BRA River Run

MANCO RIVER AUTHORITY Fall 2008/Winter 2009 A publication of the

Water Issues of the 81st Legislative Session

GBRA Marks 75 Years

Outreach Award Earned



Conservation Easements

From the GM

Water Issues for the 81st Legislature

The 81st Texas Legislature is facing many challenges this year including serious water issues to consider. In these tough economic times, how to pay for water-related projects will certainly be one of them.



While the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program (RIP) was a product of the 80th Session, the current House and Senate natural resources committees will be assessing the efforts of that process. Environmental flows adequate to maintain a healthy estuary and bay system remains a concern. Water conservation, new water reservoirs, ground water management, and water quality issues are sure to be addressed as we continue in a period of extreme drought.

This edition of the *River Run* provides an overview of the water concerns facing the Texas Legislature this session. I urge you to become familiar with the water situation in your area and let your legislators know how much you value wise management of this precious resource.

There is also an informative article about the GBRA drought and new water projects briefing recently held for constituents throughout the Guadalupe River Basin. It provides a good background on the current state of the Basin and our future water management plans and challenges.

As with many other private companies and governmental entities across the country, the economic situation has caused GBRA to look carefully at its expenses. As a result, the organization has identified areas where some savings might be achieved and implemented some budget reductions accordingly to insure GBRA can continue to effectively and efficiently provide the services its mission demands.

This issue of *River Run* also includes some articles we hope you will enjoy regarding two new conservation easements the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust will be managing for landowners who want to insure that their property continues as natural open land so critical to the health and preservation of the Guadalupe River Basin, as well as details on the formation of the Guadalupe River Monitoring Network.

Finally, GBRA celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2008 and we hope you were able to join us for some of those events. Included in this issue is a photo gallery of some of that celebration. And, last but not least, under the "Field & Office" section we are proud to include the public outreach award GBRA received from Water Environment Association of Texas.

W. E. "Bill" West, Jr. General Manager

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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GBRA River Run

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FIELD & OFFICE SMWTP Earns Consecutive TOP Ops Award

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) staff presented to the City of San Marcos and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority-operated San Marcos Water Treatment Plant operators at the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant its second consecutive, distinguished state TOP OPS Award.

The TOP OPS Award was presented as part of a voluntary, non-regulatory program created to improve standards of existing surface water treatment plants without major capitol improvements. A comprehensive performance evaluation by the TCEQ technical review and oversight team determined that the water plant operators had successfully met all rigorous criteria for the goals involved with surface water treatment for a 12-month period.



designation, show that our operators and city staff exercise care while performing this critical public service. This is an outstanding commendation for the facility and the GBRA operators. It is a milestone for the regional facility and validates our citizen's commitment and sacrifice to protect our aquifer and ensure our future area water supply through building the plant."

"While we appreciate the recognition by meeting the standards established by the TCEQ program," GBRA General Manager Bill West said, "many of our constituents are aware that GBRA's expectations of itself have always been high and our employees work hard to ensure those expectations are met."

by Lawamor Simur

"The GBRA San Marcos operations team is very excited to be recognized by the TCEQ for the second consecutive time in the TOP OPS program," said Jerry Sharp, GBRA's San Marcos Water Treatment Plant manager.

"We look forward to operating under the TOP OPS guidelines for a long time to come, and truly appreciate the recognition for both GBRA and the City of San Marcos. It shows our customers how well this plant performs on a continuous basis," Sharp added.

Director of Water/Wastewater Utilities for the City of San Marcos, Thomas Taggart said, "Significant operation awards, like the TOP OPS GBRA is the contract operator for the City of San Marcos' water treatment plant that began operation in January 2000. This facility uses surface water from Canyon Reservoir to reduce the city's pumping from the Edwards Aquifer by an average of 75 percent and existing city wells are used to supplement peak demand periods.

"The City's foresight in building such a facility and GBRA's commitment to excellence should assure our customers that they will be receiving the highest quality water possible," Sharp said.

Guadalupe River Monitoring Network Launched

Les Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the U.S. Geological Survey met in December to form a partnership for launching the Guadalupe River Basin Monitoring Network.

The Guadalupe River Basin Monitoring Network will be a system of water quality monitors in streams and rivers in the Guadalupe River Basin that collect data at regular intervals, some as often as every 15 minutes.

"In putting this system together," GBRA General Manager Bill West said, "network participants look forward to having one of the best monitoring systems in the state." This data will be used for flood-control planning, water quality regulation, and to allow the TCEQ and the partners in the system to detect water quality events in near-real time. Accessing such data allows agencies to take immediate action to remediate problems, thereby minimizing the impact to the environment and people of the area.

The network will be accessible over the Internet as will the data that the network collects.

Monitoring will occur initially from nine stations throughout the basin, but seven additional sites have been identified for future stations.

Ultimately, stations along the Guadalupe, Blanco and San Marcos rivers as well as the major tributaries will have monitoring stations where water temperature, pH levels, dissolved oxygen and other parameters will be measured.

TCEQ Chairman Buddy Garcia suggested the program would be "a model for the rest of the state."

The GBRA, U.S. Geological Survey, the TCEQ and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust are providing support for the project and seeking individuals, groups and businesses to help fund monitoring sites.

The TCEQ, GBRA, U.S. Geological Survey, and Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust are providing support for the project, which may cost about \$30,000 annually.

Interested parties or businesses that want to get involved should contact Lee Gudgell at GBRA at (830) 379-5822 or email lgudgell@gbra.org.

GBRA Makes Adjustments In Budgets

n an effort to be proactive in the midst of deteriorating Leconomic conditions nationally, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority staff members identified areas in which administrative and operational costs could be reduced or deferred.

Identified reductions implemented thus far approximate more than 7 percent of GBRA's Water Supply Division programs and an additional 11 percent of GBRA's Administrative Division programs for a total of more than \$1 million in savings from the initially approved 2009 budget.

GBRA General Manager Bill West disseminated a letter to constituents in December explaining **GBRA's efforts:**

Buda, Texas 78610 Phone: 512-312-0526 COLETO CREEK PARK AND RESERVOIR P.O. Box 68 Fannin, Texas 77960 Phone: 361-575-6366 Fax: 361-575-2267 LAKE WOOD RECREATION AREA 167 FM 2091 South Gonzales, Texas 78629 Phone: 830-672-2779 Fax: 830-672-2779 LOCKHART WATER TREATMENT PLANT 547 Old McMahan Road Lockhart, Texas 78644 Phone: 512-398-3528 LOCKHART WASTEWATER RECLAMATION SYSTEM 4435 FM 20 East Lockhart, Texas 78644 Phone: 512-398-6391 Fax: 512-398-2036

Fax:

LULING WATER TREATMENT PLANT 350 Memorial Drive Luling, Texas 78648 Phone: 830-875-2132 Fax: 830-875-2132

PORT LAVACA OPERATIONS P.O. Box 146 Port Lavaca, Texas 77979 Phone: 361-552-9751 Fax: 361-552-6529 SAN MARCOS WATER TREATMENT PLANT 91 Old Bastrop Road

San Marcos, Texas 78666 Phone: 512-353-3888 Fax: 512-353-3127

VICTORIAL REGIONAL WASTEWATER RECLAMATION SYSTEM P.O. Box 2085 Victoria, Texas 77902-2085 Phone: 361-578-2878 361-578-9039 GBRA WEBSITE

www.gbra.org

W. E. West, Jr. General Manager

Sincerely,

GENERAL OFFICE 933 East Court Street Seguin, Texas 78155 Phone: 830-379-5822 800-413-5822 830-379-9718 BUDA WASTEWATER December 31, 2008 RECLAMATION 575 County Road 236 GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY Dear GBRA Customer: 512-312-0526 Given the nation's current economic conditions, I felt it was appropriate that I share with you the outivities that are underway at the Guadalune-Rlanco River Authority ("GRRA") to address and pi Given the nation's current economic conditions, I felt it was appropriate that I share with you the activities that are underway at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority ("GBRA") to address and plan for management of the basin's resources. management of the basin's resources. Let me begin by assuring you that GBRA is financially stable and will continue to provide high quality and timely services Having said that, we also recognize the responsibility that each of us has to review and adjust plans to meet both current and anticipated future conditions. GRR A recognizes the need for fiscal responsibility. Having said that, we also recognize the responsibility that each of us has to review and adjust plans to meet both current and anticipated future conditions. GBRA recognizes the need for fiscal responsibility and I want to assure you that the organization is looking at financial alternatives and eavings in its meet both current and anticipated future conditions. GBRA recognizes the need for fiscal responsition and I want to assure you that the organization is looking at financial alternatives and savings in its programs and operations. Over the past several months GBRA has reviewed its' operating budgets and implemented appropriate adjustments in recognition of the impacts of the financial climate on GBRA and its' customers. This Over the past several months GBRA has reviewed its' operating budgets and implemented appropriation adjustments in recognition of the impacts of the financial climate on GBRA and its' customers and increases has included all levels of the organization. The criteria for this review were that any adjustments in recognition of the impacts of the mancial climate on QBKA and its' custome process has included all levels of the organization. The criteria for this review were that any modifications in the budget and work-plan would. Not sacrifice the core values or legislative direction. Not sacrifice the core values or legislative direction. Not jeopardize employee safety, public well fare or viability of facilities or operations. Continue to fulfill our legislative charge for recourse development and protection. Not jeopardize employee sately, public well fare or viability of facilities or operation of fulfill our legislative charge for resource development and protection. Continue to nutriti our registative enarge for resource development. Provide timely, reliable and high quality services to our customers. -Meet State and Federal permit and operating criteria. Provide cost effective alternatives. This process has involved updated cost and benefit analyses of numerous programs and activities. One maine decision was to defer certain nurchases and the filling of certain staffing positions with a periodic This process has involved updated cost and benefit analyses of numerous programs and activities. One major decision was to defer certain purchases and the filling of certain staffing positions, with a periodic conditions change. Other cost savings will be achieved through deferring certain major decision was to defer certain purchases and the filling of certain staffing positions, with a period review as economic conditions change. Other cost savings will be achieved through deferring certain and reducing travel and utility consumption. Our review as economic conditions change. Other cost savings will be achieved through deferring capital improvements, combining program activities, and reducing travel and utility consumption. Our managers and employees continue to look for additional alternatives to reduce costs. These actions will capital improvements, combining program activities, and reducing travel and utility consumption. Our managers and employees continue to look for additional alternatives to reduce costs. These actions will insure a brief fiture by taking the prudent step of reviewing the external influences and making managers and employees continue to look for additional alternatives to reduce costs. These action insure a bright future by taking the prudent step of reviewing the external influences and making adjustments. In these challenging times there are also some positive areas that I want to emphasize. The foundation of any organization is its commetent and dedicated employees. GRR A is fortunate to have such a dedicated employees. In these challenging times there are also some positive areas that I want to emphasize. The foundation of any organization is its competent and dedicated employees. GBRA is fortunate to have such a dedicated work. Force that deserves our recognition and appreciation for their commitment and contributions to any organization is its competent and dedicated employees. GBRA is fortunate to have such a dedicated employees work force that deserves our recognition and appreciation for their commitment and contributions and appreciation for their commitment and contributions to have a sound programs and operations. And Texas is still the place to be We continue to have work force that deserves our recognition and appreciation for their commitment and contributed assure sound programs and operations. And, Texas is still the place to be. We continue to have continue to have and implementation of projects to meet both current and future assure sound programs and operations. And, Texas is still the place to be. We continue to have opportunities to address planning and implementation of projects to meet both current and future water and wastewater needs of a growing and dynamic state. Best regards. Thealing

Drought and New Projects Discussed at Briefing

by LaMarriol Smith



the Guadalupe River Basin. During the briefing, Hill explained that weather conditions from September 2007 through December 2008 with 16.4 inches of rain had been drier than the same time period for 1955-1956 with 17.7 inches. Given the situation, GBRA officials urged constituents to exercise conservation measures in their respective cities and counties.

One of the issues that the drought brings to light is management of the Edwards Aquifer. Votteler explained to the audience the process — called the Recovery Implementation Program — that is underway to reach consensus among stakeholders on how to manage the aquifer, particularly during times of drought.

The presentation included a discussion about how releases from Canyon Reservoir are managed and what state and federal requirements,

A lmost 100 public officials, water and wastewater customers, and other invited parties attended a basin-wide constituent briefing by Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority officials in January at GBRA's River Annex Office in Seguin.

Presenters for the two-hour briefing included Bill West, general manager; David Welsch, executive manager of Economic Development; Tommy Hill, chief engineer; Bruce Wasinger, General Counsel; Todd Votteler, executive manager of Intergovernmental Relations; and Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, education coordinator.

"Given the dry conditions across the state, we felt it would be timely to give customers an update on the drought, promote conservation, explain the drought triggers for curtailment, and let them know what options for new supplies of water are being considered," West said. "There is so much growth in GBRA's statutory district, particularly along the I-35 Corridor in Hays and Comal counties, and these folks want and need to know that GBRA is working to find water supplies to meet those growing demands."

Beginning with the drought issue and in order to put the current drought gripping the central and south central Texas areas into perspective, the presenters first provided background on historical droughts in the area. The drought of the 1950s — a time period generally from 1947 to 1957 — serves as the "drought of record" for

contracts, and agreements influence those releases.

Constituents also were informed about GBRA's Regional Laboratory activities, such as its partnership in the Clean Rivers Program and monitoring initiatives, which are an essential part of keeping the Guadalupe River and its tributaries clean.

West ended the briefing providing details on four long-term projects that potentially would yield from 25,000 acre-feet of water in the smallest project to as much as 150,000 acre-feet of water in the largest project.

To view slides from the presentations, visit GBRA's website, or contact GBRA at (830) 379-5822 for more information.

Briefing Presentations Online: http://www.gbra.org/Library/BasinBriefing2009.aspx

WEAT Honors GBRA's Public Outreach

The Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) has awarded GBRA as one of the recipients of their 2008 Presidential Award for Outstanding Effort Towards Public Outreach and Communication. GBRA has developed a public outreach interactive media tool that educates citizens as to the process technologies associated with wastewater treatment and disposal.

GBRA Education Coordinator Cinde Thomas-Jimenez and graphic artist Scott Rolfe created the media project using Flash animation. The project leads the viewer on a virtual tour of the workings of a typical wastewater treatment plant, using a combination of photos, text and animation.

This online animation was created by GBRA through a 106 Public Outreach grant called "Taking Charge of Water Quality," from EPA, through TCEQ. The grant is aimed at the Plum Creek Watershed in Hays and Caldwell counties. This tool is one of many outreach efforts associated with the Watershed Protection Plan. The purpose of the tool was to educate public officials and citizens about the wastewater treatment process. GBRA has been proactive in publicizing outreach products developed through this grant. A postcard promoting the wastewater treatment animation was sent to over 450 operators, elected officials, school teachers, interested citizens and others in the Plum Creek watershed, encouraging them to view the module to get more information on how a treatment plant works.

This postcard was also featured in WEAT's quarterly publication *Texas WET* (November 2008). Traffic on the website indicates high interest.

The animation can be viewed at the web link: http://www.gbra.org/wastewater-treatment.swf.

Thomas-Jimenez and Rolfe are wrapping up a second animation project, dealing with the working of conventional and aerobic septic

systems. It will be available on the GBRA website in the near future, at http://www.gbra.org/septic-tanks.swf.

This animation will lead users through the treatment path in a septic tank, providing tips along the way about what NOT to allow into the system. The third animation, to be developed in Spring 2009, will deal with problems associated with fats, oils, and grease (FOG) in wastewater treatment systems. Ideally, it will be used to educate homeowners and businesses about problems associated with improper disposal of FOGs, and provide the user with alternatives for drain disposal.



Report Released

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ended *August 31, 2008.*

The report, called *Guadalupe River Basin Road Trip*, features stories of eight of Texas' road trip treasures from throughout GBRA's statutory district, as well as the organization's financial and statistical reports.

The report contains an independent auditors' report completed by Thompson, Williams, Biediger, Kastor, and Young L.C. of San Antonio, Texas. It also shows a copy of the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for GBRA's 2007 Annual Report, a recognition GBRA's Accounting Department has earned for 34 consecutive years.

To obtain a copy of the *Annual Report*, contact the Communications and Education staff at (830) 379-5822.



75th Anniversary Myrra McLeroy, GBRA 2008 Board Chair Celebration

Photos by Chase Fountain

Lisa Craven and Bill West, GBRA General Manager

n 2008, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority celebrated 75 years of service to it constituents in its 10county statutory district and to the citizens of Texas.

The primary celebration, held in Austin, was marked by the presentation of certificates to all employees, and resolutions presented to 13 "Legislative Champions," who included former Sen. Kenneth Armbrister; Sen. Glenn Hegar, Jr., R-Katy, Dist. 18; Sen. Kip Averitt, R-Waco, Dist. 22; Sen. Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, Dist. 25; former Rep. Robert Puente; former Rep. Rick Green; former Rep. Carter Casteel; Rep. Patrick Rose,

D-Dripping Springs, Dist. 25; Rep. Nathan Macias, R-Bulverde, Dist. 73; Rep. Edmund Kuempel, R-Seguin, Dist. 44; Rep. Geanie W. Morrison, R-Victoria, Dist. 30; Rep. William "Bill" A. Callegari, R-Katy, Dist. 132; and Rep. Harvey Hilderbran, R-Kerrville, Dist. 53.



Congressman Lloyd Doggett

West, McLeroy and Elizabeth Ames Jon

General Manager Bill West made special announcements regarding the filing of a water permit application for a new surface and groundwater conjunctive use project at Gonzales, the establishment of the San Antonio Bay Foundation, and the pending publishing of GBRA's 75-year history by board member emeritus John Taylor.

On behalf of Governor Rick Perry, Railroad Commissioner Elizabeth Ames Jones presented GBRA with a certificate of recognition from the Governor, and Lisa Craven of Sen. Glen Hegar's Office presented GBRA with a proclamation from the Texas Senate.



GBRA 2008 Board Secretary/Treasurer Margaret Grier, Alexis West and Former Representative Carter Casteel



GBRA Employees: Teresa VanBooven, Susan Cochrar Marella Dalme and Paulette Cowey

LaMarriol Smith of GBRA

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Water Issues of the

SIst Legislative

By Joel Williams

awmakers will be dealing with numerous issues related to the mission of the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority, when the 81st Session of the Texas Legislature convenes on January 13, 2009.

Where legislation related to water is concerned, Texas lawmakers are likely to pick up where they left off in 2007.

They will certainly be looking into the complicated task of finding ways to pay for projects to ensure a long-term water supply for the state.

"My top priority during the upcoming session will be identifying and securing a permanent funding source for the State Water Plan," said Sen. Kip Averitt, R-Waco, chairman of the Senate Natural Resources Committee. "While we made the state's largest-ever investment in water infrastructure last session, our investment represents only a fraction of the funding needed to avoid Texas Water Development Board projections showing that as early as 2060, 85 percent of Texans could be without an adequate supply of water during times of drought."

Estimated cost of all the projects in the plan is \$30 billion, with the state and local entities sharing the burden.

During the 80th Session, Averitt crafted and passed Senate Bill 3, which addresses the state's ongoing efforts to ensure a clean, adequate and affordable supply of water for future generations of Texans. In conjunction with three quarters of a billion dollars in water infrastructure funding, Senate Bill 3 advances the development of Texas water policy by protecting instream flows, encouraging conservation of existing water resources, and allowing new water projects identified by the State Water Plan to meet future water needs. He said he will continue monitoring implementation of SB-3's environmental flows component, designed to ensure that instream flows in rivers and fresh water inflows to bays and estuaries remain at levels sufficient to maintain healthy, natural ecosystems.

The legislation created a stakeholder process to recommend required flows for each basin, and established processes and advisory groups to ensure environmental flow protections related to any new or increased water rights.

The bill also required the TWDB to develop and implement a statewide water conservation awareness program and probably the most controversial component of the bill was the designation of unique reservoir sites as having value for the construction of a dam and reservoir. The bill also established a joint interim oversight committee to review financing of water infrastructure projects.

Jay Howard of the Austin-based public affairs firm HillCo Partners, who represents GBRA's interests in the Legislature, said he expects lawmakers to offer some changes or additions to SB-3, but he did not expect to see another comprehensive piece of water legislation like that emerge from the upcoming session.

"Each Legislature has its own priorities based on the goals and the interest of the members," Howard said. "Certainly water infrastructure financing is one issue that will be at the top of the list in 2009 along with refinements to the major water legislation, SB-3 from last session. As with every Session, there will be new players, new issues and new opportunities to address the water supply challenges we face as a region and a state."

Howard said that water-related legislation likely to be considered during the 81st Session includes issues related to groundwater as well as surface water:

Groundwater:

★ Desired future conditions of aquifers, and the process for addressing the issue

★ Joint planning within groundwater management areas and outside entities

★ Groundwater district creation process – single or partial county

★ Groundwater district consolidation within priority groundwater management area

Surface water:

★ Funding options for the state's water infrastructure needs

★ Flood control devices, infrastructure, dam safety and financing for repairs

★ New approaches to reduce salinity in state waters

Need for regional water quality standards, and

★ Refinements to Edwards Aquifer Authority Recovery Implementation Program, Environmental Flows Advisory Group, Water Conservation Advisory Council and Joint Interim Committee on State Water Funding, if needed.

SB-3 included details that will have a significant long-term impact on the Edwards Aquifer. Although the bill lifted the cap on pumping from the Edwards to 572,000 acre feet per year, it also required the Edwards Aquifer Authority,

Session

with the assistance of Texas A&M University, to develop what is known as a "Recovery Implementation Program," or "RIP." A RIP is designed to provide a plan for the recovery of any federally listed species. For the Edwards Aquifer, that will require maintaining adequate flow of water from Comal Springs and San Marcos Springs. The ongoing RIP process includes input from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, other appropriate federal agencies, and all interested stakeholders.

> "They're making, what I believe, is very good progress," said Sen. Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio. "It will be many years in the making, and I don't foresee any change in that program."

Averitt said other issues likely to be brought before the Senate Natural Resources Committee next session include " efforts to address recent judicial rulings related to the management of groundwater, and continued discussion of the water-energy nexus, including how to ensure that we have sufficient water in the State Water Plan for new electricity generation facilities."

Water plays an important role at power plants, because most of them produce electricity by using steam to make the turbines in their generators spin. Water also is used for keeping power plant systems from overheating.

Discussion of the relationship between water and electricity production is relevant to GBRA, which would provide the surface water needed for cooling at a nuclear power



"They're making, what I believe, is very good progress on the RIP. It will be many years in the making, and I don't foresee any change in that program."

> Senator Jeff Wentworth R-San Antonio, Dist. 25



"My top priority during the upcoming session will be identifying and securing a permanent funding source for the State Water Plan."

> Senator Kip Averitt R-Waco, Dist. 22

plant that Exelon Corp. has been considering building in Victoria County.

Texas will need to build additional power plants in the near future because population growth will cause the state's need for power to increase by 48 percent by 2030, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

At the Texas Water Law Conference in October, Averitt also pointed to two 1,700 –megawatt projects at the Comanche Peak nuclear plant in North Texas, which will require 100,000 acre feet of water.

Todd Votteller, GBRA's executive manager of Intergovernmental Relations and Policy, also said he did not expect any major waterrelated legislation to come out of the 81st Session, but that a number of potential bills affecting GBRA have been discussed.

Water Issues, a

While he anticipates legislation that would improve coordination between groundwater districts and regional water planning groups, the session also may see a possible effort to rein in the regulatory authority of groundwater districts.

> He'll also be keeping an eye out for a possible effort to eliminate a restriction on a pipeline from Uvalde to San Antonio to transfer Edwards Aquifer water currently permitted for irrigation in the Uvalde area. Those pumping rights are often not used fully. Legislation that would do away with a requirement that at least 50 percent of water permitted for irrigation be used on the land where it is located could put extra strain on efforts to keep the aquifer level high enough to maintain the flow of San Marcos Springs and Comal Springs.

> > "Proponents have been talking about it," Votteler said. "They are water marketers

ontinued

who have a substantial amount of Edwards Aquifer rights."

Irrigation rights make up 50 percent of Edwards Aquifer rights, so the impact of allowing that water to be transferred by pipeline could be substantial.

"Some are saying that they should not be restricting the export of groundwater from one aquifer district to some place else," Votteler said. "As far as we're concerned, we think any additional withdrawals from the aquifer are a threat to the springs. We believe that if it is permitted for municipal or industrial use, it is more likely to be consumed, and it will eventually have an impact on the springs."

The fight over that issue could get contentious, he said, pitting groundwater districts and rural interests vs. water marketers and municipal users.

A recent opinion by the state's 4th Court of Appeals, likely now to be considered by the Texas Supreme Court, also is likely to have an impact on water-related legislation this session.

The 4th Court of Appeals found that landowners involved in a lawsuit against the Edwards Aquifer Authority have some ownership rights in groundwater beneath their land and that their "vested right in the groundwater beneath their property is entitled to constitutional protection." The Supreme Court will be asked to clarify the "rule of capture" issue, and the outcome could have a far-ranging impact on groundwater districts and water management planning in Texas.

Texas House Gets New Speaker



"We will create an atmosphere where everyone's voice can and should be heard, a place where we respect each other's points of view."

Speaker of the House Joe Straus R-San Antonio, Dist. 121

While a myriad of water-related bills have been filed for Senate and House members to tackle, the 150-member House started the 81st Legislative Session dealing with the issue of who would be its speaker.

A majority of House members rallied around Joe Straus, a two-term moderate Republican representing San Antonio. About a dozen key Republicans and nearly all Democrats supported Straus, causing former Speaker Tom Craddick to abandon the campaign for his fourth speaker's term.

In what appeared to be an unexpected entry into the fray to be speaker, Straus only announced his interest less than two weeks before being elected by the unified Democrats and the handful of Republicans.

Straus, 49, signaling a departure from the House's contentious ways, said, "We will create an atmosphere where everyone's voice can and should be heard," adding, "A place where we respect each other's points of view — Democrat and Republican, urban and rural, liberal and conservative." He pledged to open the House to allow members – Republican or Democrat – to win the day if they had the best argument and the most votes.

In assessing the change in speakers, GBRA Executive Manager of Intergovernmental Relations Todd Votteler said, "Because the new speaker is from San Antonio, he is already familiar with the complex water issues in the Edwards Aquifer region."

A number of conservatives were distressed at losing the partisan Craddick, who lost some of his advantage with the November elections that left the House Republicans with a narrow 76-74 majority. Craddick was the first Republican Texas House speaker in modern history.

INSIDE GBRA GBRA Fraining & Licenses

James Asbury of General attended Overview of Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems seminar.

Darel Ball of Water Resources attended Capacity Management Operation and Maintenance (CMOM), and DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training

Ed Boettner of Shadow Creek attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Clarissa Castellanos of the Lab attended Corrective Action training, Data Quality Objectives, Dionex Seminar, LAS Alamo Chapter - IDEXX, LAS Alamo Chapter Meeting - Varian GC/MS & LC/MS, Orientation to Quality Assurance Management, Post Office Mailer Safety training, Spill Response training.

Angel Castillo, Jr. of Lockhart Wastewater attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training

Ross Chapman of Victoria Wastewater attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Jason Davidson of RUD attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator training.

David Dodd of Calhoun Canal attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Hunter Duncan of Western Canyon WTP attended TRWA - Surface Water II training.

Charles Durst of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator, and completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Charles Fennell of Hydro completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

David Garcia of Port Lavaca WTP attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard, and Surface Water I training.

Leroy Garza of San Marcos WTP attended DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

Richard Gonzales of Lockhart WTP attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Lorenzo Gonzales, Jr. of Victoria Wastewater attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Dustin Greenwood of Western Canyon WTP obtained "D" Water Operator license and completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System, IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS), and TRWA Technology Based training: Basic Water Works Operation.

Emmylou Guiterrez of the Lab attended Corrective Action Training. Introduction to Chlorine Analysis for Drinking Water, Post Office Mailer Safety Training, Spill Response Training, Teledyne-Tekmar TOC Training.

Jeffery Hebert of Western Canyon WTP obtained his "C" Surface license and attended Surface Water II, Surface Water Production I, and TRWA-Surface Water II training.

Joel Heideke of RUD attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator training.

Mark Henneke of Water Resources attended TX Aquatic Plant Management Conference and WEFTEC.

Roland Henry, Jr. of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator and completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Timothy Hill of Western Canyon WTP obtained his "A" Water Operator license and attended Applied Analytical Chemistry training.

Susan Hubbert of General attended Ethical Business Decisions by Texas CPA's training.

Billy Imhoff of General attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator training

Juan Juarez of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator and completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

David Kenda of Hydro completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Emily Knepp of the Lab attended Corrective Action training, LAS Alamo Chapter - IDEXX, Post Office Mailer Safety training, and Spill Response training

Don Koble of Canal RWSS attended Introduction to Chlorine Analysis for Drinking Water and TCEQ's Waste Water Record Keeping training.

Scott Kolbe of Canyon Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator training, NFPA 70E, and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Wilfred Korth, Jr. of Coleto Recreation attended TX Aquatic Plant Management Conference.

Chris Lewis of General attended Basic Electricity for the Non-Electrician, Basics of Motor Controls Basics of Programmable Logic Controllers, Basics of Variable Frequency Drives, Overview of Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems.

Jason Lewis of Coleto Recreation attended Certified Park and Recreation Professionals training, and the Texas Aquatic Plant Management Conference.

Joe Long of San Marcos WTP attended DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

Josephine Longoria of the Lab attended Alternative Project Delivery training, Austin 2008 Public Drinking Water, BioTiox Biomonitoring training, Corrective Action training, LAS Alamo Chapter-IDEXX, LAS Alamo Chapter Meeting-Varian GC/MS & LC/ MS. LAS/ALAmo Chapter training-Metrohom IC. Post Office Mailer Safety training, Spill Response training, and Total Coliform Rule: Proposed Revisions & Potential Impacts training.

Brian Lyssy of the Lab attended Corrective Action training, LAS Alamo Chapter-IDEXX, and OWTS 201: Overview of Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems, Post Office Mailer Safety training, and Spill Response training.

Allen Martin of San Marcos WTP attended DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

Richard Matheaus of RUD attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Richard Maxwell, Jr. of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Marlon McAdams of Coleto Reservoir attended NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training

Shane McAdams of Coleto Reservoir attended NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training

Jeffrey McKee of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator training.

Kylie McNabb of the Lab attended Introduction to Chlorine Analysis for Drinking Water training.

James Medrano of Hydro completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Cornelio Molina Jr. of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator, and completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System, and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Introduction.

Roberto Nieto of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator, NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Reagan Ploetz of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator and completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System.

Gerardo Rodriguez of Water Resources attended NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training

Tony Saenz III of Victoria Wastewater obtained his "C" Wastewater license.

Alan Schneider of Coleto Reservoir attended the TX Aquatic Plant Management Conference.

Christopher Schofield of RUD attended Introduction to Chlorine Analysis for Drinking Water.

Michael Schultze of Hydro attended Coaching the Lift Truck Operator training

Elizabeth Sedlacek of Water Resources attended Excel training, Spill Response, and Word training.

Curtis Seiler of Coleto Recreation attended NFPA 70E and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Jerry Sharp of San Marcos WTP attended DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training, NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard, and RMP training.

Allan Smith of Shadow Creek obtained his "D" Wastewater license and attended Basic Wastewater training.

Janet Thome of General attended Flash 8 training and the Texas Watershed Steward Program.

Michael Tompkins of Calhoun Canal attended NFPA 70E. and Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard, Surface Water I training

John Urban of Coleto Reservoir attended the Texas Aquatic Plant Management Conference.

Michael Urrutia of Water Resources attended the Public Drinking Water Conference, and Sanitary Sewer Overflow Initiative training.

Dennis Walker of Buda Wastewater obtained his "C" Ground Water Treatment Operator license and attended NFPA 70E, Electrical Safety in the Workplace Standard training.

Steve Wallendorf of San Marcos WTP attended DEM Hazardous Materials Technician Training, Surface Water Production II, and TRWA Technology Based Training: Water Utility Safety training.

David Weaver of Victoria Wastewater attended Water Utilities Safety training.

Roy Wilkey of Western Canyon WTP completed IS-00100 Introduction to the Incident Command System and IS-00700 National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Herbert Wittliff of Calhoun Canal attended Adaptive Management Practices, De-Salination, Employee Retention, Surface Water I - PC0217/CC0942, and TWUA-Utility Safety training



by Tammy Beutnagel

Oday with her exuberant personality, physically fit shape and energy, most people could not guess the age of GBRA retiree, Hughlene Micheli. But in 1996, Micheli was not guite the same person she is today, as she chose to leave GBRA. A serious issue required her immediate attention ---she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"After 36 years with GBRA, I decided to leave because of the cancer. I knew I'd be going through treatments and needed time to heal and regroup," Micheli said. Cancer-free for 13 years. Micheli volunteers for the American Cancer Society, where she counsels other women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. "My work with the ACS has been very rewarding and I would do it again in a heartbeat," she explained.

Born in Brenham, Texas, Hughlene Schmidt grew up and attended schools in Fayetteville, Texas, and attended Texas Lutheran College (now called Texas Lutheran University). While attending the private college, she met Seguin native, Cliff Micheli. The couple married and had two daughters, Mitzi and Joey. The Michelis' have been married 52 years. The Italian family has since added two sons-in-law and three grandsons.

Micheli gained a wealth of knowledge early in her career working for the Texas Railroad Commission in Austin before she was hired away by the GBRA in 1961 as an accounting clerk by then-controller Tom Bishop. She also worked for Jim Cooksey and Alvin Schuerg.

When Micheli was hired, the small accounting and finance department included employee Clara Fischer and a small crew of motor grader operators that worked for the soil conservation department. Today the Accounting Department has grown to 14 full-time employees that include accounting, human resources, and information technology personnel.

Micheli recalled working as many hours necessary to complete accounts payable,



receivables, and payroll. "We frequently worked nights and weekends to get the job done. I think now that might be illegal," she said with a smile.

In the '70s when computers rolled in, Micheli received training on one of the organization's first computers. She admits it was a huge time saver for everyone, even with a learning curve.

"When computers were introduced, it was a different world from the manual accounting we were used to," she said, adding, "Before computers, we had a typewriter and a calculator and that was it! Everything else was done by hand."

Micheli said she will always value her position at GBRA, but admitted her initial decision in 1961 to be counted as one of the millions of working women was a difficult one. Many

families included "stay-at-home moms" and Micheli explained that her only regret was a lack of free time to spend with her schoolaged daughters.

Her husband Cliff Micheli had started his own air conditioning and heating business, so any minor emergencies or illness that their daughters encountered usually called for nurse mom. "Of course I cared for my girls when they fell or scraped their knees, or even when they had colds," Micheli said, "but I always went back to work."

Micheli said she would always remember that GBRA hired on a part-time basis her daughter, a new college graduate, during the economic depression of the '80s.

Nowadays, Micheli always puts her family first and continues to make up for lost time by taking trips with them. She recalled fondly the "girls' trip" to New York with Mitzi and Joey, as well as her trek across the globe to Australia, New Zealand, and various parts of Europe with Cliff.

Besides enjoying traveling and her vital volunteer work with the American Cancer Society, Micheli volunteers time at Emanuel's Lutheran Church in Seguin and is a certified master gardener. She is a member of the Zonta Club of Seguin and the Green Team for Seguin, an organization focused on the beautification of downtown Sequin.

When asked if she could give readers one piece of advice, Micheli said, "Remember to cherish as much time as possible with family it's the only one we've got and it's so special."

Started at GBRA: 1961 **Retired at GBRA: 1997**

Hughlene Micheli can be contacted at (830) 379-5673 or clifmic@axs4u.net

Board Officers for 2009 Announced

Governor Appoints New Board Member and Reappoints Two Others

ficers of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority ill begin fulfilling their new positions during he organizations' board meeting Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2009, at GBRA's River Annex Building in Seguin. Tilmon Lee "T.L." Walker of New Braunfels, representing Comal County, will serve as the 2009 chair, Clifton L. Thomas, Jr. of Victoria, representing Victoria County, will serve a second term as vice-chair, and Grace Kunde of Seguin, representing

Guadalupe County, will serve as secretary/treasurer.

Walker, appointed in 2006 by Governor Rick Perry, received a commercial banking degree from the American Institute of Banking and a graduate degree in commercial banking from the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking at



Chairman

Southern Methodist University. Walker is a former member of the American Institute of Banking, the Bank Administration Institute, the American Bankers Association and the Texas Bankers ssociation.

Walker also serves as the Comal County representative on the South Central Texas Water Advisory Committee. He is a board member and past president of the New Braunfels Industrial Foundation, member and former director of the Comal County

Community Fund United Way, and committee member and past board member of the Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce. Walker is a retired Wells Fargo executive.

Thomas of Victoria originally was appointed in 2004 by Gov. Perry to represent Victoria County and was reappointed this month for a term to serve until February 2015. He is founder and CEO of C.L. Thomas, a wholesale and retail corporation.

Thomas also serves on the DeTar Hospital Board of Directors and Wells Fargo Bank Board and is a Texas A&M graduate.

Kunde, who also was reappointed by Gov. Perry to serve through 2015, received her bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas Lutheran University and a law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law.



Clifton L. Thomas, Vice-Chairman



Secretary-Treasurer

She is a private practice attorney in Seguin and a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas, the San Antonio Bar Association, the Bexar County Women's Bar Association and the Guadalupe County Bar Association.

She is a member of the Seguin Rotary Club, a member and former president of the Guadalupe County Republican Women and a former Guadalupe

County Republican



Director

Party precinct chair. She previously served on the Board of Directors for the Comal County Children's Shelter as treasurer and president and member of the Advisory Board.

New Board Appointee

In February, Gov. Perry appointed Michael Schultz of Fair Oaks

Ranch to represent Boerne County on GBRA's Board of Directors. Schultz is the Director of Business Development for The Trust Company of San Antonio, Texas, a wealth management business with \$1.6 billion worth of assets. He joined the company in 2007. Prior to that, Schultz was engaged in the real estate business in Colorado. From 1988 to 2003, he was engaged in the financial services business

ultimately creating the Business Financial Group.

Schultz served five years on the Boerne Independent School District Board and two years on The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). He has served as the President of the San Antonio YMCA. Schultz is a co-founder of LeaderSteps, a program for seniors at Boerne ISD and was a member of the Boerne Chamber Leadership Program class of 2007-2008.

GBRA is governed by nine directors, appointed by the Governor of the State of Texas and confirmed by the Senate. Each director serves a six-year term with three directors appointed or reappointed every two years.

David Garcia Distinguished as Volunteer of the Year

GBRA staff honored employee David Garcia of Port Lavaca this fall as "Volunteer of the Year" at a banquet in Victoria.

Garcia is president of the Port Lavaca Cruisers, a charitable motorcycle club that raises funds for children in Calhoun County. As part of its charitable activities, the Cruisers sponsored gift boxes for Christmas for U.S. troops in Iraq and families of Calhoun County.

The organization also sponsors Coats for Kids, the Calhoun High School Sandettes, and the Harbor, a facility for abused children. Through Garcia's leadership, the Cruisers held a fundraising program for disabled veterans.

In addition to logging numerous hours with GBRA's "Our Day to Shine," a day of performing volunteer projects within one of the counties in GBRA's statutory district, Garcia has participated in events with the "Go Texan" parade fundraiser and Calhoun County Fair. Garcia and his family also are avid supporters of the high school sports program.

employee anniversaries

GBRA recognizes the following employees for their dedication of service. (These employees started with GBRA between the months of July and November.)

July

7/5/2007	Clarissa Castellanos, Lab - 1 yr
7/5/2006	Timothy Hill, Western Canyon WTP - 2 yrs
7/28/2003	Lee Gudgell, Lab - 5 yrs
7/5/2002	Carlton Hoefling, Victoria WWTP - 6 yrs
7/17/1992	Ross Chapman, Victoria WWTP - 16 yrs
7/2/1984	Allen Ognoskie, Hydro - 24 yrs
7/2/1982	David Kenda, Hydro - 26 yrs
7/10/1978	Joel Heideke, RUD - 30 yrs
7/6/1976	Debbie Magin, Water Resources - 32 yrs
August	
8/25/2008 New Hir	Margaret Guerra, Western Canyon WTP -
8/18/2008 New Hir	Jeffery Hebert, Western Canyon WTP - e
New Hir	
New Hir 8/15/2008	e
New Hir 8/15/2008 8/27/2007	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire
New Hir 8/15/2008 8/27/2007	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire Emmylou Gutierrez, Lab 1 - yr
New Hir 8/15/2008 8/27/2007 8/26/2005	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire Emmylou Gutierrez, Lab 1 - yr Todd Hoff, Port Lavaca WTP - 3 yrs
New Hir 8/15/2008 8/27/2007 8/26/2005 8/5/2002	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire Emmylou Gutierrez, Lab 1 - yr Todd Hoff, Port Lavaca WTP - 3 yrs Josephine Longoria, Lab - 6 yrs
New Hir 8/15/2008 8/27/2007 8/26/2005 8/5/2002 8/5/2002	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire Emmylou Gutierrez, Lab 1 - yr Todd Hoff, Port Lavaca WTP - 3 yrs Josephine Longoria, Lab - 6 yrs Allen Martin, San Marcos WTP - 6 yrs
New Hir 8/15/2008 8/27/2007 8/26/2005 8/5/2002 8/5/2002 8/5/2002 8/11/1995	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire Emmylou Gutierrez, Lab 1 - yr Todd Hoff, Port Lavaca WTP - 3 yrs Josephine Longoria, Lab - 6 yrs Allen Martin, San Marcos WTP - 6 yrs Larry Shahan, San Marcos WTP - 6 yrs
New Hin 8/15/2008 8/27/2007 8/26/2005 8/5/2002 8/5/2002 8/5/2002 8/11/1995 8/29/1994	e Allan Smith, Shadow Creek - New Hire Emmylou Gutierrez, Lab 1 - yr Todd Hoff, Port Lavaca WTP - 3 yrs Josephine Longoria, Lab - 6 yrs Allen Martin, San Marcos WTP - 6 yrs Larry Shahan, San Marcos WTP - 6 yrs Billy Imhoff, General - 13 yrs

8/15/1990 Angel Castillo, Lockhart WWTP - 18 yrs
8/7/1989 Scott Kolbe, Canyon Hydro -19 yrs
8/31/1981 Charles Durst, Hydro - 27 yrs
8/25/1975 Christy Dietert, General - 33 yrs
8/18/1975 Richard Maxwell, Hydro - 33 yrs

September

9/19/2008 Dustin Greenwood, Western Canyon WTP -New Hire

 9/16/2008
 Kylie McNabb, Lab - New Hire

 9/28/2001
 Gerardo Rodriguez, Water Resources - 7 yrs

 9/27/2001
 Dennis Walker, Buda WWTP - 7 yrs

 9/1/2000
 Brian Lyssy, Lab - 8 yrs

 9/10/1999
 Ryan Boedeker, Canal RWSS - 9 yrs

 9/14/1998
 Susan Cochran, Water Resources - 10 yrs

 9/14/1992
 David Dodd, Calhoun Canal - 16 yrs

 9/2/1992
 Jason Eeds, Lockhart WWTP - 16 yrs

 9/3/1991
 Stephanie Shelly, Port Lavaca WTP - 17 yrs

 9/1/1988
 Eduardo Montana, Lockhart WWTP - 20 yrs

 9/3/1974
 Frank Tompkins, Victoria WWTP - 34 yrs

 9/11/1967
 Roberto Nieto, Hydro - 41 yrs

10/27/2008 Earl Harp, Lab - New Hire 10/25/2007 Annlee Drazkowski, General - 1 yr 10/29/2004 Keelyn Underwood, Victoria WWTP - 4 yrs 10/17/2003 Wendell Gillit, Victoria WWTP - 5 yrs 10/20/2003 Jose Leal, Lockhart WTP - 5 yrs 10/11/2002 Terry Ramey, Victoria WWTP - 6 yrs 10/15/2001 Marella Dalme, General - 7 yrs 10/1/2001 Barbara Gunn, General - 7 yrs 10/1/1990 Elizabeth Sedlacek, Water Resources - 18 yrs 10/22/1979 Herbert Wittliff, Calhoun Canal - 29 yrs 10/25/1976 Lorenzo Gonzales, Victoria WWTP - 32 yrs 10/8/1973 Ronald Gosnell, Canal RWSS - 35 yrs

November

11/5/2008 John Moryl, Hydro - New Hire 11/1/2007 Gynna Hernandez, General - 1 yr 11/29/2005 Juan Vasquez, Western Canyon WTP - 3 yrs 11/1/2002 Jason Davidson, RUD - 6 yrs 11/20/2000 Robert Scott, Hydro - 8 yrs 11/20/2000 Robert Scott, Hydro - 8 yrs 11/22/1999 Eric Mendez, Lockhart WWTP - 9 yrs 11/22/1999 Eric Mendez, Lockhart WWTP - 9 yrs 11/24/1997 Angela Baxley, General - 11 yrs 11/24/1997 Jeannine Herrmann, General - 11 yrs 11/6/1995 Thomas McNeal, Luling WTP - 13 yrs 11/14/1983 Jason Lewis, Coleto Recreation - 25 yrs 11/10/1981 Don Koble, Canal RWSS - 27 yrs 11/19/1979 Wilfred Korth, Jr., Coleto Recreation - 29 yrs 11/19/1976 Michael Gerdes, RUD - 32 yrs

THE TRUST

Sisters Place 620-acre Ranch into Easement

wo Kendall County sisters have placed a conservation easement on 620 acres of prime Texas Hill Country property through the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust. The ranch land, located near the Texas Hill Country town of Sisterdale where the Guadalupe River winds its way downstream, rippling over rocks, will be preserved in its natural landscape.

Natives of San Antonio, the two sisters, Peggy J. Dean and Cynthia A. Guyon, who started spending time on the property after their father purchased the ranch in the 1950s, developed a deep love for it. They began looking into options that would allow them to keep their property or to pass it on while ensuring that when they were gone the land would still be managed and protected in accordance with their wishes.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is a 501(c)(3) that promotes and encourages the conservation, stewardship and enjoyment of the land and water resources of the Guadalupe River watershed, while maintaining its unique and irreplaceable natural heritage. Working with the Trust's Executive Director Todd Votteler, along with Janaé Reneaud, conservation specialist for the Trust, and Janet Thome, Trust coordinator, Dean and Guyon

enacted a plan that would preserve the land for future generations and ensure that it will be managed in the manner they intend.

Guyon explained, "We have no children. We needed to stop and look around and do something," adding "I see the natural landscape eroding away no more open land, water disappearing, building big homes, putting out sprinkler systems to water lawns." Ultimately, finding the right way to preserve the land became a priority for the sisters.

Living on the ranch full time for the past 35 years, Dean said, "I didn't want to see a bunch of houses and subdivisions. I wanted a place for the wildlife, and to be able to continue ranching and hunting ... I think my daddy and mother would be very proud." The ranch in Kendall County was named after their sister Linda Dean who was killed in an accident when she was 13 years old. Naming the ranch the "Linda Dean Ranch" was a way Peggy

> and Cynthia could keep their name attached to the ranch as their only brother passed away from polio.

Wildflowers can be seen along the banks of the river, and views of the rugged landscape include fields of oak trees, rocks, and grass land. Dinosaur tracks are visible in a limestone outcrop. All of the scenic landscape will be preserved with the sister's voluntary



Photos by Janet Thome

conservation easement through the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust.

Thome said, "Getting to know these remarkable ladies, and becoming a friend of the family, has been a real honor. This action speaks to how they have thought strategically about how to protect a piece of the environment that is precious to them."

Another key player in assisting the sisters with bringing the easement to fruition was Boerne resident Mike Schulz. Schulz, who is a trustee of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, commented on how the landscape has changed and how nice it is to see people interested in preserving the land for future generations to enjoy.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust works with landowners, primarily within the Guadalupe River Basin, to help them preserve their property and leave a legacy for future generations to enjoy. Conservation easements are used by landowners who want to ensure that future owners continue to respect and conserve the values they have for the land. Conservation easements can also provide tax savings for the landowners who donate them.



Trust Lands Riverfront Easement

ore than 2.5 miles of pristine Guadalupe River frontage will be protected in perpetuity through a conservation easement with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (Trust). The Guadalupe Delta frontage land, located in Calhoun County, originally was purchased in 1983 by Dr. Del Williams.

William's land has been primarily used for ranching, but he actively manages the land for wildlife, by maintaining habitat for the thousands of migrating waterfowl and song birds that visit the property each year. "I preserved the land for my children and grandchildren so they could see it the way it is today and this was the only way to do it," he explained.

"Since the Trust was founded in 2001, it has taken a keen interest in the preservation of the Guadalupe River Delta. The Guadalupe River Delta is one of the few fully intact deltas on the U.S. Gulf Coast. Dr. Williams's action conserving his land is a key element of the Trust's work to date and for our future efforts to work with landowners in the delta. The Trust's staff will be announcing the completion of additional conservation projects below the confluence of the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers in the coming months," said Todd Votteler, executive director. Janaé Reneaud, conservation specialist for the Trust who worked closely with Williams over the last several months to complete the conservation easement, said, "Dr. Williams is a dedicated landowner that cares greatly about the future uses of his land and the impact that use will have on the wildlife and his ranch." Reneaud added, "He has set an important example for other landowners in the area who also wish to conserve the beauty of the Guadalupe River."

For more information about ways to preserve land, call 830-372-5077 or visit www.gbrtrust.org.







Mark Your Calendar

Feb. 25–27, 2009 Texas Water Conservation Association 2009 Annual Convention, http://www.twca.org/meetings/annual/ Sheraton Austin Hotel, Austin, TX

Mar. 15–18, 2009 AWWA 10th Biennial Membrane Technology Conference and Exposition awwamktg@awwa.org Memphis, TN

Mar. 18, 2009 GBRA Board Meeting River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Mar. 22-27, 2009 2009 AWWA Water Utility Management Institute http://www.tawwa.org/AWWAManInstituteBasic.htm Arlington, TX

Apr. 14-17, 2009 Texas Water 2009 by WEAT and TAWWA Moody Gardens, Galveston, TX

Apr. 15, 2009 GBRA Board Meeting River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

www.gbra.org

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