

# GBRA River Run

A publication of the **GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY** Fall 2007



*Good  
Neighbors  
on the  
Guadalupe*

Accounting Staff Recognized



Water Facilities Enhanced



Gorge Opens for Tours

# From the GM

## Good Neighbors on the Guadalupe . . .

When I reflect upon the organizational structure of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, it reminds me that the authority does so much more than simply manage the resources of the rivers within the basin. Many of our constituents and friends realize that GBRA is involved in water, wastewater, and hydroelectric operations. But some of these groups are not aware of the role GBRA takes in assisting their communities in a variety of other ways.



Yes, GBRA has been a "good neighbor" on the Guadalupe.

From our staff's involvement in helping to develop the Zedler Mill Project in Luling, to assisting the Canyon Reservoir communities on the Canyon Lake Gorge Project and Tye Preston Memorial Library, to working with Gonzales on developing new paddling trails, to clearing log jams in the lower basin, to our most recent efforts in Kendall County to construct Joshua Springs Park and Preserve, and in Victoria County to help its chances in landing an Exelon Generation Company, LLC, nuclear facility. All of these activities have positive economic impacts in their respective communities, and opportunities such as that with Exelon could represent a profound economic boon, bringing hundreds of well-paying jobs to the area.

GBRA's assistance and participation in such projects takes many forms. In some instances, GBRA provides funding along with other project partners. In other cases, GBRA assists in identifying and securing federal, state, or private grants, facilitates discussions, and engages interested parties accordingly.

Please read more about the GBRA's commitment to helping its friends and neighbors in its 10-county statutory district on page 8 in this issue of the *River Run*.

Other information in the *River Run* that certainly will be of interest to our readers is the recent activity related to the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

GBRA, fellow river authorities, water and groundwater districts, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and other industry entities have worked with their congressional representatives to try to pass this important legislation. WRDA would authorize planning, design, and construction assistance for environmental infrastructure, resource protection, and development projects, including water supply for Texas. This issue of the *River Run* explains more about how the bill would affect Texas and how it fared on Capitol Hill.

Keeping our constituents informed is just another way the GBRA is being your good neighbor on the Guadalupe.

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

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## GBRA River Run

Fall 2007

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Front and back cover photos by LaMarriol Smith

# FIELD & OFFICE

## New Storm Shelter Put into Place at Coletto Creek

When Mother Nature sends Hurricane Rita knocking at the door, it doesn't hurt to have a door that can withstand the pressure of the intense winds that come with it.

Recently, the GBRA installed a storm shelter near the main spillway at the Coletto Creek Reservoir to protect emergency staff required during hurricanes and other severe weather that tend to strike the coastal areas.

Hurricane Rita was the fourth-most intense Atlantic hurricane ever recorded and the most intense tropical cyclone ever observed in the Gulf of Mexico. Rita made landfall on Sept. 24, 2005, between Sabine Pass, Texas, and Johnsons Bayou, La., as a Category 3 hurricane and at one point packed maximum sustained winds up to 140 mph.

GBRA's 68,000-pound shelter, constructed in Chandler, AZ by Oldcastle Precast, is designed to withstand up to 150 mph winds with five-inch thick walls, floor and roof.

Using a 240-ton crane, reservoir staff installed the shelter with the help of Bay Inc.



Photo by Alan Schneider

## GBRA Assists Seguin Wastewater Operations

Following the recent resignation of the City of Seguin's wastewater treatment plant chief operator, the GBRA stepped in to assist so that Seguin would remain in compliance with state requirements.

The Texas Commission for Environmental Quality requires a chief operator with a "Class B" wastewater operator's license or higher to monitor the city's Walnut Branch and Geronimo wastewater treatment plants. Because Seguin needed a temporary chief operator until the position could be filled permanently, City Manager Douglas Faseler requested management services from GBRA.

GBRA lent Seguin a "Class A" licensed wastewater operator and a "Class B" licensed operator to rotate at the Seguin plants for approximately three months while the city conducted a search to fill the position permanently.

"We are most appreciative that GBRA could help the City of Seguin with its wastewater operations in the interim. Their willingness to provide assistance and the professionalism of GBRA's staff has certainly helped as we make the transition to a new chief operator," Faseler said.

# Teachers Learn Water Conservation to Take Back to Classrooms

by Cinde Thomas-Jimenez

Water is one of the Earth's most precious natural resources. Conserving that resource must be taught at an early age in order to insure supplies for future generations. At the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), an education coordinator is employed to infuse the concept of conservation and general water education into the schools systems within the GBRA's 10-county statutory district. Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, GBRA's education coordinator, organized two well-attended "Wonders of Water (WOW)" teacher workshops over the summer – a time when most people usually think teachers are enjoying a little rest and relaxation.

These vigorous, week-long institutes were designed to engage teachers in a variety of fun, indoor and outdoor activities that introduce teachers to the many challenges in the Guadalupe River Basin that today's students will face in the future. Participating teachers – from kindergarten through eighth grade – received a \$200 stipend and earned 30 hours of professional development credits.

In order to provide stipends, presentations, and other materials, the GBRA enlisted governmental, utility and water partners within the region, including, the City of San Marcos Water Conservation Department, Schertz-Seguin Water Development Corporation, Springs Hill Water Supply Corporation, Green Valley Special Utility District, Canyon Regional Water Supply, Crystal Clear Water Supply Corporation, and New Braunfels Utilities, Victoria and Refugio Groundwater Conservation Districts, and DuPont Industries.

Ideally, teachers will use the information and activities they were provided in the sessions, and modify it to reach the grade level objectives for their science and social studies classes. In-class presentations focused on the chemical attributes of water, water uses, water quality and quantity. Field trips to water treatment plants, wetlands, wastewater plants, and environmental learning centers supplemented the understanding of the topics.

Teachers from Comal, Hays, Guadalupe, and Caldwell counties attended the first workshop, held in June, hosted by Texas Lutheran University (TLU). TLU and Seguin ISD joined GBRA in presenting classroom lectures, daily hands-on activities, demonstration of models, and pre/post field trip discussions.

"It was a wonderful experience for me and you made learning easier for me," Susan Nichols, principal of San Marcos Adventist Junior Academy, said of the WOW training.

"The class is very practical. By having community members visit with us, touring facilities, and faculty that understood our needs as well as informing us, I received a great amount of information."

The second workshop, Wonders of Water in the Environment (WOW-E), also focused on the regional issues of air and solid waste. Hosted by Victoria College, it involved teachers from DeWitt, Refugio, Victoria and Calhoun counties. Victoria College, the Region III Education Service Center, Calhoun ISD and the City of Victoria joined GBRA in lectures, presentations, and field trips.

"If we provide the training for teachers to teach young people how to become good stewards of water and the environment, it will pay off in the long run," said Bill West, GBRA general manager. "What we do today affects how we live tomorrow."

Photos by Cinde Thomas-Jimenez



# San Marcos WTP Expansion Nears Completion

**D**espite the deluge of rain in Central Texas over the spring and summer, the San Marcos WTP expansion progressed ahead of schedule and met the “substantial completion” (operational) stage prior to its Oct. 16 milestone date.

The \$9.4 million expansion, initiated in August 2006, includes a second clarifier, four additional filters, an emergency generation system, and a two million-gallon, pre-stress concrete clear well.

The additional capacity brings the water treatment plant from a rating of 9 million gallons per day (mgd) up to 21 mgd, said Gary Asbury, GBRA manager of project engineering.

Asbury along with Chris Lewis oversaw construction for the expansion. Alan Plummer Associates, Inc., served as engineers and the construction company was Archer Western Contractors, LTD. Final completion of the expansion is Dec. 15, 2007.

The original City of San Marcos surface water treatment plant, completed in January 2000, was initiated to reduce dependence on the Edwards Aquifer, providing drinking water for about 45,000 San Marcos area residents.

San Marcos contracted with the GBRA to draw water from the Guadalupe River, piping it about 23 miles to the plant, which is operated by GBRA. That construction project cost about \$7.2 million. The design allowed a plant flow of about 9 mgd. The engineering firm for the original project was Alan Plummer Associates, Inc.

Photos by LaMarriol Smith



## Regional Raw Water Pump Station Remains on Schedule

**T**he Regional Raw Water Pump Station and related pipeline, located near Lake Dunlap off Highway 46 just outside of Clear Springs, continues to progress on schedule.

“This project was initiated to fulfill a regional need for water delivery,” said Bill West, GBRA general manager, adding, “It is just one of a variety of projects underway that will help communities deal with the tremendous growth occurring in our statutory district.”

Owned and financed by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, the RRW pump station should reach “substantial completion” in May 2008.

An enhancement for the region, the \$12 million-project will increase pumping capacity from 11 million gallons per day (mgd) up to 25 mgd, bring water from Clear Springs to the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant, according to Gary Asbury, GBRA manager of project engineering, who designed it and provided construction oversight.

The RRW pump station and pipeline also will deliver to American National Power, Hays Energy LTD Partners, and CRWA. HDR, Inc., is serving as engineers and the construction company is Archer Western Contractors, LTD.

# Canyon Lake Gorge Opens for Public Tours

Not long after the five-year anniversary of the July 4, 2002, flood and subsequent spilling of Canyon Reservoir forming the Canyon Lake Gorge, the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority has begun offering limited public tours of the canyon continuing year-round on the first Saturday of each month.

The GBRA, which has a lease from the Army Corps of Engineers to manage the 64-acre Canyon Lake Gorge site, has worked in conjunction with the Gorge Preservation Society (GPS) to develop this unique area in a way that will preserve the natural wonders uncovered by the approximately 68,000 cubic feet of water that went roaring over the Canyon Reservoir spillway five years ago. The reservoir itself was completed in 1964 and designed to prevent flash flooding along the Guadalupe River and to serve as a Central Texas water supply. Future development of the gorge includes a rim trail, lookout points and an environmental educational center.

The recent public opening of the gorge drew media attention from both area and national media. Following the publishing of an Associated Press story on Oct. 5, almost 300,000 Internet users visited the gorge website. Of the 31 tours scheduled between October 2007 and October 2008, all have been booked and requests continue. To sign up for a tour, interested parties may visit the Canyon Lake Gorge website at: [www.canyongorge.org](http://www.canyongorge.org).

Anyone interested in becoming a gorge docent may contact Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, at (830) 379-5822 ext. 311 or [cthomas@canyongorge.org](mailto:cthomas@canyongorge.org).



Photo by Marve Ball



## GBRA Accounting Department Lands GFOA Recognition

The Government and Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada awarded its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the GBRA's Accounting Department in September.

The financial report was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story.

The GFOA is a nonprofit professional associating serving approximately 16,000 government finance professionals. It has offices in Chicago and Washington, D.C.

# Luling Water Treatment Plant Receives 5-Year TCEQ Award

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) recently awarded the Luling Water Treatment Plant a "Certificate for Outstanding Performance" in the category of the Total Coliform Rule Program of 2006.

This award, for the 2006 calendar year is the second award in a two-year period earned by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's (GBRA) Luling plant. "The entire staff of the Luling Water Treatment Plant is to be commended for exceeding the requirements of the 'Total Coliform Rule' for the 72-month period from January 2001 through December 2006," Darel Ball, GBRA's Hays/Caldwell division manager said. "The plant operators work around the clock to insure the highest quality drinking water is provided to the citizens of Luling and Lockhart."

Built in the late 1970s, the GBRA Luling Water Treatment Plant was designed to treat surface water pumped from the San Marcos River and deliver it to the City of Luling. Since March 2005, a joint partnership between the cities of Luling and Lockhart and GBRA allows the plant to provide water to the Lockhart water system. This partnership, known as the Luling/Lockhart Treated Water Delivery System, delivers treated water from Luling to Lockhart and is blended with water from the Lockhart wells. The surface water makes up approximately 80 percent of the Lockhart supply on an annual basis.



Photo from GBRA A

## GBRA Operations Take Steps to Make Corrections

### • Western Canyon Water Treatment Plant

The Texas Commission for Environmental Quality requires treatment facilities to properly disinfect water before distribution, maintain acceptable disinfection residuals within the distribution system, monitor the disinfectant residual at various locations throughout the distribution system and report the results to the TCEQ on a quarterly basis.

While the GBRA's operators performed all those requirements and the necessary monitoring at its Western Canyon plant, TCEQ cited the staff for failing to submit the reports of the results of its disinfectant residual

monitoring during the period beginning Jan. 1, 2005, through June 30, 2007.

Since the notice of the violation, GBRA's staff submitted all of the required quarterly reports to TCEQ and is in compliance with the reporting requirements.

### • Lockhart Wastewater Treatment Plant (FM 20)

When TCEQ staff inspected the Lockhart WWTP in August, inspectors cited one violation for the plant having weirs in clarifiers that were not level, which possibly could cause a short circuit in the future. The GBRA hired a contractor to level the clarifier weirs with a laser leveler, correcting the problem as of October.

### • Wimberley Wastewater Treatment Plant

In 2004, the GBRA agreed to operate a formerly private developer-owned WWTP for the Village of Wimberley. The facility is permitted for 15,000 gallons per day and includes an Imhoff settling tank that fails to adequately treat the wastewater to meet permit requirements. Consequently, GBRA staff entered into discussions to provide a more permanent solution for Wimberley. In the meantime, the TCEQ cited GBRA for being over the limit on biochemical oxygen demand (B.O.D.), which measures the strength of the wastewater. While praising GBRA's initiative in self-reporting, the inspector also cited the GBRA for failure to report

effluent pH tests for three months this year. To begin improving the B.O.D.s, GBRA has provided chemical additions to the wastewater and self-implemented weekly pH testing.

The GBRA also entered a contract with Alan Plummer Associates, Inc., an environmental engineering firm, to provide a preliminary engineering report on the feasibility of constructing a collection system and treatment plant for the Village of Wimberley. GBRA staff anticipates receiving the report within the next three months.



# GBRA Hosts Open House



Robert Nieto takes a closer look at the GBRA watershed model during Open House.

(Below) Debbie Magin and Josie Longoria (left) show the new lab section to Director T.L. Walker (center) and retiree Jim Arnst. In the lower photo, retirees Judy Gardner, Clara Fletcher and Jim Arnst speak with Vernelle Jones.

(Above) Preparation for the Open House included restoring the pump function on the GBRA's entry fountain.

Retiree and Open House guide Clara Fischer shows Wilfred Korth (left) and Herb Wittliff some historical Seguin office photos.



Photos by LaMarriol Smith

## Did You Know?

The Guadalupe River was named for Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe by Spanish explorer Alonzo de Leon in 1689.

In mid-November, the GBRA hosted an "open house" for its Seguin campus. Employees enjoyed an open house preview on Halloween. GBRA's entire Seguin campus has increased to a total of about 25,000 square feet. The first phase of this transformation began in 2002 with the replacement of the warehouse. The second phase began in mid-2003 by building the River Annex, which provided about 5,000 sq-ft. The third phase included constructing the technical and accounting wings, which began in fall 2004 and ended in mid-2006, followed by the remodeling of the original building, which began late 2006. 

# Good Neighbors

## How the GBRA Assists Communities with Economic Development

by Tammy Beutnagel

**T**he GBRA Mission statement displayed in the lobby of the river authority's main office states: "GBRA is to protect, conserve, reclaim and steward the resources of the district, and provide leadership in regional cooperation, in order to enhance quality of life for those we serve."

This exemplifies exactly what GBRA has tried to achieve since 1933 for neighbors and communities in the 10-county statutory district of Kendall, Comal, Guadalupe, Caldwell, Gonzales, Hays, Calhoun, DeWitt, Refugio and Victoria counties.

By 1935, GBRA created individual relationships on both economic and community levels by assisting area farmers in the farmers' assistance program known as the Soil Conservation Program. In its seven decades, GBRA has continued to assist neighboring cities and counties through flood control, water and wastewater treatment, hydroelectric operations, and economic development.

Recognizing the tremendous growth occurring in the region, the GBRA took proactive steps to help these communities in developing and improving their economic assets by hiring staff who would directly engage community and business leaders economic development. Randy Worden, executive manager of business development, joined the management team in 2002, and hired Tommie Streeter-Rhoad as customer representative and economic development manager in 2003. Worden and Rhoad quickly familiarized themselves with leaders within the district and forged new relationships with them on behalf of GBRA.

The Zedler Mill Project in Luling, TX, is an example of one of the successful partnerships in which the GBRA's economic development team participated. For this project, the City of Luling, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and GBRA pooled resources to save an 1874 saw mill, gristmill and cotton gin on the banks of the San Marcos River. When Luling Mayor Mike Hendricks called a meeting, 90 concerned citizens came together to discuss what could be done to preserve the historic building and property. From this initial effort, the Zedler Mill Foundation was formed and the Zedler Mill became a non-profit 501(c)(3).

Today, the historic Zedler Mill complex makes up seven structures located on nine acres, including the Fritz Zedler home that was built in the early 1900s.

"GBRA has really supported anything we do at the mill," said Randy Engelke, chair of the Zedler Mill Foundation. "We're really proud to have GBRA as a partner."

With the help of TPWD and GBRA, the Zedler Mill Foundation served as the basis for forming the Luling Zedler Mill Paddling Trail. Canoe and kayak enthusiasts in the Guadalupe River Basin now have access to the first inland paddling trail in the basin.

Engelke said he has appreciated GBRA's assistance in organizing clean-up days at the mill and participating with the annual Zedler Mill catfish cook-off.

Future development of the Zedler Mill site will involve construction of a pavilion, bath house and on-site utilities. GBRA's economic development staff recently met with architects to see how the GBRA might continue to assist in this effort.

### Canyon Lake Gorge Project

While Zedler Mill is a success story, it is not the first or the only. GBRA has worked closely with the community of Canyon Lake and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) since the early 1960s when construction, sponsorship and 378,852 acre-feet of water was captured to create Canyon Reservoir. Today GBRA's economic development staff continues to work closely with the Canyon Lake community on the Canyon Lake Gorge Project.

The gorge was formed when Canyon Reservoir spilled as a result of the July 2002 flood. This natural event brought GBRA, the USACE and the community of Canyon Lake together in a unique partnership.

Rock formations that date back millions of years, dinosaur tracks, natural springs and fossils were just a few amazing features uncovered after the tragic flood. In an effort to preserve the gorge and develop it as an educational site for its scientific value, the GBRA submitted a development plan to the USACE in 2005. The Corps, which owns the property rights where the gorge is located, approved the plan and negotiations began for a 25-year lease between the two entities.

Led by GBRA, a citizens' advisory group was created, and in 2006, the Gorge Preservation Society (GPS) was formed. The GPS works to secure funding to preserve the gorge, properly develop trails, and oversee touring. This October, the gorge was opened to the public for guided tours. For tours, visit the gorge website at [www.canyongorge.org](http://www.canyongorge.org).

"There has been phenomenal interest in the gorge, and tours are booked for a full year. GBRA and the GPS will be training more

# the Guadalupe

docents during the month of November. These new docents eventually will become tour guides and will allow us to put more tours on the calendar,” said Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, GBRA education coordinator.

Future plans for Canyon Lake Gorge include hiring a staff person to help develop an eco-tourism site and preserve the historic beauty for generations to come.

## **Preston Memorial Library Project**

The GBRA’s staff has found other opportunities to assist with economic development in the Canyon Lake community. The GBRA is sponsoring the entry courtyard and fountain that is being built in the expansion of the Tye Preston Memorial Library. A new 18,000-square foot facility, tripled in size of the current building, provides a separate children’s area, a meeting room, gathering area and an outside deck.

Bette W. Wehner, president of the Canyon Lake Community Library District Board, reported that 75,000 people visited the library last year and expected that number to exceed last year’s total by the end 2008. In 2000, approximately 40 children attended the summer reading

program and by 2007, the library hosted 300 young readers.

On behalf of the Canyon Lake Community Library District Board, Wehner presented GBRA an award, accepted by Streeter-Rhoad, for its contribution to the library project.

“Having a state-of-the-art library that is accessible to everyone in the community is often a priority for anyone interested in relocating to an area, and Tye Preston Memorial has filled that need since its founding in the early 1970s,” Wehner said, adding, “GBRA’s contribution and support helps us continue to meet our goals as the population increases. We are pleased that GBRA recognizes the role that the library plays in the economic development of the area.”

Streeter-Rhoad explained, “GBRA is happy to assist a vital Canyon Lake resource like the Tye Preston Memorial Library to meet the growth needs in its community.”

In addition to the Luling Paddling Trail, GBRA has begun working with the City of Gonzales, Gonzales County Historic Commission, Gonzales Economic Development Corporation, and the Gonzales Chamber of Commerce to build the Gonzales Paddling Trails. Shortly after a community meeting in Gonzales last year, GBRA submitted a grant to National Park Service requesting assistance for the paddling trail project.

The GBRA’s staff helped form a steering committee earlier this year and filed applications with TPWD for recognition as another inland paddling trail in Texas.

“There will be two paddling trails - one will be on the Guadalupe River starting at Lakewood Park and ending at Independence Park,” Teresa VanBooven, GBRA economic development representative and project coordinator said. The second park, she explained, would be located on the San Marcos River and end on the Guadalupe River at Independence Park. The segment that starts at Lakewood Park is accessible now, but the San Marcos River segment remains in the development phase.”

## **Other Projects**

GBRA’s economic development staff is also working with TPWD to create a basin-wide paddling trail in Victoria and other communities in the Guadalupe River Basin.



Photo by Connie Rothe

# Good Neighbors, cont.



In Kendall County, GBRA, in a collaborative effort with the Kendall County Commissioner's Court, the National Park Service, and the residents of Kendall County is initiating the construction of Joshua Springs Park and Preserve. The development of this 406-acre park and preserve will be a valued nature area for Kendall County.

Other relationships between GBRA and its neighbors have led to a variety of successful projects such as the Roland and Viola Bindseil Park in Blanco, the Fannin and Belmont volunteer fire departments, Jumbo Evans Sports Park in Comal County, Saint Judes Ranch for Children in Bulverde, Independence Park in Gonzales, DeWitt Technology Center in DeWitt County, Riverside Stadium in Victoria, the Blue Hole in Wimberley, and Friends for River Clean Up in New Braunfels. 



Photos by Connie Rothe

# New Board Members Join the Trust

## Conservation Partner Award Created

by LaMarriol Smith

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust recently added two new members to the Board of Trustees and elected officers for the upcoming year.

In September, **Grace G. Kunde**, a Seguin attorney who serves on the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's Board of Directors representing Guadalupe County, joined the Trust Board. Kunde earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas Lutheran University and a law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law. She is a private practice attorney in Seguin and a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas, the San Antonio Bar Association, the Bexar County Women's Bar Association and the Guadalupe County Bar Association. She volunteers her time to church, civic, and political activities. Kunde is a member of Redeemer United Church of Christ, the Seguin Rotary Club, a member and former president of the Guadalupe County Republican Women and a former Guadalupe County Republican Party precinct chair. She previously served on the Board of Directors for the Comal County Children's Shelter as treasurer and president and member of the Advisory Board.

Introduced in October, the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Board (UGRA) appointed **Lana Edwards** of Hunt, as its representative on the Trust Board replacing Trustee A.L. "Curg" Starkey, III, who has served on the Board since 2004. Edwards attended Abilene Christian College and the University of Houston. She and her husband, Danny Edwards moved from Houston to Hunt in 1985 where they had purchased property in 1980. She operates the Getaway Cottage on their Hunt property. Edwards was an Arabian horse breeder for many years.

After moving to Kerr County she became active in politics and many civic and church activities having served as a counselor at Talley House Maternity Home and director of Kerr County Christian Action Council. Edwards was a co-founder and served as president of the Professional Republican Women of Kerr County and President of the Hunt Garden Club, and was co-founder and serves as director of Kerr County Prayer Fellowship.

The Trustees also elected a slate of officers during its October meeting at the GBRA's River Annex in Seguin. The 2008 officers are: President Toby Summers; Vice President Robert Thornton; and Secretary-Treasurer Roger Welder.

In other business, Trust Executive Director Todd Votteler submitted the first Guadalupe River Conservation Partner Award nomination to the Trustees, which was unanimously accepted. Plans are underway to make a formal presentation of the Guadalupe River Conservation Partner Award at a meeting in 2008. Organizations or individuals nominated for the award must make a significant contribution to a Trust project of great importance. Nominations are ad hoc. ■

# Water Resource Deve

... *President Wie*

**B**oth the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate recently passed the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), but at press time, President George W. Bush wielded his veto pen to the legislation that he described as lacking “fiscal discipline.”

During the week of November 5, the legislation headed back to the House and Senate, where lawmakers over turned the veto, with more than two-thirds of each chamber making the bill law.

WRDA would authorize planning, design, and construction assistance for environmental infrastructure, resource protection, and development projects, including water supply for Texas. It will

**“These worthy projects will generate jobs across Texas, benefit local economies, and improve Texas infrastructure”**

support the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) State Water Plan. The cost share would be 75 percent federal and 25 percent non-federal with a \$40 million authorization for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to work with the state to implement the plan.

In addition to authorizing flood control, navigation and ecosystem restoration projects, the 2007 WRDA legislation would enact significant reform of the USACE. It would establish requirements for independent reviews of USACE projects and make it easier to stop work on projects that are no longer needed.

WRDA also increases federal participation in watershed-based planning – something, which may help prevent another flood protection failure like the Hurricane Katrina disaster. Even with the extraordinary work related to Katrina, the annual average of work for the USACE remains comparable to what it has been for decades.

In addition to the flood protection for New Orleans, WRDA also would authorize the USACE to make improvements to Folsom Dam to provide increased protection for Sacramento and allow work on the Everglades restoration projects – nearly 18 years after Congress directed it. All three of these projects are acknowledged as high priorities.

Although one of the issues cited by those opposed to authorizing WRDA is the work backlog at the USACE, those in

favor have said that backlogs do not necessarily translate into higher priorities.

## **The WRDA Impact in Texas**

More than \$1 billion in WRDA approved for 39 Texas water projects would have a significant impact on the state’s ability to deal with a wide variety of water resources situations. Work on flood protection projects in Dallas, Arlington, Harris County, Central Texas, and along the Rio Grande, ship channel and intra-coastal waterway projects in Corpus Christi and Coastal Texas, and support for the TWDB are just some of the projects statewide that will benefit from the passage of the WRDA legislation.

“These worthy projects will generate jobs across Texas, benefit local economies, and improve Texas infrastructure,” said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX.) “Some of these projects will provide critical flood protection and ecosystem restoration, while others will ensure that our waterways remain viable for commerce.”

“The legislation authorizes important infrastructure improvements to make Texas communities safer and boost economic growth,” said Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX.) “The flood control and prevention measures are critical to protecting Texans’ lives, homes and businesses. In addition, the bill includes initiatives to improve and expand some of our state’s coastal waterways that serve as economic engines for both local communities and the nation.”

Bill West, general manager of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and president of the National Water Resource Association (NWRA), said, “Population growth and environmental concerns that make new water supply development difficult is a major concern for everybody worried about water resources.”

**“Our economic health depends as much on water and wastewater infrastructure and resources as it does on the nation’s transportation infrastructure.”**

West added, “Our economic health depends as much on water and wastewater infrastructure and resources as it does on the nation’s transportation infrastructure. Recent failures like the levees in New Orleans and the Interstate Highway 35 bridge in Minneapolis



# Development Act

by Rose Marie Eash

## *Veto Pen ... Congress Overrides ...*

highlight the need to continue to invest in these foundation elements that are so easy to take for granted.”

“Of particular interest to GBRA is the authorization for the Army Corps of Engineers to assist Texas in the implementation of the state water plan,” West said. “Having the Corps as the federal

**“Economic growth cannot happen without a reliable source of water.”**

agent for projects as they were back in the 60s when we were building Canyon Reservoir is very important in terms of federal funding for water development projects.”

### **Reasons to Remain Optimistic**

Those opposed to WRDA authorization have said it is an example of unchecked federal spending and does not focus on critical priorities like hurricane protection for greater New Orleans, flood protection for Sacramento, and restoration of the Florida Everglades.

Lawmakers from Louisiana and Florida delegations, however, disagree saying the real problem is the seven-year delay in passing the WRDA bill.

Addressing the spending issue, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee ranking member James Inhofe (R-OK), a fiscal conservative who has lobbied in favor of WRDA, said it only authorizes projects, but does not fund them directly. Expenses still would have to be justified and the need for investment in water infrastructure is clear.

Both senators Hutchison and Cornyn supported the legislation, lobbying for critical projects across the state. Along with 22 other senators, they signed a letter to President George W. Bush asking him to reconsider his staff’s recommendation on WRDA. The letter explained that WRDA passed both the House and Senate with strong support – 90 percent approving – and was desperately needed.

“It almost passed last year,” said lobbyist Fred McClure of Sonnenschein, Nath, and Rosenthal LLP, who works in support of GBRA issues in Washington.

Prior to the veto, McClure, a former Assistant for Legislative Affairs to President George H. W. Bush and a Special Assistant for Legislative Affairs to President Ronald Reagan, said, “This looks good this time for the advancement of water policy.” He emphasized the importance of WRDA on national water policy,

which helps local communities with matching funding and the federal government taking the lead in some cases.

### **The Big Picture**

As president of the National Water Resources Association, a grassroots organization of agricultural and municipal water providers in the 17 Western States, West is keenly aware of how critical public water resources and the infrastructures necessary to deliver them are and how valuable USACE assistance is to local communities.

“Our communities depend on water resources that are developed in a balanced and sustainable way,” West explained, adding, “Economic growth cannot happen without a reliable source of water.”

West said that the USACE has worked with local partners like GBRA to successfully protect hundreds of communities from flooding and they play a lead role with technical assistance and analysis so that river authorities and other agencies can insure water resources can adequately meet each community’s economic and cultural needs in the years ahead.”

Although it is likely that both the House and Senate have enough votes to override a presidential veto, the people in Congress always

**“Citizens should stay informed on water issues and express their concerns to their representatives in Washington.”**

like to hear from their constituents, West explained. “Water issues are so important to all of us, especially those of us who live in areas where the weather is as unpredictable as it is in Central Texas. Citizens should stay informed on water issues and express their concerns to their representatives in Washington.”

**VETO**

# INSIDE GBRA

## Spotlight on GBRA Volunteers



GBRA General Manager Bill West congratulates Curtis Davis as the organization's 2007 Volunteer of the Year.



Kathy and D.W. Rutledge visit with Bill West (right) during the banquet.



The Roughriders Band entertained the banquet crowd with classic western tunes.

Photos by Connie Rothe



GBRA employees enjoy the Grist Mill cuisine during the banquet.

About 70 GBRA employees and friends were on hand to put the spotlight on Curtis Davis, chief operator at the Victoria Wastewater Treatment Plant, as the 2007 "Volunteer of the Year."

Davis has been involved in numerous volunteer efforts as well as working with GBRA's Our Day to Shine projects.

D.W. Rutledge, executive director of the Texas High School Coaches Association, addressed GBRA's annual volunteer banquet, held Saturday, Sept. 22, 2007, at the Grist Mill Restaurant in Gruene, Texas. Rutledge is spouse to recently retired GBRA employee Kathy Rutledge.

## Where are they now?

### Clara Fischer

by LaMarriol Smith

Although Clara Fischer loves gardening as much as anything, one cannot find much grass growing under her feet. Where gardening ends, the winds of travel have captured her heart.

Most recently, Fischer and her sister, Dee Beyer, blew into Eastern Canada while traveling with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in late June. While in Canada, they toured Montreal, Quebec City, Ottawa, and Toronto. The old-fashioned, unique buildings, street dances and culture made Quebec City Fischer's favorite during the tour. The next possible vacation stop for Fischer might be the far eastern area of Rhode Island.

When Fischer first retired after about 35 years with the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), she spent some time caring for her husband, Ben, who had been ill. She underwent master gardener's

training and gardening became one of her favorite pastimes – a hobby she enjoys along with her daughter Denise and daughter-in-law Barbara.

Family, of course, is an important part of Fischer's life. Denise and her husband, Billy Joe (B.J.) have a son, Chad, and Fischer's son, Keith and his wife, Barbara, have a son, Jason. Fischer also has another sister and two brothers.

Fischer, who was a secretary at GBRA to then-Assistant General Manager Robert Vahrenkamp and later worked in budgeting and accounting, fills up her remaining "free" time with reading – specifically, she said she loves mysteries. "More recently, I've decided to finally start 'learning' something rather than just reading fiction," Fischer explained, adding, "I've begun reading about presidents, first ladies, and first families."



Started GBRA: 1958  
Retired GBRA: 1994

Clara Fischer can be reached by email at [cbfischer@satx.rr.com](mailto:cbfischer@satx.rr.com), or by phone at (830) 379-7905.

# *employee anniversaries*

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

## **September**

09/11/67 Roberto Nieto, Hydro Division – 40 yrs  
09/03/74 Frank Tompkins, Victoria WWTP – 33 yrs  
09/08/81 Kathleen Rutledge, Water Resources – 26 yrs  
09/01/88 Eduardo Montana, Lockhart WWTP – 19 yrs  
09/03/91 Stephanie Shelly, Port Lavaca WTP – 6 yrs  
09/02/92 Jason Eeds, Lockhart WWTP – 15 yrs  
09/15/92 Ronnie Parenica, Port Lavaca WTP – 15 yrs  
09/18/92 David Dodd, Calhoun Canal – 15 yrs  
09/14/98 Susan Cochran, Water Resources – 9 yrs  
09/10/99 Russell Jackson, Coleta Recreation – 8 yrs  
09/10/99 Ryan Boedeker, Canal RWSS – 8 yrs  
09/01/00 Brian Lyssy, Lab – 7 yrs  
09/16/00 Luis Garcia, Luling WTP – 7 yrs  
09/27/01 Dennis Walker, Buda WWTP – 6 yrs  
09/28/01 Gerardo Rodriguez, Water Resources – 6 yrs

## **October**

10/08/73 Ronald Gosnell, Canal RWSS – 34 yrs  
10/25/76 Lorenzo Gonzales, Victoria WWTP – 31 yrs  
10/22/79 Herbert Wittliff, Calhoun Canal – 28 yrs  
10/11/90 Elizabeth Sedlacek, Water Resources – 17 yrs  
10/01/01 Barbara Gunn, General Division – 6 yrs  
10/15/01 Marella Dalme, General Division – 6 yrs  
10/26/01 Gerald Hicks, Buda WWTP – 6 yrs  
10/01/02 Randy Worden, Water Resources – 5 yrs  
10/11/02 Terry Ramey, Victoria WWTP – 5 yrs  
10/17/03 Wendell Gillit, Victoria WWTP – 4 yrs  
10/20/03 Jose Leal, Lockhart WTP – 4 yrs  
10/29/04 Keelyn Underwood, Victoria WWTP – 3 yrs  
10/31/05 John Turner, Western Canyon WTP – 2 yrs  
10/31/05 Allen Lawson, Western Canyon WTP – 2 yrs

## **November**

11/01/76 Michael Gerdes, RUD – 31 yrs  
11/19/79 Wilfred Korth, Coleta Recreation – 28 yrs  
11/10/81 Don Koble, Canal RWSS – 26 yrs  
11/14/83 Jason Lewis, Coleta Recreation – 24 yrs  
11/06/95 Thomas McNeal, Luling WTP – 12 yrs  
11/19/97 Angela Baxley, General Division – 10 yrs  
11/24/97 Jeannine Herrmann, General Division – 10 yrs  
11/08/99 James Asbury, General Division – 8 yrs  
11/22/99 Eric Mendez, Lockhart WWTP – 8 yrs  
11/14/00 John Tomlinson, Water Resources – 7 yrs  
11/20/00 Robert Scott, Canyon Hydro – 7 yrs  
11/01/02 Jason Davidson, RUD – 5 yrs  
11/29/05 Juan Vasquez, Western Canyon WTP – 2 yrs

## **GBRA** *Training & Licenses*

**Curtis Davis** from the Victoria WWTP earned his “A” Wastewater Operator License, and attended trainings for Microsoft Excel and Advanced Microsoft Excel

**Tim Hill** from the Western Canyon WTP earned a “C” Wastewater Treatment Operator and attended training for TCEQ Operator Management

**Christopher Lewis** from the General Division obtained a “D” Water Operator License

**Tony Saenz III** from the Victoria WWTP earned a “D” Wastewater Operator License, and recently attended training for Wastewater Collection and Water Utilities Safety

**Art Samons** from the Western Canyon WTP “D” Water Operator License and recently attended the TCEQ Operator Valve and Hydrant Training

**Ross Chapman** from the Victoria WWTP Wastewater Collection and attended training for Water Utilities Safety

**David Dodd** from Calhoun Canal attended Basic Water training

**Hunter Duncan** from the Western Canyon WTP attended training for TCEQ Operator Valve and Hydrant Training

**Robert Foley** from the Victoria WWTP Surface Water Distribution

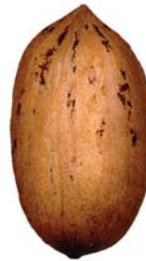
**Lorenzo Gonzales** from the Victoria WWTP recently attended the TWUA Golden Crescent Meeting

**Terry Ramey** from the Victoria WWTP attended training for Wastewater Collection

**John Turner** from the Western Canyon WTP attended TCEQ Operator Valve and Hydrant Training

# PECAN FEST 2007

Friends of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority joined employees at the annual Pecan Fest in October at the Nolte Island Pavilion. About 300 people socialized, snacked on pecans, and enjoyed a scrumptious catfish dinner prepared by Davila's Bar-B-Q of Seguin.



Photos by LaMarriol Smith

## GBRA's Worden Named Honorary Commander



**R**andy Worden, GBRA's executive manager of business development and resource management, recently participated in the 2007 Civic Leader Tour at Randolph Air Force Base (AFB) and Randolph military leaders bestowed him with the title "Honorary Commander."

Worden was honored to receive the title and will fulfill a two-year commitment by continuing business relationships with the military bases in GBRA's statutory district.

Randolph AFB is the leading aviation military training base in the U.S. – home to the 12th Flying Training Wing and the only

unit in the Air Force that conducts both pilot instructor training and combat systems officer training.

Through Randolph's community relations program, Worden and other senior-level executives, law enforcement officials and business owners had the opportunity to tour the base, gain first-hand knowledge of military experiences and go "behind the scenes" of some of the Air Force's most exciting units.

Col. Richard Clark, 12th Flying Training Wing commander at Randolph, invited Worden and 26 other civic leaders on a two-day tour to Ellsworth AFB, S.D., and Nellis AFB, Nev., to demonstrate the tremendous skills needed to form the U.S. military fighting force.

When the civic leaders arrived at Ellsworth AFB, they viewed a B-1B Lancer, a long-range bomber plane, and briefed on the war on terror. The group toured the base's fire department and was allowed to try on specialized gear. Fire safety, decontamination techniques, surviving a downed plane and learning to live off the land were other vital topics covered.

At Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Worden and his group toured the air combat training program, "Red Flag." Red Flag is a

major air combat mission training event for U.S. forces and American allies.

"Randolph has the same needs as our customers such as water supply and water treatment," explained Worden. "I had the opportunity to interact with Richard Treviño, Jr., a civil engineer for Randolph AFB who works closely with civic relations and helps create positive relations for the base. We discussed how the GBRA can partner with Randolph to meet the future water needs of the base and surrounding area.

Worden, who indicated he gained a tremendous amount of knowledge in just 48 hours at the two military bases, said that the bases have a tremendous impact on these regions – more so than most people realize. "This program has helped us understand the mission of Randolph and how it fits as a whole," he said.

Worden was impressed by each military individual's skill and knowledge of aviation, weaponry, medicine, communications, electronics and the survival rescue operations. "It was incredible to see the dedication and the professionalism of our service people," Worden said, adding, "Why I was so fortunate to attend this, I don't know. It was the trip of a lifetime." 

## Remedies to Consider during Cold and Flu Season

With winter knocking at the door, the chances of people becoming susceptible to colds and flu increases. Here are some tips to follow if you start to feel poorly:

- Stay clear of others. A cold or flu is most contagious the first 48 hours, so stay home if possible.
- Humidify the space. A humidifier of any size can help put moisture back into the air and the body. Using shower steam or breathing over a bowl of hot water will also do the trick.
- Elevate your body. Prop yourself up with at least one more pillow than normally used when sleeping. This elevates the chest and prevents phlegm from settling in the chest cavity.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Fluids thin your mucus helping it to flow. Hot drinks and soups work especially well.
- Go ahead, cough! Coughing and blowing the nose will loosen phlegm and help rid it from the body.
- Gargle your throat. Add ½ teaspoon of salt to one cup of warm water for 30-60 seconds. Gargling will soothe a sore throat, sterilize the bacteria in the throat and heal inflamed tissue.

- Beware of antibiotics. For a cold or flu check with a doctor before taking antibiotics.
- Know your OTCs. Over-the-counter medicines can help relieve some cold and flu symptoms, but do very little to cure the condition. Some OTCs can even cause side effects or slow down recovery.
- Call your Doctor at the first sign of a cold or flu. He or she can give the best medical advice to treat the symptoms.



## Five Habits to Good Health

Taking care of yourself does not have to be difficult. Listed below are some healthy habits to get started on a healthier lifestyle:

- ✓ Take a daily vitamin. Vitamins can give a body one or more supplement that it lacks and also help boost the body's immune system.
- ✓ Do not skip meals. Eat regularly, well-balanced meals. Don't worry if you're not a spinach fan like Popeye. There are plenty of other vegetables and fiber-rich foods to add to the diet. Eat tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, cucumbers, squash or peas.
- ✓ Exercise 15 minutes a day. Riding a bike or walking can improve energy, quality of sleep and mental alertness. As an energy booster, exercising elevates levels of serotonin, a mood-elevating neurotransmitter in the body.
- ✓ Get some sleep. Try to stick to a regular bedtime and wake time with at least eight hours of sleep each night.
- ✓ Kick the habit. Consumers of alcohol and caffeine, and smokers should try to limit themselves to these addictions or stop completely. Seek a counselor or medical professional to help "kick the habit." It doesn't have to be done alone!

### Did You Know?

In 1721, members of the Aguayo expedition named the Blanco River for the white limestone along the banks.



# Mark Your Calendar

Dec. 19, 2007 10 a.m.  
GBRA Board Meeting  
River Annex Bldg.

Dec. 24-25, 2007  
Christmas Holidays  
GBRA Offices Closed

Jan. 1, 2007  
New Year's Day  
GBRA Offices Closed

Jan. 16, 2008 10 a.m.  
GBRA Board Meeting  
River Annex Bldg.

Jan. 22-25, 2008  
TGWA Annual Meeting  
Lubbock Memorial Civic Center, Lubbock, TX

Jan. 31 – Feb. 1, 2008  
TWCA/TRWA Water Law Seminar  
Sheraton Austin Hotel, Austin, TX

Mar. 4-7, 2008  
TWCA Annual Convention  
Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel  
The Woodlands, Texas

Mar. 21, 2008  
Good Friday  
GBRA Offices Closed

Mar. 29, 2008 8 a.m.  
Guadalupe River Trout Unlimited Cleanup  
Rio Raft on River Road  
New Braunfels, TX



Photo by LaMarriol Smith

Gen/GRR/Fall2007/Cap-4500

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