

# GBRA River Run

A publication of the **GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY** Fall 2009

*flowing solutions*

## *Addressing the Region's Water Needs*

Cleanup Helps Plum Creek



GBRA Educator Gets Award



Updating Hazard Mitigation

# From the GM

## The Complexities of Completing the Region L Plan

Senate Bill 1 provided for the development of a 60-year state water plan updated every five years, with both short-term (10 years or less) projects, and long-term (10 or more years) projects. The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority has been working with other members of Region L to draft each respective section of the water plan, which is due in early 2010.



Since the last revision of the state water plan in 2006, many things have changed:

- The Exelon project surfaced
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Recovery Implementation Program (RIP) for the Edwards Aquifer was initiated. (This effort may have potential changes of water availability depending on the outcome.)
- The LCRA/SAWS project is in question. (Its outcome could affect springflow at San Marco and Comal springs and in-stream flows for the Guadalupe River.)
- The consideration of an off-channel reservoir in Calhoun County that could provide water to lower basin cities, industry and agriculture that currently depend on GBRA's senior run-of-the-river water rights. (This project could relieve lower basin demand on Canyon Reservoir.)

How will water availability in GBRA's statutory district be affected by these changes? As the Region L plan is developed, GBRA is taking all of these things into consideration to navigate the complex and difficult job of managing the Guadalupe Basin's water resources and meeting constituents' needs.

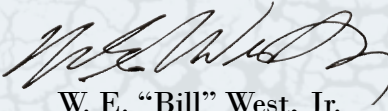
One of the primary issues with which GBRA is dealing is developing water supplies for the area between Austin and San Antonio and along State Highway 130 where Hays, Comal and Guadalupe counties are experiencing substantial growth rates with no end in sight.

This is a critical situation because Canyon Reservoir is fully committed, building new water projects cannot happen overnight, and competition is tough for water sources in Texas. Many water projects will require partnerships and equity sharing. Finding partners who can agree that a particular water project seems realistic and economical and who can reach agreement on controlling interests and equity sharing compounds the difficulties and complexities already associated with this business.

However, GBRA is focusing on two projects — the Simsboro and Carrizo/Gonzales — that have the potential to provide water supplies to meet the current demand and can come to fruition within 10 years. Read more about these projects in this issue of River Run.

I hope you also find the stories on a national educator award, a \$500,000 Kendall County grant, and a new easement for the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust of interest.

Please continue to conserve water and participate in the decisions that govern this precious resource.



W. E. "Bill" West, Jr.  
General Manager

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Fall 2009

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Front Cover Photo: GBRA Archives

## GBRA Collaborates with Lockhart Groups for Park and Creek Cleanups

A host of local organizations pulled together with area citizens to participate in the Second Annual Lockhart Town Branch Cleanup in September at Lockhart City Park, Lions Park, Arredondo Park, Pecos Park, and Navarro Springs and Walkway.

About 325 volunteers, mostly students representing area schools and scouting groups, worked to remove nearly 500 pounds of trash, 260 pounds of recyclable materials, and even some invasive plant species from the City Park grounds.

The Plum Creek Watershed Partnership, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), City of Lockhart Parks Department, and area citizens coordinated this year's cleanup event. Additional sponsors who were instrumental in making the event successful included Lockhart High School Key Club, Lockhart Junior High School, Patterson Consulting Computer Store, Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, First Lockhart National Bank, H-E-B, Smitty's Market, the Greater Caldwell County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Texas Stream Team, and Dr. Donovan L. Thomas of Lockhart Chiropractic.

Oscar Fogle, who represents Caldwell County on GBRA's Board of Directors said, "The more that people understand how non-point source pollution really affects these tributaries that flow into the Guadalupe River, the more they are able to identify bad habits and take corrective action to improve the condition of our waterways. I am really pleased with the results of this Lockhart cleanup and I would hope that the level of interest continues to grow."

In conjunction with the cleanup, existing pet wastes in City Park were flagged prior to the cleanup and removed as part of the cleanup to demonstrate their potential to contaminate the waterways with their bacteria and nutrients - negative impacts to water quality. The City of Lockhart has installed pet waste stations in the parks with bags for easy cleanup to prevent future pet waste pollution.

"Ultimately, more than a mile of the Town Branch waterway, the tributary of Plum Creek that runs through Lockhart, was cleaned up," said Debbie Magin, GBRA's director of Water Quality.

Murals painted on the Lions Park restroom walls by Mrs. Beth Cooper, art teacher at Lockhart Junior High School, and her student volunteers, represented the beautification component of the cleanup. Lions Park is located across from H-E-B.

Cleanup participants received free T-shirts, water bottles and wristbands. The event also included an environmental fair with educational booths and a free pizza lunch.

The Third Annual Lockhart Town Branch Cleanup has been scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 18, 2010. To find out more about water quality in Town Branch and the Plum Creek Watershed, visit this website: <http://plumcreek.tamu.edu>.



More than 300 volunteers worked to cleanup parks and creeks in Lockhart, Texas.

Photo by Nikki Dictson

# Photographer Earns Recognition for Coletto Creek Park *and Reservoir*

by Wilfred Korth

This year, Coletto Creek Park participated in the 2009 Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest (CBWPC). The purpose of the contest is to raise the awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation and to help raise funds for conservation education programs.

In collaboration with O.C. Garza, ([www.ocgarzaphotography.com](http://www.ocgarzaphotography.com)) the Communications Officer for the City of Victoria, an avid outdoor photographer and member of the Victoria Photography Club; and Jim Payne, an avid photographer and president of the Victoria Photography Club ([www.victoriaphotographyclub.com](http://www.victoriaphotographyclub.com)), the Park garnered recognition through their photography. From February to June, both photographers spent a great deal of time at Coletto Creek Park taking thousands of photos. The 2009 CBWPC have 61 private lands entered with



about 70 amateur and professional photographers participating.

The drought this year provided a harsh and challenging backdrop for the contest, which was a striking difference from the rainy 2007

contest. Yet, the depictions of South Texas wildlife and landscapes were still amazing.

Winning photos from the contest will fill the pages of the CBWPC's next book, "Wildlife in Focus V," which is scheduled for release in late 2010.

In August, judges chose the winners after going through 5,020 submitted images shot from February to June. Teams of winning photographers and landowners will share more than \$90,000 in prize money from this biannual event funded mainly by private donors and entry fees. On Saturday, September 12, the winning photos were announced at an Awards ceremony held in

Robstown. O.C. Garza had nine of his submissions place, with two placing first in these categories.

The Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest is a nonprofit conservation/education organization that promotes wildlife and habitat conservation through community outreach and in the classroom. Photos can inspire emotion, which can turn to conservation action. Part of the organization's purpose is to convince private land owners to keep their properties intact and undeveloped. Patti Young, the Executive Director of the CBWPC, has said that beyond responsible stewardship, she

hopes the photos and the book will help reconnect local residents with their rural roots and nature.

The CBWPC's most important work though occurs in the classroom. Area students learn about natural ecosystems and man's role in maintaining them through the Kritters 4 Kids program. More than 150 Coastal Bend teachers use Wildlife In Focus books in their classrooms and have adopted the organization's curriculum into their science programs.

To view all of the winning photos and learn more about the CBWPC visit there website at:

[www.wildlifephotcontest.com](http://www.wildlifephotcontest.com). Coletto continues to work with the Victoria Photography Club to further develop opportunities for amateur and professional photographers to take advantage of Coletto's diverse natural resources. With continued assistance from the Victoria Photography Club, Coletto Creek will once again hold its Springtime Annual Photo Contest.



Photos by Wilfred Korth

# Geographic Organization Recognizes GBRA Educator with National Award

by Cinde Thomas-Jimenez

During a ceremony of the 2009 National Conference on Geographic Education (NCGE) held in Puerto Rico, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's Education Coordinator, Cinde Thomas-Jimenez, was recognized with the 2009 Outstanding Support for Geographic Education Award.

The NCGE, which is comprised of thousands of members all over the United States, presents the annual award to those who have made extraordinary commitments to the teaching and learning of geography in support services or informal education.

Thomas-Jimenez was nominated for the Outstanding Support for Geography Education Award by Richard Earl, Ph.D., of Texas State University in San Marcos. Earl indicated his observation of Thomas-Jimenez's wide range of activities complemented by how her knowledge and understanding of geography played a central role in her water-related activities prompted him to nominate her.

Thomas-Jimenez has worked as GBRA's education coordinator for almost seven years. She continuously works to develop and implement innovative educational programs that provide an interdisciplinary approach to the study of water resources throughout the Guadalupe River Basin. Through her efforts, partnerships have been forged with school districts, education service centers, colleges and universities, cities, counties, utility companies, and other entities.

During her tenure with GBRA, Thomas-Jimenez has developed and provided comprehensive water education programs focusing on water

quality and water quantity for schools primarily situated within GBRA's 10-county statutory district. She provides professional development workshops for K-12 teachers and spends a significant amount of time working directly with children in the schools and at area environmental education centers conducting water-related outreach activities.

"Cinde's colleagues know that she is very deserving of this recognition. There are few individuals who work as effectively and efficiently over such a large region promoting water-related education

as Cinde. This national award simply confirms our belief that she is second to none," said LaMarriol Smith, GBRA's manager of Communications and Education.

Thomas-Jimenez's public outreach activities include pioneering efforts in the Canyon Lake Gorge — training and coordinating volunteers and assisting with development plans. She also works with various volunteer monitoring groups and has assisted in outreach and education efforts for watershed protection. She also led the development of an online education module that recently landed an award from the Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) in fall 2008.

Thomas-Jimenez earned her bachelor of science degree in education and master's degree in applied geography from Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University). She spent 10 years in the classroom before making the transition to a career in

environmental education. Her academic and work experiences have helped Thomas-Jimenez develop a unique skill set that has allowed her to move effortlessly between formal and informal education.



Photo by Dr JoBeth Oestreich

Thomas-Jimenez is pictured with Joseph Stoltman, President of National Conference on Geographic Education

# Staff Helps Secure Grant for Kendall County

by Tammy Beutnagel

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's Economic Development Director Tommie Streeter Rhoad wrote a grant that netted nearly \$500,000 for Kendall County. The \$488,825-grant, which was submitted to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), provides funds that will be used for recreation costs of the new Joshua Springs Park and Preserve in Kendall County.

More specifically, Kendall County officials will use the TPWD grant toward proposed park improvements costs of \$977,650, including \$400,000 for a 700-square-foot pavilion. The proposed public fishing pier would cost another \$106,000, and \$80,000 would pay for two restroom facilities. Other costs would be incurred for a proposed handicap-accessible "swimming hole" located in the natural impounded limestone area of Joshua Creek.

During a recent meeting of GBRA's Board of Directors, Rhoad explained, "Grant writing can be challenging and time consuming, but it was well worth the effort because this grant will benefit so many of GBRA's Kendall County constituents. A park project is open to the public — not reserved for an exclusive few."

GBRA Director Michael Schultz, who represents Kendall County on the Board, said, "Tommie's expertise with grants and holding the hand of Kendall County through the process has provided the county with resources to make its parks 'public friendly.'"

Schultz added, "This effort had nothing to do with water, but it has a lot to do with relationships. And this is a perfect example of what really happens behind the scenes."

The 405-acre county park opened to the public this past summer and is located midway between Boerne and Comfort on FM 289 and Allen Road near Nelson City. To view plans for Joshua Springs Park, visit this website: <http://www.co.kendall.tx.us/node/304>



Photo by Connie Rothe

## Stewards for the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks Watershed Begin Work

About 80 interested individuals attended a Texas Watershed Steward planning meeting for the Geronimo and Alligator creeks watershed at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's River Annex in November.

The Texas Watershed Steward program is a coordinated effort of the AgriLife Extension Service, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and GBRA.

The free, one-day educational workshop is designed to help watershed residents improve and protect their water resources by getting involved in local watershed protection and management activities. The workshop provides an overview of water quality and

watershed management in Texas, and in this case, a focus on water quality issues in Geronimo and Alligator creeks watershed.

From this initial workshop, the participants will determine a set of stakeholders for the watershed and reconvene to develop protection strategies. The first stakeholder meeting for the Geronimo Creek watershed will be Jan. 12, 2010.

To participate in the Texas Watershed Stewards program for Geronimo and Alligator creeks, contact Debbie Magin, GBRA director of water quality, at (830) 379-5822 or [dmagin@gbra.org](mailto:dmagin@gbra.org).

# GBRA Assists Basin Partners with Hazard Mitigation Plan 5-Year Update

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA), in conjunction with H2O partners, convened the first upper and lower basin meetings to begin updating its regional 5-year hazard mitigation plan for participating cities and counties.

The development of this basin-wide hazard mitigation plan, which is required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to be updated every five years, is necessary for participating entities to be eligible to receive FEMA pre-disaster grants. In the hazard mitigation plan submitted for 2005, entities participating with GBRA included Kendall County, City of Boerne, Caldwell County, City of Lockhart, City of Luling, City of Martindale, DeWitt County, City of Yoakum, City of Nordheim, City of Cuero, City of Yorktown, Gonzales County, City of Nixon, City of Waelder, Calhoun County, City of Port Lavaca, City of Point Comfort, City of Seadrift, Refugio County, City of Austwell, City of Bayside, Tow of Refugio, City of Woodsboro, Victoria County and City of Victoria. Many of the same entities are participating in the 5-year update for 2010,

Hazard mitigation plans are implemented to protect people and structures, and to minimize the costs of disaster response and recovery.

Contracted by GBRA, H2O Partners' environmental scientists and consultants employed their professional expertise in disaster and

mitigation planning, public assistance programs and disaster recovery at two planning workshops and a public meeting held this summer. Tommy Hill, GBRA's chief engineer leads the hazard mitigation plan project for GBRA.

Ultimately, the updated hazard mitigation plan will be designed to mitigate the effects of natural hazards such as flood, tropical storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquake, wild land fire, ice or hail storms, and drought. The hazard mitigation plans also explore means of avoiding future disaster losses. Developing the plan involves a four-step process that includes "capability assessment," "hazard identification and analysis," "vulnerability assessment" and "mitigation strategy development."

Staff of participating entities may download capability assessment forms online from <http://www.gbra.org/Documents/HazardMitigation/CapabilitySurvey.pdf>. Completed forms should be submitted to H2O Partners, Inc., P.O. Box 160130, Austin, TX 78716.

When the updated and integrated plan is complete, it will comply with all requirements promulgated by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (DEM) as well as related federal disaster regulations.

## GBRA Acquires Property in Canyon Lake Area for Future Use

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority officials recently acquired a parcel of land in Comal County for future use.

The 21-acre tract, which was purchased from the Casteel Family, is situated in front of Scarborough Road and adjacent to South Access Road and the Canyon Lake Gorge.

"The timing and economic conditions just happened to be right for both GBRA and the Casteel family. We're very excited to have obtained this property to use for future development of a regional environmental education facility in the Canyon Lake area," said David Welsch, GBRA's executive manager for Business Development and Resource Management.

Initially, GBRA may use the property in some other way in the interim, according to Bill West, GBRA general manager. However, he said, the primary interest in the property is that it would be

"an excellent location for an environmental educational facility for GBRA's upper basin region."

Although development for such a facility is not imminent, an environmental education center will be a great addition for Comal County, and by proximity, will compliment the Ty Preston Memorial Library, which is being constructed on adjoining property, West explained.

GBRA staff has been conducting site visits and researching other environmental education facilities in order to develop an appropriate construction, operation and maintenance, and fundraising plan that could be implemented and executed in the coming years.



# Kiosk to Educate on Water Quality

by Cinde Thomas-Jimenez

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority has purchased a computer kiosk that will be used to expand its water quality education program. The user-friendly kiosk is loaded with numerous interactive programs dealing with a variety of water quality topics.

The kiosk, generally housed in the lobby at the GBRA main office in Seguin, allows both student-age and adult users to navigate the information in a fun and informative manner. Visitors are encouraged to use the kiosk, and feedback is invited. Programs are presented in both English and Spanish.

One of the most popular programs is a music video featuring Alex the Rappin' Frog. While explaining his plight of trying to find a home, which is challenging due to polluted runoff from urban centers, Alex performs *Water Down the Drain*.

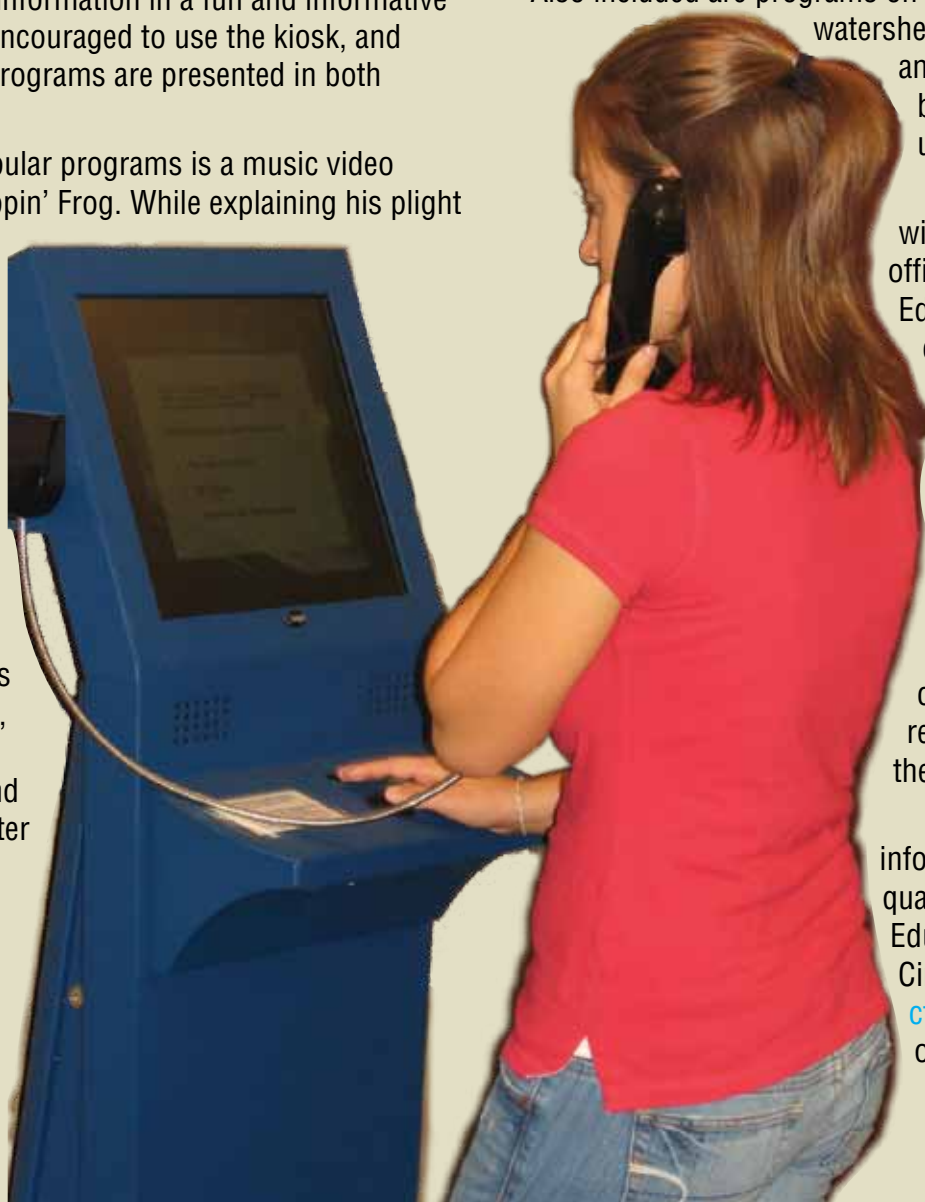
Journey of a Raindrop features live video interlaced with animation of a water drop as it makes its way over a rooftop, through a residential yard, a storm drain and into a stream. The water drop experiences a number of pollutants along his journey. The conclusion of the video leads the user to a set of multiple choice questions that teach best management practices for homeowners.

Streets to Streams includes an outstanding video that helps the user understand the water quality problems associated with impervious surfaces. The movie is followed by an animated program that clearly portrays how impervious surfaces contribute to accelerated runoff, and how this runoff is detrimental to water quality in our streams.

Also included are programs on the water cycle and watersheds. Each of these has animated movies followed by exercises to check the users understanding.

The water quality kiosk will remain in the Seguin office while the GBRA Education staff develops a couple of short videos on its Clean Rivers Program and laboratory. Once these videos are complete, the kiosk will be available for loan to environmental education centers, libraries, agriculture centers, nature centers, other education-related organizations within the Guadalupe-River Basin.

For more information on the water quality kiosk, contact GBRA's Education Coordinator Cinde Thomas-Jimenez at [cthomas-jimenez@gbra.org](mailto:cthomas-jimenez@gbra.org) or (830) 379-5822.



*Whitney Bengoechea views educational programs on the new GBRA kiosk*

Photo by Cinde Thomas-Jimenez



# GBRA Working

## New Water

by Joel Williams

**W**ith all the wet weather that finally arrived in Central Texas this fall, it did not take long to hear people complaining about the rain that they had just been hoping and praying for during the scorching summer. Many quickly reminded themselves that “We need the rain.” It has been, after all, one of the worst droughts on record, possibly eclipsing the 1950s “drought of record.”

Summer 2009 had brought the region more than 60 days of 100-degree temperatures with no rain. Aquifer levels had steadily dropped, causing springs to yield less and less water. Rivers shrank and appeared to stand still in some areas, creating stagnant pools covered with algae. Although its Canyon Lake reservoir dropped to record low levels, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) had to release additional water from the lake to shore up the dwindling supply downstream at Victoria.

The GBRA stepped up conservation messages to remind constituents how they could do their part to reduce consumption. Various levels of mandatory drought-stage restrictions also kicked in throughout the region.

But looking beyond crisis management, GBRA has been busy planning to meet the region’s long-term future water supply needs and is focusing on two projects to move forward among the projects that have been under consideration.

“We’re trying to have supplies to meet those demands,” said GBRA General Manager Bill West.

This drought helped to highlight the need for additional water supplies for a region experiencing tremendous population growth. Although drought has been part of the natural cycle in Central Texas for centuries, the number of people putting demands on limited water supplies continues to increase. That especially proves true along the Interstate Highway 35 corridor between San Antonio and

Austin, where growth in some areas has soared with the addition of more and more residential subdivisions. Hays County, with San Marcos as the county seat, for example, saw a population increase of nearly 46 percent between 2000 and 2008, according to the Texas State Data Center, Office of the State Demographer. Comal County, where New Braunfels is located, saw growth of nearly 39 percent during that same period.

**“We’re trying to have supplies to meet those demands,” said GBRA General Manager Bill West.**

State Highway 130, the toll road around Austin currently under construction, will bring a new catalyst for population growth, West said.

“If you look at a map and you just envision that part of Central Texas between Austin and San Antonio and if you just think about the growth that has occurred and continues to occur 50 miles either side of I-35 and the future growth parallel to state Highway 130, the population increase here in the middle of our service district is phenomenal.”

Population growth in San Antonio also puts increasing demands on the Edwards Aquifer, the city’s source of drinking water.

A survey of water resources available to this part of the state brings the sobering realization of the scarcity of new sources of fresh water at GBRA’s disposal.

Water rights to the GBRA’s primary reservoir, Canyon Lake, are fully committed, ruling out Canyon as a source of additional water.

The GBRA cannot simply pump more water from the Edwards Aquifer, the underground water supply upon which the San Antonio area relies for its municipal needs. Excessive pumping, especially during droughts, reduces the flow of the Comal and San Marcos Springs, which provide much of the water in the Guadalupe and San Marcos Rivers. Reducing the spring flow could harm the

# to Secure Supplies for Region

endangered species that depend on the springs. That would put the region in violation of the federal Endangered Species Act, which has protected the spring flow so critical to those rivers.

With that in mind, the Texas Legislature in 2007 mandated development of the Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program, or EARIP, with the goal of balancing demands on the aquifer with the long-term needs of the ecosystems that rely on it. Participants in the EARIP include a diverse group of stakeholders in the region, including the GBRA.

The EARIP, which must develop a “Habitat Conservation Plan” by 2012, under the supervision of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, is expected to reduce the amount of pumping allowed from the Edwards Aquifer by about 100,000 acre-feet (ac/ft) per year, West said.

“Where’s that shortfall going to come from?” West asked.

Other factors affecting the availability of water in the GBRA’s

and San Antonio’s state water planning region, known as

Region L, include:

- ◆ The dissolution of an agreement under which the San Antonio Water System would have obtained water from the Lower Colorado River Authority.

- ◆ The water rights that Exelon Corp. has reserved for the operation of a nuclear power plant near the Gulf Coast in Victoria County.

- ◆ The unsuccessful effort to reach an agreement to move water from the lower Guadalupe River basin to the upper basin, known as the Lower Guadalupe Water Supply Project. The LGWSP had been

viewed as a “Canyon Lake 2,” in terms of ensuring a firm water supply.

## *New water sources*

After an analysis of available water new water supplies, GBRA has identified two groundwater sources as short-term priorities, and has begun pursuing agreements with water-rights leaseholders and those with pending applications in those areas.

Two sources that the GBRA has identified as priorities for short-term development could bring GBRA’s customers a total of approximately 81,000 ac/ft of water per year. The GBRA defines “short-term” to mean that development would take less than 10 years.

County	2000 Population	2008 Population	Number Change	Percent Change
Caldwell	32,194	35,843	3,649	11.3%
Calhoun	20,647	20,937	290	1.4%
Comal	78,021	108,170	30,149	38.6%
DeWitt	20,013	20,265	252	1.3%
Gonzales	18,628	19,174	546	2.9%
Guadalupe	89,023	119,084	30,061	33.8%
Hays	97,589	142,310	44,721	45.8%
Kendall	23,743	32,474	8,731	36.8%
Refugio	7,828	7,386	-442	-5.6%
Victoria	84,088	85,750	2,662	3.2%

The GBRA's West acknowledges that a period of 10 years does not meet most people's definition of "short term."

"That's kind of shocking to the general public, but building pipelines and well fields and water treatment plants and everything else that a water project requires just doesn't happen overnight," West said.

One of the sources that GBRA has identified as a priority would tap the Simsboro Aquifer in Bastrop and Lee Counties. The Simsboro, part of the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer System, would bring the river authority 30,000 ac/ft of water per year in its first phase and another 26,000 ac/ft in a second phase.

GBRA is negotiating with parties that have pending permit applications on the Simsboro, and developing a letter of intent to do business with them, said GBRA General Counsel Bruce Wasinger.

"Those two projects have the greatest potential of being able to be brought on line to meet this demand that's so quickly materializing between Austin and San Antonio parallel to I-35 and 130," West said.

The letter of intent would help those applicants to show that they have a customer for the water for which they are applying, Wasinger said.

"We're not buying leases anywhere," said Jim Murphy, GBRA's executive manager of Water Resources and Utility Operations. "We're working with people who already have them."

GBRA has taken the same approach with another new source under development in Gonzales County, which could yield 25,000 ac/ft per year for GBRA. The river authority is working primarily with a company there that has consolidated leases with various landowners, Wasinger said.

"Those two projects have the greatest potential of being able to be brought on line to meet this demand that's so quickly materializing between Austin and San Antonio parallel to I-35 and 130," West said.

He added that any new water projects, including the pipelines needed to deliver the water to treatment plants in the GBRA service area, will be multi-party projects that include as equity partners the utilities receiving the water.

"GBRA will be the lead facilitator, but our customers will be equity partners, not just customers," West said. "If they are in a project for 15 percent, then they have ownership of 15 percent of that project, so they have say-so."

That type of equity partnership with customers is how the energy utility industry has operated for the past 30 years, and it has become the norm in the water utility industry, he said.

## *Off-channel reservoir*

Another source of relief under consideration at GBRA is an "off-channel" storage reservoir in the lower basin. "Off-channel" refers to a reservoir that is not within an existing stream. Such a reservoir could fulfill commitments to users such as the Calhoun County Rural Water Supply District and the cities of Port Lavaca and

Victoria, which rely on run-of-river rights from GBRA.

That could help to ease demand on the Canyon Reservoir, especially during drought, such as the release this summer for Victoria.

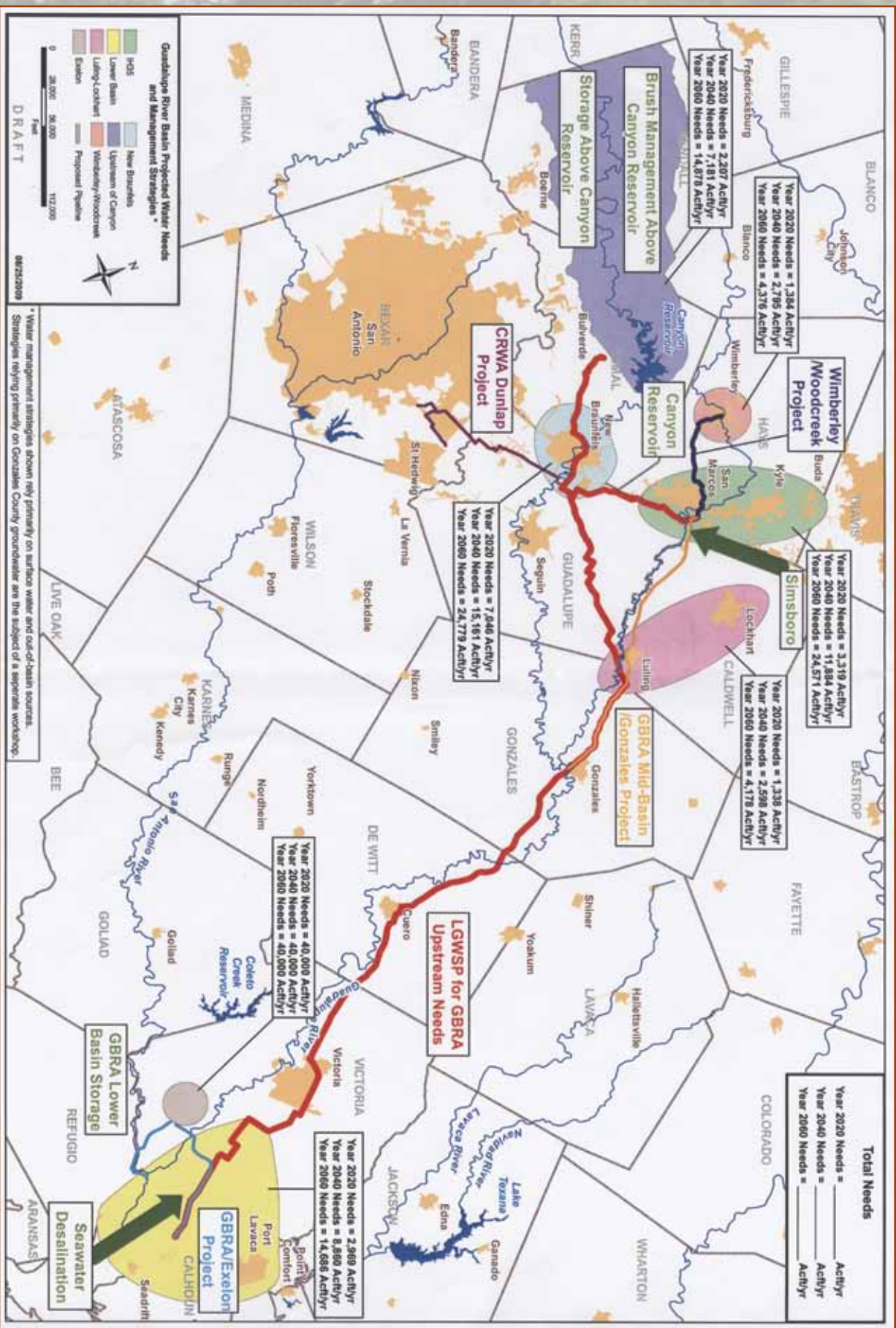
"If we could build some off-channel storage down in Calhoun County, we could use that backup storage to firm those rights up, and relieve some of the demand out of Canyon, so it could be used in the upper basin," West said.

Murphy said GBRA is focused on taking a regional approach to water management.

"We just want to make sure the water gets to where it is needed," Murphy said.

**"GBRA will be the lead facilitator, but our customers will be equity partners, not just customers," West said. "If they are in a project for 15 percent, then they have ownership of 15 percent of that project, so they have say-so."**

# Guadalupe River Basin projected water needs and management strategies



## 208-Acre Easement Established through the Trust

Photo by Janet Thome



Janaé Reneaud and Stan Berkefelt

**M**ore than 200 acres of property along the Edwards Plateau in Comal County is being preserved through a conservation easement with the Berkefelt family and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (Trust). The easement was executed at the end of August.

Stan Berkefelt and his family own the 208-acre tract of land situated in the eastern Edwards Plateau and boarded by Rocky Creek. The land is on an incline that provides a stunning view of the surrounding Hill Country. It also features limestone outcroppings that contain fossils that are relics of the cretaceous reef once found there.

“After many conversations and determining that there were common interests, the Trust was fortunate to develop this partnership with the Berkefelts and to help bring the land into a conservation easement,” Janaé Reneaud, Trust executive director said.

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization or government agency that

permanently limits a property’s uses in order to protect the property’s conservation values.

“We felt the need to preserve our property from future development and my family’s goals align well with the Trust,” Berkefelt said, adding that “In the great scheme of things, this tract of land may be small, but it is very meaningful to me and my family and we wanted to maintain the integrity of this special piece of property.”

Reneaud explained that it is in the interest of the Trust to see the riparian zone maintained to ensure future water quality in the river, for wildlife and for the protection of the beautiful vistas in the Texas Hill Country.

In addition to the recent Berkefelt easement, the Trust staff has been working with several landowners whose properties are situated in the Guadalupe River Basin and are interested in easements through the Trust. These combined easements, if secured, could yield more than 7,000 acres of preserved property.

The Trust is a charitable, non-profit 501(c)3 organization that was developed to conserve the land and water of the Guadalupe River watershed for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic and productive value.

The mission of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust is to promote and encourage the conservation, stewardship and enjoyment of the land and water resources of the Guadalupe River watershed, while maintaining its unique and irreplaceable natural heritage.

More information about the Trust is available at [www.gbrtrust.org](http://www.gbrtrust.org).



Photos by Janaé Reneaud

# Trust Submits Accreditation Application

Staff of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (Trust) recently completed its Land Trust Alliance (LTA) application for accreditation — a long, arduous process intended to give more credibility to non-profit organizations such as the Trust.

The LTA accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. To reach the point of application submission, the Trust staff underwent a thorough examination of its policies and procedures, an intense review of 12 indicator practices and multiple proofreads and assessments of the material by staff and volunteers. This effort resulted in a three-and-a-half-inch binder comprised of the application and related documents.

Trust Board President Roger Welder said, “Our Board knows that the Trust has top-notch personnel running its operations, but this accreditation is a third-party endorsement that the public can trust. That, ultimately, is what influenced the Board’s decision to have the staff research and pursue this LTA relationship.”

The accreditation process would ensure that the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust staff and Board of Trustees maintain responsible governance of the organization. “A successful accreditation is indicative that the approved organization protects the public interest with sound and sustainable land transactions and stewardship, follows ethical operations, is accountable to donors and the public, and complies with applicable laws and regulations,” said Janaé Reneaud, Trust executive director.

“Once the Trust has attained LTA accredited status, prospective donors and landowners who want to protect their property will know, without question, they are working with a credible, respected and well-managed organization,” Janet Thome, grants and projects specialist for the Trust, said.

The Trust staff has submitted the final application to LTA for review. Upon completion of the review, which likely will be sometime in January 2010, LTA will notify the Trust whether it has been successful in attaining accreditation.

## SEP Funding to Benefit Trust

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust will receive \$34,676 from the Supplemental Environmental Projects funding provided through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

When entities violate federal environmental laws and regulations, the EPA requires violators to come into compliance and pay a civil penalty. In some instances, the EPA may require the violator to implement or sponsor Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) as part of the settlement. SEPs, or environmentally beneficial projects, are ways to further the EPA’s goals to protect and enhance public health and the environment. An SEP, which the EPA indicates must improve, protect, or reduce risks to public health or the environment at large, can be undertaken by a violator in the settlement of an enforcement action, but which the violator is not otherwise legally required to perform.

According to Trust Executive Director Janaé Reneaud, the Trust will use SEP funds toward the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge Wetland Enhancement project located at the Myrtle-Foester Whitmire Preserve in Indianola, Texas.



Photos by Steve Sykes

This project is designed to enhance and restore critical wetland habitat that will benefit hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, wading and shorebirds.

Threatened and endangered species found on the Whitmire Unit include the whooping crane, peregrine falcon, aplomado falcon, and the brown pelican. Birds of management concern include the wood stork, reddish egret, roseate spoonbill and osprey. Common waterfowl species using the Whitmire Unit include the northern pintail, mottled duck, redhead, canvasback, ring-necked duck, American wigeon, and greater white-fronted goose.

### *Trust Guided Tours and Events*

#### **Dec. 19, 2009**

Trust Board Meeting  
GBRA River Annex  
Seguin, TX

#### **Feb. 10, 2010**

Guided bird hike during peak migration period at the coast  
Calhoun County, TX

#### **Feb. 10, 2010**

Visit the first Trust Preserve for a close up look at Hog and Schwing Bayou  
Calhoun County, TX

#### **March 2010**

Witness the effects of an area in the Texas Hill Country after cedar clearing  
Kendall County, TX

#### **April 2010**

Tour a 100-acre conservation easement where the land has been restored to native grassland  
Hays County, TX

Visit [www.gbrtrust.org](http://www.gbrtrust.org)  
or call (830) 372-5077 for more information.

# INSIDE GBRA



Photos by LaMarriol Smith



In October, around 400 friends and customers of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority gathered for the annual Pecan Fest at Nolte Island. In addition to socializing and catching up with old friends, guests were served a delicious catfish lunch with all the trimmings and pecan pie for dessert.



# Where *are they now?*

## Sally Deming

by Tammy Beutnagel

Sally Deming's hometown of Victoria, Texas was one of the worst hit in October of 1998 when the Guadalupe River crested at 33.85 feet, reached five miles in width, and flows peaked at 466,000 cubic feet per second (cfs).

Deming started with GBRA in September of 1977 at the Victoria Regional Waste Water Plant, but never imagined she would experience a natural disaster such as that one. Eight feet of water filled the Victoria Regional Waste Water Plant and almost all buildings and equipment on site were damaged, except the employees' third floor lunch room.

"Shortly after the rain stopped, GBRA employees met at a local hotel to decide what to do first," said Deming. "We used the employee lunch room as the command center and then as a temporary lab."

An A-licensed operator working as a lab technician for the plant, Deming recalled some of her job duties included running wastewater test samples, recording data and submitting hand-written monthly reports to the Environmental Protection Agency. "I was so happy when a second employee was hired in the lab," Deming said.

With the 1980s computer age, GBRA purchased data processors for the Victoria plant. Deming quickly learned a new meaning for



the word "mouse." Jim Wyatt, Victoria WWTP technician, showed Deming how to use a computer mouse by having her play a computer game of ping pong. After mastering the mouse and the game, Deming put her new skills to use on spreadsheets — she was grateful to Wyatt for teaching her how to use the computer. Today Deming and Wyatt still stay in touch via email.

Deming retired in June of 2003.

She enjoys traveling to any destination and by various modes of transportation. One experience she recalled was a cruise trip she had taken with her sister to ports in Mexico and Belize. "I had just gotten my scooter before the cruise to help me get around and I kept running into things on the ship! But I eventually got the hang of it and we even went to a rodeo while in Belize."

Originally from Pennsylvania, Sally moved to Texas as a child when her father was stationed at the Navy air station base in Corpus Christi. Sally later moved to Victoria and married the late Chuck Deming with whom she had three daughters and a son. Today her children reside in Victoria, Houston and Round Rock. Her family has expanded to include six grandchildren and one great-grandson, who she describes as her greatest pride and joy.

## GBRA *Training & Licenses*

**Darel Ball** of Water Resources attended the Ground Water Rule Teleconference, TCEQ Public Drinking Water Conference, and Predictive Maintenance training.

**Angel Castillo** of Lockhart WWTP completed DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

**Robert Delgado** of Lockhart WTP completed DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

**David Dodd** of Calhoun Canal attended Electrical Safety training.

**Hunter Duncan** of Western Canyon WTP obtained a "C" Surface Water Treatment Operator License.

**Jason Eeds** of Lockhart WWTP completed DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

**Stacy Frentzen** of the Lab attended LIMS Samples 2007 training.

**Clarissa Frnka** of the Lab attended Gas Chromatography and Mass Spectrometry Analysis and Data Review training.

**David Garcia** of Port Lavaca WTP attended Electrical Safety training.

**Leroy Garza** of San Marcos WTP attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E.

**Ronald Gosnell** of Canal RWSS attended NWS/City of Pt. Lavaca - "Hurricane Awareness."

**Barbara Gunn** of General attended Unsecured PHI Breach Notification training.

**Daphne Harder** of General attended Unsecured PHI Breach Notification training.

**Jeffery Hebert** of Western Canyon WTP obtained his "D" Wastewater Treatment License.

**Don Koble** of Canal RWSS attended NWS/City of Pt. Lavaca - "Hurricane Awareness."

**Carl Korth** of Coletto Reservoir attended Safe Pesticide Applications training.

**Nita Krahn** of Port Lavaca WTP completed the Utility Safety Course.

**Jason Lewis** of Coletto Recreation attended a TCEQ Groundwater Rule Workshop.

**Joe Long** of San Marcos WTP attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E.

**Josephine Longoria** of the Lab attended Gas Chromatography and Mass Spectrometry Analysis and Data Review.

**David Lundin** of Port Lavaca WTP attended Process Training/Evaluation.

**Brian Lyssy** of the Lab attended How to Use Qualified Data training.

**Debbie Magin** of Water Resources attended the Ground Water Rule Teleconference.

**Marlon McAdams** of Coletto Reservoir attended GBRA Electricians Workshop and Safe Pesticide Applications training.

**Shane McAdams** of Coletto Reservoir attended GBRA Electricians Workshop and Safe Pesticide Applications training.

**Eric Mendez** of Lockhart WWTP completed DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

**Eduardo Montaña** of Lockhart WWTP completed DEM Hazardous Materials Technician training.

**Clint Retzliff** of Coletto Recreation attended GBRA Electricians Workshop.

**Tommie Rhoad** of Water Resources attended the National Boating Access Conference.

**Emmylou Roberts** of the Lab attended Chromeleon Level 1 training.

**Gerardo Rodriguez** of Water Resources attended GBRA Electricians Workshop.

**Alan Schneider** of Coletto Reservoir attended Safe Pesticide Applications training.

**Curtis Seiler** of Coletto Recreation attended GBRA Electricians Workshop.

**Jerry Sharp** of San Marcos WTP attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E.

**Stephanie Shelly** of Port Lavaca WTP attended Process training/Evaluation.

**Trey Sibert** of San Marcos WTP attended Electrical Safety NFPA 70-E.

**Allan Smith** of Shadow Creek obtained a "C" Wastewater Treatment License.

**Michael Tompkins** of Calhoun Canal attended Electrical Safety.

**John Urban** of Coletto Reservoir attended Safe Pesticide Applications training.

**Michael Urrutia** of Water Resources attended the Ground Water Rule Teleconference and TCEQ Public Drinking Water Conference.

**Teresa Van Booven** of Water Resources attended the National Boating Access Conference and the Texas Travel Industry Association Seminar.

**Herbert Wittliff** of Calhoun Canal attended the Insurance Seminar, Process Training/Evaluation, and NWS/City of Pt. Lavaca - "Hurricane Awareness."

**Alan Zolnosky** of Coletto Recreation attended Texas Water Utilities Assoc. - Pump and Pumping and the Safe Pesticide Applications training.

*The information for the trainings and licenses section was compiled by Daphne Harder, Human Resources Department of the Office of Finance and Administration.*

# employee anniversaries

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

## July

07/27/09 Donald Carpenter, Luling WTP — New Hire  
07/05/06 Timothy Hill, Western Canyon WTP—3  
07/05/04 Clarissa Frnka, Lab—5  
07/28/03 Lee Gudgell, Water Resources—6  
07/05/02 Carlton Hoefling, Victoria WWTP—7  
07/17/92 Ross Chapman, Victoria WWTP—17  
07/02/84 Allen Ognoskie, Hydro—25  
07/02/82 David Kenda, Hydro—27  
07/10/78 Joel Heideke, RUD—31  
07/06/76 Debbie Magin, Water Resources—33

## August

08/24/09 James Irby, Coletto Recreation—New Hire  
08/17/09 James Wall, San Marcos WTP—New Hire  
08/18/08 Jeffery Hebert, Western Canyon WTP — 1  
08/15/08 Allan Smith, Shadow Creek — 1  
08/27/07 Emmylou Roberts, Lab — 2  
08/05/02 Josephine Longoria, Lab — 7  
08/05/02 Larry Shahan, San Marcos WTP — 7  
08/11/95 Billy Imhoff, General — 14  
08/29/94 Felix Cortinas, Luling WTP — 15  
08/05/91 John Urban, Coletto Reservoir — 18  
08/15/90 Angel Castillo, Jr., Lockhart WWTP — 19  
08/07/89 Scott Kolbe, Canyon Hydro — 20  
08/25/75 Christy Dietert, General — 34  
08/18/75 Richard Maxwell, Jr., Hydro — 34

## September

09/19/08 Dustin Greenwood, Western Canyon WTP — 1  
09/16/08 Kylie McNabb, Lab — 1  
09/28/01 Gerardo Rodriguez, Water Resources — 8  
09/27/01 Dennis Walker, Buda WWTP — 8  
09/01/00 Brian Lyssy, Lab — 9  
09/10/99 Ryan Boedeker, Canal RWSS — 10  
09/14/98 Susan Cochran, Water Resources — 11  
09/18/92 David Dodd, Calhoun Canal — 17  
09/15/92 Ronnie Parenica, Port Lavaca WTP — 17  
09/02/92 Jason Eeds, Lockhart WWTP — 17  
09/03/91 Stephanie Shelly, Port Lavaca WTP — 18  
09/01/88 Eduardo Montaña, Lockhart WWTP — 21  
09/03/74 Frank Tompkins, Victoria WWTP — 35  
09/11/67 Roberto Nieto, Hydro — 42

## October

10/27/08 Earl Harp, Lab — 1  
10/25/07 Annlee Drzakowski, General — 2  
10/29/04 Keelyn Underwood, Victoria WWTP — 5  
10/20/03 Jose Leal, Lockhart WTP — 6  
10/17/03 Wendell Gillit, Victoria WWTP — 6  
10/15/01 Marella Dalme, General — 8  
10/01/01 Barbara Gunn, General — 8  
10/11/90 Elizabeth Sedlacek, Water Resources — 19  
10/22/79 Herbert Wittliff, Calhoun Canal — 30  
10/25/76 Lorenzo Gonzales, Victoria WWTP — 33  
10/08/73 Ronald Gosnell, Canal RWSS — 36

## November

11/05/08 John Moryl, Canyon Hydro — 1  
11/01/07 Gynna Hernandez, General — 2  
11/29/05 Juan Vasquez, Western Canyon WTP — 4  
11/01/02 Jason Davidson, RUD — 7  
11/20/00 Robert Scott, Hydro — 9  
11/22/99 Eric Mendez, Lockhart WWTP — 10  
11/08/99 James Asbury, General — 10  
11/24/97 Jeannine Herrmann, General — 12  
11/19/97 Angela Baxley, General — 12  
11/06/95 Thomas McNeal, RUD — 14  
11/14/83 Jason Lewis, Coletto Recreation — 26  
11/10/81 Don Koble, Canal RWSS — 28  
11/19/79 Wilfred Korth, Jr., Coletto Recreation — 30  
11/01/76 Michael Gerdes, RUD — 33

## December

12/29/00 James Medrano, Hydro — 9  
12/20/00 Wallis Gudgell, Western Canyon WTP — 9  
12/10/99 Jerry Sharp, San Marcos WTP — 10  
12/28/92 Dianne Fly, Coletto Reservoir — 17  
12/06/83 Constance Rothe, General — 26  
12/25/81 Roy Odom, Hydro — 28

*The information for the employee anniversaries section was compiled by Daphne Harder, Human Resources Department of the Office of Finance and Administration.*

Robert Nieto



Photo by Connie Rothe



Photo from GBRA archives

# SAFETY & WELLNESS

## Practice Safety when Holiday Shopping

The holiday season has arrived and many people are gearing up to go shopping. Shopping during the holiday season is a time people can become vulnerable to theft, car-jacking, online fraud, and other criminal activity. Before joining the rush of holiday shoppers, take a moment to review some safety tips that may reduce your chances of becoming a “victim” of the season.

### Parking Lots:

- \* Do not hesitate to ask for a security escort if you feel unsafe.
- \* Use the trunk of your car to keep your packages out of sight.
- \* Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- \* Have your keys in your hand before you go to your car.
- \* Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, “con-artists” may try various methods of distracting you with for malicious intentions.
- \* Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. Such individuals are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops, on buses and other rapid transit.
- \* Even though holiday shopping can be rushed and distracting, stay alert to your surroundings.

### Malls and Shopping Centers:

- \* Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member. Bring a babysitter, friend or older child to help watch the youngest, especially when waiting in long lines.
- \* Dress casually and comfortably.
- \* Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible. Minimize the number of credit cards being carried and put driver’s licenses or ID cards, necessary cash, checks and credit cards in front pockets. Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.
- \* Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- \* Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- \* Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.
- \* Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.

- \* Teach your children what to do in the event you get separated. The best option is to instruct your child to look for a security guard or police officer, or go to the customer service desk where people are trained to help.

### ATM Machines:

- \* When going to automatic teller machines for cash withdrawals, do so during daylight hours.
- \* If you must go at night, use a machine that is well lit and visible to passing traffic.
- \* If anyone is lurking near the machine, pass it up and find another.

### Online Shopping:

- \* Use caution when shopping online. According to [PCWorld.com](http://PCWorld.com), about 114 million people will try to avoid crowded shopping centers and do at least some holiday shopping online. If you plan to purchase some of your holiday gifts online, make sure that you have updated anti-virus and anti-spyware programs on your computer. Never buy something from a site that you do not trust.





Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority  
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## Mark Your Calendar

Nov. 18, 2009

GBRA Board Meeting  
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Nov. 18-20, 2009

National Water Resources Association  
78th Annual Conference, <http://www.nwra.org/pdf/2009AnnualConfBrochure.pdf>  
Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, TX

Dec. 8-10, 2009

POWER-GEN Conference  
<http://www.power-gen.com/index/conference.html>  
Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV

Dec. 16, 2009

GBRA Board Meeting  
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Jan. 20, 2010

GBRA Board Meeting  
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Feb. 17, 2010

GBRA Board Meeting  
River Annex Bldg., Seguin, TX

Feb. 21-24, 2010

Utility Management Conference by AWWA and WEF  
(water and wastewater managers, professionals)  
<http://www.awwa.org/Conferences/>  
Intercontinental San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

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