

GBRA RIVER RUN

A publication of the GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY Summer 2012

Seawater Desal: A Water Solution for Texas

Publication Awards



Water Safari Photos



Corge 10th Anniversary

From the GM

Balance Needed in Water Flow Protections

The environmental flows (or “e-flows”) process set up as part of Senate Bill 3 to determine instream flows and flows to Texas’ bays and estuaries has a set of stakeholders for each regional planning area. The planning group in which the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) falls is comprised of 25 stakeholders. These stakeholders, with the exception of GBRA, the City of Victoria and the City of New Braunfels, submitted e-flow recommendations to the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that failed to meet the SB-3 requirement of balance “in conjunction with other factors, including the present and future needs for water for other uses related to water supply planning.”

Nevertheless, TCEQ published proposed revisions to the 30 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 298, Environmental Flow Standards for Surface Water that more closely meet the balanced approach required by SB-3.

Since then, those stakeholders launched a media/editorial campaign aimed at getting TCEQ to change its draft rules to favor their e-flow recommendations, even though the legislation clearly indicates the TCEQ “shall consider” the stakeholder recommendations and other factors — not that those recommendations take precedent over TCEQ.

The stakeholders who want less water for the growing population of humans in the Guadalupe River Basin have expressed satisfaction that “protections for the San Antonio River and Mission River basins remain” but lament that “few protections for the Guadalupe River were incorporated into the rules.” Yet, it is GBRA that has statutory jurisdiction over the Guadalupe River and is responsible for either providing or developing surface water supplies to meet the growing water needs within the Guadalupe River Basin.

It is tempting, on this issue, to cast one side as pro-environment and the other as pro-development. But it is not that simple.

GBRA’s stewardship of the Guadalupe River encompasses 10 counties, stretching from the Hill Country to the Gulf Coast. U.S. Census Bureau data indicated a 35 percent increase in the Guadalupe River Basin population from 2000 to 2010. The people of these 10 counties depend on the Guadalupe River, in all or part, for water — water for homes, businesses, agriculture, municipal and recreational uses. The other stakeholders have no accountability for providing water to the residents and businesses of the Guadalupe River Basin and are not as sensitive to the needs of this growing area.

But do not think that GBRA is not sensitive to the health of the state’s coastal bays and estuaries, as well as the run of the river itself. It is GBRA that since 2001 has worked to enhance habitat for the endangered whooping crane with its partner the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust. It is GBRA that in 2002 initiated and provided significant funding for a \$2 million study by Texas A&M on the needs and feeding habits of the whooping crane, and it was GBRA that joined the Sierra Club in 1990 in a suit to halt over-pumping of the Edwards Aquifer to protect the endangered species that call the Comal and San Marcos springs home.

All the stakeholders saw the same scientific data. That data clearly shows that the Guadalupe River Basin is healthy, even in spite of the drought. Further, there is no question that a simplified environmental flow regime, as prescribed in TCEQ’s proposed rules, would both promote a sound ecology and be consistent with the urgent need to provide for the development of additional water supplies in the Guadalupe River Basin.

New water projects frequently take a decade or more to put in place. Restricting existing surface water permits is not the way to get a project done. The rules proposed by TCEQ, which also understands the need for balance and if sensibly refined, would allow the development of badly needed new water supplies without penalizing a growing population.

The e-flow recommendations by the other 22 stakeholders — who have no accountability to the residents of the Guadalupe River Basin — will put the economic future of this region in jeopardy. It is time for a common-sense approach to managing water.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. E. West, Jr.', written in a cursive style.

W. E. “Bill” West, Jr.
General Manager

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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GBRA River Run

Summer 2012

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Back cover photo: by Connie Rothe

Weir Gate Overhauled at Canyon Dam



Photo by Mike Schultze

For the first time since the Canyon Lake Hydro Plant began operation in January of 1989, GBRA crews recently dewatered the aeration weir to replace the weir gates.

“Replacement of the weir gates was necessary so that water flow traveling from Canyon Reservoir would contain increased amounts of dissolved oxygen, necessary downstream of the plant,” said Allen Ognoskie, GBRA’s division manager for Guadalupe/Gonzales counties.

At the start of the project in April, hydro crews wedged in place and sand bagged plywood covers outside gate openings and the weir area was then dewatered. All existing hinge systems and remaining pieces of metal gates inside of the weir area were removed.

Crews then used a template to install a new hinge system. New gates and latches also were installed and a crane service was used to place the gates into position.

Upon completion, crews installed a total of 12 new galvanized weir gates with stainless steel hinge pins and new latches.



Photo by Mike Schultze



Photo by Tammy Beutnagel

Five Students Earn GBRA Scholarships

by Tammy Beutnagel

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority officials awarded five deserving students within GBRA's statutory district \$2,000 academic scholarships to attend the colleges of their choice.

Scholarships are presented annually as part of GBRA's Employee Volunteer Program, which was founded in December of 2000 and is led by a committee with a chairperson responsible for the overall program. The purpose of the Volunteer Program is to improve the quality of life in area communities through the commitment of GBRA employees and the use of their time, energy, talents and skills.

Listed by location, meet the 2012 GBRA scholarship recipients:

SEGUIN



Ana Laura Gonzales

Ana Laura Gonzales graduated from Seguin High School in Guadalupe County and plans to attend Abilene Christian University at Abilene. Her major is undecided. While in high school, Gonzales was a member of varsity volleyball, varsity soccer, varsity band, National Honor Society, Interact, Student Leadership Initiative, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Students Taking a New Stand and Seguin Area Youth

Leadership Academy. Her community service consisted of car washes, fundraisers, Vacation Bible School, Harvest Fest, Seguin Outdoor Learning Center cleanup, Seguin Streets Revitalization, Annual Rotary Shrimp Fry, AJB Teacher Help Day and Blue Santa. Samuel Ramos, Co-Founder of Seguin Leadership Initiative and Latinoversity, said the best definition for Gonzales is "infectious leader." Her willingness to assist others and give for the betterment of the greater good of community is what lifts Ana Laura above other outstanding students.

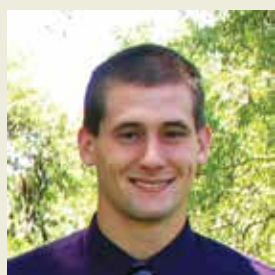
Haley Imhoff graduated from Seguin High School and plans to attend Baylor University at Waco, majoring in nutrition. In high school, Imhoff participated in band, Interact Club, National Honor Society, Business Professionals of America, Seguin Area Youth Leadership Academy, Rotary Youth Leadership Assembly and basketball. She also taught Vacation Bible School. Imhoff says of herself, "I have grown not only



Haley Imhoff

as a leader, but as an individual. I have become confident in my decisions and I have learned many skills that I am able to use throughout every day in class and interacting with my peers."

Christopher Sestak graduated from Navarro High School in Guadalupe County and plans to attend Texas A&M University at College Station, majoring in aerospace and petroleum engineering. In high school, he was a member of



Christopher Sestak

National Honor Society, Class of 2012 Vice-President, varsity football, varsity basketball, varsity baseball, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Drug Awareness Council. Sestak's community service includes Texas Ramp Project, Mission Arlington trips, Vacation Bible School, work as a recreation leader, Shattered Dreams and NHS Christmas and Easter parties for elementary students, Christian mentoring and tutoring, and Relay for Life. Sestak explained, "Throughout high school, I continually go back to what my parents have taught me preparing for life. Working hard, maintaining discipline, being kind, loyal, honest, and willing to take chances are just a few of the characteristics I try to employ every day. Although it is not always easy, I have always tried my best with the understanding they have always been right, and I am thankful for those lessons."

CANYON LAKE



Matthew Clark

Matthew Clark graduated from Canyon Lake High School in Comal County and plans to attend Texas A&M University at College Station, majoring in electrical engineering. While in high school, he was a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, Interact Club, Junior Statesmen of America, PTSA, Soccer, PALS and band. Clark's community service consisted of coaching a youth soccer team for two

years, helping with Vacation Bible School, planting trees and assisting with the Christmas Village at the Community Resource and Recreation Center. Michael Collyer, Senior Army Instructor, said, "Clark is great at defusing situations and has all the best employee traits. He is punctual, reliable, trustworthy, and dedicated. Clark is always working hard to improve himself, and can communicate with all age levels effectively. He is the type of young adult who will do the right things even when no one is watching."

SAN MARCOS

Marshal Hanzel graduated from San Marcos High School in Hays County and plans to attend Texas A&M University at College Station, majoring in business and finance. While in high school, Hanzel was a member of the National Honor Society, varsity baseball team, Baseball Leadership Council, a math tutor, an assistant to history and math department instructors and assistant to the AVID program advisor. His community service consisted of tutoring other students, canned food drives, book drives, Angel Tree Program, blanket drive and Christmas decor for the elderly. His teacher, Carolyn Coburn, said she has seen Hanzel find comfort in standing up for others when most would not. He also leads others in activities in the classroom and urges them to step up and be active in community service through NHS.



Marshal Hanzel

50th Anniversary

World's Toughest Canoe Race

Texas



Photo by Teresa VanBooven



Photo by Teresa VanBooven



Photo by Tommy Hill



50th Texas Water Safari

Photo by Teresa VanBooven



Photo by Tommy Hill



Photo by Tommy Hill



Photo by Teresa VanBooven

On Saturday, June 9, about 135 paddlers and kayakers hopped in the waters of the San Marcos River near the former Aquarena Springs Center for the start of the 50th Texas Water Safari — the world's toughest canoe race.

When all was said and done, after more than 99 hours of paddling, 94 of the original 135 entrants finished the race.

The first boat arrived at the finish line in Seadrift, Texas, in 38 hours and 30 minutes. The first place team was comprised of William Russell, Andrew Stephens, Sam Ritchie, Andrew Soles, Daniel Cruz and Amado Cruz, with John Russell serving as team captain.

For complete race results, please visit the Texas Water Safari website at this link: <http://www.texaswatersafari.org/history/2012-tws/>

GBRA has been a proud sponsor of the Texas Water Safari for many years.

GBRA Publications

Get Design Honors

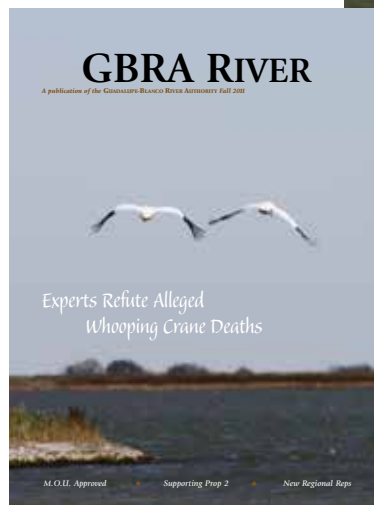
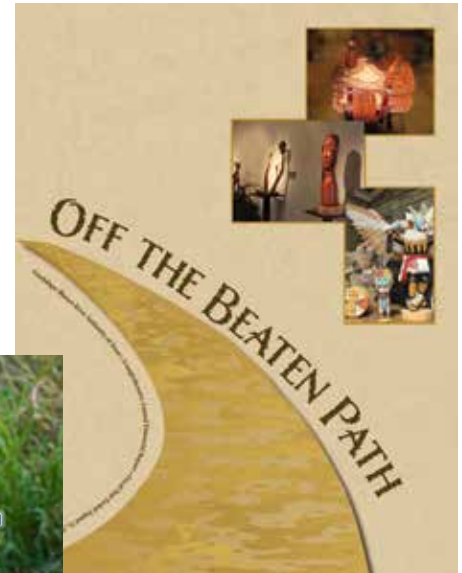
The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority designers claimed a banner year in recognition for their work on GBRA publications. The design staff of Connie Rothe, board relations and publications specialist, and Janet Thome, projects and publications specialist, picked up 15 honors from five different professional organizations.

"Every year, GBRA publications get better and better. And the effort that our staff puts into our printed materials is being noticed, not just by other designers, but by our peers in the water industry and other areas," GBRA General Manager Bill West said.

The publication *Ten Years of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust* earned a coveted Platinum Award from Hermes Creative Awards. Hermes is an international competition for creative professionals and received about 4,700 entries for the 2012 competition. Hermes also bestowed its Gold Award on the *GBRA River Run* and on the *Basin Highlights Report* publication. GBRA's annual report, *Off the Beaten Path*, received Hermes' Honorable Mention.

The International Academy of Visual Arts and the Communicator Awards issued five Awards of Distinction (Silver Awards) for *Off the Beaten Path*, *GBRA River Run*, *Ten Years of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust*, the *Basin Highlights Report* publication, and the *Aqua Phil's Conservation Basin* brochure. The 2012 Communicator Awards featured a pool of more than 6,000 entries.

Because the Summit International Awards consider a two-year window of publications, GBRA was able to get a Bronze Award for the previous year's annual report, *Flowing Through Congregations*.



Off the Beaten Path, *GBRA River Run*, and *Ten Years of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust* also picked up 2012 American Inhouse Design Awards, and the Water Environment Association of Texas recognized

GBRA with "honorable mentions" for the *Basin Highlights Report* and the *GBRA River Run*.

"Even though we have a small shop compared to some of our peers, we try to maintain high standards to put forth the best presentation possible for our publications," LaMarriol Smith, GBRA's chief strategic communications and public affairs officer, said.

10 Year Anniversary of the Gorge Recognized



Photos by LaMarriol Smith



When waters from Canyon Reservoir came crashing over the spillway at more than 67,000 cubic feet per second on July 4, 2002, no one would have imagined the geological wonder it would leave behind.

At the time, area residents were more consumed with trying to salvage their property and lives after the devastating flood that caused nearly \$90 million in damages in Comal County alone.

However, after the floodwaters settled and officials could survey the surroundings of Canyon Reservoir, they would behold a gorge carved just beyond the spillway into the earth more than 70 feet deep and over a mile long. The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) entered into a lease agreement on that property with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Shortly thereafter, a group of volunteers supported by GBRA formed the Gorge Preservation Society (GPS) to help manage and preserve it.

Drawing curious observers from all over the country, this unique natural feature has become known as the Canyon Lake Gorge — where researchers from oil companies, institutes, colleges and universities; naturalists; secondary school educators; tourists

and hikers all come to see dinosaur footprints, fossils and fault formations.

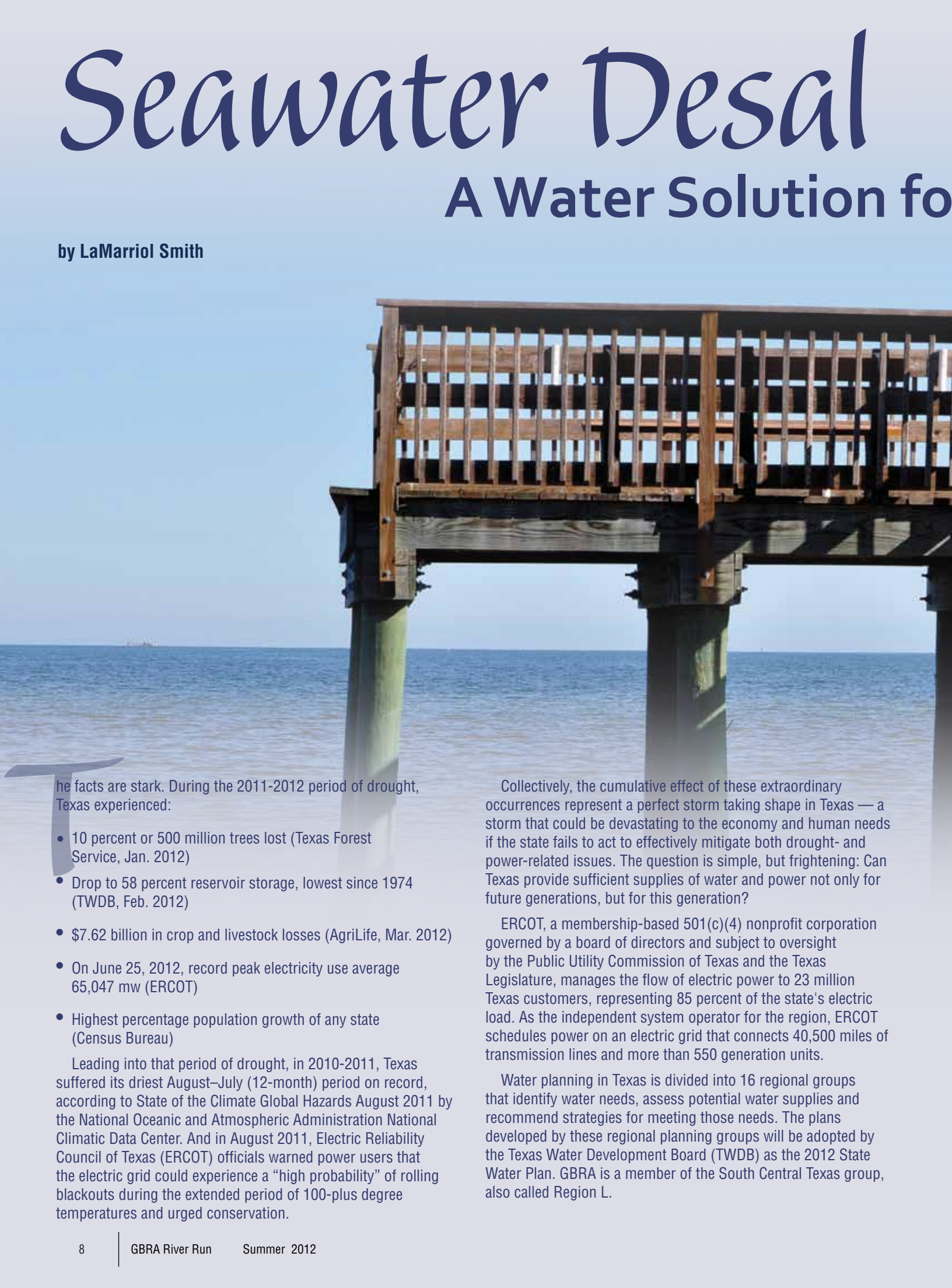
To commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the flood event and the creation of the Canyon Lake Gorge, the GPS, GBRA and USACE, hosted a "media day" and "VIP celebration." Media day was held Wednesday, June 27 and provided local media an opportunity to tour, photograph and videotape the gorge first hand. On Friday, June 29, more than 60 local officials and gorge enthusiasts met on the Canyon Lake Spillway and at Tye Preston Memorial Library to reminisce about their memories of the flood experience, hear a proclamation from Comal County Judge Sherman Krause, and enjoy refreshments.

The GPS also seeks new members, volunteers and docents. A new docent training class is scheduled during the month of August. For more information about docent training or to arrange a tour of the Canyon Lake Gorge, visit the website at <http://www.canyonlakegorge.org> or contact Jaynellen Ladd at (830) 964-5424.

Seawater Desal

A Water Solution fo

by LaMarriol Smith



The facts are stark. During the 2011-2012 period of drought, Texas experienced:

- 10 percent or 500 million trees lost (Texas Forest Service, Jan. 2012)
- Drop to 58 percent reservoir storage, lowest since 1974 (TWDB, Feb. 2012)
- \$7.62 billion in crop and livestock losses (AgriLife, Mar. 2012)
- On June 25, 2012, record peak electricity use average 65,047 mw (ERCOT)
- Highest percentage population growth of any state (Census Bureau)

Leading into that period of drought, in 2010-2011, Texas suffered its driest August–July (12-month) period on record, according to State of the Climate Global Hazards August 2011 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Climatic Data Center. And in August 2011, Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) officials warned power users that the electric grid could experience a “high probability” of rolling blackouts during the extended period of 100-plus degree temperatures and urged conservation.

Collectively, the cumulative effect of these extraordinary occurrences represent a perfect storm taking shape in Texas — a storm that could be devastating to the economy and human needs if the state fails to act to effectively mitigate both drought- and power-related issues. The question is simple, but frightening: Can Texas provide sufficient supplies of water and power not only for future generations, but for this generation?

ERCOT, a membership-based 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation governed by a board of directors and subject to oversight by the Public Utility Commission of Texas and the Texas Legislature, manages the flow of electric power to 23 million Texas customers, representing 85 percent of the state's electric load. As the independent system operator for the region, ERCOT schedules power on an electric grid that connects 40,500 miles of transmission lines and more than 550 generation units.

Water planning in Texas is divided into 16 regional groups that identify water needs, assess potential water supplies and recommend strategies for meeting those needs. The plans developed by these regional planning groups will be adopted by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) as the 2012 State Water Plan. GBRA is a member of the South Central Texas group, also called Region L.

r Texas

In the 2011 State Water Plan, conservation is a “recommended” water management strategy, along with a variety of projects proposed by the regional groups that would utilize existing surface water supplies, groundwater, aquifer storage and recovery (ASR), brackish groundwater and/or any combination of those sources. Most of these projects are proposed to commence between now and the next 30 to 40 years. They range in size, with some potentially yielding supplies of up to 50,000 acre-feet of water.

Projects that produce higher yields of water, such as seawater desalination (or “desal”), are not included among recommended strategies in the State Water Plan, but are listed in the category of “requiring further study and funding,” with actual development as far off as 2060. Data from the TWDB indicate about 44 desalination plants have been built for public water supplies in Texas, but none using seawater.

“If the droughts of recent years have taught us anything, they should have taught us that shelving seawater desalination in the state water plan for the next 50 years is absolute folly,” W.E. “Bill” West, Jr., GBRA general manager, said.

“In the Guadalupe watershed, we have one of the highest growth areas in the state — the I-35 and Texas 130 corridors in Comal, Hays, Caldwell and Guadalupe counties,” West said, adding, “I really don’t see how this area of the state is going to manage

without a substantial source of new water in the next 10 to 20 years. It is not enough to simply acknowledge there is a water crisis; we must do something about it, and soon.”

Desalination refers to processes that remove some amount of salt and other minerals from saline water in order to produce fresh water that is suitable for human consumption or irrigation.

Brine results from the desalination process and is a mixture of water saturated with or containing large amounts of a salt. Disposal of seawater brine certainly will present challenges.

But, desalinated seawater from the Gulf of Mexico represents an untapped, unlimited resource for the state of Texas. While the practice is fairly new to the U.S., many countries around the world have amassed an extensive track record for its cost-effective implementation.

At least one entity in the state, Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB), has been taking serious steps toward pursuing a seawater desalination plant.

And, while the Brownsville project can have a significant local impact, the larger opportunity is to find a way to develop an integrated power-water project that not only provides huge amounts of water, but also adds to the Texas power grid. Power is the key to a large desal plant — power to remove the salt and

Seawater Desal, continued

minerals from the water and more power to pump the water where it is needed.

A series of new gas-fired power plants could be hooked to a desal water-processing facility, using one power plant for the desal operation and the others to generate new capacity for the grid. Certainly, such a flagship facility — if it makes operational, economic and environmental sense — could make a big dent in the dual power-water problem.

In order to flesh out the concept, GBRA is leading the effort to commission a feasibility study, led by Les Shephard, Ph.D., director of the Sustainable Energy Research Institute at the University of Texas at San Antonio. “We have to answer all the key questions about such a project,” West said. “First, can it be done? Second, how much will it cost? Third, where should it be located? Fourth, what are the possible environmental impacts and how can they be dealt with?”

On April 13, 2012, GBRA released a “request for qualifications (RFQ),” inviting engineering firms to submit qualifications for preparing a feasibility study for the new regional water supply and power generation project. According to the RFQ, the Texas Sustainable Energy Research Institute and the Center for Water Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio will serve as the Project Manager for this project. The deadline for firms to submit qualifications is 2 p.m. Sept. 12, 2012.

Given the scope of such a study, it will not be inexpensive, West said. “Eventually, we are going to need additional funding. Feasibility is just the first part of the puzzle.”

Since 2002, the TWDB has been required to submit a Biennial Report on Seawater Desalination as part of a seawater desalination initiative begun in April 2002. In the most recent report, submitted to the Governor’s Office in December 2010, the TWDB indicated it had awarded about \$3.3 million to fund eight studies directly related to advancing seawater desalination in Texas.

Two feasibility and pilot plant studies conducted by the Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB) in 2004 and 2008 provided sufficient data to prepare a preliminary design for a 25million-gallon-per-day plant to be installed at the Brownsville ship channel. The estimated cost for that project was \$182.4 million. A more recent proposal from BPUB is to implement a 2.5-million-gallon-per-day production plant at the Brownsville ship channel without provisions for future expansion. The estimated cost for this plant is \$22.5 million. In its role as an electric power utility, the BPUB is considering a \$6 million investment in renewable energy to be developed in conjunction with the seawater desalination project, according to the Biennial Report.

In an article in the April 5, 2012, Houston Chronicle, State Rep. Bill Callegari (R-Katy) wrote, “More than 6,000 desalination

plants worldwide transform seawater into a potable resource. Some countries, such as Israel, Australia and India, have aggressively pursued desalination as a water supply strategy. Texas, with its extensive Gulf coastline, has not.”

Callegari also noted, “Although desalination promises a reliable new water supply, it’s not predicted to become a major part of our water

portfolio. According to the state water plan, by year 2060 only 3.4 percent of our water will come from desalinated sources. Of that amount, 1.4 percent will be desalinated seawater and the other 2 percent treated brackish groundwater.”

He said that the linchpin to making desalination work involves developing and using newer, innovative technologies that reduce energy consumption and help dispose of saline brine.

Water and power conversations are continuing and building momentum around the state, as the continuing drought and its accompanying hot weather have highlighted both energy and water shortfalls. As for a big integrated power-water desalination project for Texas, only a thorough, extensive study can answer the big questions.



(May 2009) A desalination plant in the Lanzarote, a Spanish island in the Atlantic Ocean near the coast of Africa.

GBRA Negotiating with Walton International

Goal of Bringing More Water to the I-35/TX-130 Corridors

Officials with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and Walton International (Walton) signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to negotiate toward a plan to bring new water to the fast-developing region of Hays, Caldwell, Comal, Guadalupe and Gonzales counties and, together with other stakeholders, positioning it for responsible and sustainable growth. The LOI will expire in September

“With this LOI, we have made substantial progress in making GBRA’s Mid-Basin Water Supply Project viable,” Bill West, GBRA general manager said. “If negotiations prove successful, Walton will become an anchor partner, taking a substantial amount of the 25,000 acre-feet of water delivered by the project,” he added.

The action brings GBRA’s Mid-Basin Project, which is a recommended strategy in the 2011 South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group’s projects in the State Water Plan, closer to fruition. While there is much work to do over the next several months, Walton and GBRA hope to work together on necessary governmental, environmental and regulatory permits, on construction, and on funding the project through available public and private financing options. In December, the Texas Water Development Board awarded GBRA a \$4.4 million loan from its Water Infrastructure Fund to finance development costs of GBRA’s Mid-Basin Project, which comprises the use of both surface and groundwater.

“The letter of intent we’ve signed with GBRA is the first step in a process we hope will bring a new, reliable supply of water to this growing region. Walton works with every community where

it does business to advance economic development, intended to benefit everyone – the community, its residents, its businesses, and Walton as a stakeholder” said Alexa Knight, of Walton. “Once signed, the LOI initiates a 90-day process of negotiation with the GBRA. We look forward to working with all stakeholders in the I-35 and Texas 130 corridors to ensure this course of action delivers a public-private partnership that leads to the development of vibrant communities where people can live, work and play.”

U.S. Census Bureau data indicated a 61 percent increase in the Hays County population from 2000 to 2010 and nearly a 40 percent change in Comal County, West explained, noting, “There is no reason to believe that trend will reverse anytime soon. A critical need has developed within our statutory district and we are working diligently to help address it.”

Walton also participates in the Greater San Marcos Partnership, which is working to bring new economic development and jobs to these key corridors in Central Texas. They have been in business for more than 30 years,

The Walton Group currently manages approximately \$3.1 billion USD of pre-development and development real estate assets, including nearly 65,000 acres of land in Alberta, Ontario, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, Virginia, Maryland, and North and South Carolina on behalf of investors around the world, including primarily North America, Europe and Asia, and for the Walton Group. Headquartered in Calgary, the Walton Group also has offices in Toronto, Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Scottsdale (Arizona, USA) and Hamburg (Germany).

New Basin Highlights Report Released

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority has released the Clean Rivers Program (CRP) 2012 *Basin Highlights Report*.

Basin Highlights Reports are the result of a state-wide program funded by fees assessed to water rights and wastewater discharge permit holders. These fees are divided among the CRP partners for the administration of each river basin’s program. The GBRA and Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) carry out the water quality management efforts in the Guadalupe River Basin under contract with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

This report is designed to give readers an overview of activities occurring in the Guadalupe River Basin and the Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal Basin under the CRP in 2011. Among the activities summarized are the return of drought conditions, the ongoing lawsuit involving endangered whooping cranes, the status of the Geronimo Creek Watershed Protection Plan, the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program, hydraulic fracturing activities, and many other relevant topics.

To access a .pdf copy of this publication online, please visit this link:
<http://www.gbra.org/documents/publications/basinhighlights/2012.pdf>





Support Rolls in for the GBR Trust

The Burdine Johnson Foundation, Union Pacific Foundation and the Dixon Water Foundation each recently awarded grants totaling nearly \$30,000 to the Guadalupe Blanco River Trust—support the organization will use for various programs in its geographic service area.

The Buda, Texas-based Burdine Johnson Foundation provided a grant in the amount of \$10,000 that will support outreach, education and conservation programs. The Burdine Johnson Foundation has been a supporter of local conservation, education and historic preservation projects in Hays County and the surrounding area.

Another grant of \$7,000 provided by the Union Pacific Foundation will help support conservation outreach and education efforts. Union Pacific Foundation officials presented the grant funds to the GBR Trust during a reception in San Antonio as part of Union Pacific's 150th Anniversary celebration. Union Pacific Foundation supports nonprofit organizations in communities where the company operates. Union Pacific's service area generally includes south central Texas and the Guadalupe River Basin, where there are a number of operations.

The GBR Trust also will benefit from a \$10,000 grant from the Dixon Water Foundation. The grant will support the GBR Trust's

riparian outreach program. The Dixon Water Foundation promotes healthy watersheds through sustainable land management to ensure that people have the water resources needed for now and generations to come. In addition to supporting organizations with similar goals, the Dixon Water Foundation also operates ranch demonstration sites in north and west Texas.

"We are so fortunate to have organizations that understand our mission and have made a commitment to support our programs through these grants," Steve Jester, GBR Trust executive director, said, adding, "I want to offer a public 'thank you' to these foundations for their support in helping us achieve our goals."

The GBR Trust's programs are made possible through the efforts of dedicated volunteers and short- and long-term funding from charitable individuals and organizations.

Donations may be made to the GBR Trust online through its website at <http://www.gbrtrust.org/> or contact Jester at sjester@gbrtrust.org or (830) 660-3486. The GBR Trust operates throughout the Guadalupe River Basin primarily in Kerr, Kendall, Blanco, Hays, Comal, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Goliad, Refugio and Calhoun counties.

Success Brings Plans for More Trust-Supported Workshops

Following a successful riparian zone workshop earlier this year, officials with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBR Trust), resource management specialists with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service are planning a series of workshops to be offered beginning in September.

The free workshop, held in March in Victoria, delivered information on functional riparian, or streamside, areas and the services they provide to both people and wildlife. Interest in riparian area function and management has been growing steadily in Texas over the last 10 years.

Locations for the next series of workshops have not been determined, but when details are finalized, information will be disseminated through advertising and posted on the GBR Trust website at <http://www.gbrtrust.org>.

Workshop topics included an introduction to riparian areas, riparian vegetation and hydrology along with information on riparian practices and programs, and information on the Trust and landowner management associations. Following the classroom session in the morning, attendees participated in a field trip to a riparian area to observe and discuss some of the riparian principles and concepts presented. Participants also received a riparian publication developed by the Nueces River Authority for the riparian outreach network.

"Healthy riparian areas are key to the GBR Trust's conservation mission in the Guadalupe River Basin," Steve Jester, GBR Trust executive director, said. "Our plan is to hold more workshops in the middle and lower Guadalupe River Basin counties. Since the last workshop, we have been meeting with other potential partners, such as local soil and water conservation districts, to expand our offerings as we develop future workshops."

To inquire about GBR Trust workshops, contact Jester at sjester@gbrtrust.org or (830) 660-3486.



Photo by Janée Fields

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Vernelle Jones

Some people say “Time flies when you are having fun” and Vernelle Jones can attest to that. Jones has been having fun for the last 13 years, since she retired from GBRA as general division records manager of files and archives.

“When I began working for GBRA in 1978, computers and microfilming were in its infancy,” said Jones, who was responsible for researching and implementing a resource management system to make documents accessible to all departments, and an efficient way to archive records on microfilm.

“I was a stay at home mom and school bus driver before starting at GBRA,” Jones said, adding, “I had not worked in an office environment for six years.” Fortunately, her training in medical records stenography and her friendly personality earned Jones an interview with Leta Glenewinkle, then secretary to the General Manager. Glenewinkle hired Jones and the two became good friends while working at GBRA.

Over her 21-year career with GBRA, Jones participated in numerous activities. She recalled a fond memory from 1981 during the dedication ceremony of Coleta Creek Dam and Reservoir. The ceremony was cut short when a rain storm over the



Photo by Connie Rothe

reservoir developed, raining all day and filling the empty reservoir by the following day.

Only a few guest speakers spoke that day while people ran for shelter from the rain, and the ceremony came to a halt. “Some of us tried to sit under a flatbed trailer to eat and stay dry,” Jones said. “We were hoping the rain would stop, but our plates became so full of water, the barbecue and beans became one.”

In 1999, Jones retired, but kept special memories of working with a unique and talented group of co-workers she called her GBRA family. But retirement allowed her to fully enjoy her personal family.

“Our two daughters and their husbands have given me four grandchildren. The youngest is a high school senior. I also have four great-grandchildren, including the newest one who was born July 3, 2012,” Jones said.

Jones spends time with Bill, her husband of 52 years. The two enjoy traveling and camping, relaxing at the river, outdoor cooking, gardening and fishing at the Jones’ Ranch whenever possible.

“I love retirement,” Jones said, explaining, “But I miss seeing people I worked with on a regular basis. That is why I enjoy the company picnics each year.”

Vernelle Jones

Started at GBRA—1978

Phone—(830) 379-2641

Retired at GBRA—1999

Email—jonesranch1@gmail.com

Management Audit Gives GBRA Clean Bill of Health

The certified public accounting firm of Thompson, Williams, Biediger, Kastor & Young, L.C., of San Antonio thoroughly reviewed a variety of policy, management, and fiscal processes at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority and found the organization had “no management process control deficiencies.”

From the period of April 23 through June 5, 2012, the firm conducted its audit on GBRA’s policies, procedures, manuals and records. The scope of the firm’s work is mandated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and its procedures were performed in accordance with the consulting standards promulgated by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA).

“This entire process just shows that GBRA soundly manages its fiduciary, performance, and procedural responsibilities in

accordance with industry standards as well as the public’s expectations,” GBRA’s Executive Manager of Financial Administration Alvin Schuerg said.

“These audits are fairly comprehensive,” Schuerg said, explaining that the firm looks at a host of areas, including but not limited to GBRA’s strategic planning, organizational structure, performance management, policies and procedures, management information systems, revenue, risk assessment, budgets, investments, capital assets, procurement and cash management.

Thompson, Williams, Biediger, Kastor & Young, L.C., which has been operating since 1966, presented its report to GBRA’s Board of Directors at its July 18, 2012 meeting. Thereafter, the report was submitted to the TCEQ and Governor’s Office.

In Memoriam

Arlene Marshall

1941 - 2012



Photo by Ansen Seale

The Honorable Arlene N. Marshall, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority director for Calhoun County and a former Calhoun County judge, died May 21, at the age of 71.

Marshall was appointed to GBRA's Board of Directors in January 2008 by Governor Rick Perry. During her tenure on GBRA's Board of Directors, Marshall was elected and served as Secretary/Treasurer of the board beginning Dec. 15, 2010, and was re-elected to that position for the 2012 calendar year.

While serving on the board, Marshall saw the undertaking of GBRA's participation in the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program, which concluded successfully with a stakeholder-approved Habitat Conservation Plan, the stewardship of GBRA's hydroelectric lakes following the flood of June 2010, the forging of a partnership between GBRA, the Guadalupe Blanco River Trust and Ducks Unlimited for collaboration on wetland restoration work in coastal counties, including Calhoun County and the overhaul of GBRA's retirement and benefits plans.

Marshall's "life and legacy" was recognized with a resolution from GBRA's Board read by Chairman Grace Kunde during its regular meeting in June.

Marshall was a woman of great faith, well loved by her family, friends and colleagues, and known as one of the pillars of the community in Calhoun County, having served with charitable organizations and in various civic capacities, including as County Judge (1998 to 2002) and Executive Director of the Economic Development Corporation.

Originally from Houston, Marshall earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston and went to work in the oil and gas industry. She bought and exported oil field equipment and became an administrative consultant after the industry waned in Texas in the early 1980s.

In 1983, Marshall married Norman Marshall, who owned and operated Marshall Pontiac-Buick-GMC.

Marshall is survived by her husband Norman and his children and numerous other relatives and friends.

New Engineer Joins GBRA Staff



Photo by Connie Rothe

GBRA employees welcomed Charlie Hickman to its General Division at the Main Office in Seguin. Hickman began his new duties as an engineer II in May.

Having earned a bachelor of science in civil engineering from the University of Texas at San Antonio, Hickman will be responsible for providing technical assistance to GBRA's operations, making hydrologic and hydraulic determinations, coordinating with local,

state and federal agencies such as emergency management coordinators, the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Weather Service, and managing water resource projects.

"With the arrival of Charlie, the engineering department can provide greater attention to hydrology modeling within the watershed," GBRA Chief Engineer Tommy Hill said, adding, "We are so pleased to have him on board."

Hickman, who grew up around Texas rivers, said, "Learning about their natural functions was one of the experiences that led me to pursue a career in water resources engineering, and I find it very rewarding to be considered a steward of the Guadalupe River watershed."

"Water resources is one of the most important issues that Texas faces in the near future, and I am excited to have an opportunity to work with a great group of people towards implementing projects and policies that will shape the future of our state," he added.

Hickman also will be involved in performing independent engineering design analysis of hydraulic structures for water control, providing assistance with the state's environmental flow programs, working with the South Texas watermaster, and assisting in the preparation of water use reports to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

Before joining GBRA, Hickman worked at the engineering and land survey firm of Cobb, Fendley & Associates in San Antonio.

Plum Creek Gets Watershed Coordinator

A grant obtained through Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 319(h) from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board facilitated the hiring of a new watershed coordinator for the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership (PCWP).

Nick Dornak, a graduate of Texas A&M University and the University of Wyoming, was hired after the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, at the direction of PCWP, applied for the grant and posted the position. Dornak began his duties as watershed coordinator in March.

"We are very excited to have Nick on board with this watershed program. He brings a lot of energy and talents to the table and he's hit the ground running," said Debbie Magin, GBRA's director of Water Quality.

Dornak, who will facilitate the PCWP, has been meeting with local stakeholders in an effort to continue the success of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, which had coordinated the PCWP since 2003. The goal of the watershed coordinator is to engage stakeholders in voluntary participation in the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan. The grant funding for the watershed coordinator will end in August.

More on Dornak and the environmental stewardship activities in the Plum Creek Watershed will be featured in the next *River Run*.



employee anniversaries @ gbra

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

May

5/1/2012	Yolanda Pierce	General	11
5/1/2012	Leroy Garza	San Marcos WTP	23
5/2/2012	Norma Harvey	General	7
5/2/2012	Joseph Downey	Luling WTP	34
5/4/2012	Alvin Schuerg	General	31
5/4/2012	Clint Retzliff	Hydro	3
5/5/2012	James King	Hydro	32
5/7/2012	Daniel Beckendorf	Coleto Recreation	0
5/7/2012	Levi Fromme	Coleto Recreation	0
5/10/2012	Thomas Hill	Water Resources	36
5/11/2012	Denise Lyssy	General	5
5/12/2012	Cynthia Thomas-Jimenez	General	9
5/14/2012	Charles Hickman	Water Resources	0
5/14/2012	Joseph Tschatschula	Port Lavaca WTP	1
5/17/2012	Juan Juarez	Hydro	36
5/18/2012	Hunter Duncan	Western Canyon WTP	5
5/19/2012	Bruce Wasinger	General	4
5/19/2012	Jaynellen Ladd	Water Resources	4
5/19/2012	Michael Urrutia	Water Resources	25
5/19/2012	Joey Kisiah	Port Lavaca WTP	4
5/21/2012	Charles Schnitz Jr	Hydro	0
5/23/2012	Casey Salinas	Regional Lab	1
5/31/2012	Alan Zolnosky	Coleto Recreation	29

June

6/1/2012	Todd Votteler	General	12
6/1/2012	Carl Korth	Coleto Reservoir	29
6/2/2012	Tommie Rhoad	Water Resources	9
6/6/2012	Christopher Harder	Western Canyon WTP	1
6/7/2012	Tamra Beutnagel	General	13
6/10/2012	Sammy Salas	Luling WTP	26
6/15/2012	Allen Lawson	Western Canyon WTP	3
6/21/2012	Janet Thome	General	11
6/23/2012	Teresa Van Booven	Water Resources	9
6/25/2012	David Welsch	Water Resources	39
6/27/2012	Jeffrey McKee	Hydro	35
6/30/2012	Daphne Harder	General	8
7/27/2012	Donald Carpenter	Luling WTP	3
7/28/2012	Lee Gudgell	Water Resources	9

July

7/2/2012	David Kenda	Hydro	30
7/2/2012	Allen Ognoskie	Hydro	28
7/6/2012	Debbie Magin	Water Resources	36
7/10/2012	Joel Heideke	RUD	34
7/19/2012	Mellinda Brzozowski	Regional Lab	2

August

8/1/2012	Thomas Schulte	Water Resources	1
8/5/2012	Josephine Longoria	Regional Lab	10
8/5/2012	John Urban	Coleto Reservoir	21
8/7/2012	Scott Kolbe	Canyon Hydro	23
8/11/2012	Billy Imhoff	General	17
8/15/2012	Angel Castillo	Lockhart WWTP	22
8/18/2012	Richard Maxwell	Hydro	37
8/18/2012	Jeffery Hebert	Western Canyon WTP	4
8/24/2012	James Irby	Coleto Reservoir	3
8/25/2012	Christy Dietert	General	37
8/27/2012	Emmylou Roberts	Regional Lab	5
8/29/2012	Felix Cortinas	Luling WTP	18

September

9/1/2012	Brian Lyssy	Regional Lab	12
9/1/2012	Eduardo Montana	Lockhart WWTP	24
9/2/2012	Jason Eeds	RUD	20
9/3/2012	Stephanie Shelly	Port Lavaca WTP	21
9/10/2012	Ryan Boedeker	Canal RWSS	13
9/14/2012	Susan Cochran	Water Resources	14
9/15/2012	Ronnie Parenica	Port Lavaca WTP	20
9/16/2012	Kylie Gudgell	Regional Lab	4
9/28/2012	Gerardo Rodriguez	Water Resources	11



Photo courtesy GBRA archives



Debbie Magin

Photo by Connie Rothe

GBRA *Training & Licenses*

James Asbury of General Division attended TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101.

Tamra Beutnagel of General Division attended TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101 and CPR/First Aid Training.

Barbara Gunn of General Division attended Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities, and TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101.

Daphne Harder of General Division attended TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101.

Gynna Hernandez of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Jeannine Herrmann of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training and Crystal Reports 2008- Level I.

Susan Hubbert of General Division attended TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101 and Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities.

Constance Rothe of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training and Photoshop Bootcamp Training.

Alvin Schuerg of General Division attended TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101.

LaMarriol Smith of General Division attended TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101 and Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities.

Sandra Terry of General Division attended Crystal Reports 2008 Level I, TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101, and Texas Public Funds Investment Act and related investment issues.

Cythia Thomas-Jimenez of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Angela Whitley of General Division attended Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities, and TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101.

Wallis Gudgell of Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Michael Helmke of Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Darryl Jandt of Hydro Division attended Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities.

Steven Maricle of Hydro Division attended Computer Training: Hand, Wrist, and Finger, Hand and Power Tool, Ergonomics, Forklift Training-unqualified, Fall Protection, Eye Safety, Drug and Alcohol-Supervisor, Accident Investigation, Personal Protective Equipment, Lockout Tagout Training, Hazcom, General Safety Orientation, First Aid, Drug and Alcohol-Employee, Confined Space, Land Transportation, and Bucket and Digger Truck Operations.

David Maltony of Hydro Division attended Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities, and CPR/First Aid Training.

Jeffrey McKee of Hydro Division attended Disaster Management for Water and Wastewater Utilities, CPR/First Aid Training, and TWCA Risk Management Fund Workers' Comp 101.

Janet Thome of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training and Photoshop Bootcamp Training.

Recent Retirements @GBRA

Two water treatment operators recently said farewell to the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority through retirements.

Robert Delgado, an operator 2 at the Lockhart Water Treatment Plant, began his tenure with GBRA on April 8, 2001. He retired July 13, 2012.

Having begun work for GBRA on Aug. 5, 2002, Larry Shahan, an operator 4 at the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant, retired Dec. 19, 2011.

"Anytime you have people who are good at what they do and are dependable, you're going to miss them. And we're going to miss these guys," Jim Murphy, executive manager for Water Resources and Utility Operations, said.



Robert Delgado



Larry Shahan



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
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Mark Your Calendar

Aug. 15, 2012

GBRA Board Meeting
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX
<http://www.gbra.org/board/meetings.aspx>

Sept. 16-20, 2012

Dam Safety 2012
AWWA and Association of State Dam Safety Officials
Denver, CO
Contact: 800-926-7337

Sept. 19, 2012

GBRA Board Meeting
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX
<http://www.gbra.org/board/meetings.aspx>

Oct. 04-05, 2012

Water and Energy: Supply and Demand Management Strategies
for Energy Independence Conference
The Houstonian Hotel, Houston, TX
<http://www.waterenergystategy.com/>

Oct. 17, 2012

GBRA Board Meeting
Convention and Civic Center, Boerne, TX
<http://www.gbra.org/board/meetings.aspx>

Oct. 22-23, 2012

Water Forum: Texas Drought 2012
Center for Integrated Earth System Science, UT-Austin
University of Texas, Austin, TX
<http://www.jsg.utexas.edu/ciess/events>

Oct. 24-26, 2012

Texas Water Conservation Association Fall Meeting
Crowne Plaza Riverwalk Hotel, San Antonio, TX
<http://www.twca.org/meetings.html>

Oct. 31-Nov. 02, 2012

National Water Resources Association Annual Conference
Hotel Del Coronado, Coronado, CA
<http://www.nwra.org/events/2012/10/annual-conference-2/>

Texas Gulf Coast

Photo by Connie Rothe

