

A Publication of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

Fall 2017

GBRA River Run

HARVEY HITS

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Constituent Communiqué

Building Relationships



In its 10-county statutory district, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority works with a variety of customers for water sales and treatment, wastewater treatment, power sales, recreational undertakings and other services. In conducting those operations, GBRA staff also work closely with elected officials, developers and other constituents to determine their current and future needs and to see how GBRA can help address those needs. The purpose of our efforts is to provide exceptional service for their benefit. We are able to do this by ensuring that GBRA has highly skilled employees who receive relevant training year round. This also includes state licensed operators for the water and wastewater treatment facilities that we own and those that we operate in partnership with customers in our basin.

Today, GBRA continues to nurture long-standing relationships with its current customers while building new relationships with new partners.

Furthering existing partnerships and addressing a need for a geographic area that lacks certain utilities, GBRA is securing a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) to provide wastewater services to an unincorporated area between New Braunfels and Seguin. GBRA will work in partnership with New Braunfels Utilities and the city of Seguin to provide wholesale wastewater treatment to wastewater that is collected from the new developments that are occurring in this high growth area.

GBRA is stepping up to build these relationships because the area is growing and circumstances demand it. Since 2000, Guadalupe County grew more than 130 percent reaching a population of nearly 150,000. The United States Census Bureau listed New Braunfels as the ninth fastest growing city with a population of 50,000 or more in the country. Its population increased 4.7 percent in 2016. In that same timeframe, GBRA's district was home to three of the top 10 fastest-growing counties in the nation with a population of 10,000 or more: Kendall County ranked second with 5.15 percent growth, Hays County ranked third with 5.09 percent growth, and Comal County ranked sixth with an increase of 4.4 percent.

GBRA leads as a regional partner managing watershed resources to protect and support the needs of a growing population, economy and healthy environment. We look forward to working with you as we grow together on this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Patteson'.

Kevin Patteson
General Manager/CEO

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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GBRA River Run

Fall 2017

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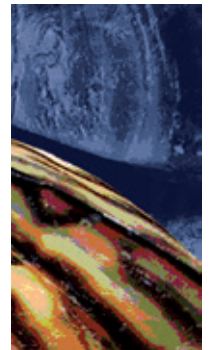
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FIELD & OFFICE

GBRA AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

By Ja'Nise Solitaire

From L to R: Melanie Olguin, Kaleigh Lawson, Alexa Beard, Jesus Hernandez Alvarez, and Kolin Ploetz



Photo by Janet Thome

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) officials awarded three \$2,000 academic scholarships and three \$1,000 academic scholarships to area students within GBRA's 10-county district. The scholarships, presented annually, are part of GBRA's Employee Volunteer Program.

Listed below, by city, are the scholarship recipients:

San Marcos

Jesus Hernandez Alvarez is a graduate of San Marcos High School in Hays County. He is a first-generation graduate and attends the University of Texas at San Antonio. He is working toward a degree in biology with future plans to attend dental school. While in high school, Alvarez was in the top 10 percent of his class as well as a member of the National Honor Society and Key Club. He also was a volunteer with the Hays County Food Bank.

Canyon Lake

Alexa Beard graduated from Smithson Valley High School in Comal County. She is studying nursing at Texas State University in San Marcos. While in high school, Beard was a member of the Varsity Dance Team, the Family and Consumer Science class and on the A/B Honor Roll. She volunteered with the highway clean-up, blood drive, homeless shelter, senior center, and community center. Beard also held employment positions with VIP Gymnastics, Clear Springs Restaurant, San Pedro Church and Walmart.

Kaleigh Lawson graduated from Smithson Valley High School in Comal County. She is attending Texas Tech University, studying agribusiness and agricultural communication. In high school, Lawson participated in the National Honor Society, 4-H Club and Future Farmers of America Club (FFA). Her achievements include several Comal County Junior Livestock Show Association Senior Showmanship Awards, Comal ISD Superintendent Student of the Month Award,

multiple placements in state and national shooting championships, the 4-H Gold Star Award and Texas FFA Lone Star Degree. In 2016, Lawson exhibited the Grand Champion Market Lamb at the 2016 Houston Livestock Show.

New Braunfels

Melanie Olguin graduated from Canyon High School in Comal County. She is attending Texas Lutheran University in Seguin, studying nursing with future plans to become an emergency nurse practitioner. In high school, Olguin was in the top two percentile of her class and a National Hispanic Scholar, a member of the French Club, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and HOSA. She also was involved in the Varsity Color Guard and won the 2015 Texas Educational Color Guard Association Championships, in the Scholastic Region A Division.

Lockhart

Laurel Eeds is a graduate of Lockhart High School in Caldwell County. She attends Texas State University and studies sonography. In high school, Eeds participated in cross country, track and field and competed at the state level in powerlifting placing in the top 15. She has volunteered with her church, the local animal shelter and was a member of FCCLA.

Geronimo

Kolin Ploetz is a graduate of Navarro High School in Guadalupe County. He attends Angelo State University where he studies agribusiness. In high school, he studied advanced animal science, advanced soil science, fabrication of metal and design and biology. He has volunteered with his church, Pecan Fest, the Texas Agricultural Education and Heritage Center as well as the Guadalupe County Youth Show. He also has worked with Becker's Feed and Fertilizer, Laubach Bowling Alley and in chicken processing.



Photos by Michael Schultze

Crews Work on Hydro Facilities

In August and September respectively, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority hydroelectric crews lowered Lake Nolte (Meadow Lake) and Lake Placid to perform scheduled repairs.

At Lake Nolte, repairs include replacement of structural steel members inside the spillgates as well as the replacement of wooden timbers on the downstream side of the spillgates. Lake Nolte will remain lowered for several months while the repairs take place.

Similar maintenance work, including replacement of structural steel members inside the spillgates and wooden timbers on the downstream side of the spillgates was occurring at Lake Placid.

Crews also plan to have Lake Placid lowered for several months during repair time.

Occasionally, both lakes may fluctuate by 8-10 inches during periods of hydroelectric power generation.

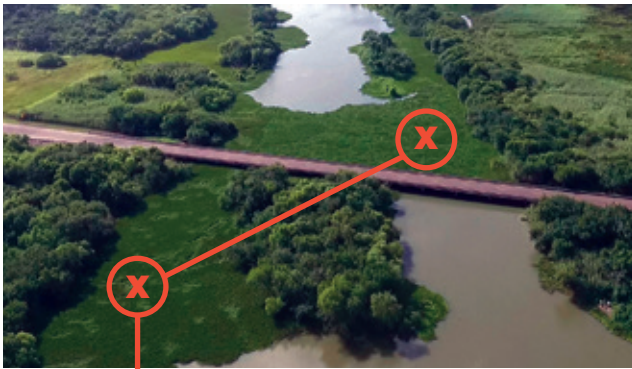
As part of this project, repairs also will be scheduled in the future for lakes McQueeney and Gonzales.

While the lakes are lowered for repairs, lake users and recreationalists should exercise caution as lower lake levels may expose debris and other potential hazards that normally are underwater.

Water Hyacinth Treated at Goff Bayou

By Ja'Nise Solitaire

Photos by Leigh Crettenden



San Antonio Bay Foundation (SABAY) staff coordinated efforts to combat water hyacinths that were clogging area waterways through funding provided by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Invasive Weed Program.

"Crews sprayed more than 60 acres, which is about 2.5 miles, within Goff Bayou near Tivoli with AquaNeat," said SABAY Executive Director Dan Alonso. AquaNeat is a water glyphosate-based herbicide used to kill the invasive water-weed.

Alonso explained that water hyacinths were introduced to area waterways through ornamental trade. "People placed it in ponds, which flooded over and they entered the rivers and bayous," he said. "This creates huge problems because the plant produces millions of seeds and it can be difficult to control."

The AquaNeat treatment took approximately two weeks to take effect and is expected to last three years.

Moonlight in the Gorge: A Texas-Sized Experience

By Ja'Nise Solitaire

This year's "Moonlight in the Gorge" gala brings Mardi Gras to Canyon Lake. The event, coordinated by the Gorge Preservation Society (GPS), highlights some of the best chefs within the area, while guests experience gourmet dining and entertainment. Guests can shuttle down or walk to the spillway, where they will be greeted by the GPS Board of Directors and a perfectly blended scene of Mardi Gras and sun-setting colors.

"This year we've contracted a new catering company called Cajun on da Geaux," Jaynellen Kerr, GBRA natural resource specialist. "We also have a new dessert company that will create Cajun-style cupcakes to match the Mardi Gras theme."

The evening begins with a cocktail hour featuring regional wines and socializing, and after the sun sets, dinner is served as luminaries dimly light the tables. Every year, Brothers of the Flame have provided the entertainment performing fire tricks and stunts. Kerr said, "Moonlight in the Gorge is the organization's only fundraiser and tickets sell out every year."

"Last year we raised \$8,425. This year we're looking to raise about the same amount," Kerr said. "It [Moonlight in the Gorge] is truly an experience and one of the most enjoyable events in Texas."



Photo by Scott Mozisek/Red Martian Photo

Bow Hunters to Converge at Coletto This Fall

These yearly hunts, begun in 1998, help reduce the size of the deer herd that has continued to grow beyond the carrying capacity of the reservoir's lands.

Rangers at the Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir are trying to accommodate this fall's bowhunting season, despite the disruption caused by Hurricane Harvey. The 19th Annual Bowhunt for white-tail deer and feral hogs will take place from Sept. 30, 2017 to the first weekend of January 2018.

Bowhunts are restricted to the use of archery equipment and are being held on 15 consecutive weekends beginning on the weekend of Sept. 30, 2017 and ending on the weekend of Jan. 5, 2018. On the first weekend of archery season, legal hunting is only allowed on Saturday and Sunday. For the remaining weekends, hunters selected by random drawing will be allowed to pre-scout and begin hunting assigned areas on the Friday of their respective hunting weekends, and continue through Sunday.

"These yearly hunts, begun in 1998, help reduce the size of the deer herd that has continued to grow beyond the carrying

capacity of the reservoir's lands, and to reduce the large numbers of feral hogs that continue to damage reservoir property. Each year, the drawn hunters see a lot of deer," GBRA Reservoir Ranger Curtis Seiler said.

GBRA uses 1,500 acres in the bowhunting program. This acreage is divided into five unique hunting compartments that are managed by GBRA around the reservoir, but are not part of the main Coletto Creek Park. Hunters are allowed to harvest two antlerless deer and an unlimited number of feral hogs. Hunters may apply for the hunts individually or as groups of two, four, six, eight, and 10 per party. Each individual or group is assigned a specific hunt area based on the size of their group and the order of draw.

For more information about yearly bowhunting at Coletto Creek Park, contact Curtis Seiler at the Coletto Creek Office at 361-575-6366, or email coletto@gbra.org.



Stock Photo

Luling WTP Earns Superior Recognition

Photos GBRA Archives



In August, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) Austin Regional Office evaluated the Luling Water Treatment Plant (WTP) for compliance with requirements for public water systems and found "no violations." As a result, TCEQ Water Section Manager Shawn Stewart said, "Your public water system continues to merit recognition as a 'Superior' system."

"The superior rating is a testament to the great work performed by Chief Operator Joe Downey and his team on a daily basis," GBRA Division Manager Eduardo Mantana said.

TCEQ inspections are conducted every two years. The Luling WTP was built in 1978. Downey has served as its chief operator since its opening.

New Staff Fill Key Positions

Three new professionals recently joined the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) staff to fill key vacancies in the Operations and General divisions. Oscar Ramirez joined GBRA as the accounting manager, Raymond “Ray” Casteline was hired as GBRA’s laboratory director, and Ja’Nise Solitaire was hired as the social media/community relations specialist.

Accounting Manager Oscar Ramirez

Oscar Ramirez, who brings 30 years of experience to his new position as GBRA’s accounting manager, previously worked in accounting positions with the Texas Water Development Board. He also spent many years as a trust officer and director of trust services for the Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company where he administered the management of Trust Client Accounts totaling more than \$35 billion in state funds and endowments.

Cindy Demers, executive manager for finance and administration and chief financial officer, said, “Oscar has such a wealth of experience. He’s already putting processes into place that will benefit GBRA over the long run.”

Ramirez earned his bachelor of business administration degree from the University of Texas at Austin, and he is a member of the Austin Association for Financial Professionals.

Laboratory Director Raymond Casteline

Ray Casteline, who served 16 years full-time in the U.S. Army and is serving in the Army reserves, was chief of diagnostics section and as a general supervisor at the Public Health Command-Central, Department of Defense, Food Analysis and Diagnostics Laboratory at the Joint Base in San Antonio before joining GBRA as its laboratory director. Prior to his time in San Antonio, Casteline worked in the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Meade, Md., and at the Department of Research Programs at the Biomedical Research Laboratory in Bethesda, Md.

“We’re really pleased to have Ray lead our laboratory. With his well-rounded background and

leadership skills, there are so many ways that he can help the staff and streamline laboratory services,” said Michael Urrutia, deputy executive manager of operations and water quality.

Casteline has graduate certification in forensic toxicology from the University of Florida, and completed his medical laboratory technician certificate from George Washington University. He earned his bachelor of science degree from the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania and his master of forensic science degree from National University in La Jolla, Calif. He also is “all but dissertation” from completing his doctor of public health degree from Capella University.

Social Media /Community Relations Specialist Ja’Nise Solitaire

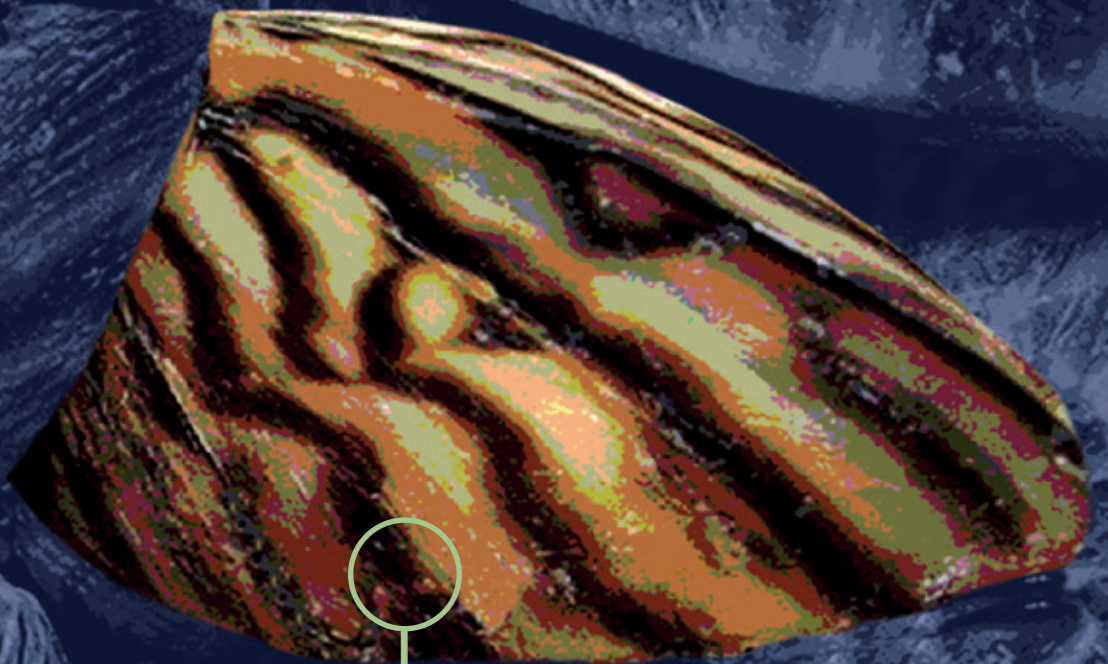
Ja’Nise Solitaire, a broadcast journalist and creative media professional, was proprietor of J3 Media Concepts, LLC, prior to joining GBRA as its social media/community relations specialist. Before becoming an entrepreneur, Solitaire was associate producer at WOAI-TV in San Antonio and was a morning producer with KABB-TV in San Antonio.

“In addition to her journalistic abilities, Ja’Nise brings a creative skill set to her new position at GBRA, and we are looking forward to her contributions in communications,” said LaMarriol Smith, executive manager for strategic communications and education.

Solitaire earned her bachelor of arts degree from the University of North Texas in Denton.



*From L to R: Oscar Ramirez, Ja'Nice Solitaire,
and Raymond Casteline*



ZEBRA MUSSELS

Zebra Mussels

Know the Signs, Know Prevention

“The presence of zebra mussels in the river basin will prompt our due diligence with respect to all of GBRA’s water intake structures and treatment facilities”...

– Kevin Patteson, GBRA General Manager/CEO

After a watercraft in the Cranes Mills Marina area of Canyon Lake in June showed signs of what appeared to be zebra mussels, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) officials surveyed the lake and determined zebra mussels actually are present.

Native to the lakes of Russia and Ukraine, zebra mussels are small freshwater mollusks that are invasive to the waters of the United States. The first Texas infestation of this invasive species was found in Lake Texoma in 2009.

Zebra mussels, which have sharp shells and multiply rapidly, can negatively affect native fish, become beach hazards, damage boats and boating equipment, and clog water intakes. In Texas, it is unlawful to possess or transport zebra mussels, dead or alive.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) constructed the 8,230-acre Canyon Lake for flood control and water supply, with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) as the local sponsor. Of the 378,852 acre-feet (a/f) of water stored at Canyon Lake, 90,000 a/f is permitted as water supply managed by GBRA.

*This
is the
first
positive
documentation
of
zebra mussels
in
Canyon Lake
and in
the
Guadalupe
River
Basin*

The positive finding places all of the reservoirs downstream of Canyon Lake, including Lake Dunlap, Lake McQueeney, Lake Placid, Meadow Lake, Lake Gonzales (H-4), and Lake Wood (H-5) at risk of invasion as zebra mussel larvae disperse downstream. Initial inspections in August did not reveal a presence of zebra mussels on fixtures of the hydro dams in the Guadalupe Valley Hydroelectric System. However, zebra mussels were determined to be present on the exterior of a pump column at the Western Canyon Raw Water Station. Operations staff is working to secure a diver to check the intake structure of the Western Canyon Water Treatment Plant that goes into Canyon Lake, which may occur sometime in October 2017.

“Even with the TPWD positive determination for the presence of zebra mussels in Canyon Lake, we want to ensure our customers that it does not negatively affect the safety of their drinking water,” GBRA General Manager/CEO Kevin Patteson said. “However, the presence of zebra mussels in the river basin will prompt our due diligence with respect to all of GBRA’s water intake structures and treatment facilities, which will include an ongoing monitoring and inspection regiment,” he added.

GBRA and TPWD staffs regularly conduct sampling at designated areas along the Guadalupe River and at Canyon Lake, which with this finding became the state’s southernmost affected lake. Patteson said additional monitoring and evaluation may be necessary to determine potential long-term impacts, treatment and mitigation options for Western Canyon Water Treatment Plant and intake structures.

A TPWD June 12 news release indicated TPWD staff also began inspecting other marinas at Canyon Lake. Information they collect will help in evaluating potential future impacts below Canyon on infrastructure and habitat.

“This is the first positive documentation of zebra mussels in Canyon Lake and in the Guadalupe River Basin,” said Brian Van Zee, Inland Fisheries regional director for TPWD. “Although marina staff have intercepted several incoming boats over the years that had invasive mussels attached, it is essential that boats stored on infested lakes be decontaminated before they’re moved, as they are a key pathway for spreading this invasive species.”

Since zebra mussels were first found in Texas in 2009, 11 lakes in five river basins are now classified as infested – Belton, Bridgeport, Dean Gilbert (a 45-acre Community Fishing Lake in Sherman), Eagle Mountain, Lewisville, Randell, Ray Roberts, Stillhouse Hollow, Texoma, Lake Travis and Canyon.

TPWD defines a water body having an established, reproducing population of zebra mussels as “infested,” and have determined the mussels in Canyon Lake meet their criteria for the designation. Patteson said GBRA is employing more signage in appropriate areas regarding cleaning requirements for boats and other watercraft in an effort to prevent the mussels from spreading to other water bodies and explained that GBRA already is a partner with TPWD in its “Clean, Drain, Dry Your Boat” campaign to curtail the spread of zebra mussels on Texas lakes. TPWD staff will work with the USACE on additional specific ramp signage at Canyon Lake.

According to Van Zee, boaters are required to drain all water from their boats and onboard receptacles before leaving or approaching a body of fresh water in order to prevent the transfer of zebra mussels. The requirement to drain applies to all types and sizes of boats whether powered or not: fishing boats, wakeboarding and ski boats, personal watercraft, sailboats, kayaks, canoes or any other vessel used on public waters.

Van Zee said that Canyon Lake’s popularity as a boating destination for Texans around the state combined with its deep water and suitable habitat made it vulnerable to the spread of zebra mussels.

“Unfortunately, I think this is a textbook scenario of a zebra mussel infestation that is the result of a contaminated boat being launched in the lake,” Van Zee said. “It really hits home how important it is for boaters to take ownership of the problem and to take the appropriate steps before moving a boat with zebra mussels attached as well as to clean, drain and dry their boats every time they leave a lake.

To find out more about zebra mussels and their potential impacts, please visit tpwd.texas.gov/ZebraMussels.



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HARVEY

The staffs of most river authorities in Texas were abuzz days before the eye of Hurricane Harvey first hit landfall on San Jose Island and then near the Rockport and Fulton areas around 10 p.m. Friday, Aug. 25, 2017, and into the following week. Harvey would become what some meteorologists were calling one of the worst natural disasters to hit the Texas Coast.

To provide some historical perspective, the hurricane that struck Galveston in 1900, wherein an estimated 12,000 people

YHITS

lost their lives, certainly counts among the worst. The Texas Coast took another hit from Hurricane Carla in 1961. Carla packed 175 mile per hour (mph) winds, produced 17 inches of rain and killed 43 people. In more recent years, damages and deaths caused by hurricanes Rita (2005) and Ike (2008) had significant impacts on the state as well. Although officials continue to survey the aftermath, about 30 confirmed and suspected flood-related deaths have been counted for Harvey.

At the end of August, the National Hurricane Center released its final storm summary on rainfall and winds associated with Hurricane Harvey. A rainfall total of 51.88 inches at Cedar Bayou has broken the continental U.S. record for rainfall from a single storm. The highest peak wind gusts for Harvey were recorded at 132 mph in Port Aransas. The National Weather Service (NWS) recorded more than 44 inches of rain from Harvey in parts of Houston, and the Beaumont-Port Arthur areas received 47.35 inches. More than 10 inches of rain was recorded as far north as Austin.

In the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's district, the NWS recorded 15.60 inches of rainfall at Victoria attributed to Harvey from 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 24, through 9 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 30. The Victoria River Access Water Supply station had a peak wind gust of 83 mph.

The heavy precipitation resulted in major flooding on the Guadalupe River from about Gonzales County on downstream, and the Garcitas and Coletto creeks, and near major flooding was observed on Copano Creek near Refugio, with moderate flooding on the Mission River, according to the NWS. The Guadalupe River at Victoria crested at 31.25 feet (123,935 cubic feet per second [cfs]) during the late evening of Wednesday, Aug. 30, while Bloomington crested at 29.01 feet (95,348 cfs) on Thursday, Aug. 31. These were the second highest recorded crests at these two gauges since records have been kept. The existing record stage of 34.04 feet at Victoria occurred Oct. 20, 1998 and 34.0 feet at Bloomington Oct. 21, 1998.

For its initial impact, Harvey underwent rapid intensification and quickly became a Category 3 hurricane on Friday at 2 p.m. (120 mph sustained winds) and then a Category 4 hurricane (130 mph sustained winds) early Friday evening.

Rockport and Fulton took a direct hit from Harvey's eyewall. Significant structural damage also occurred in numerous other coastal towns including Port Lavaca, Copano Village, Aransas Pass, Port Aransas and Ingleside. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality required the GBRA Calhoun County Rural Water System (RWS) public water system to issue a boil water notice that Saturday. "The crews of the Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant, Calhoun County Canal, and Calhoun County Rural Water divisions worked tirelessly to rapidly restore plant operations and service to affected customers and constituents in the Calhoun County area," Darel Ball, executive manager of Operations and Water Quality, said. The notice was rescinded Friday, Sept. 1, when laboratory test results confirmed the water was safe for human consumption.

"Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir staff managed flow releases through Coletto Dam to ensure the safety of residents in the Victoria County region," Ball explained, adding, "They also worked to quickly remove debris, make repairs and return normalcy to affected park operations and reopened the park to recreationalists on Sept. 18."

Harvey's storm surge brought increased water and tide levels with the highest maximum storm tides of more than 12 feet were observed at the Aransas Wildlife Refuge. Observed storm surge in Port Lavaca was higher than 10 feet. On the very lower reaches of GBRA's district, storm tide levels were from near 3 to 6 feet above ground level at Seadrift and Port O'Connor.

GBRA staff at Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir, Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant, and Calhoun County RWS had not yet tallied all of the damages at these facilities by press time.

Photos depict extensive flooding and wind damage in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. GBRA engineers also took time to document high-water marks to provide to the appropriate state and federal agencies.



Photo by Leigh Crettenden

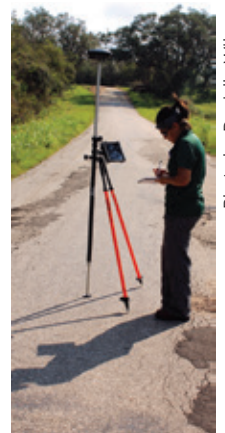


Photo by Danielle Wilson

Wind damage at GBRA's Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir included overturned RVs and cabins as well as broken trees and branches.



Photo by Alan Scheider



Photo by Leigh Crettenden



Photo GBRA Archive



Photo GBRA Archive



Photo by Danielle Wilson



Grant Facilitates Watershed Education at Learning Center

Photos by Ja'Nise Solitaire



By Ja'Nise Solitaire

Nestled behind a rugged tree line off U.S. 90 East in Seguin are 115 acres of nature filled with experiential learning opportunities. Since October 2015, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) Communications and Education and Water Quality departments have contributed to expand existing programs at the Irma Lewis Seguin Outdoor Learning Center (ILSOLC) through a grant issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

The ILSOLC is the perfect place to teach the love of nature and outdoor exploration to students. The property includes opportunities for outdoor recreation, science education activities, and exploration of both land and water ecosystems.

The TCEQ grant provides GBRA with funding for the development and implementation of education and outreach programs, focusing on riparian systems and how to reduce nonpoint source pollution within the Geronimo Creek Watershed. “The creek is on the TCEQ’s 303(d) list due to high bacteria levels,” said Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, GBRA environmental education administrator. “The bacteria in the water are likely caused by a variety of sources and the result of land uses within the watershed. Geronimo Creek flows through the ILSOLC property and it is an excellent learning environment for students of all ages to learn about watersheds, riparian systems, nonpoint source pollution and water quality.”

The Geronimo Creek Watershed is made up of two creek systems: Alligator and Geronimo creeks. Alligator Creek is an intermittent stream with its headwaters in northern New Braunfels. When flowing, it merges into the spring-fed Geronimo Creek near the town of Geronimo. Geronimo Creek flows into the Guadalupe River just south of the city of Seguin.

Outreach conducted by GBRA is important because it informs the public of the potential dangers of unhealthy watersheds. In the case of Geronimo Creek, the bacteria in the water eventually will make its way into the Guadalupe River, which serves as a drinking water source for downstream communities. As of press time, GBRA has presented content to more than 1,300 students under the TCEQ grant. Activities conducted range from geocaching and riparian trail walks to studying macroinvertebrates.

“We measure our success through outreach. Every student we work with learns about the importance of water quality and healthy riparian systems,” Thomas-Jimenez said. “They are able to take the information back and implement it in their homes and communities.”

A Water Protection Plan (WPP) for Geronimo Creek is being implemented by Texas A&M University’s Agri-Life Department. In addition to supporting riparian and non-point source education efforts at the ILSOLC, the TCEQ grant supports the WPP with education and demonstrations of low-impact development (LID) practices. GBRA Water Quality Permitting and Project Coordinator Lauren Willis monitors the TCEQ grant and ensures GBRA completes its requirements.

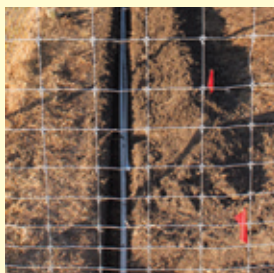
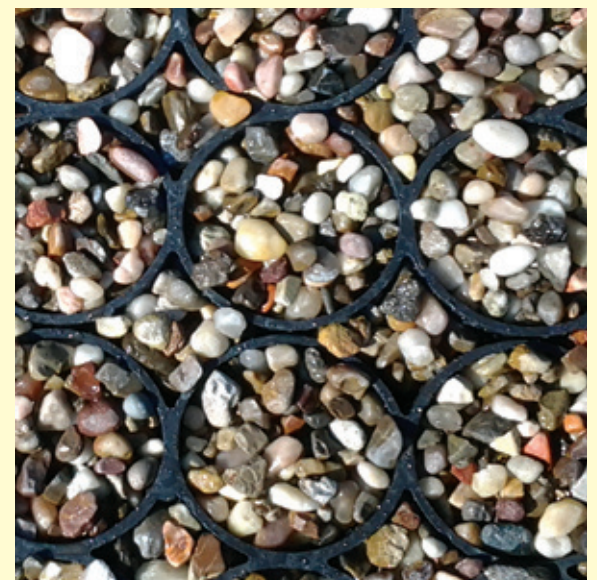
“This is a four-year grant. We were awarded a sum of \$306,667,” she said. “We’re half way through the grant and are close to fulfilling the tasks for water quality outreach.”

To supplement school-age education tasks, staff designed additional project tasks to address LID strategies. A rainwater harvesting system, rain garden, vegetated swale and pervious parking have been installed at the ILSOLC site.

GBRA staff also presented information on these LID construction techniques and how these innovations reduce storm water runoff in local watersheds and improve water quality at community workshops. Plans are underway for a second pervious parking area to be installed this fall using pervious pavers.



Photos by Lauren Willis



THE TRUST

Intern Assists with GBR Trust Activities

By Bethany Hamson

Water sampling, facility tours, and species assessments are just a few of the things in which Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBR Trust) interns may participate while working in an unique, summer internship program.

Through a three-way partnership between the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas, The University of the South (Sewanee), and the GBRA, students like Bethany Hamson are immersed in hands-on, environmental learning experiences.

Hamson, who is majoring in natural resources, plans to graduate with her bachelor's degree from Sewanee in spring 2018. "I'm so excited and looking forward to using the knowledge I've gained from my internship work with GBRA and the Trust," she said.

Mentoring Hamson through her internship were GBR Trust Executive Director Carrie Kasnicka and GBRA Executive Manager of Resource Policy and Stewardship Todd Votteler, Ph.D., who helped develop the program with the Episcopal Diocese.

"Over the summer, Hamson really was invaluable in assisting us with inspecting conservation easements for compliance and communicating with landowners," Kasnicka said. "This program allows the interns to get a lot of one-on-one experience and to see up-close the workings of real policy issues."

Votteler explained that in developing the internship experience at GBRA, he wanted to ensure students would be exposed to more than office and clerical work. "I wanted her to attend and understand what was going on in important meetings where we might be deciding critical water policy issues or making decisions that affect aquatic species," he said.

Hamson said she was able to join GBRA laboratory technicians in the field taking samples from rivers and streams in the Guadalupe River Basin, toured the Canyon Lake Gorge, and even viewed the San Marcos Springs from a glass-bottom boat at the Meadows Center.

"I can't say enough about how beneficial this program was and how much I appreciate both the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas, GBRA and the GBR Trust for affording me this opportunity," she said, adding that she would encourage other Sewanee students studying in natural resource disciplines to apply.



Photo by Carrie Kasnicka

GUADALUPE-BLANCO
RIVER TRUST
Intern
Bethany Hamson
photographs
the riparian area
while visiting
Old Glory Ranch
in Wimberley
during an annual
easement site
inspection.

INSIDE GBRA

Where Are They Now? Debbie Magin



Photo by Lauren Willis

By Danielle Wilson

“When you work with a group of people who are dedicated to protecting and educating the people in their watershed, you feel like you are doing something worthwhile.” This is the response that comes when one asks Debbie Magin, former GBRA director of Water Quality Services, about her favorite part of working for GBRA.

Magin, who resides in Seguin, began her GBRA career July 1976 as a lab analyst for Water Quality and then quickly moved up the ladder to lab director. During her tenure, she oversaw various programs and worked to secure permits and renewals for GBRA’s operations. Magin also worked on environmental issues and describes her time in Water Quality as a nonstop job that she absolutely loved, and in retirement, transferred that passion to educating children and adults in her extended community.

Retired since 2014, Magin uses her knowledge and skills to help local communities understand the importance of water and how to conserve it. She said people must learn how to protect and stretch water

resources. She explained that everyone needs to recognize that watershed protection is not someone else’s issue. “We should all realize how critical we are in responsibly handling the resources that nature has given us,” she said.

Retirement has not slowed Magin. She serves on the Irma Lewis Seguin Outdoor Learning Center Board of Directors, where its goals are to make sure that both children and adults have a positive outdoor experience that helps them understand how they fit in the environment. She also serves on the Spring Hill Water Supply Corporation Board of Directors ensuring that the water quality is excellent for their customers and that all monies in the corporation are spent appropriately.

While working with those boards and participating in a host of other activities, Magin still finds time to work a part-time job in New Braunfels, where she is helping to write a watershed protection plan for the Comal River and Dry Comal Creek. In her spare time, Magin likes to volunteer with her church and local library. She truly is a Renaissance woman!

Employee Milestone Anniversaries

July

07/10/17	Oscar Ramirez	Financial Administration	NH
07/13/17	Shalynn Sprague	Lab	NH
07/31/17	Jana Gray	Lab	NH

August

08/13/17	Kimberly Helmke	Financial Administration	5
08/14/17	Ja'Nise Solitaire	Communications	NH

September

09/02/17	Jason Eeds	Lockhart WWTP	25
09/15/17	Ronnie Parenica	Port Lavaca WTP	25
09/24/17	Jennifer Sanchez	Lab	5

October

10/25/17	Annlee Drazkowski	Financial Administration	10
10/17/17	Elizabeth Gutierrez	Communications	5

November

11/24/17	Jeannine Herrmann	Financial Administration	20
11/01/17	Gynna Hernandez	Financial Administration	10

December

12/28/17	Dianne Fly	Coletto Creek Park & Reservoir	25
12/03/17	Daniel Alonso	SA Bay Foundation	5

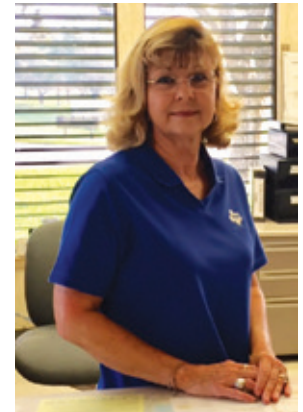
*NH = new hire

The information for the employee anniversary list was compiled by Jeannine Herrmann in the Office of Finance and Administration.

GBRA recognizes the following employees for their dedication of service. These employees started with GBRA between the months of July through December.



Photos GBRA Archives



Dianne Fly

Chief Ranger Korth Retires

Thirty-seven-year employee Wilfred Korth, Jr., hung up his chief ranger shirt for good in July following an exceptional park service career with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority.

Korth entered employment with the GBRA Nov. 19, 1979, initially serving as a Reservoir Ranger in the Coletto Creek Recreation Division before being promoted to chief ranger Aug. 28, 1981. He also worked with local schools, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and other organizations to implement youth hunting, fishing, and education programs in an effort to expose young people to the outdoors at GBRA's Coletto Creek and Lake Wood recreational areas.

Korth was instrumental in working with Coletto Creek Power in obtaining a 238-acre conservation easement adjacent to Coletto Creek Reservoir with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, and he worked to maintain Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir as a top South Texas camping, fishing and boating destination.



Photos by Janet Thome

L to R: GBRA Board Chair Rusty Brockman, Claire Korth, Wilfred Korth, and GM/CEO Kevin Patteson.



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October

Oct. 16-18, 2017

Basic Watershed Modeling
9500 Amberglenn Blvd., Bldg. F, Austin, TX
http://www.tfma.org/events/event_list.asp

Oct. 18, 2017

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

Oct. 18-20, 2017

TWCA Fall Conference
The Wyndam Riverwalk Hotel, San Antonio, TX
<https://www.twca.org/>

November

Nov. 15, 2017

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

Nov. 29-30, 2017

The American Water Summit
JW Marriott, Austin, TX
<http://www.americanwatersummit.com/>

December

Dec. 15, 2017

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



Photo by Janet Thome