

GBRA River Run

A publication of the GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY Spring/Summer 2011



WATER

Sharing the Resource?

Buda WWTP Gets Award



Safety Award Earned



New Board Directors

From the GM

Drought Amplifies Importance of Resolving the EARIP

Through the creation of Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA) in 1993, the Texas Legislature brought a temporary end to the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) litigation over the aquifer by giving the region a deadline to assure that certain endangered aquatic species would be protected during the most severe droughts, specifically, the 1950s drought of record.

The Edwards Aquifer Act gave the Edwards Aquifer Authority an extraordinary 19-year period in which to implement a plan to protect endangered species as required by the ESA, which could include developing additional non-Edwards Aquifer water supplies, implementing stringent water conservation programs or obtaining approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for a plan to protect the endangered species. In effect, the Act temporarily removed the threat of federal intervention in the management of the aquifer, postponing the water issue as a key obstacle to growth in San Antonio.

For nearly four years, some 80 stakeholders representing interests across the region have been painstakingly assembling a plan that could end more than 50 years of dispute over management of the aquifer—a dispute that began decades before the ESA existed.

The stakeholder process, or Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Plan (EARIP), has made much more progress than most participants ever envisioned. Much of the credit for this progress is due to the EARIP's talented Program Manager, Dr. Robert Gulley.

Today, an exceptional drought coupled with extreme summer heat has thrust the issue of resolving the EARIP to the forefront.

The progress made has been tremendous, and a funding solution has been put on the table and approved by most of the stakeholders. But the EAA still has to approve the plan and raise aquifer management fees to fund it.

The price tag of the plan is high given that it does not provide for alternative supplies of water to the region, but relies instead on a menu of projects and strategies, including almost a 50 percent cut in aquifer pumping during severe droughts. However, the costs of not having an approved plan could be much greater.

In the absence of a stakeholder-generated plan, the USFWS, stakeholders themselves, or external forces could trigger federal enforcement of the ESA with more stringent aquifer pumping limits than those contemplated in the EARIP draft plan.

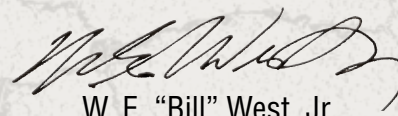
More severe aquifer pumping limits will have a negative impact on the economies of San Antonio and the entire aquifer region, which includes the fast-growing I-35 corridor.

There is little time to develop an alternate regional plan that could be evaluated and approved by the USFWS before the end of 2012.

Flows at Comal Springs in New Braunfels and San Marcos Springs in San Marcos are already at critical levels in this drought, which is growing more severe each day. However, even at reduced amounts these springflows are providing the vast majority of the water in the Guadalupe River and a substantial amount of the freshwater reaching San Antonio Bay.

The momentum for the EARIP to meet the Dec. 31, 2012, deadline must continue, but time is running out—fast.




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

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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Editor
LaMarriol Smith, Manager of Communications and Education

Art Direction and Design
Connie Rothe, Board Relations and Publications Specialist

Editorial
Tammy Beutnagel, Public Communications Assistant
Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, Education Coordinator
Joel Williams
LaMarriol Smith

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Contact GBRA River Run:
Office of Communications and Education
Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
933 E. Court
Seguin, TX 78155
Editor: 830.379.5822
Email: editor@gbra.org

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Back cover photo: by LaMarriol Smith

Buda Wastewater Treatment Plant Claims Plant of the Year from WEAT

The Buda Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), owned by the City of Buda and operated by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), earned the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year Category 1 Award from the Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) this spring.

This year's wastewater treatment plant of the year award was presented in April at the 2011 Texas Water Conference in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Buda facility met all permit requirements of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). "We recognize the high standards of the Buda Plant and they serve as an example to other wastewater treatment plants in the same category," said WEAT Executive Director, Carol Batterton.

Utilizing their technical expertise, a safe working environment, and consistent facilities maintenance, the Buda wastewater operators manage the facility and systematically produce high quality effluent necessary to protect the sensitive waters of the Guadalupe River basin.

"The award from WEAT is confirmation that GBRA staff is not only competent, but highly skilled in their crafts and take great pride in their work," Bill West, GBRA general manager said. "The Buda plant is another in a line of consistently excellent GBRA operations that has been recognized by its peers in the industry," he added.

"The City of Buda is delighted to receive this award. This is another example of achieving the city's goal of providing excellent customer service to the citizens of Buda." Kenneth Williams, Buda city manager said. "We thank GBRA for their important role in making this honor possible."

GBRA Chief Operator, Ed Boettner, supervises all aspects of the Buda Plant, while licensed wastewater operators, Dennis Walker, Allan Smith, and Fred Hernandez operate and maintain the plant and perform process control monitoring. Boettner holds a "B" wastewater license and a class II collections systems license. Walker holds an "A" wastewater license, while Smith holds a "C" wastewater license, and Hernandez holds a "D" wastewater license. These operators also

are responsible for three additional wastewater treatment systems, including the Wimberley Plant, Shadow Creek Collection System and Plant, and the Sunfield Plant.

"Our professional operators at the Buda Wastewater Treatment Plant are just that-professionals," Jim Murphy, GBRA deputy general manager said. "Each one of our operators takes pride in their daily operations, producing a great example of team work that has made the Buda Wastewater Treatment Plant what it is today," he added.

In order for a plant to consistently meet its permit requirements, operators not only have to be technically

competent and work safely, but also have to incorporate facilities maintenance into daily operations. GBRA utilizes an aggressive preventive and predictive maintenance program to ensure the equipment operates at peak performance.

The Buda staff uses a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS), which tracks preventive maintenance activities, generates work orders, and logs scheduled and non-scheduled tasks as they are completed. All major and critical equipment and related components are included in the CMMS.



(L-R) Darel Ball, Fred Hernandez, Dennis Walker, Ed Bottner, Allen Smith, Michael Beggs and Kenneth Williams

Photo by Mike Beggs

General Manager Earns AAWRE's Highest Honor

The American Academy of Water Resources Engineers (AAWRE) recognized GBRA General Manager William E. West, Jr. with an Honorary Diplomate, Water Resources Engineer (Hon.D.WRE) in May in Palm Springs, Calif., at the 7th Annual Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI) World Environmental and Water Resources Congress.

Since the beginning of AAWRE in 2004, more than 600 water resource engineers worldwide have qualified for the Hon.D.WRE program, but West became one of only 20 professionals who have received the Honorary Diplomate status.

According to the AAWRE's mission, the Hon.D.WRE represents strong professional ethics and a commitment to life-long learning and continuing professional development. AAWRE Board Member, Bill Espy, nominated West based on this philosophy. "West's eminence and leadership in the water resources field is exemplified by his appointment by the Office of The Governor of the State of Texas to various commissions and committees dealing with Water Resources development in the State of Texas," said Espy. "Plus, West's contribution to the water resources profession for 35 years has encompassed engineering and management of major water supply projects in Texas."

"My parents were products of the great depression and as such they instilled in me a strong work ethic, insured that I got a good education and taught me that diplomacy was always the best option," said West. "Timely opportunities have allowed me to have a full career of public service," he added.

West graduated from Texas A&M University in 1970 with a B.S. Degree in Agricultural Engineering and began his water resources career at Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), as a system operations manager. He then became a water resources director, and eventually executive director of Natural Resources with LCRA.

In 1994, West was tapped for the position of General Manager at GBRA. In addition to overseeing day-to-day operations, functions and providing leadership and direction, he deals daily with achieving a long-term solution to the Edwards Aquifer conflict, as well as being Top of Form member of the Senate Bill 1 Region L Water Planning Committee. In 2003, West was appointed by Governor Perry to the state's Study Commission on Water for Environmental Flows. He also served as president of the Texas Water Conservation Association (TWCA), and is a member of the TWCA Board. West also served as president of NWRA, and past chairman of the Texas Water Forum.

AAWRE's mission is to improve the practice, elevate the standards, and advance the profession of water resources engineering by certifying engineers with specialized knowledge in water resources, recognizing the ethical practice of water resources engineering at the expert level, encouraging

continued professional development for engineers, and supporting positions on water resources issues important to the public health. The American Academy of Water Resources Engineers was founded by members of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI) and is the first Academy of the Civil Engineering Certification, Inc. (CEC) and ASCE.



Bill West

Photo courtesy Frank Kim

San Antonio Bay Foundation Names Executive Director

Board Also Hires Environmental Director for SABAY



Photo by Connie Rothe

This spring, the Board of Directors of the San Antonio Bay Foundation (SABAY) confirmed the appointment of Tommie Rhoad as the new executive director of the foundation. Concurrently, the directors also approved Stephanie Shelly to take on responsibilities as the foundation's environmental director. The San Antonio Bay Foundation was organized by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority in July 2008 as a vehicle to protect and steward the resources of San Antonio Bay and its associated estuarine system.

Rhoad, who earned her bachelor's degree in geography from the University of Texas at San Antonio,

will be responsible for the operation and management of all aspects of the San Antonio Bay Foundation under the direction of the Board of Directors.

"The San Antonio Bay Foundation will play an important role in building relationships and collaborative partnerships in an effort to educate the public about the needs and challenges associated with the bay area," Rhoad said.

"With Tommie on board, the San Antonio Bay Foundation is ready to move forward on issues that are important to people who live along the bay and the Gulf coast area," SABAY Board Secretary/Treasurer Todd Votteler, Ph.D., said. "She brings a wealth of experience in assessing needs and assisting communities," he added.

Before signing on as executive director for the San Antonio Bay Foundation, Rhoad served as GBRA's economic development manager for seven years. In that capacity, she assisted city, county and local agencies in determining area needs by developing business and tourism assessments, promoting partnerships and building consensus among interested parties. Rhoad was also the driving force behind the creation of the Gorge Preservation Society; an environmental organization dedicated to preserving the 110 million-year-old geological phenomena that was discovered after the flood of 2002 at Canyon Reservoir. This non-profit organization successfully brought together a diverse group of stakeholders and scientists by identifying common goals and interests.

Stephanie Shelly earned her bachelor of science degree in wildlife and fisheries science from Texas A&M and has a strong background in marine biology. In addition to her work with SABAY, she continues to serve as chief operator of GBRA's Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant (PLWTP) where she coordinates daily operations between GBRA and its municipal customers and ensures that the water produced at the PLWTP meets or exceeds the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. "Stephanie will be a great asset to the foundation in project development and implementation," Rhoad said.

Coletto Chief Ranger Earns Outstanding Achievement

The Nature Tourism Branch of the Texas Travel Industry Association selected Wilfred Korth, chief ranger at GBRA's Coletto Creek Park, as the recipient for its 2010 Outstanding Achievement Award in Nature Tourism for the State of Texas.

"Wilfred works very hard in promoting nature tourism at Coletto Creek Park, including the park's participation in the current state-wide Nature Challenge Program, and he deserves the recognition," said Bryan Serold, GBRA's operations manager for the Lower Basin.

The Texas Nature Tourism Council is a council of the Texas Travel Industry Association. Its mission is to promote the value of nature tourism in Texas as a major enhancement of the state's economy and quality of life, to educate its citizens and its visitors about the state's nature tourism resources, and to assist, counsel, and inform businesses, individuals and other entities that provide nature-based tourism services and facilities to the public.



Photo courtesy TTIA Staff

GBRA Launches Redesigned Website

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority unveiled its new and improved website earlier this year. The web address WWW.GBRA.ORG remains the same.

The website, designed by GBRA's Webmaster Leigh Crettenden, contains great features and is loaded with very useful information, including some that is accessible right on the front page. Key monitoring points of river and stream flow data from the Guadalupe River Basin can be found on the right column, along with a 28-day chart of Canyon Reservoir levels. The "conditions" tab can take a user directly to streamflow data, a basin summary, flood information and drought/conservation information.

Take a moment to explore the new design and check out some of the unique features available for users to access.

Listed here are a few suggestions:

Interactive Water Quality Modules:

"septic system training"

<http://www.gbra.org/septic.swf>

"wastewater treatment facility training"

<http://www.gbra.org/wastewater-treatment.swf>

GBRA's Publications and Multimedia:

<http://www.gbra.org/publications/default.aspx>

The Recreation tab can get you to:

"Coletto Creek Park"

<http://www.gbra.org/coletocreekpark/default.aspx>

"Nolte Island"

<http://www.gbra.org/recreation/nolteisland.aspx>

The screenshot displays the GBRA website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'Quick Links', 'Conditions', 'Public Info', 'Water Quality', 'Community', 'Recreation', and 'About Us'. Below this, a secondary bar lists specific links: 'Coletto Creek Park', 'Lake Wood Park', 'Regional Laboratory', 'Current Bids', 'Employment', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Featured Stories:** Includes 'Plum Creek Stewardship is Recognized Model' and 'GBRA Earns Envision Central Texas Community Stewardship Award'.
- Drought Notices:** Lists 'Stage II water restrictions in place for Cordillera Ranch and Comal Trade Subdivisions' and 'GBRA initiates Stage II Drought Measures on Hydroelectric Lakes'.
- Current Conditions:** A table showing flow data for various locations like J-17 Well, Canyon Reservoir, and Guadalupe @ Satter.
- Latest News:** Includes 'GBRA Officials Urge Water Conservation' and 'Lake Dunlap Lowering Schedule Delayed Until Aug. 14'.
- Downloads:** Lists documents such as 'Whooping Crane Litigation Documents' and '2011 Basin Highlights Report'.
- Charts:** A line chart titled 'Charts' showing 'Canyon Reservoir' levels over a 28-day period.

At the bottom, there are three additional sections: 'Preservation Matters' (Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust), 'San Antonio Bay Foundation', and 'Canyon Lake Gorge'.

Watershed Kiosks Make a Big Splash



process, and the operation and maintenance of aerobic and conventional septic systems.

"The kiosks include links to real-time data for the various local watershed, which means that folks will be able to look at the current temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, turbidity, and flow," said Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, GBRA environmental education administrator.

"For historical data, including bacteria, the kiosks also contain links to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Clean Rivers Program, GBRA, the watershed protection plans, and local websites," said Thomas-Jimenez. Visitors may use the kiosks during regular business hours at the respective locations.

The Cypress Creek kiosk shown in the photos was designed by skilled professionals at GBRA, and funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the TCEQ Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Nonpoint Pollution Grant Program.

Want to know more about watersheds, water treatment or water conservation? Then plan to explore GBRA's new watershed and water quality kiosks that are being installed at select locations throughout the Guadalupe River Basin and in other areas of Central Texas. In June, GBRA unveiled a Cypress Creek Watershed kiosk at the Wimberley Community Center.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and the Wimberley Community Center invited the public to view the interactive kiosk, and learn more about the serious subject of water. The kiosk displays educational modules by touch screen, and the user can listen to mini-lessons on a myriad of water subjects, such as watersheds and non-point source pollution, the wastewater treatment



Photo by Cinde Jimenez



Photo by LaMarriol Smith

Water Quality Director Becomes Scholarship Namesake

Texas Water Utilities Association (TWUA) honored GBRA's Director of Water Quality Services by renaming its prestigious scholarship to include her name.

As the outgoing TWUA-Lab Analyst Section chairperson, Debbie Magin has made a positive impact on the organization and its members. So much so was her impact that the board members voted to rename the scholarship it awards as the Debbie McReynolds / Debbie Magin Scholarship. Magin was a charter member of that group when it formed around 1977 and continued to be active with the Lab Analysts Section since.

"Debbie is among the standard bearers in her field, and I am not surprised to see her peers recognize her contributions in this way," said David Welsch, GBRA's executive manager for Business Development and Resource Management.

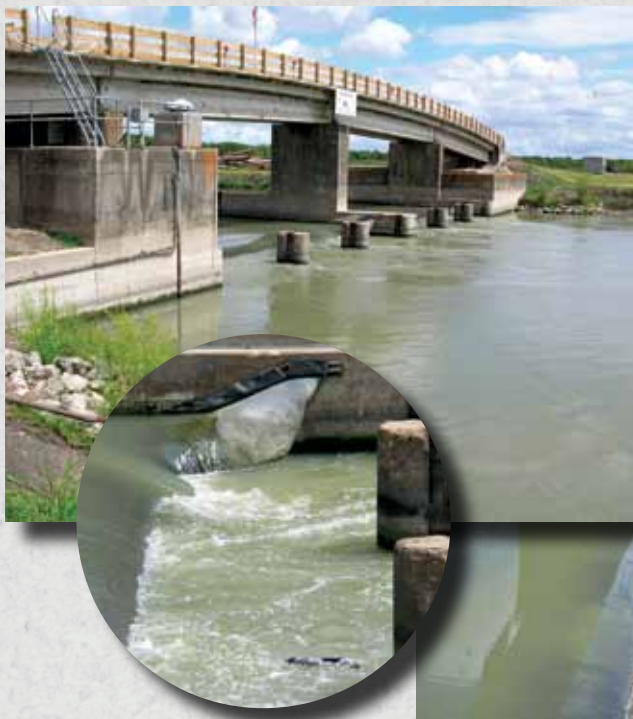
Magin was TWUA president in 1997, president-elect in 1996 and its vice president in 1995. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in biology from Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University).



Debbie Magin (center) poses with TWUA officials

Photo by Josie Longoria

Salt Water Barrier Inflated



Drier weather conditions caused a gradual decline in the Guadalupe River's level as recorded at the GBRA Lower Guadalupe Diversion Dam and Saltwater Barrier, which is located near the community of Tivoli, Texas, prompting GBRA crews to activate the fabridam bags of its Salt Water Barrier earlier this year.

Boaters or recreational users in this area of the river are urged to exercise extreme caution. When the fabridam bags are not in operation, the design of the Barrier allows normal flows of the river to pass through without restriction, because the bags are completely deflated and lie flat on the river bottom. However, when the Barrier is activated by inflating the bags, upstream water will "pool" to the desired operating level of 4.0 feet msl, with most of the water flowing over the bags and downstream to San Antonio Bay. Because a 2 to 4 foot drop in water level is possible from the upstream to the downstream side of the Salt Water Barrier when the bags are inflated, boating caution should be observed for anyone who uses the lower Guadalupe River near Tivoli for water recreation or commercial fishing.

Photos by Bryan Serald



by Joel Williams

Although Texas' population has grown more than 50 percent in two decades—from 17 million in 1991, to 25 million today—the state has not added one new major water reservoir during these two decades of rapid growth and increasing demands on water.

It has been even longer since the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority region added a major new source of water. That was Canyon Lake, for which construction on Canyon Dam began in 1958, and the lake reached its conservation level in the '60s.

Population Growth

Because demands on the region's limited water resources have been increasing every year, the GBRA continues to actively pursue new sources to serve the growing population.

Water resources already are stretched about as far as they can be allocated in a region that contains some of the fastest-growing areas. Here are some examples: Hays County, where San Marcos area is located, saw a population increase of more than 60 percent between 2000 and 2010, according to the Texas State Data Center.

Comal County, which includes New Braunfels and Canyon Lake, grew by 47 percent during that same decade.

The population boom continues today in that stretch along Interstate 35 within the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's statutory district.

And now Texas State Highway 130, meant in part to relieve traffic going through Austin, is already spurring new development, meaning more people, more businesses and more demands on water.

The effects of the current "exceptional" drought are being felt throughout the GBRA region. Aquifer levels keep dropping, spring flows that feed our rivers keep declining and those rivers are slowing down.

The EARIP Continues

Meanwhile, representatives to the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program, continue to negotiate in a region wide effort to address long-term environmental concerns related to the increasing demands on the aquifer from a growing population. When users pump too much water from the aquifer, especially during drought periods, it reduces the flow of the Comal and San Marcos Springs, which provide much of the water for the Guadalupe and San Marcos rivers. And reducing the spring flow could harm endangered species that depend on those springs.

The Texas Legislature in 2007 mandated the EARIP to find a way to balance demands on the aquifer with the long-term needs of ecosystems that rely on it. The goal is to develop solutions that keep the region

in compliance with the federal Endangered Species Act. The diverse group of participants from across the region includes the GBRA.

Some of the EARIP's scenarios for drought periods contain austere cutbacks in water usage – as much as 40 percent—because there simply is no new water available.

Such restrictions on use of Edwards Aquifer water would have the greatest impact on San Antonio, the nation's seventh-largest city, where the San Antonio Water System serving 1.2 million people pumps more Edwards water than any other user.

Finding ways to maintain the flows of the Comal and San Marcos



WATER

y the Resource?

Springs fits directly within the GBRA's mission as protector of the Guadalupe river because those springs are the river's lifeblood.

"What really needs to happen is that alternative water supplies need to be brought into the Edwards region," said GBRA General Manager Bill West. "The State of Texas must find ways to share the water resources of the state—both groundwater and surface water. River authorities, groundwater districts and other entities must work together to develop regional solutions that address the concerns of the whole."

A Proposed Project

A source of water with possibly the greatest potential to serve the booming population along Interstate 35 and State Highway 130 is the Simsboro Aquifer in Bastrop, Lee, Burleson and Milam counties. Part of the vast Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer System, the Simsboro could provide the

GBRA with 30,000 acre feet of water in its first phase and 26,000 acre feet in a second phase.

GBRA has proposed building a pipeline that possibly would move that water to the demand centers.

"Growth along the Interstate Highway 35 corridor in Hays and Comal counties—both within GBRA's statutory district—is exploding. The State Highway 130 project is already beginning to see development spring up along its corridor. GBRA is not in a position to look the other direction and pretend these populations do not exist,"

West said. "Growth tends to occur along transportation arteries, so GBRA is working to find ways to help these areas. Doing nothing means stifling economic development in Texas and that is not good for any of us."

Water that GBRA would acquire from the Simsboro Aquifer would come from entities such as Blue Water Systems and Alcoa already have permits to pump far more water than

GBRA would obtain.

The Texas Water Development Board in December 2010 approved

a \$2.5 million loan from the state Water Infrastructure Fund to the GBRA to finance development costs of the Simsboro Water Supply Project. These initial funds would pay for a study of the proposed Simsboro project.

As part of this feasibility and planning study, the GBRA will evaluate well field locations, available groundwater supplies, construction of major raw water transmission lines, storage facilities, booster pumping stations, possible additional groundwater supplies, and expansions and possible enhancements to treatment facilities in San Marcos.

The proposed Simsboro Water Project is the product of long-range planning by GBRA to meet the region's needs. GBRA announced in 2005 that it was taking a serious look at the Simsboro Aquifer as a means for reducing pressure on the Edwards Aquifer and the nearby Trinity Aquifer.

According to the TWDB, the Simsboro Water Supply Project would directly supplement the water supplies for customers in Hays, Caldwell, Comal, Guadalupe, and Kendall counties and indirectly supplement supplies for all of the GBRA's customers. However, some in the Simsboro Aquifer area have come out against moving that water out of their area.

"The State of Texas must find ways to share the water resources of the state – both groundwater and surface water." — Bill West

WATER, continued

Sharing the Resource?

The Smithville-based Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District, which represents Bastrop and Lee counties, in May hired a law firm and hydrologic firm to make a case against projects such as the GBRA proposal for the Simsboro Aquifer Water Project.

State Rep. Tim Kleinschmidt, R-Lexington, announced last October that he would try to block use of taxpayer money for transfer of water from the Simsboro Aquifer.

Kleinschmidt said various proposals to move water from Bastrop and Lee counties to the west would conflict with water management strategies for Region L, the water region in which GBRA operates. He said that the Region K water planning group's strategies "would utilize the same waters to meet the current needs of Lee and Bastrop counties, as well as those counties' plans for future growth and development."

But Texas Water Development Board member Weir Labatt, a San Antonio resident, said that TWDB approved funding to get the Simsboro Water Project started because part of the TWDB's mandate is to try to take care of the state's water needs. As the population grows, it must deal with environmental concerns and regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency. Labatt noted a pressing need for new water sources along the Interstate 35 corridor area.

"There's a huge need there and I'm supportive of that effort," Labatt said. "I'm very much in sync with bringing water from outside of the area to the Edwards Aquifer area."

Strike a Balance

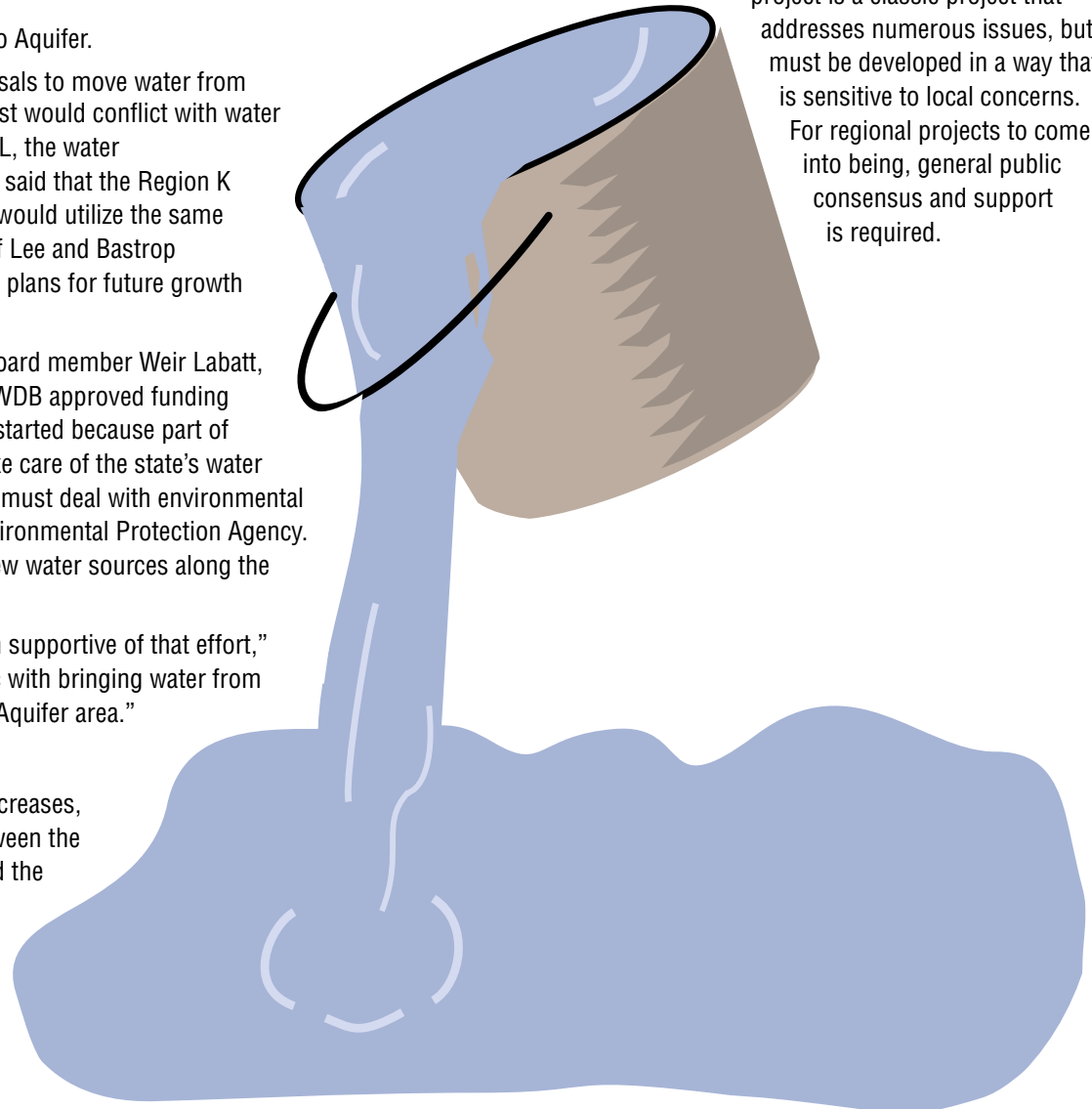
He said that as the population increases, the state must strike a balance between the needs of the population centers and the needs of local areas to have water for their present and future use.

"If we're not going to allow people to transfer water around

the state of Texas to take care of the population centers, we're going to run out of water in some places," Labatt said. "There just can't be an anti-export policy all the time."

"There just can't be an anti-export policy all the time." — Weir Labatt

Also noting the increasing population in certain parts of Central Texas, the GBRA's West said, "The Simsboro project is a classic project that addresses numerous issues, but must be developed in a way that is sensitive to local concerns. For regional projects to come into being, general public consensus and support is required."



GBRA Officials Push Water Conservation

This summer, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) officials urged citizens in its 10-county statutory district, which includes Caldwell, Calhoun, Comal, DeWitt, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Hays, Kendal, Refugio and Victoria counties, to conserve water and comply with drought management measures implemented by local municipalities.

The water conservation plea came amidst the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recent declaration of 213 of Texas' 254 counties as a



Photos by Janet Thome

natural disaster area as a result of the extreme drought conditions the state has faced since at least January.

Also contributing to the request for conservation were low flows throughout the basin. On July 10, 2011, United States Geological Survey (USGS) gauges read 1.4 cubic feet per second (cfs) for the inflow at Spring Branch into Canyon Reservoir. The median inflow at Spring Branch is 161 cfs. Flows at San Marcos Springs were down to 107 cfs (median flow is 164 cfs) and Comal Springs flows were down to 175 cfs (median flow is 308 cfs).

Canyon Reservoir represented good news with an elevation in early July at 903.95 mean sea level (msl), which was 90 percent full. The reservoir, operated by GBRA for water supply and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for

flood protection, provides firm yield to water supply system customers. The reservoir is refilled with flood flows and does not provide a constant elevation.

GBRA officials imposed Stage II restrictions on June 8 for residents who live along its Hydroelectric Lakes. The critical period applied to any diverter of water other than contracted stored water that diverts and uses water from any of the GBRA Hydroelectric Lakes—Lake Dunlap (Comal and Guadalupe counties), Lake McQueeney (Guadalupe County), Lake Placid (Guadalupe County), Lake Nolte (Guadalupe County), H4 or Lake Gonzales and H5 or Lake Wood (both in Gonzales County). Stage III restrictions would be imposed if the average 24-hour spring flow rate at Comal Springs flows at or below 150 cfs.



On the lower end of the basin, the drought similarly affected river flow. The gauge at Victoria read 260 cfs (median flow is 1010 cfs), triggering Stage 2 restrictions for the City of Victoria. Stage 2 enacted mandatory water restrictions on Victoria residents and limited landscape irrigation and other water uses. The flow into the San Antonio Bay and estuary was 400 cfs.

Other areas within GBRA's statutory district, such as Boerne and Fair Oaks Ranch in Kendall County, also implemented and enforced water restrictions. Several of the monitoring wells in the Trinity Aquifer were at historical low levels.

When flows drop below 150 cfs at Comal and 100 cfs at San Marcos, endangered species, including the Fountain Darter and the San

Marcos Gambusia, technically are in "jeopardy." In addition to protecting endangered species, spring flows are important to water rights and even water supply in the Guadalupe and San Marcos rivers – a supply that is used by cities, industries and agricultural producers.

Prolonged high temperatures, at least 18 days of 100-plus degree temperatures recorded in some Central Texas locations during the month of June, and lack of rainfall were contributing to the declining water levels throughout the Guadalupe River Basin and the Edwards Aquifer.

The level of the Edwards Aquifer J-17 well was 644.4 on July 4. The Edwards Aquifer Authority triggers Stage 2 Critical Period at 650 msl, which demands 30 percent restrictions for aquifer users in Bexar, Medina and parts of Atascosa, Comal, Guadalupe, Hays and Caldwell counties. Stage 3 Critical Period is triggered when J-17 reaches 640.

GBRA officials urged all individuals to conserve water throughout the summer months and suggested the following conservation and fire awareness tips:

- Monitor local papers, radio or TV stations for drought restrictions.
- If vehicles must be washed, do so in grassy areas instead of a driveway.
- Report individuals or businesses suspected of water misuse to local utility officials.
- Install low-flow shower heads and sink aerators. These items can be purchased inexpensively at local hardware stores.
- Use dye tablets or food coloring to check for leaks in toilet bowls/tanks.
- Make sure sprinkler heads face lawn and garden areas and have not shifted toward sidewalks and driveways.
- Turn off water faucets while brushing teeth or shaving.
- Beware of enhanced fire hazards
- Smokers should not toss cigarette or cigar butts out of vehicle windows when driving.
- Avoid outdoor grilling or barbecuing and the use of tiki torches, candles, fire pits, propane/gas burning lamps or burning citronella oils outdoors during droughts conditions.

Stage II Drought

Implemented on Hydro Lakes

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) officials in June announced Stage II restrictions for its Hydroelectric Lakes to go into effect. Restrictions affected lawn watering, outdoor fountain use, vehicle washing and other areas.

According to the river authority's Drought Contingency Plan, Stage II applies on any day following a day when the average 24-hour spring flow rate from the Comal Springs, when measured at the Comal River, is at or below 200 cubic feet per second (cfs), but greater than 150 cfs. As of June 8, 2011, Comal Springs flow rate was 184 cfs, thus triggering Stage II restrictions.

Critical period stages apply to any diverter of water other than contracted stored water that diverts and uses water from any of the GBRA Hydroelectric Lakes — Lake Dunlap (Comal and Guadalupe counties, Lake McQueeney (Guadalupe County), Lake Placid (Guadalupe County), Lake Nolte (Guadalupe County), H4 or Lake Gonzales and H5 or Lake Wood (both in Gonzales County).

With Stage II in effect, the following restrictions on the Hydro Lakes apply:

- ✱ All of the prohibitions applicable in Stage I apply in Stage II, except to the extent replaced by more restrictive conditions imposed by this stage.
- ✱ Landscape watering is prohibited between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., and is further restricted such that properties with an odd-numbered address may landscape water only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and properties with an even-numbered address may landscape water only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. However, landscape watering by means of a bucket or hand-held or soaker hose, or a properly installed drip irrigation system is permitted at any time. This subsection does not apply to reclaimed, recycled or reuse water.

✱ No person may use water for an ornamental outdoor fountain or similar feature, unless the water is recycled and the only additional water used is to compensate for evaporative losses.

✱ No person may wash a vehicle at other than a commercial vehicle wash facility except over a pervious surface area, during the above designated watering days and times with a hand-hose with automatic shut-off nozzle or using a bucket.

The penalty for wasting water or any violation of Stage II restrictions as determined by the GBRA general manager, or his designee, is \$100 per day per violation.

Restrictions from Stage I already prohibited wasting water from irrigation or vehicle washing, and required the use of covers for swimming pools to prevent evaporation when not in use.

"During these times of drought, it is prudent for all of us to try to be good stewards and conserve our water resources," Bill West, GBRA general manager said.

Restrictions of a drought contingency Stage may be terminated when the condition listed as the triggering event for such Stage has ceased to exist for a period of 30 consecutive days. Upon termination of the restrictions of the applicable Stage, the restrictions of the prior Stage become operative.

GBRA's Drought Contingency Plan is available to read online at the following link: <http://www.gbra.org/documents/conservation/GBRADroughtContingencyPlan.pdf>

GBRA-Operated Plant in Buda Gets Expansion



Photo by LaMarriol Smith

The City of Buda is expanding the Buda Wastewater Treatment Plant from .95 million-gallons-per-day (mgd) to 1.5 mgd. The plant is operated by GBRA.

The general contractor for the \$3.75 million expansion project is Bryan Construction, according to Darel Ball, GBRA division manager.

Ball said some of the improvements that will be accomplished with this expansion include a new operations building, a second automated fine screen, a grit removal system, a third aeration basin, a third chlorine contact basin, a third filter, two additional sludge digestion basins (for total of four basins upon completion), an additional blower (total of four blowers to provide aeration to the aeration basins), an additional return activated sludge pump, two waste activated sludge pumps, an additional raw sewage pump, and an emergency generator.

Former Pets Land Role of Classroom Wonders

By Karen Zamora

(Reprinted with permission of University Star <Texas State University Newspaper>)

Students not knowing what to do with aquarium fish and plants have the opportunity to enrich elementary students' education while protecting the river.

The Adopt-a-Fish program is intended to prevent area residents from dumping aquarium pets into the river system. The program allows people to give pets to the aquatic biology department or San Marcos National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center. The fish are then given to elementary schools for classroom use.

Wanda Kollauss, Seguin Independent School District K-5 Science specialist, collaborated with the aquatic biology department and the fish hatchery to develop the program.

"We'll take the animals and then we'll call Wanda (Kollauss) and she'll set up an elementary school that's willing to except them as a donation," said Catherine Phillips, fish biologist at the San Marcos National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center. "They can use them for educational purposes in the classrooms."

Kollauss received a \$550 grant from the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority to help purchase the aquariums, fish food and chlorine remover that were distributed between seven elementary schools.

"In our schools we are always looking to put fish in the aquarium and we don't have lots of money to do that," Kollauss said. "I came

up with this idea — if we would adopt them, then we would teach our students not to put them in the water."

Students and community members disturb the river by dumping aquarium fish. The fish and the aquatic plants students purchase are invasive species, meaning they are not native to San Marcos.

"If people are dumping their aquariums into the river water, then the plants, the snails and the fish start taking over where the native animals and plants have been and we lose the things that are endangered, or they become endangered," Kollauss said.

The biggest obstacle has been getting the word out to students, Kollauss said. There have not been enough students donating to the program or bringing in fish in the past two years, said Tim Bonner, associate professor of biology.

"Most students at Texas State don't know about it and it's because we haven't had enough publicity yet," Phillips said. "It gives a second life to peoples' pets. It's a good home and you don't feel like you have to kill them or put them in the river and damage the habitat."



Juan Vasquez (right)

Photo by Mike Urrutia

TWUA Recognizes Western Canyon WTP Manager

The Texas Water Utilities Association (TWUA) recognized Juan Vasquez, manager of GBRA Western Canyon Water Treatment Plant (WCWTP), with its Operator of the Year Award for WTPs in populations of 10,000 to 30,000. Vasquez picked up the honor at the Opening Session of the TWUA Annual School in Corpus Christi this spring.

After beginning his career with GBRA as an operator, Vasquez was promoted to plant manager. He has been working for the WCWTP, which is a 16 million-gallons-per-day membrane filtration plant that treats surface water from Canyon Reservoir, since it was first constructed. In bringing the WCWTP online in 2006, he assisted with the testing and implementation of the membrane filters and formulation of the

standard operating procedures for the plant, as well as hiring and training operating staff. Vasquez holds a Texas Commission for Environmental Quality grade "A" water license and grade "A" wastewater license.

In addition to overcoming multiple operational challenges in 2010, Vasquez was able to implement process control changes that resulted in cost savings to the division.

"GBRA is very fortunate to have Juan Vasquez as an employee at the water utilities profession is very lucky to have him as a leader and mentor to other utility professionals," said GBRA Upper Basin Operations Manager John Smith.



Where *are they now?*

Jim Smith

by Kellen Schuerg



Photo by Kellen Schuerg

Born in Paradise, Texas in 1931, Jim Smith had a rather intriguing neighbor growing up. The infamous prohibition-era mobster, “Machine Gun Kelly” did his last bit of criminal activity here, when he held oil tycoon Charles Urshel captive on the farm next to the Smith’s. Living far outside of town, it was the perfect place for anyone that wanted to escape city life... and the police. This was only the beginning of an action-filled life led by Smith.

With the start of World War II, the Smith family moved to Dumas, Texas, where he graduated from high school in 1948. After graduating, Smith spent four years in the U.S. Air Force, took advantage of the G.I. Bill and went to college at North Texas State Teacher’s College, where he also met his wife, Alice. After earning his degree, he returned to the Air Force as a missile maintenance technician, working on both ICBM and C130 planes, before retiring in 1973.

In 1975, Smith began a new career at the Seguin Water Treatment Plant. While attending water licensing meetings, he became friends with a GBRA employee by the name of Nelson Erxleben. Their conversations and friendship grew, and eventually it led to a job for Smith at GBRA. Hired by Arthur Bading, Smith worked in the maintenance department for the Lake Placid (TP-4) hydroelectric plant. In the event of a flood, Smith recalls the advice he was given by Bading, “get your thermos and lunchbox packed, because we are going to work!”

One memory Smith said he would never forget, took place one evening while on duty at TP-4. A legend was being told amongst the control room operators about a spirit woman who haunted the area. At TP-4, usually only one operator worked the night shift. On this particular night, Smith would be on duty. As he walked across the foot bridge that led from the dirt road, across the river, and to the control room, the bridge made an eerie, squeaky noise. Just then, a moonlit figure with hair blowing in every direction appeared. At this point, Smith said he was sure it was the spirit woman coming to get him. “My heart must have skipped about

two beats right then,” said Smith, “but moments later I realized it was just a long-haired hippie.”

Surviving his near ghostly encounter, Smith was promoted to work at the GBRA main office control room, where he trained to operate a SCADA system using computers and radio waves. “This was the beginning of the technology age that allowed GBRA to reach the level it is at today,” says Smith.

After retiring from GBRA in 1996, Smith says he “doesn’t do anything and doesn’t start that until after dinner!” But in reality, he and Alice have enjoyed traveling, including cruises and their best vacation memory to Germany.

The Smiths have three daughters, four grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren and will celebrate 55 years of marriage on August 25, 2011.

Reflecting on their relationship with the river authority, the Smiths agree that GBRA is a great place to work because of the family atmosphere, and retired employees are considered valuable assets.

Started at GBRA: 1975

Retired at GBRA: 1996

Jim Smith can be contacted at:

2742 W. Kingsbury St., Seguin, TX 78155
(830) 372-5969 or cell at (830) 305-5181.

New Board Members and Officers Take the Reins at GBRA

Appointees of Governor Rick Perry took the oath of office Wednesday, April 20, 2011 during the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Board of Directors meeting. District Judge Gary Steel swore in three new board members, Rusty Brockman, Thomas Mathews II, and Dennis L. Patillo, and three reappointed members, Myrna Patterson McLeroy, Oscar H. Fogle, and Arlene N. Marshall. And earlier this year, newly elected officers took on their respective roles, including Grace Kunde of Guadalupe County as chair, Oscar Fogle of Caldwell County as vice-chair, and Arlene Marshall of Calhoun County as secretary/treasurer.

Joining the GBRA Board for the first time, included Brockman of New Braunfels who will represent Comal County. Brockman is director of economic development for the Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce Inc. He is vice-chair of the Texas Economic Development Council, economic development committee chair of the Austin/San Antonio IH-35 Corridor Council, a life member of the Texas Parent/Teacher Association, and a member of the International Economic Development Council. Brockman is also director and past president of the New Braunfels Breakfast Lions. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston, a teaching certification from the University of Houston at Clear Lake, and a master's degree in education and a professional administrator certification from Stephen F. Austin State University. Brockman is appointed for a term to expire Feb. 1, 2017.

Mathews of Boerne will represent Kendall County. Mathews is president of Westward Environmental, Inc. He is a member of the National Registry of Environmental Professionals, Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists, Associated General Contractors of Texas, and Texas Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement Association, and president of the Cow Creek Groundwater Conservation District. Mathews is past board chair of the Allied Division of the

Texas Aggregate and Concrete Association, and a past board member and past secretary of the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association. He is also past president of the Hill Country Alliance of Groundwater Conservation Districts, past citizen representative of the Lower Guadalupe River Water Supply Project Advisory Forum, and past board secretary of the Winston School San Antonio Board. Mathews received a bachelor's degree from Trinity University. Mathews is appointed for a term to expire Feb. 1, 2015.

Patillo of Victoria will represent Victoria County. Patillo is president of Stewart Title of the Coastal Bend, Inc. He is vice-chair of the Victoria Economic Development Council, infrastructure chair of Crossroads Commission on Education, and a board member of DeTar Healthcare System. Patillo is past board chair of the Texas and Houston associations of Realtors, a former board member of the National Association of Realtors and Victoria Country Club, and a past member of the Texas Tax Reform Commission and University of Houston Commission on Downward Expansion. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston. Patillo is appointed for a term to expire Feb. 1, 2015.

Kunde, the new board chairman, earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas Lutheran University and her law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law. 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, and the Guadalupe County Bar Association. Kunde volunteers her time to church, civic, and political activities. She is a member of Redeemer United Church of Christ, the Seguin Rotary Club, a member and former president of the Guadalupe County Republican Women, a former Guadalupe County Republican Party precinct chair and serves on the Board of Trustees for the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust.

Fogle, the new vice chairman, and his wife Susie own and operate Oak Hill Ranch, where they have a commercial cattle business and employ several wildlife management practices. He is a veteran of the United States Air Force and retired from a career with Exxon Corporation. As a member of Exxon's International Oil Spill Response Team, Fogle was a deputy taskforce commander during the Exxon Valdez oil spill clean-up operations. *(continued on page 16)*



Photo by Connie Rothe

(L - R) District Judge Gary Steel, Oscar H. Fogle, Thomas Mathews II, Myrna P. McLeroy, Arlene N. Marshall, Dennis L. Patillo and Rusty Brockman

New Board Members, continued

Fogle attended Texas A&I University, formerly Texas A&M-Kingsville. He is a past president of the Texas A&I Alumni Association, and is serving his fifteenth year on the Board of Trustees for the Texas A&M-Kingsville Foundation. Fogle serves as chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee for the Caldwell County Appraisal District, serves on the Board of Trustees for the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, is an active member of the Caldwell County Republican Party, and a life member of the National Rifle Association and Texas State Rifle Association. Fogle is a member of the First United Methodist Church in Lockhart, where he is a certified lay speaker and serves as the vice-chair of the Board of Trustees. His reappointment to GBRA goes through a term to expire Feb. 1, 2017.

Marshall, the new secretary/treasurer, is a former County Judge for Calhoun County, currently serves as president of the Calhoun County Economic Development Corporation, and owned and operated Newman International, Inc. in Houston buying and exporting oil and gas field equipment. Marshall earned her bachelor's degree at the University of Houston, and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the University of Houston-Victoria Regional Advisory Board, the Victoria College Foundation, and serves as Chair of the Victoria College Calhoun County

Campus Advisory Board. Marshall's reappointment to GBRA goes through a term to expire Feb. 1, 2017.

Marshall also serves as director for the Workforce Solutions of Golden Crescent, is Past President of the Port Lavaca Rotary Club, Vice President of the Matagorda Island Foundation, and has been appointed a member of the Governor's EMS & Trauma Advisory Council. She is a member of Six Mile Assembly of God Church where she is a lay teacher/speaker.

Kunde and Fogle are serving their second terms with the GBRA board of directors. Marshall began board service in 2008. All are appointees of Governor Rick Perry.

McLeroy of Gonzales, is owner of McLeroy Land Group. She is a member of the American and San Antonio Associations of Professional Landmen, and a board member of the Grace Christian Academy School, Gonzales Cannon Newspaper and Voyager Oil and Gas, Inc. McLeroy attended Southern Methodist University and the University of Houston. She is appointed for a term to expire Feb. 1, 2013.

The appointments were confirmed in April 13, 2011, by the Texas Senate.



Photo by Holly Mode

GBRA Staff Forms Kayak Team

GBRA's official kayak team, "The Guad Squad," participated in "Ruby's First Annual Great Guadalupe River Race" during Turkeyfest in Cuero. The race was seven miles long, and took about 2 1/2 hours.

The participants from *(left to right in the photo)* are Liz Sedlacek, Susan Cochran, Chris Harder, Daphne Harder, Sandra Terry, Colton Williams, Paulette Cowey, Teresa VanBooven, Tommie Rhoad, Cricket Dietert, Stephen Cowey, David VanBooven, Collin Cowey and Greg Terry

employee anniversaries

GBRA recognizes the following employees for the dedication of service. (These employees started with GBRA between the months of October and April.)

October

10/12/2010 Gregory Holt, Hydro – 1 yr
 10/25/2010 Annlee Draskowski, General – 3 yrs
 10/20/2010 Jose Leal, Lockhart WTP – 7 yrs
 10/15/2010 Marella Dalme, General – 9 yrs
 10/1/2010 Barbara Gunn, General – 9 yrs
 10/10/2010 Dennis Walker, Buda WWTP – 12 yrs
 10/11/2010 Elizabeth Sedlacek, Water Resources – 20 yrs
 10/22/2010 Herbert Wittliff, Calhoun Canal – 31 yrs
10/6/2010 Ronald Gosnell, Canal RWSS - 37 yrs

November

11/21/2010 Fred Hernandez, Shadow Creek – 1 yr
 11/5/2010 John Moryl, Canyon Hydro – 2 yrs
 11/1/2010 Gynna Hernandez, General – 3 yrs
 11/29/2010 Juan Vasquez, Western Canyon WTP – 5yrs
 11/1/2010 Jason Davidson, RUD – 8 yrs
 11/20/2010 Robert Scott, Hydro – 10 yrs
 11/8/2010 James Asbury, General – 11 yrs
 11/22/2010 Eric Mendez, Lockhart WWTP – 11 yrs
 11/19/2010 Angela Baxley, General – 13 yrs
 11/24/2010 Jeannine Herrmann, General – 13 yrs
 11/6/2010 Thomas McNeal, RUD – 15 yrs
 11/14/2010 Jason Lewis, Coletto Recreation – 27 yrs
 11/10/2010 Don Koble, Canal RWSS – 29 yrs
 11/19/2010 Wilfred Korth, Coletto Recreation – 31 yrs
 11/1/2010 Michael Gerdes, RUD – 34 yrs

December

12/20/2010 Wallis Gudgell, Hydro – 10 yrs
 12/29/2010 James Medrano, Hydro – 10 yrs
 12/10/2010 Jerry Sharp, San Marcos WTP – 11 yrs
 12/28/2010 Dianne Fly, Coletto Reservoir – 18 yrs
 12/6/2010 Constance Rothe, General – 27 yrs
 12/25/2010 Roy Odom, Hydro – 29 yrs

January

1/4/2011 Steven Maricle, Hydro – 1 yr
 1/2/2011 Edwin Boettner, Shadow Creek – 3 yrs
 1/21/2011 James Murphy, Water Resources – 3 yrs
 1/2/2011 Sheryl Kisiah, Canal RWSS – 4 yrs
 1/24/2011 Susan Hubbert, General – 6 yrs
 1/27/2011 Steve Wallendorf, San Marcos WTP – 7 yrs
 1/6/2011 Sandra Terry, General – 16 yrs
 1/27/2011 Sara Vazquez, Coletto Recreation – 23 yrs
 1/5/2011 Samuel Widmer, Coletto Recreation – 24 yrs

1/4/2011 Alan Schneider, Coletto Reservoir – 28 yrs
 1/31/2011 David Lundin, Port Lavaca WTP – 30 yrs
 1/16/2011 Curtis Seiler, Coletto Recreation – 30 yrs
 1/14/2011 Darel Ball, Water Resources – 31 yrs
 1/14/2011 Mark Henneke, Water Resources – 31 yrs
 1/11/2011 Rodney Voss, Hydro – 34 yrs
 1/28/2011 Bryan Serold, Water Resources – 35 yrs

February

2/5/2011 Trey Sibert, San Marcos WTP – 2 yrs
 2/1/2011 Lamarriol Smith, General – 4 yrs
 2/18/2011 Richard Gonzales, Lockhart WTP – 8 yrs
 2/4/2011 Cheryl Gorden, General – 12 yrs
 2/1/2011 William West, General – 17 yrs
 2/1/2011 Richard Gaona, Calhoun Canal – 20 yrs
 2/27/2011 Linda McPherson, Port Lavaca WTP – 27 yrs
 2/18/2011 Charles Fennell, Hydro – 31 yrs

March

3/14/2011 Stephen Jester, Water Resources – New Hire
 3/7/2011 Lowell White, Western Canyon WTP – New Hire
 3/21/2011 Leigh Crettenden, General – 5 yrs
 3/29/2011 Christopher Lewis, General – 6 yrs
 3/15/2011 Michael Helmke, Hydro – 7 yrs
 3/10/2011 Guadalupe Aguillon, Calhoun Canal – 16 yrs
 3/21/2011 Richard Matheaus, RUD – 23 yrs
 3/31/2011 Marlon McAdams, Coletto Reservoir – 25 yrs
 3/26/2011 Michael Tompkins, Calhoun Canal – 27 yrs
 3/23/2011 John Smith, Water Resources – 30 yrs
 3/1/2011 Jimmy Wyatt, Hydro – 31 yrs
 3/4/2011 Michael Schultze, Hydro – 35 yrs

April

4/18/2011 Billy Penney, Calhoun Canal – New Hire
 4/13/2011 Jason Penshorn, Coletto Recreation – New Hire
 4/17/2011 Brent Howard, Port Lavaca WTP – 1 yr
 4/13/2011 Paulette Cowey, General – 5 yrs
 4/5/2011 David Garcia, Port Lavaca WTP – 5 yrs
 4/22/2011 Curtis Gosnell, Calhoun Canal – 9 yrs
 4/11/2011 David Maltory, Hydro – 16 yrs
 4/17/2011 John Manchack, Hydro – 16 yrs
 4/8/2011 Robert Delgado, Lockhart WTP – 20 yrs
 4/24/2011 Roland Henry, Hydro – 24 yrs
 4/7/2011 Reagan Ploetz, Hydro – 24 yrs
 4/16/2011 Darryl Jandt, Hydro – 29 yrs
 4/26/2011 Jim Lumley, Calhoun Canal – 29 yrs

The information for the employee anniversary list was compiled by Daphne Harder, Human Resources Department of the Office of Finance and Administration.



Ronald Gosnell



Photos from GBRA Archives

GBRA *Training & Licenses*

Allan Smith of Buda WWTP attended the United Rentals Confined Space Entry Training.

Dennis Walker of Buda WWTP attended the United Rentals Confined Space Entry Training.

Guadalupe Aguillon of Calhoun Canal attended TWUA Day School.

Guadalupe Aguillon of Calhoun Canal attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

Richard Gaona of Calhoun Canal attended TWUA Day School.

Michael Tompkins of Calhoun Canal attended TWUA Day School.

Herbert Wittliff of Calhoun Canal attended Pipeline Awareness Training, TWUA Day School, RMP/Chlorine Safety training, Scada and Facility Security Training and Table-Top Hurricane Drill Training.

Ryan Boedeker of Canal RWSS attended TRWA Technology Based Training: Water Utility Safety Training and TWUA Day School.

Richard Gaona of Canal RWSS attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

Curtis Gosnell of Canal RWSS attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

Ronald Gosnell of Canal RWSS attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training and TWUA Day School.

Sheryll Kisiah of Canal RWSS attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

Don Koble of Canal RWSS attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training and TWUA Day School.

Michael Tompkins of Canal RWSS attended Technical Skills Development Training.

Scott Kolbe of Canyon Hydro attended United Rentals Confined Space Entry Training.

John Moryl of Canyon Hydro attended Bucket and Digger Truck Operations Training.

Wilfred Korth, Jr. of Coleta Recreation attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E Training and Aquatic Plant Management Society Training.

Jason Lewis of Coleta Recreation attended TRWA - Technology Based Training: Chlorinator Systems and Chemical Handling.

Clint Retzlloff of Coleta Recreation attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E Training.

Curtis Seiler of Coleta Recreation attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E Training.

Sara Vazquez of Coleta Recreation attended Wastewater Treatment Training.

Sara Vazquez of Coleta Recreation attended Basic Wastewater Training and Wastewater Collection Training.

Marlon McAdams of Coleta Reservoir attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E Training.

Alan Schneider of Coleta Reservoir attended Texas Aquatic Plant Management - General, Drift Control Training, General, IPM Training and IPM, Rules and Regs Training.

John Urban of Coleta Reservoir attended Texas Aquatic Plant Management - General, Drift Control Training, General, IPM Training and IPM, Rules and Regs Training.

James Asbury of General attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Susan Hubbert of General attended Ethical Business Decisions by Texas CPAs.

Chris Lewis of General attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training, TRWA - Technology Based Training: Water Utility Safety and TCEQ - "C" Water Distribution Operator Training.

Janet Thome of General attended ArcGIS Desktop I: Getting Started with GIS, ArcGIS Desktop II: Tools and Functionality, and ArcGIS Desktop III: GIS Workflows and Analysis.

Wallis Gudgeall of Hydro attended TRWA - Technology Based Training: Pump and Motor Maintenance and TCEQ - Customer Service Inspector Training.

Roland Henry, Jr. of Hydro attended United Rentals Confined Space Entry Training.

Darryl Jandt of Hydro attended United Rentals Confined Space Entry Training.

David Maltony of Hydro attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

John Manchack, Jr. of Hydro attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Allen Ognoskie of Hydro attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Reagan Ploetz of Hydro attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Michael Schultze of Hydro attended Feral Hog Workshop.

Rodney Voss of Hydro attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Jimmy Wyatt of Hydro attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Mellinda Craig of the Lab attended New TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standards.

Stacy Frentzen of the Lab attended the New TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standards.

Clarissa Frnka of the Lab attended the New TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standards.

Josephine Longoria of the Lab attended LAS Special Topics.

Brian Lyssy of the Lab attended the New TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standards Training.

Kylie McNabb of the Lab attended the New TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standards Training.

Emmylou Roberts of the Lab attended the New TNI Laboratory Accreditation Standards Training.

Robert Delgado of Lockhart WTP attended the United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Jose Leal, Jr. of Lockhart WTP attended the United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Eric Mendez of Lockhart WWTP attended the United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Joseph Downey of Luling WTP attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

Samuel Salas of Luling WTP attended United Rentals - Confined Space Entry Training.

David Garcia of Port Lavaca WTP attended Texas Electrician CE Course.

David Garcia of Port Lavaca WTP attended Technical Skills Development Training.

Brent Howard of Port Lavaca WTP attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

Joey Kisiah of Port Lavaca WTP attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training and TWUA Day School.

David Lundin of Port Lavaca WTP attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

David Lundin of Port Lavaca WTP attended TWUA - Surface Water Production #1 Training.

David Lundin of Port Lavaca WTP attended TWUA - Day School.

Linda McPherson of Port Lavaca WTP attended RMP/Chlorine Safety Training.

Ronnie Parenica of Port Lavaca WTP attended Technology Based Training: Water Utility Safety.

Ronnie Parenica of Port Lavaca WTP attended TRWA - On-line Safety Training.



GBRA Family Mourns Stayton W. Finch

GBRA retiree Stayton W. Finch died May 4, 2011, at the age of 81. Finch proudly served in the United States Navy during the Korean Conflict, and in 1957 joined GBRA as a member of the hydroelectric crew, where he worked for 38 years.

After Finch retired from GBRA in 1995, he became a master craftsman, designing wood, acrylic and mirror art. Finch proudly donated two intricate 16" x 20" wood carvings of the Lord's Prayer to two area churches, and enjoyed making pieces for friends and family. He also sold some of his carvings at various art shows.

Finch is survived by his wife, Ella Mae; daughters, Debbie Lewis and Robin Finch; son-in-law, John Finch; grandson, Brandon Finch and wife, Samantha.



Texas State Bestows Distinguished Alumna Award to Employee

The Scholarships and Awards Committee of Texas State University (formerly Southwest Texas State University) voted Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, GBRA's environmental education administrator, to receive one of its 2011 Distinguished Alumni Awards this spring. The awards ceremony occurred April 30, 2011, in the Alkek Teaching Theater at Texas State University-San Marcos.

"Cinde is certainly worthy of such recognition. She's made an impact on the environmental education field throughout the state," said LaMarriol Smith, manager of Communications and Education for GBRA.

Thomas-Jimenez is one of very few members of Texas State University's Department of Geography alumni to earn the distinction. She earned her bachelor of science degree in education and master's degree in applied geography at TSU. She spent 10 years in the classroom before making a transition to environmental education.

Among Thomas-Jimenez's other accolades, she was recognized with the 2009 Outstanding Support for Geographic Education Award by the National Conference on Geographic Education.



Photo by LaMarriol Smith

Cinde Thomas-Jimenez discusses water conservation with students who visited the Red Barn in Seguin.

GBRA Volunteers Renovate Gonzales Food Pantry

On March 26 and April 2, 2011, the GBRA Volunteers chose the Gonzales Christian Assistance Ministries (GCAM) in Gonzales, Texas for their annual "Our Day to Shine" volunteer project.

Work consisted of turning a storage building into a usable shopping space for GCAM's retail thrift store as well as renovating and organizing the food storage areas.

About 50 GBRA employees and family members worked as volunteers on the project.



THE TRUST

Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust *Hires New Executive Director*



Steve Jester

Photo by Connie Rothe

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBR Trust) Board of Trustees hired Steve Jester, a 20-year veteran in the fields of wildlife and land conservation, as the new executive director for the organization.

Jester, who earned his bachelor of science degree in agriculture at Texas State University and master of science degree in wildlife and fisheries sciences at Texas A&M University, became responsible for the operation and management of the GBR Trust under the direction of the Board of Trustees.

"It's great to be back in Texas, but more importantly, I am back here in a position where I will have an impact in land conservation and preserving areas that will protect habitats for wildlife for years to come," said Jester, who recently completed a four-year stint in Wyoming as the Southwest Wyoming Program Director for Nature

Conservancy after five years with the same organization in Texas and seven with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

"Steve brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in wildlife and land management, as well as a fresh perspective to the Trust, and we are looking forward to his contributions," said Todd Votteler, Ph.D., executive director emeritus of the GBR Trust.

"We feel very fortunate to have been able to recruit Steve back to Texas," said Roger Welder, president of the Board of Trustees for the GBR Trust, adding, "All of the trustees are looking forward to working with him and getting him involved in protecting these sensitive, precious areas that we value so much within the Guadalupe River Basin."

The Trust is a charitable, non-profit 501(c)3 organization that was developed to conserve the land and water of the Guadalupe River watershed for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic and productive value. The mission of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is to promote and encourage the conservation, stewardship and enjoyment of the land and water resources of the Guadalupe River watershed, while maintaining its unique and irreplaceable natural heritage.

Additional information about the GBR Trust can be found at <http://www.gbrtrust.org>.

GBR Trust Sponsors Forum

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is helping to sponsor the 2011 Farm and Range Forum to be held in Uvalde, TX, Oct. 14-15. This year's theme is "Conserving our Rural Heritage" and topics will include land fragmentation, nature tourism, maximizing conservation values of rural lands and estate planning among others. For registration information, see this link:

<http://www.greensatx.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/NEW-longflyer.pdf>



SAFETY & WELLNESS

Safety and Health Committee Observes 20 Years

Created in 1991 to ensure safety and health were high priorities for GBRA employees, the GBRA's Employee Safety and Health Committee is observing its 20th anniversary this year.

"We've had a commitment to workplace safety for a long time and the Employee Safety and Health Committee was one representation of it," said Bill West, general manager. "But this past year we strengthened that commitment by appointing a staff person to specifically deal with those responsibilities."

Bryan Serold, GBRA's operations manager for Lower Basin, has undertaken Safety Officer duties for GBRA and provides leadership for the Employee Safety and Health Committee.

"The Committee plays an integral role in GBRA's overall safety and health program, which is designed to protect all employees from accidents, injuries and illnesses both on and off the job," Serold explained.

Committee members share and promote a commitment to safety, exchange information and expertise on health and safety issues related to GBRA operations, identify ways to make the workplace safer, communicate employee safety concerns, and develop and communicate GBRA safety policies.

Even though GBRA has operated a successful health and safety program, challenges remain. "GBRA's operations differ from such operations like manufacturing where employees might work on an assembly line performing repetitive job task day in and day out," Serold explained, adding, "The diversity of GBRA's water resource operations, such as water and wastewater treatment facilities, hydroelectric power production, water quality, reservoir and flood control functions, raw and treated water delivery systems, park

operations, log jam removal operations, and even administrative duties, all present

safety-and health-related issues and concerns that are inherent with each operation."

The Employee Safety and Health Committee's efforts are continual and its members constantly strive to find ways to improve GBRA's work environment. "An example of those continuous efforts," Serold said, "is the recent GBRA Safety and Health Assessment Survey completed by all employees to obtain feedback on current safety and health programs and to identify areas where improvements can be made in GBRA programs."

GBRA's Safety Mission Statement: "No job is so important, no service so urgent, that we cannot perform our work safely."

TWCA Recognizes GBRA Safety Program

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of GBRA's Safety and Health Committee became even more special after the Texas Water Conservation Association's (TWCA) Risk Management Fund (RMF) recently presented its "Best Safety Record" Award to GBRA.

The TWCA RMF provides workers compensation insurance coverage for GBRA and other fund participants. Annual workers compensation insurance premiums paid by each member of the RMF are based on the company's workers compensation claims history. The RMF calculates what is referred to as a "workers compensation experience modifier" for each fund participant based on their claims history. The lower the experience modifier, the lower insurance premiums are.

GBRA had the lowest experience modifier of all fund participants over the last four years, which helps explain why the organization received the award, Serold said.

The conscientious employees lead to safe work environments and healthier individuals. Bryan Serold and all the members of the Employee Safety and Health Committee extend their "thanks" to all GBRA employees for making GBRA a safe place to work.

Serold concluded, "This award is a reflection of GBRA's ongoing commitment to safety. Our ability to maintain and even reduce our workers compensation insurance costs is also a direct benefit to the customers we serve. Keep up the good work!"



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Aug. 26, 2011

Hydraulic Fracturing Conference (CLE credits)
<http://cle.com/upcoming/PDFs/COLWAT11.pdf>
Grand Hyatt, Denver, CO

Sept. 21, 2011

GBRA Board Meeting
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Oct. 8, 2011

GBRA's PecanFest
Nolte Island, Seguin, TX

Oct. 12-14, 2011

Texas Water Conservation Association Fall Meeting
Crowne Plaza Riverwalk, San Antonio, TX

Oct. 19, 2011

GBRA Board Meeting
Calhoun County, Port Lavaca, TX

Nov. 16, 2011

GBRA Board Meeting
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Nov. 16-18, 2011

National Water Resources Association Annual Conference
Ventana Canyon Resort, Tucson, AZ

Nov. 24-25, 2011

Thanksgiving Holidays
United States

Guadalupe River at New Braunfels Photo by LaMarion Smith

