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Comments

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Jan. 2004

40 Acre Facility Cranks Up New Dredge

It's nine feet tall, weighs about 15 tons and floats. The new dredge now in operation at 40 Acre Facility in Texas City has been dubbed "Miss Liberty" by dredge operator Burt Pena.

Miss Liberty's job is removing accumulated sludge from the bottom of the treatment ponds at 40 Acre. A cutter head breaks the material loose from the bottom and a pump sends it through a hose and a pipeline to a landfarm adjacent to GCA's Campbell Bayou Facility. Sludge is made up of the non-organic material (sand, etc.) that enters the plant with the wastewater and from the billions of spent microorganisms that live and die in the operation of the treatment process.

Periodically, it is necessary to



Dredge operator Burt Pena returns to the dredge to start 'Miss Liberty' on another pass across the pond.

remove the build-up of sludge in the various treatment ponds. This returns the ponds to their full depth and improves treatment capacity. Currently,

the dredge is operating manually with an operator on-board.

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GCA Team Gathers to Celebrate Eden's 'Go-Live'



*Front row (l-r): Jeff Mittelman (Eden), Mike Nirider, Jim Cooksey.
Back row (l-r): Gardenia Broussard, Jeff Miller, Peggy Vaclavik, Nelda Tuthill, Debbie Churchill, Jason Smith (Eden), Linda Anderson*

Friday afternoon, November 7th, was cause for celebration! After months of preparation, a new accounting system went live. GCA's accounting staff initially discovered the Ecen System at an annual meeting of the Government Finance Officers Association.

After several months of searching, debating and deliberating in focus groups over several different systems, GCA selected Eden. Since that time, the GCA staff has been training on the software and customizing it to GCA's needs.

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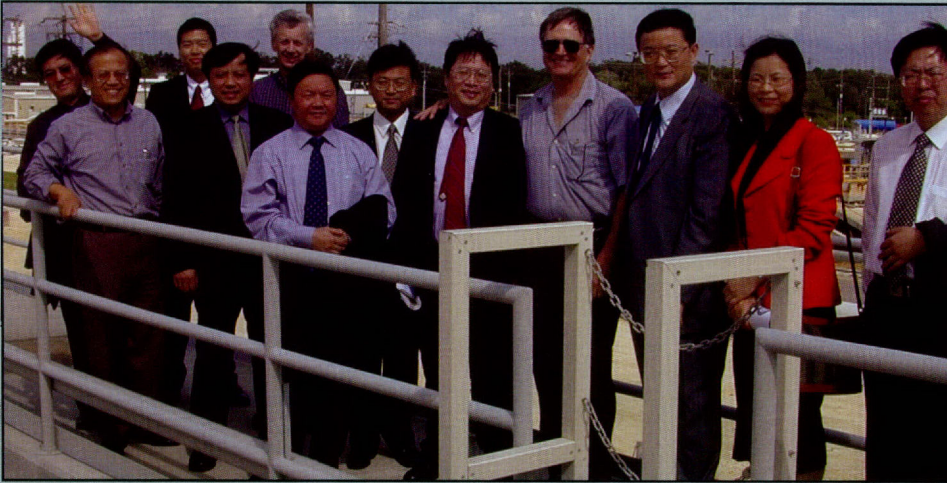
Visitors from Shanghai Tour Bayport Facility

A contingent of representatives from Shanghai, China, visited Bayport Facility on October 31. The group was headed by Li Yuyi, Governor of the Jinshan District People's Government. Ed Chen, Deputy Director, Department of Solid Waste Management, City of Houston, arranged

for the visit. Chen explained that Shanghai has an industrial district very much like the Bayport Industrial District. Chen and Dr. Chi-Chung Chang of URS Corp. acted as interpreters.

Bayport Facility Manager, Jim Kowalik, and Compliance Coordinator,

Monroe Parker, gave a short presentation about Bayport's history and operations, after which the visitors were given a tour around the facility. The group was treated to lunch, during which they presented Bayport with a painting from Shanghai.



Shanghai tour group gets a bird's eye view of the Bayport Facility

Gov. Li Yuyi presents a painting of the Shanghai area. From left are Jim Kowalik, Gov Li Yuyi, Monroe Parker and Charles Goode.



GCA Team Gathers to Celebrate Eden's 'Go-Live'

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GCA set an aggressive schedule, but with the help of Eden's implementation and training personnel, the staff has managed to stay on that schedule.

"We've enjoyed working with Eden's training and implementation people. Everyone is pleased with the new product," said Jim Cooksey, GCA's Manager of Financial Services. "The

staff here at GCA is eagerly anticipating the 'go-live' on Payroll and Human Resources in January.

Pederson, Overgaard Announce Completion of "YardWise" Manual

Gordon Pederson, Municipal Facilities Manager, has announced the completion of a project to provide instruction manuals for the Texas "Yardwise" program which is coordinated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The work was done with Karen Overgaard of Overgaard & Associates. Ms. Overgaard is a long-time master gardener.

The manuals are designed to train interested individuals about environmentally friendly gardening techniques such as composting, recycling, waste reduction and pollution control. These individuals can then pass along this knowledge in their own neighborhoods.

Pederson explained that Gulf Coast Authority applied in 2002 for a grant from TCEQ to update the manuals the agency had been using in the program.

"The manuals they had were outdated and were not written specifically for any particular region of the state," Pederson said. "The written material

made no distinction between conditions in Lubbock and Brownsville."

Pederson coordinated the grant contract and provided the required reporting

on progress and financial records.

Overgaard was subcontractor and worked on updating and regionalizing the training tools.



Karen Overgaard, center, displays educational material developed with GCA for the Texas "Yardwise" program. With her from left are Lori Gernhardt, Manager-Operations; Gordon Pederson, Municipal Facilities Manager, and Charles Ganze, General Manager.

40 Acre Facility Cranks Up New Dredge

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Sludge that the dredge pumps from the pond is sent through a pipe to a landfarm at Campbell Bayou.

Work will be completed soon to allow the dredge to be started up and then placed on automatic to work its way slowly back and forth across the 16-acre pond.

Bill Haygood, Maintenance Foreman, explained that it will take about two years to remove the sludge from one pond. "At that point, we pull the machine out and move it to the next treatment pond," he said. "Just

because we move the sludge to the landfarm doesn't mean we're through with it," Haygood added. He said farm equipment is used to till the sludge into the soil within the landfarm.

Microorganisms in the sludge and in the soil continue to break the material down over time until it's pretty much just dirt, he said. Any water generated at the landfarm is pumped back to 40 Acre for treatment.

Mark Schultz Recognized by FSA



Mark Schultz, pictured on the right, was recognized last Thursday morning by Farm Service Agency Executive Director Glen Beimer for 17 years of service to the organization. "Mark Schultz has served on the Chambers County Farm Service Agency County Committee for 17 consecutive years, beginning in 1987 and continuing through 2003," said Beimer. In 1987, he was elected as a regular member on the committee. In 1990, Schultz was chosen as the chairperson and served in that capacity until 2003.

"Mark has seen many changes over the

years in the way the Farm Service Agency has operated," said Beimer. When he was first elected, the name of the agency was the ASCS (Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service). The name changed to CFSA (Consolidated Farm Service Agency) and finally changed to the FSA (Farm Service Agency). "I appreciate the service and dedication Mark has given FSA all of these years," said Beimer. We wish him the best. The County Committee serves the Chambers County farmers and ranchers in making decisions on commodity price support loans and payments; establishment of yields; eligibility for conservation programs; incentive, indemnity and disaster assistance. The FSA County Committee is the farmer's voice in making national programs fit local situations," said Beimer. The COC is accountable to the State Committee (STC); oversees the work of the county office and the County Executive Director (CED) who manages the county office; and acts in an advisory capacity to the Farm Loan Manager (FLM). The County Committee system goes back to the

1930's, when Congress set up a system in which federal farm programs were administered locally. The members on County Committees are nominated and elected by local producers who are eligible to participate in FSA programs. "The COC is democracy in action. Once elected by their peers to the committee, local producers make important decisions about how FSA programs will be carried out in the county," said Beimer. "They are a direct link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

The COC also acts as a board of directors for the county office. Each COC consists of three of five members. The committee may also include advisors who are appointed by the State Committee to advocate for under represented groups and assist in outreach activities. The COC must see that programs are consistent with federal law, regulations, policies, procedures, and instructions.

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Comments

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