

GBRA RIVER RUN

A publication of the GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY Spring 2016



GBRA Buys TWA ♦ Water Rights Acquired ♦ Coleta Creek Hosts Nature Fest

From the GM

Every Now and Then, It's a Win-Win



In March 2010, The Aransas Project (TAP) filed a complaint in the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas, Corpus Christi division, against officials of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The suit alleged “illegal harm and harassment of whooping cranes at and adjacent to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in violation of the Endangered Species Act” (ESA) caused by “reviews and approvals of water permits” on the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers. Recognizing the implications of a potential federal takeover of the state’s surface water management process, GBRA staff sought defendant intervener status to enter the case.

TAP’s lead attorney Jim Blackburn claimed at the time, “The harm that the whooping cranes have experienced is a direct result of TCEQ’s failed oversight of its water rights permit programs in the Guadalupe River Basin where too much water is being taken out of the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers, especially during low-flow conditions.

In December 2011, Judge Janis Graham Jack held an eight-day bench trial to hear the lawsuit. Then, on March 11, 2013, she decided that TCEQ’s mismanagement of water permitting caused whooping crane deaths and issued an order prohibiting the TCEQ from issuing further water permits until the state created a plan to protect the whooping cranes. Several days later, State Attorney General Greg Abbott filed for a stay of the order and an emergency appeal to the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans and the appeal was granted.

In a June 30, 2014 decision, a Fifth Circuit panel that consisted of judges Edith Jones, Jerry Smith and Emilio Garza agreed with defendants that the plaintiff failed to prove its case that diversions of water for use by Texans had led to multiple deaths of federally protected whooping cranes in the winter of 2008. That December, the Fifth Circuit also denied a Petition for Rehearing *En Banc* in the case.

Finally, on June 22, 2015, the United States Supreme Court denied review in *The Aransas Project (TAP) v. Shaw*. I believe this was the appropriate outcome for this case, which essentially boiled down to defending the state’s system of water rights and fending off federal intervention at a cost of more than \$7 million to ratepayers and taxpayers. GBRA’s legal team worked to challenge and dispel what we believed to be a seriously flawed chain of causation theory and an even more flawed methodology for counting whooping crane populations.

Then, this past February after all of those years of litigation, TAP and GBRA officials met in a non-contentious manner to figure out how to work together for the benefit of the Guadalupe River system, San Antonio Bay and Estuary, and the endangered species that live therein. Now that takes guts, and as the saying goes, “No guts, no glory.” Every now and then, a situation evolves into a win-win for both sides. I encourage you to read more about the proposed work of TAP and GBRA on page 12 in this issue of the River Run.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. E. West, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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GBRA River Run

Spring 2016

Editor

LaMarriol Smith

Art Direction and Design

Mark Steele, Project and Publications Specialist

Editorial

Rebecca Wilson, Social Media and Community Relations Specialist
D. Danielle Wilson, Communications and Education Assistant
LaMarriol Smith

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Contact GBRA River Run:

Office of Communications and Education
Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
933 E. Court St.
Seguin, TX 78155
Phone: (830) 379-5822
Email: editor@gbra.org

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Front cover: LaMarriol Smith

by Rebecca Wilson

Staffing Changes at GBRA

New Division Manager Hails from Private Sector

As one of the newest employees at GBRA's Seguin office, Juan Peña brings 18 years of industry experience from Dow Chemical Company in Seadrift to his new position as the division manager for Hays and Caldwell counties. Peña previously worked at Dow in the Ethylene Oxide operations for 10 years and as a technical advisor for Energy Systems and Environmental Operations for eight years.

In his new position, Peña is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Hays and Caldwell divisions, which includes the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant, the IH 35 Treated Water Delivery System, Lockhart water and wastewater treatment plants, Luling Water Treatment Plant and Treated Water Delivery System, Buda Wastewater Treatment Plant, Sunfield Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Shadow Creek Wastewater System are also in Peña's area of responsibility.

Peña earned his bachelor's degree in biology from Southeastern Louisiana University.



New Grant Writer/Administrator Brings Wealth of Expertise to GBRA

Tim Dusek began his new position as grant writer/administrator for GBRA in December. His responsibilities include researching funding opportunities and developing grant proposals for all GBRA divisions and affiliated non-profits. He will also assist the organization's managers with coordinating and completing all grant reporting requirements. "As a seasoned professional in the grants arena, Tim has hit the ground running," said LaMarriol Smith, executive manager for Strategic Communications and Public Affairs.

Dusek arrives with 20 years of experience administering federal and state workforce development and youth development grant programs. He has worked with various agencies, including BCFS Health and Human Services, Workforce Solutions Alamo and the Texas Workforce Commission. Dusek earned a bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio.



GBRA's Hires First Social Media Staff

Rebecca Wilson has joined GBRA in a new position that was designed to provide more responsiveness to constituents in social media forums, particularly during times of crisis, such as extreme inclement weather events. Wilson's role as the Social Media and Community Relations Specialist has both external and internal communication responsibilities.

"Rebecca brings not only new energy and perspective to this position, but also poise and intellect," LaMarriol Smith said.

Prior to working with GBRA, Wilson coordinated social media and communication for nonprofits in the human services industry - most recently with Refugee Services of Texas. She also has a background in digital marketing and multicultural communications. Wilson earned her bachelor's degree in mass communications from Texas State University. She is enrolled in a master's degree program at Texas State University, where she is focused on emergency management and communications.



Darel Ball Welcomed as New Lower Basin Manager

There are only a few stones left unturned from the 36-year tenure of Darel Ball. His promotion from division manager of the Hays and Caldwell County Water Resources Division to operations manager for the Lower Basin places him at the helm of many of the operations in which he has worked himself, including the reservoir and recreation systems of the Coletto Creek Division, the Calhoun Canal Division, Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant Division, and the Calhoun County Rural Water Supply System. He also worked as the plant manager for the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant from 1999 to 2004. "Darel is a perfect example of a company being able to benefit from its in house talent," said James Murphy, executive manager of Water Resources and Utility Operations.

Ball earned a bachelor's degree in recreation and parks administration from Texas A&M University in 1979 and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Houston at Victoria in 1987.



Photos by Danielle Wilson

Shelly Takes Charge as Division Manager for Calhoun and Refugio Counties

The promotion to division manager was a natural fit for Stephanie Shelly, who has achieved expertise in water quality and treatment by working in GBRA's Calhoun and Refugio operations for 25 years. Shelly began at GBRA as a plant operator at the Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant in 1991, after having worked in water quality at the Environmental Protection Agency lab at Auburn University. In 1999, she was promoted to chief operator of the Port Lavaca Division.

As the new division manager of Calhoun and Refugio counties, Shelly directs operations and maintenance of the Calhoun Canal Division, Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant, Calhoun County Rural Water Supply System, and the Crestview Subdivision Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Darel Ball, the operations manager for the Lower Basin, said the transition is going very well and added "She has a strong technical background in water treatment at Port Lavaca and is respected and well-liked by the employees of all three divisions, as well as by her peers and co-workers in the authority."

Shelly has a degree in Marine Biology from Texas A&M University.



Other New Hires

Other new staff hired since September 2015 are noted in the Employee Anniversaries section on page 16. The GBRA Board of Directors and general manager welcome all new employees into the GBRA family.



GBRA Coletto Creek Park Hosts First Nature Fest

On Saturday, April 9, GBRA Coletto Creek Park hosted its first Nature Fest

The focus of this event was to introduce families to nature and outdoor activities. The event featured a guided bird walk and nature walk as well as presentations on monarch butterflies, hummingbirds, alligators, white tailed deer, bird rookeries, and whooping cranes.

Chief Ranger Wilfred Korth estimated about 500 people attended the event.

Fluoridation Ceased at San Marcos Water Treatment Plant

by Rebecca Wilson

At the request of the City of San Marcos, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), operator of the City of San Marcos Water Treatment Plant (WTP), terminated the practice of adding fluoride to the drinking water treated at the plant in Mid-November. Fluoride levels dropped to natural levels within a few days throughout the city's distribution system.

Results from the City of San Marcos general and special charter amendment election held Nov. 3, 2015 indicated voter approval of Proposition 1, directing the city officials not to add or require its agents to add fluoride to the San Marcos municipal water supply.

To codify the new amendment, officials canvassed votes during a special City Council meeting on Nov. 12 in the San Marcos City Council Chambers. The meeting was recorded and posted on www.sanmarcostx.gov and broadcast live on a local cable channel.

Proposition 1 passed with 60.73 percent of the votes.

"The City has been working expeditiously with GBRA to insure they are prepared to modify treatment by ceasing the addition of fluoride to the City's water supply," explained Tom Taggart,

Director of the City of San Marcos Water-Wastewater Utility Department. "Residents should not experience any change to the water's taste or odor," he added.

"To be clear, the water supply has some naturally occurring fluoride. However, we will not put additional fluoride into the supply," added GBRA's Jerry Sharp, manager of the San Marcos WTP.

The San Marcos WTP also supplies water to other municipalities and water utilities through its I-35 pipeline. GBRA officials have notified those customers, including Kyle, Buda, Sunfield, Gofort S.U.D., and Monarch of the fluoride changes precipitated by the San Marcos vote. Sharp has notified the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and plans to work with any of the municipalities that want to maintain the addition of fluoride in their respective water supplies by retrofitting their points of service with equipment acquired and installed through a state grant program.

Jerry Sharp, SMWTP Plant Manager



Photo by Rebecca Wilson

Lake Wood Dam Gate Damaged During Storm Event

During a rain event on March 9, 2016, a gate on the Lake Wood (H-5) dam malfunctioned while spilling water and sustained extensive damage.

GBRA hydro crews evaluated initial damage, then consulted with an engineering firm to perform a more complete assessment. On Tuesday evening March 22, GBRA official held a community meeting with Lake Wood-area residents and park users to fully explain the situation, repair options and related costs. The video of that meeting may be viewed at the following link: www.gbra.org/video/H5Townhall.aspx.

The GBRA Board of Directors planned to consider those options during its April meeting.



Photo by Charles Hickman

Volunteers Pull Tons of Trash Out of River and Watershed

Courtesy of the City of San Marcos

The weights are in, and organizers say the 31st Annual Great Texas River Clean Up held on March 5 was the most successful to date.

More than 700 volunteers picked up trash and debris in and along the Upper San Marcos River to Stokes Park, Purgatory Creek, Sink Creek, Sessom Creek, Willow Creek and Cottonwood Creek.

- Total Trash: 17,080 pounds
- Total Recycling: 7,350 pounds; 77 tires

The Texas River Protection Association and the San Marcos River Foundation had over 100 volunteer canoeists that cleaned another 60 miles of the San Marcos River from Stokes Park in San Marcos to Palmetto Park.

- Total Trash: 40 cubic yards
- Total Recycling: 770 pounds; 40 tires

The Students of Sustainability, a Texas State University student organization, did an audit of the litter that was brought in from Cottonwood Creek which runs along IH-35 by the outlet mall and found that plastic bottles and plastic retail bags made up over half of the litter collected.

This year, as well as last, a strong focus of the cleanup revolved around educating the volunteers on the source of the trash in the watersheds. Over 60 watershed leaders and crew leaders were trained by the city and university stormwater managers on the effect of litter dropped on the streets and lawns

washing to our rivers and creeks through stormwater runoff. This message was given to the more than 700 volunteers, showing the connection between our urbanized areas and our natural waterways.

To help minimize the amount of trash between the annual river clean ups, Keep San Marcos Beautiful hosts Hot Spot cleanups on the first Saturday of each month

"We need all the help we can get. Once a year is not enough to control the amount of litter left on the ground," said Amy Kirwin, City of San Marcos Community Enhancement Program Manager.

To receive notifications for cleanups, contact Ki win at akirwin@sanmarcostx.gov.

The 31st Annual Great Texas River Cleanup was a collaboration of TG Canoes and Kayaks, Texas River Protection Association, San Marcos River Foundation, the City of San Marcos, Texas State University and the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority. Multiple donors helped make the event possible: CH2M, Chamber of Commerce, Edwards Aquifer Authority, Lions Club, Clean Earth Systems and Alpha Paving Industries; as well as SurPowr Battery, HEB, Green Guy Recycling, GBRA, KDF Enterprises, Gruene Env, Geosolutions, IDS (Tymco), Greater San Marcos Partnership, Color Mix, Carson Properties, Abatix, Stericycle, Honda San Marcos, David Peterson, L&L Septic and Portable Toilets.

Kendall County, Texas
Founded 1852

The Guadalupe River Heritage Tour includes the 10-county statutory district of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority. Each location highlights some of the points of interest, attractions, and historical background. Shown here are some of the many offerings of things to do and see while visiting Boerne.



River Heritage Tour



River Heritage Tour

The GBRA River Heritage Tour kicked off in October 2015, with an online video guide and 10 physical kiosks navigating visitors on a journey through the history and culture of the counties across the GBRA statutory district. GBRA worked with local governments to design and implement the Heritage Tour videos and kiosks, collaborating to boost awareness of the river's importance while additionally promoting the charms of history, recreation, cuisine and more in the nearby communities along the Guadalupe and Blanco river basins.

"The GBRA River Heritage Tour will be a resource for each of these 10 communities by providing local residents, as well as visitors, current and historical information, along with points of interest to help them appreciate each location," explained GBRA's Executive Manager of Business Development and Resource Management David Welsch. "At the same time, the tour highlights the Guadalupe River and other tributaries that assist in sustaining these communities," he added. The kiosks were unveiled ceremoniously in the communities along the basin with the help of GBRA board members and representatives of local governments and organizations.

Three components of the tour tell the story of each community, highlighting history, economic development, tourism and recreation. The tour identifies points of interest using videos, the GBRA web kiosks that are located in each of the 10 counties served by GBRA. A large map showing the navigation of the tour through the basin is included on each kiosk to encourage regional tourism and river awareness.

Cities hosting the GBRA kiosks are Boerne, Luling, New Braunfels, Seguin, Victoria, Cuero, Gonzales, Port Lavaca, San Marcos and Refugio. The River Heritage Tour is also accessible at www.gbra.org/riverheritagetour or through the QR codes printed on the kiosks. The website showcases each of the community's videos and direct links to the chamber and/or convention and visitors bureau of each individual community for current information.



Photo Courtesy Boerne Chamber of Commerce



Photo by Teresa Van Booven

OSKS



*White Paper to Benefit
the Guadalupe River System*



Two entities that spent years in litigation over Guadalupe River water use and how it affects the wintering population of the endangered whooping cranes found common ground and announced in a joint press conference Feb. 24, 2016, that they would be collaborating on a white paper.

The white paper, between the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and The Aransas Project (TAP), brought the two parties together to address human and environmental issues for the benefit of the Guadalupe River system, including San Antonio Bay and Estuary, and to secure funding for studies related to this endeavor.

GBRA General Manager Bill West, Jr., and Jim Blackburn, a TAP board member and former attorney of record for the group, spoke side-by-side at the press conference and formally executed the white paper in February to show that both organizations planned to act in good faith to research and develop effective solutions for the unique Guadalupe River system.

A white paper generally is an authoritative and informative type of document that is used to advocate a particular position or solution for a problem. The importance of this white paper is that it culminates the end of an era of mistrust by providing a way forward on shared stewardship interests and the continued recovery of the majestic whooping crane.

“GBRA and TAP have many differences that were demonstrated in a bitter, long-running lawsuit. But both sides recognize that we are going to have to rise above the fray and start making ‘real’ progress on the issues that affect the Guadalupe River system,” West said, adding, “This white paper represents that commitment to find viable solutions for our mutual interests.”

Blackburn said, “TAP is committed to working with GBRA to find a path forward. This is a difficult step for each of us. But, he added, “We are used to fighting and distrusting on another. We are now working to develop trust and a positive working relationship.”

The vision for the white paper generally is two-pronged. The timely development of sufficient additional water supplies needed to meet current and future water needs of the rapidly increasing human population within the watershed of the Guadalupe River system comprises one prong and the other is insuring effective and comprehensive stewardship of the lands and waters within the watershed and San Antonio Bay.



Photos by LaMarriol Smith



The two parties also outlined a “shared vision” wherein they both believe that there are creative and innovative approaches, not yet discovered or fully appreciated, that can bring parties as disparate as GBRA and TAP together to work for the common good of the region. They also identified “water reallocation and management,” the “true value of water,” “market-based mechanisms to provide additional base flow generated through watershed improvements,” “climate change,” “sea level rise,” the “Guadalupe River Delta preservation and restoration,” “whooping crane habitat,” “sea turtle habitat,” “freshwater mussels,” and “marine seawater and brackish groundwater desalination” as specific focal points of their efforts.

Both West and Blackburn wanted to ensure that stakeholders would be able to contribute to the discourse and be involved in the process. Because of that, specific plans for constituent engagement and grant pursuits are being developed for the white paper.

A copy of the white paper can be accessed on GBRA’s website at www.gbra.org/documents/news/2016/022401_whitepaper.pdf. While this white paper process marks the beginning of a new era of progress between the two entities, their past exchanges were not always as cordial.

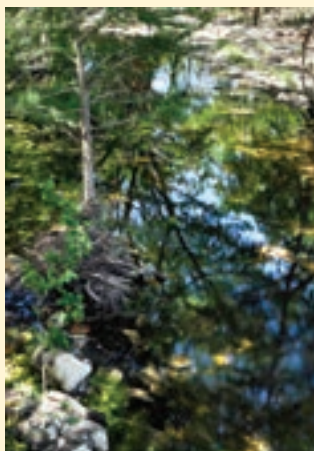
In March 2010, TAP, using the federal Endangered Species Act, sued the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in U.S. District Court in Corpus Christi alleging mismanagement of the Guadalupe and San Antonio rivers harmed the whooping cranes that winter at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. GBRA filed to join the case as intervenor defendants.

In March 2013, the federal judge over the case ruled in favor of TAP.

In a June 30, 2014 decision, a United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit panel agreed with defendants that the plaintiff failed to prove its case.

After the Fifth Circuit in December 2014 denied a Petition for Rehearing En Banc requested by TAP attorneys, the U.S. Supreme Court decided not to hear the case. As a result, defendants in the case prevailed.

GBRA Archive Photo



TWA Purchase Brings Mid-Basin Project Closer to Reality

by LaMarriol Smith

During the Feb. 17, 2016 GBRA Board of Directors meeting, board members authorized GBRA General Manager Bill West to execute the \$31 million purchase of the Texas Water Alliance assets and to conduct business related to the sale. The purchase of the TWA assets in Gonzales and Caldwell counties will provide 15,000 acre-feet (ac/ft.) of groundwater toward the Mid-Basin Project. The TWA assets include groundwater leases on more than 30,000 acres in this area.

The Mid-Basin Project, a proposed conjunctive use water supply project that has been in the State Water Plan in various forms since 2006, would supply 65,000-plus ac/ft. of water to potential customers along the high-growth I-35 and SH Toll 130 corridors. The conjunctive use project would include surface water, groundwater, and/or aquifer storage and recover (ASR) components to comprise a single supply.

To put the project into perspective with respect to its scope and size, the firm yield of Canyon Reservoir is 90,000 ac/ft. of water and the firm yield of Lake Texana is 79,000 ac/ft. The Mid-Basin Project will be the first significant municipal water supply project in the region in several decades.

Mark Janay, President of TWA commenting on behalf of SJW Corp, said he believes that this agreement represents the best of what a public-private partnership can do to benefit the citizens and communities of Texas. By working together, TWA provided the investment and management necessary to develop a critical groundwater supply; this sustainable groundwater supply can now be married with the conjunctive use aspects of the Mid-Basin project to create a much needed regional water supply solution.

“We are trying to provide much needed water resources to municipalities and developers in this high-growth region, so I am optimistic about potentially securing support for the project from the Texas Water Development Board,” West said.



At the end of October 2015, torrential rains and flash flooding struck the Central and Sou Central Texas region, including the Guadalupe River Basin, for the second time in six months.

The Blanco, Guadalupe and San Marcos rivers and many of their tributaries all experienced flooding and a tornado reportedly touched down in Hays County.

Overall, about 13 inches of rain fell in the area of Travis and Hays counties, more than 40 high-water rescues were executed, and two people died in the flooding

In February 2016, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the city of San Marcos \$25 million for disaster recovery relief for flooding that occurred during th Memorial Day and Halloween weekends of 2015.



Grant to GBR Trust Helps Secure Habitat for Whoopers

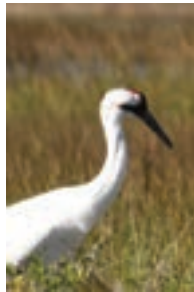


A partnership that involves the Guadalupe Blanco River Trust (GBR Trust), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and local land owners has formed the basis of conservation planning and acquisition of vital habitats for threatened and endangered species in Texas is being supported with a recently received \$316,800 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (CESCF) grant.

GBR Trust Executive Director Todd Votteler, Ph.D., explained, "Prime Prairie and Wetland Habitat for Whooping Cranes Wintering in Texas was the objective submitted to the USFWS in our application to secure funding that would help us acquire, by conservation easement, about 218 acres of habitat for whooping cranes within the Lower Guadalupe Basin and San Antonio Bay region along the Texas coast." The properties are located in Calhoun and Refugio counties and primarily will benefit the whoopin crane, Atwater's prairie chicken and northern aplomado falcon.

"Private landowners and natural resource managers play a vital role in conserving our nation's most imperiled wildlife," Dan Ashe, service director, said. "By cultivating partnerships between federal and local governments, private organizations and individuals, we can establish creative and effective solutions to some of the greatest conservation challenges of our time. These grants are one of many tools available under the Endangered Species Act, and we look forward to continued guidance and support for these programs."

The conservation easements in Calhoun and Refugio counties will be held by the Guadalupe Blanco River Trust. "The GBR Trust has been working to preserve habitats for endangered species since 2001," Votteler said, adding, "By working with USFWS and our landowner partners, we hope to preserve some of the final parcels in the upper portion of Guadalupe River Delta." The GBR Trust already holds conservation easements in the Guadalupe River Delta and owns the 816-acre Hog and Schwing's Bayou Preserve nearby that protects 4.35 miles of riparian habitat.



GBRA Archive Photos



GBRA *Training & Licenses*

Elizabeth Aguilar of the Communication and Education & Regional Lab Divisions attended CPR/First Aid Training.

James Asbury of the General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Travis Basham of the Western Canyon Division attended Electrical Safety, CPR/First Aid Training and Class D Wastewater Treatment Operator training.

Jennifer Blinder of the Regional Lab attended the Sample Master Laboratory Information Management System User/Administrator (Accelerated Technology Laboratories, inc.), Sample Master Laboratory Information Management System Advanced User (Accelerated Technology Laboratories, inc.), and CPR/First Aid Training.

Ryan Boedeker of Calhoun Canal Division added Introduction to Monochloramine/Free Ammonia Day School-GCTWUA.

Ed Boettner of the Buda WWTP attended the Electrical Safety, CPR/First Aid Training, Class C Water Distribution Operator, and Class II Wastewater Collection Operator trainings.

Susan Cochran of the Water Resources Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Justin Cortez of Regional Lab attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Logan Daigle of the Port Lavaca WTP attended the Surface Water Production I, Surface Water Production II, TWUA-BASIC WATER, TEEX-BASIC WASTEWATER, and Day School-GCTWUA.

Marella Dalme of the General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Toby Dennis of the Western Canyon Division attended Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Joseph Downey of the Luling WTP attended the Electrical Safety and Level 2 Electrical Work trainings.

Hunter Duncan of the Western Canyon Division attended Texas Watershed Steward Program, CPR/First Aid Training, and Revised Total Coliform Rule Webinar Part 1.

Jason Eeds of the Lockhart WWTP attended the Level 2 Electrical Work, Electrical Safety, and CPR/First Aid Training.

Austin English of the Port Lavaca WTP attended Surface Water Production I, Surface Water Production II, and TRWA-PUMP & MOTOR MAINTENANCE-ONLINE training.

Mike Fagan of the Western Canyon Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Wilbert Freeman of the Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Tyler Friedel of the Coletto Creek Recreation Division attended TWCA-Accident Investigation, TWCA-Back Safety, TWCA-Confined Space Training, TWCA-Defensive Driving, TWCA-Electrical Safety, TWCA-First Aid & CPR, TWCA-Hazard Communication, TWCA-Ladder & Scaffolding Safety, TWCA-Lockout/Tagout Training, TWCA-Personal Protective Equipment, TWCA-Respiratory Protection, Basic Electricity for the Non-Electrician, and CPR/First Aid Training.

Kylie Gudgell of the Regional Lab attended the Sample Master Laboratory Information Management System User/Administrator (Accelerated Technology Laboratories, inc.) Sample Master Laboratory Information Management System Advanced User (Accelerated Technology Laboratories, inc.), and CPR/First Aid Training.

Wallis Gudgell of the Hydro Division attended Electrical Safety training.

Rodney Guice of the Port Lavaca WTP attended Water Loss/Metering.

Barbara Gunn of the General Division attended STXHRS.

Jeffery Hebert of the Western Canyon Division attended Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Joel Heideke of RUD attended Water Utility Safety.

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

Michael Hencerling of the Coletto Reservoir Division attended the GBRA Electrician Workshop, FEMA-National Incident Management System, FEMA-Introduction to Incident Command System, TWCA-Accident Investigation, Back Safety, Confined Space, Defensive Driving, Electrical Safety, First Aid & CPR, Hazard Communication, Ladder & Scaffolding, Lockout/Tagout, Personal Protective Equipment, Respiratory Protection, Eye and Face Protection, Fall Protection, Field Biological Hazards, Fire Prevention, Forklift Safety, General Ergonomics, Hand and Power Tool Safety, Compressed Gas Safety, Bloodborne Pathogens for All Employees, Laboratory Safety, Indoor Crane and Sling Safety, Hearing Conservation, and Light Trucks: Backing Safety, Avoiding Collisions, Driving Hazards, Ergonomics, Handling Extreme Conditions, and Trailing.

Mark Henneke of the Lake Wod Division attended the Pesticide Applicator Recertification training, Pesticide Safety & Laws, CPR/First Aid Training, First Aid, CPR, AED Training, and Safety Meeting-Texas Snakes.

Roland Henry of the Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Fred Hernandez of the Buda WTP attended Electrical Safety, Level 2 Electrical Work, CPR/First Aid Training, and Class C Wastewater Treatment Operator License training.

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

Jeannine Herrmann of the General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Russell Hester of the Hydro Division attended Electrical Safety, CPR/First Aid Training, Class C Surface Water Treatment Operator License, and Class C Ground Water Treatment Operator License training.

Todd Hoff of the Port Lavaca WTP TRWA Utility Safety Class.

Cecil Holliday of the Western Canyon Division attended Electrical Safety and Level 2 Electrical Work training.

Michael Hunt of Port Lavaca WTP attended the TEEX-BASIC WASTEWATER and Day School-GCTWUA.

The information for the employee trainings list was compiled by Tricia Ramirez, Human Resources Department of the Office of Finance and Administration.

Death Touches Two GBRA Families

Over the past few months, GBRA lost two dedicated workers from its water treatment plants. James Kelley was hired April 24, 2012 as an operator at the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant. He served at the San Marcos plant for more than three years at the position of Operator II and passed away on Nov. 28, 2015.

James Lucas was as an operator at the Luling Water Treatment. Lucas began employment on Aug. 19, 2013 as an Operator II and served at the water treatment plant for just over 2 years before passing away on Feb. 6, 2016. His funeral was held on Feb. 10, 2016 at First United Methodist Church in Luling, Texas.

Recent Retirements at GBRA



Photo by Danielle Wilson

Senior Water Tender of the Calhoun County Canal Division Retires

After 33 years of employment with GBRA, James "Jim" A. Lumley, senior water tender of the Calhoun County Canal Division, retired in January. He began employment in April 1962 as a water tender in the Calhoun County Canal Division and dedicated his career to insuring agricultural, industrial and municipal customers received the water necessary for their operations.

During his career, Lumley played a major role in the implementation of a workboat log jam removal training video, developing sketches of the canal system for field use, and completing an operating manual for the canal system in April 1995. An expert in the canals and a tireless safety advocate, he helped to build, install and maintain major canal checks, bridges, crossings and field water gates, as well as training many water tenders throughout his employment.



GBRA Archive Photo

Lower Basin Manager Retires After 39 Years

Bryan Serold began his employment in 1976 as a land rights agent for GBRA. In 1980, he assumed the position of reservoir manager of the newly formed Coletto Creek Division where he worked until 1995, when he took over the reins as operations manager for the Lower Basin. He retired in September 2015.

Serold provided outstanding leadership in a variety of major projects, including the Coletto Creek Reservoir and Park, two expansions to the Victoria Regional Wastewater Reclamation System, an expansion of the Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant, planning for the Lower Basin Storage Project and the Lower Basin New Water Appropriation, amendments to lower Guadalupe River water rights, and GBRA's operational recovery efforts after the 1998 flood. He also directed the establishment, design and operation of GBRA's Safety Program, with emphasis on preventive maintenance and the safety and well-being of employees.

employee anniversaries @ gbra

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

September

9/1/2015	Eduardo Montana	Lockhart WWTP	27
9/3/2015	Stephanie Shelly	Water Resources	24
9/15/2015	Ronnie Parenica	Port Lavaca WTP	23
9/2/2015	Jason Eeds	Lockhart WWTP	23
9/14/2015	Susan Cochran		17
9/10/2015	Ryan Boedeker	Coletto Creek Rec.	16
9/1/2015	Brian Lyssy	RUD	15
9/28/2015	Gerardo Rodriguez	Water Resources	14
9/16/2015	Kylie Gudgell	Regional Lab	7
9/24/2015	Jennifer Sanchez	Regional Lab	3
9/15/2015	Justin Cortez	Regional Lab	1
9/16/2015	Colten Boothe	Regional Lab	1
9/2/2015	Carrie Kasnicka	General	1
9/27/2015	Carmen Phillips	Regional Lab	1
9/3/2015	Cecil Holliday	Western Canyon	1
9/1/2015	Mark Steele	General	New Hire
9/21/2015	Austin English	Port Lavaca WTP	New Hire
9/21/2015	Logan Daigle	Port Lavaca WTP	New Hire

October

10/10/2015	Dennis Walker	San Marcos WTP	17
10/1/2015	Barbara Gunn	General	14
10/15/2015	Marella Dalme	General	14
10/20/2015	Jose Leal	Luling WTP	12
10/25/2015	Annee Drazkowski	General	8
10/22/2015	Tommy Walenta	San Marcos WTP	4
10/17/2015	Elizabeth Aguilar	General	3
10/9/2015	Tricia L. Ramirez	General	2
10/1/2015	Michael Hencerling	Coletto Creek Rec.	New Hire
10/12/2015	Richard Valadez	San Marcos WTP	New Hire
10/2/2015	Miliana Hernandez	Regional Lab	New Hire

November

11/19/2015	Wilfred Korth	Coletto Creek Recreation	36
11/10/2015	Don Koble	Calhoun Canal RWSS	34
11/14/2015	Jason Lewis	Coletto Creek Recreation	32
11/24/2015	Jeannine Herrmann	General	18
11/22/2015	Eric Mendez	Lockhart WWTP	16
11/8/2015	James Asbury	General	16
11/20/2015	Robert Scott	Hydro	15
11/1/2015	Gynna Hernandez	General	18
11/5/2015	John Moryl	Hydro	17
11/21/2015	Fred Hernandez	Buda WWTP	16
11/4/2015	Jeremy Stanton	RUD	12
11/18/2015	Mike Fagan	Western Canyon	New Hire

December

12/25/2015	Roy Odom	Hydro	34
12/28/2015	Dianne Fly	Coletto Creek Res.	23
12/10/2015	Jerry Sharp	San Marcos WTP	16
12/29/2015	James Medrano	Hydro	15
12/3/2015	Daniel Alonso	General	3
12/1/2015	David Spivey	General	1
12/3/2015	Jeffrey Robison	Hydro	1
12/14/2015	Michael Stanford	Coletto Creek Rec.	New Hire
12/14/2015	Wibert Freeman	Hydro	New Hire
12/21/2015	Timothy Dusek	General	New Hire
12/7/2015	Rebecca Wilson	Water Resources	New Hire

January

1/11/2016	Rod Voss	Hydro	39
1/14/2016	Darel Ball	Water Resources	36
1/14/2016	Mark Henneke	Water Resources	36
1/16/2016	Curtis Seiler	Coletto Creek Rec.	35
1/31/2016	David Lundin	Port Lavaca WTP	35
1/4/2016	Alan Schneider	Coletto Creek Res.	33
1/5/2016	Samuel Widmer	Coletto Creek Rec.	29
1/27/2016	Sara Vazquez	Coletto Creek Rec.	28
1/6/2016	Sandra Terry	General	21
1/24/2016	Susan Hubbert	General	11
1/2/2016	Sheryll Kisiah	Calhoun Canal RWSS	9
1/2/2016	Edwin Boettner	Shadow Creek WWRS	8
1/21/2016	James Murphy	Water Resources	8
1/4/2016	Steven Maricle	Hydro	6

1/16/2016	Derek Schedlbauer	Western Canyon	4
1/16/2016	Toby Dennis	Western Canyon	4
1/7/2016	Jorge Rojas	Water Resources	3
1/13/2016	Jesi Mann	Shadow Creek WWRS	2
1/2/2016	George Bohl	General	2
1/12/2016	Adrian Medrano	Lockhart WWTP	1
1/12/2016	John Gerland	San Marcos WTP	1
1/11/2016	Tyler Friedel	Coletto Creek Rec.	New Hire
1/2/2016	Joshua Black	Luling WTP	New Hire
1/4/2016	Danielle Wilson	General	New Hire
1/4/2016	Juan Pena	Water Resources	New Hire
1/1/2016	Wallis Gudgell	Water Resources	New Hire

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



Wilfred Korth

GBRA Archive Photos



Fisherman Nabs Record Carp

This past November, John Grason of Victoria caught a 17.32 pound, 31-inch long carp at Coletto Creek Reservoir while fishing for crappie. The catch represents a new rod-and-reel water body record.

Coletto Creek Park Chief Ranger Wilfred Korth said Grason caught the carp with a crappie jig with a 4-pound test fishing line. Grason told park rangers that it took him 45 minutes to get the carp landed.

The record catch has been submitted to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Inland Fisheries for certification as a new Coletto Creek Water Body record.



In Memoriam: Warren P. Kirksley

Warren Patton "Pat" Kirksey, 81, of Lockhart, Texas, died Feb. 9, 2016, in College Station, Texas. A celebration of life was held for him at First United Methodist Church of Lockhart Friday, Feb. 12, 2016.

Kirksey was born Oct. 4, 1934. He attended school in Lockhart and earned his bachelor of science degree in geology and business administration from Texas A&M University.

Governor Mark White initially appointed Kirksey to GBRA's Board of Directors for Caldwell County in 1985. He was reappointed by Governor Ann Richards in 1991. He was elected Vice Chairman of the Board in 1989 and 1990, served as chair of the Ethics and Public Relations committees, and served on the Legal and Policy committees, and the Retirement and Benefit Committee.

President of Kirksey Propane Service, Kirksey was a past president of Texas LP Gas Association, former member of the Texas Railroad Commission Advisory Board, former mayor of Lockhart, and was active in numerous community organizations, including the Lockhart Jaycees, the Kiwanis Club, Northern Caldwell County United Way Board, Lockhart Chamber of Commerce, Lockhart Industrial Foundation, and the Caldwell County A&M Club.

Kirksey was preceded in death by a grandson, Spencer Patton Squire. He is survived by his wife, Patsy Kirksey of Lockhart; daughters, Margo and spouse Chris Dailey of College Station, and Anna and spouse Patrick Squire of Allen; brother Cecil Tull Kirksey of Dallas; and three grandchildren.





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Mark Your Calendar

May 3-4, 2016

TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair & Conference
Austin Convention Center
Austin, TX

<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html>

May 16, 2016

4th Annual Endangered Species Act Conference
Omni Hotel at Southpark
Austin, TX

http://www.cle.com/product.php?proid=1585&src=Featured&page=Endangered_Species_Act

May 17-19, 2016

Wastewater Treatment / 20 hours
Texas Rural Water Association
San Antonio, TX

<http://www.trwa.org/?212>

May 18, 2016

GBRA Board Meeting
Seguin, Texas

<http://www.gbra.org/board/meetings.aspx>

May 21, 2016

Canyon Dam and Reservoir 50th Anniversary Celebration
Corps Office
Canyon Lake, Texas

Jun 9-10, 2016

Texas Aquifer Conference
Omni Austin Hotel at Southpark
Austin, TX

<http://www.agwt.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=219>

Jun 15, 2016

GBRA Board Meeting
Seguin, Texas

<http://www.gbra.org/board/meetings.aspx>

Jun 15-17, 2016

TWCA Mid-Year Conference
Horseshoe Bay, TX

<http://www.texaswca.com/meetings/index.html>

GBRA Archive Photo

