

GBRA River Run



Eyes on the Future

- 3** / *Shadow Creek WWTP Expanded*
- 6** / *Canyon's 50th Anniversary*
- 12** / *Scholarships Have Impact*

Constituent Communiqué

Guiding GBRA's Future



Tommy Mathews
Chairman, Board of Directors

When it became apparent that long-time General Manager Bill West soon would be casting his rod and reel on the river, the Board of Directors knew it faced challenges in the search to fill the vacancy. GBRA would be losing more than 22 years of experience, but was presented with an opportunity to further establish GBRA on the state's water stage.

The real issue before this nine-member, governor-appointed body was positioning GBRA's future. In developing the job description and considering candidates from all across the nation, we have kept in mind that the Guadalupe River Watershed is home to some of the state's fastest growing communities and that GBRA's mission 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.

After a thorough vetting of candidates, the Board selected Kevin Patteson, the former executive administrator at the Texas Water Development Board. I hope you will take a moment to learn more about the new leadership at GBRA (p. 8-10). We are excited that he has joined the GBRA Team and look forward to him implementing his vision for the future to ensure that GBRA is a leader and partner for our region for the decades ahead.

Long-Time GM Bill West Retires



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

After 46 years in the Texas water industry and more than 22 of those years with GBRA, William "Bill" E. West, Jr., is retiring Sept. 30, 2016.

West began his career in 1970 at the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA). In 1986, he was named Executive Director of Natural Resources. At LCRA, West participated throughout the Texas Water Commission adjudication of the Colorado River initiated in the early 1970s. He started as GBRA's general manager on Feb. 1, 1994.

West was a member of the Senate Bill 1 Region L Water Planning Committee and was appointed by Gov. Rick Perry in 2003 to the State's Study Commission on Water for Environmental Flows. He worked to achieve a long-term solution to the Edwards Aquifer conflict. West is a past president of the National Water Resources Association and the Texas Water Conservation Association. He was recognized as an Honorary Diplomat, Water Resources Engineer (Hon.D.WRE) by the American Academy of Water Resources Engineers in 2011.

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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Contents

Departments

- 2 | Field and Office
- 12 | The Trust
- 14 | Inside GBRA

Features

- 6 | Canyon Dam and Reservoir Turns 50
- 8 | Eyes on the Future

FIELD & OFFICE

Dam Gate Being Evaluated

During a rain event on March 9, 2016, a gate on the Lake Wood (H-5) dam malfunctioned while spilling water and sustained extensive damage. After a public meeting, GBRA officials decided to explore all potential options.



Photo by Charles Hickman

Damaged Gate at Lake Wood

GBRA staff has been working for several months with engineering consultants to evaluate every possible option to remedy the malfunctioning dam gate at Lake Wood. Because of the age of the hydroelectric dams along the Guadalupe River, it is more efficient, and potentially more cost effective, to consider long-term solutions for “all” of the gates than to consider only the damaged one at H-5.

Many land- and home- owners around Lake Wood continue to inquire about the status of repairs on the

damaged H-5 gate GBRA officials are aware and understand that the residents are growing anxious.

Initially, there was some discussion about the H-5 situation at the April Board of Directors meeting, and a couple of Lake Wood residents addressed the board. No final decision was made at that time.

When all of the engineering and cost issues have been identified and fully evaluated, the staff will again present their recommendations to the GBRA Board of Directors.

Seven GBRA Employees Earned Internal Promotions

Seven Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) employees earned promotions across different operational areas of the organization this past spring and early summer. Join the GBRA family in recognizing its employees for the following promotions:

- Jennifer Blinder, sample custodian/lab technician I, was promoted to lab technician II – Regional Laboratory.
- Michael Hunt, maintenance operator trainee, was promoted to maintenance operator I, Rural Water Utilities.
- Justin Cortez, lab technician II, was promoted to water quality technician I – Water Resources Division.
- Curtis Gosnell, heavy equipment operator, was promoted to chief water tender – Canal Division.
- Charles Hickman, Engineer II – Water Resources, was promoted to manager for project engineering – General Division.
- Kimberly Helmke, administrative assistant – Water Resources Division, was promoted to customer service assistant II – General Division.
- Denise Lyssy, customer service assistant II, was promoted to the position of accounting clerk – General Division.



Photo by Janet Thome

Laboratory Technician Is Real Renaissance Woman

Carmen Phillips, laboratory technician III, is a bit of a renaissance woman. She is an Army Staff Sergeant, medic, and chemistry teaching assistant, nearing completion of her master's degree, and has crafting skills that would make Martha Stewart envious. In addition, she recently sought and earned her Texas Water Utilities Association, Lab Analyst Section, Lab Certification D. Obtaining the certification was voluntary rather than a requirement, and as such, was a first for the GBRA Regional Laboratory.

Expansion Completed on Shadow Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant

Work crews recently completed an expansion of the Shadow Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant that serves the Shadow Creek Subdivision near Buda, Texas.

Shadow Creek WWTP was expanded from 0.162 million gallons per day (mgd) to 0.372 mgd, and was put into service June 22, 2016. The facility, owned by North Hays County Municipal Utility District #1 and GBRA, initially began plant operations in January 2006.

Juan Peña, GBRA's division manager for Hays and Caldwell counties, said the expansion included the addition of a new circular package plant.

The plant also underwent improvements to the existing structures. "Several technological upgrades were built into the expansion, including a headworks structure with an automatic barscreen microstrainer for screening large solids from the influent before treatment," he explained.

Additionally, Peña said, "The plant has a pair of cloth disc filters, which were added to reduce turbidity and provide a better quality effluent prior to release into the Plum Creek Watershed."



Photo GBRA Archives



Laboratory Staff Accommodates Growth in the Region

Through adherence to very rigorous standards of The Nelac Institute (TNI), the laboratory's staff produces accurate, reliable, and legally defensible data.

By Jennifer Blinder

In keeping with the pace of growth in the surrounding region, the Regional Laboratory staff has worked steadily to ensure that constituents can be confident in the quality of the Guadalupe River Watershed's drinking water, wastewater, and surface water.

Guadalupe County, where GBRA's Main Office and Regional Laboratory are situated, has seen tremendous population and employment growth in industry, food production, and even organic farming. According to U.S. census data, the county experienced nearly 48 percent population growth in the decade of 2000 to 2010, and there appear to be few, if any, signs of slowing.

Through adherence to very rigorous standards set forth by The Nelac Institute (TNI), the laboratory's staff produces accurate, reliable, and legally defensible data. They perform analyses for drinking water permitting, wastewater and pre-industrial permitting, the state's Clean Rivers Program (CRP) and for household and industrial well owners.

So much of GBRA's NELAC-accredited laboratory's work is interconnected, such as the 4,000-5,000

different analyses performed each month. Sampling from numerous public drinking water sources are subject to multiple limits of contaminants.

Wastewater must be treated to certain purity levels before it can be released back into rivers and streams or used for non-consumable watering. Water data gathered through the CRP and analyzed in the lab help TCEQ develop the permit levels for wastewater.

A variety of standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) apply to surface water before public consumption, human contact recreational use and for healthy aquatic life.

Both private citizens and industry representatives rely on GBRA's laboratory to conduct baseline testing of well water for various contaminants to ensure its safety for manufacturing uses, livestock, irrigation, or human consumption. GBRA is proud to serve a significant number of the new business facilities that have located in the South Central Texas I-35 and I-10 corridors in the past few decades. For more information about GBRA's laboratory services, email lab@gbra.org or visit www.gbra.org/lab/default.aspx.



Inaugural Event Creates More Fun at Coleto Creek Park and Reservoir

By Rebecca Wilson

On Saturday, April 9, 2016, nature organizations participated in the inaugural Nature Fest at Coleto Creek Park. Participants set up tables and activities along the shoreline of the reservoir to educate all ages about native wildlife and the importance of conservation.

The day began with a guided bird walk led by Robert and Karen Benson, avid birders and naturalists in the region. Participants saw cardinals, Carolina wrens, a black-crested titmouse, Lincoln's sparrows, Inca and white wing doves, black and white warblers, and cedar wax wings. The walk ended with a view of the rookery island of the reservoir, teeming with the pink plumage of an active flock of roseate spoonbills.

The park pavilion was the centerpiece for entertainment and education, with presentations from local experts including: Brent Ortego, hummingbird expert at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD); Cathy Downs, Monarch Watch conservation specialist; Norman Hirst, Mid-Coast Texas Master Naturalist; Jim Feig, with the Victoria Photography Club; Dan Alonso, retired manager of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and current executive director

of the San Antonio Bay Foundation; Owen Fitzsimmons, a biologist with the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program; and Trey Barron, TPWD wildlife biologist.

Other action outside of the main pavilion included fly casting lessons, archery and atlatl activity booths, live native animals hosted by the Texas Zoo, the Texas A&M "Wetlands on Wheels" trailer, an interactive tent from the Children's Discovery Center, and the GBRA watershed model. Visitors were also able to try locally-made cuisine from Guerrilla Gourmet, Say Grace Chicken and Waffles, KB's BBQ, and Ma's Cafe.

Wilfred Korth, chief ranger and event organizer, said of the event, "My goal was to provide kids and families in our region another chance to get outdoors to experience nature. We provide that in a safe, friendly setting so that hopefully they will develop a long-term appreciation of why our natural world is important to our health and the health of our communities. I truly feel our first Nature Fest accomplished that goal."

The second annual Nature Fest is scheduled for April 1, 2017.

GBRA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lead the Community in Celebrating Canyon Dam and Reservoir's 50th Anniversary

An investment of about \$20.2 million in the early 1960s following a decade of one of the state's worst droughts led to the construction of Canyon Dam and Reservoir, which was completed in 1964. The reservoir was declared full in 1966. Since then, the Corps of Engineers estimate the project's flood protection has prevented nearly \$1.2 billion in damages.



On May 21, 2016, the communities of Comal County joined GBRA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Canyon Dam and Reservoir.

The celebration culminated months of planning by various members of the community and contributions from local organizations and businesses. More than 400 people attended the event.



Photos by Danielle Wilson



Photo by Janet Thome



Photos by Danielle Wilson



Celebration participants included KGNB disc jockey Tiffany Mayne; Canyon Lake High School Color Guard; local singer Peaches Kelly; Canyon Lake United Methodist Church Pastor Randy Lefler; GBRA Retiring General Manager Bill West; USACE Ft. Worth District Commander COL Calvin Hudson II; USACE Ft. Worth District Chief of Operations Tim MacAllister; Canyon Lake Manager Marcus Schimank; the Honorable U.S. Congressman Lamar Smith; District Manager for the Honorable State Sen. Donna Campbell, Kelly Follis; the Honorable former State Rep. Doug Miller; and the Honorable Comal County Judge Sherman Krause.

Kevin Patteson Takes the Reins at GBRA

...with his eyes on the future



Photo by Janet Thome

Kevin Patteson

By LaMarriol Smith

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) Board of Directors approved a motion in April appointing Kevin Patteson, former Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) executive administrator, as GBRA's new general manager and chief executive officer. Patteson assumed his duties as general manager and chief executive officer, May 2, 2016.

Patteson brought with him a unique set of experiences along with two new administrators, Darrell Nichols and Jonathan Stinson, with their own set of talents and ways of getting things done. Nichols, senior deputy general manager, and Stinson, deputy general manager, joined GBRA June 1, 2016.

Amidst our state's most recent and significant droughts, the Texas Legislature recognized the need and opportunity to strengthen our state's commitment to water development and ensuring water supplies for the future. In 2013, the voters of Texas affirmed a \$2 billion appropriation by the legislature from the state's Economic Stabilization Fund, or "Rainy Day Fund," to create a new water-financing program to help develop and finance water-supply projects adopted in the Texas State Water Plan. The State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT) program is designed to provide more than \$27 billion in cost-effective financial assistance to local and regional water suppliers over the next 50 years. In addition to capitalizing the new SWIFT program, the legislature also directed changes at the TWDB calling for enhanced accountability, transparency, and engagement. Patteson, then working as executive director for the Texas Office of State and Federal Relations representing Texas in Washington, D.C., was tapped to help steer the agency in its new direction. Both Nichols and Stinson also draw from that agency-changing experience having served as TWDB's assistant executive administrators during Patteson's tenure.

GBRA Board Chairman Thomas Mathews explained that after an extensive national search among a group of talented and qualified candidates, the Board of Directors determined, "Patteson was the best fit for managing the day-to-day operations of the organization moving forward. We were very impressed with his breadth of experience, political savviness, and water industry knowledge."

Patteson saw potential in taking on the GM/CEO position, describing GBRA as "a leader among river authorities and is well-positioned with viable projects to serve the diverse needs of our growing region of Texas."

But there were other factors that made the prospect of joining the organization more attractive. "GBRA has a wealth of dedicated staff who have committed their lives to serving our neighbors with their expertise. In these dynamic times when we are experiencing so much change and growth, it is exciting to lead an organization with more than 80 years of commitment

While resources are limited, whether financial or environmental, we must be accountable stewards with these precious resources that make our part of Texas so special.

serving Texans from Kendall to Calhoun counties," Patteson said, adding, "My goal is to engage and enable all the resources GBRA has available to forge new partnerships to manage and develop water resources for the next 80 years."

As the new general manager, Patteson is the public face and the senior executive of the GBRA, overseeing the organization's entire operations of more than 150 employees in multiple locations, assets of nearly \$250 million, and leading its strategic initiatives in concert with the nine-member board of directors who are appointed by the governor.

Patteson replaces William "Bill" E. West, Jr., who served as GBRA's general manager since February 1994.

As he takes the reins of GBRA, Patteson indicated he intends to ensure GBRA maintains its status as a leader in water development and management for the citizens, customers and stakeholders who live and work in the Guadalupe Basin. "My goal is to preserve the high level of customer service our staff provides on a daily basis and serve as a regional partner to the communities from the hill country to the coast," he said.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority also faces challenges in the future. Among those challenges, "growth" looms large. "GBRA must keep pace with the demands and needs of customers as the communities within our basin experience growth," Patteson said. "We can employ effective strategies to help deal with the issues that accompany growth. While resources are

limited, whether financial or environmental, we must be accountable stewards with these precious resources that make our part of Texas so special. I believe by growing our regional partnerships, together we can achieve successes for the environment and economics of the Guadalupe Basin.”

The upcoming 84th Legislative Session may present some challenges of its own. “It’s no secret that the state’s lawmakers will be focused on how Texans plan and pay for needed water infrastructure to meet the demands of our growing population and economy,” Patteson said.

But legislative sessions are exciting times, and 2017 looks to be no different. Whether it is flooding or drought, water is always a priority in Texas. “Serving as a regional partner,” Patteson explained, “GBRA is poised to implement new water projects to serve the next generations of Texans.”

Patteson, who enjoys spending time with his wife and three sons, earned his bachelor’s and juris doctorate degrees from Baylor University in Waco.

He has served as the special advisor on federal initiatives for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), acting as liaison between TCEQ and members of Congress on federal legislation and regulatory matters. Previously, Patteson was deputy general counsel for the Texas Workforce Commission and assistant general counsel/ethics advisor for the Office of Governor Rick Perry from 2002 to 2008.

As senior deputy general manager, Nichols is charged with the development and implementation of the Authority’s policies, and has general oversight of daily operational and administrative activities. He assists with directing GBRA’s programs related to project development and construction activities,



*Darrell
Nichols*

Photos by Janet Thorne

financing of water infrastructure projects, scientific data collection and dissemination, hydrologic and environmental analysis, water supply planning, and water policy development.

Nichols has been working in the utility industry for 25 years. Prior to his experience at TWDB, he performed utility regulatory work at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and has 10 years of engineering and consulting experience in the private sector with a firm he created.

Nichols earned his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from the University of Texas at Austin.

Stinson’s work as deputy general manager includes responsibility for implementation of the GBRA’s programs and policies in an efficient and effective manner in conformance with the authority’s governance, management, operational structure, and statutory requirements. Stinson also has general oversight, development, and implementation of GBRA’s policies, and assists with the daily administrative and operational activities.

Prior to his work at TWDB, Stinson served as a natural resources policy advisor to the governor in the Office of Budget, Planning and Policy, where he focused on programs and policies affecting water, parks and wildlife, and agriculture. He also worked in the Texas Senate for nearly 10 years, during five legislative sessions, working on issues ranging from groundwater and surface water policies, infrastructure financing, and economic development issues.

Stinson earned his bachelor’s degree from Texas A&M University.



*Jonathan
Stinson*



Putting Social Media to Work for You

By Rebecca Wilson

From rural farmers in the lower basin to millennials in the growing urban hub along the I-35 corridor, constituents across the Guadalupe River Basin are a diverse community who use a variety of channels to access information. For many decades, communication along the watershed took place through newspapers, radio, mail, television, or community events. There were few methods for simultaneously alerting thousands of targeted individuals across the region. Today, nearly everyone in the country has incorporated social media platforms as a part of their everyday lives. Social media is no longer just about keeping up with friends; it has become a “go-to” source of information.

Initiating online engagement

Recognizing the opportunity to open new channels of communication with constituents, GBRA began using social media with Twitter in October 2009 and Facebook in May 2013. As more and more constituents and colleagues tuned in online, GBRA responded by expanding social media communications and approving the hiring of a new staff person to oversee this operation.

Enhancing the experience

The social media strategy of GBRA continues to evolve from an emergency-only notification model to more of an engagement and educational model. Using

social media to connect with constituents on a daily basis has steadily increased the level of interaction online, which has major benefits for the basin as news and messages about flooding or drought conditions, conservation, recreation, water quality and river flow conditions can reach interested audiences in a short period of time.

Furthering GBRA's commitment

GBRA's Communications and Education staff works diligently to respond to social media inquiries in a timely manner. Equally important, they strive to provide accurate information. Sometimes doing so may require a little more time to obtain or confirm information with the appropriate sources.

Many of GBRA's social media followers have visited GBRA pages to thank operations staff, report news from across the basin, and share weather or education messages with friends and family. While the staff appreciates positive exchanges in communication efforts, it is understood that questions and comments sometimes can be related to specific events and activities, an unpleasant experience, or even to a miscommunication. Social media gives staff the important opportunity to quickly resolve such issues. Regardless of the topic, GBRA is improving its social media engagement to further its commitment to the people of the Guadalupe River Basin.

How GBRA Scholarships Are Helping Youth in the Guadalupe River Basin

From the rural reaches to the Smithsonian Latino Center in Washington, D.C., GBRA scholarships have aided more than a generation of young people who are among its constituents in the Guadalupe River Basin.

By Rebecca Wilson

GBRA staff members recently visited with a couple of past scholarship recipients, Alana Zamora and Taryn Shea (Downey) Mertz, to see how they have fared since making use of their GBRA scholarships.

Alana Zamora

Alana Zamora earned a scholarship from GBRA in 2013. She graduated from San Marcos High School and attended Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, before transferring to Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

Zamora is a first generation college student who begins her senior year at Texas State University this fall. Due to her diligence in applying for and receiving scholarships, she was able to finish her first two years of university without taking out student loans. Zamora said she credited the awards with relieving her financial stress and allowing her to focus on her studies.

A public relations major specializing in digital media with a minor in leadership studies, Zamora landed an enviable position as an alumni liaison contractor for the Smithsonian Latino Center. It is a satellite position that allows her to work from Texas for the Washington, D.C., institute. Upon graduation, Zamora said she hopes to work in a community relations position for an educational or cultural institution.



Taryn Shea (Downey) Mertz

Taryn Mertz, daughter of Joe Downey, plant manager at GBRA's Luling Water Treatment Plant, earned a GBRA scholarship in 2004. Mertz graduated from Gonzales High School and started out attending Texas Lutheran University in Seguin, Texas, to study biology. She earned an associate's degree in nursing from Victoria College before completing her bachelor's degree in nursing in 2011 from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas.

Mertz recalled using the scholarship award from GBRA to purchase a desktop computer she used to research and write papers while she earned her degrees. Mertz said she values her college experience for providing her with the ability to obtain her degree, but also for allowing her the opportunity to meet many different people with different perspectives on life.

With nursing degree in hand, Mertz works in home health in Hallettsville, Texas as a registered nurse. "It's what I was born to do," Mertz explained. "I enjoy going to work every day." Perhaps more importantly, Mertz said she appreciates that her profession allows her to work in a rural setting. She is married and has three children.



GBRA Awarded 12 Academic Scholarships

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) officials awarded three \$2,000 academic scholarships and nine \$1,000 academic scholarships to area students within GBRA's 10-county district.

The scholarships, presented annually, are part of GBRA's Employee Volunteer Program, which was founded in December of 2000. The program's purpose is to improve the quality of life in area communities through the commitment of GBRA employees and the use of their time, energy, talents and skills.

Christopher Velasquez graduated from San Marcos High School in Hays County. He planned to attend the University of Texas at Austin, working toward a degree in business and social work.

Madison Hesse graduated from Samuel Clemens High School in Guadalupe County. She planned to attend the University of Texas at Austin, where her goal is to transfer into the business program.

Bernadette Flehmer graduated from Smithson Valley High School in Comal County. She planned to attend the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry to study environmental resource engineering.

Addie Blinder graduated from Seguin High School in Guadalupe County. She planned to attend Southwestern University to study music education.

Joseph Freeman graduated from Seguin High School in Guadalupe County. He planned to attend the University of Texas at San Antonio to study business.

Ileana Gonzales graduated from Lockhart High School in Caldwell County. She planned to attend Texas Christian University to study speech-language pathology.

Shelby Mann graduated from Luling High School in Caldwell County. She planned to attend The Travel Academy in Eagen, Minnesota.

Hannah Shelly graduated from Calhoun High School in Calhoun County. She planned to attend Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.

Patrick Urrutia graduated from Central Catholic High School in Bexar County. He planned to attend the United States Naval Academy to study mathematics. In high school, Patrick served as the Brigade Commander in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC).

Chico Wagner graduated from Canyon High School in Comal County. He planned to attend Texas State University to study journalism and political science.



Top left: Chico Wagner
Middle left: Madison Hesse



Pictured left to right; Joseph Freeman, Bernadette Flehmer, Shelby Mann, Patrick Urrutia and Addie Blinder

Photos by Janet Thome

THE TRUST

Land Trust Interns Bring Needed Support

By Katie Morrison and Clark Lupton

Like most non-profit organizations, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBR Trust) tries to operate as efficiently as possible with its available resources. That is why the GBR Trust staff is always eager to make use of the Sewanee: The University of the South and the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas partnership, which offers an internship program for students who have interests in environmental programs.

This summer, the GBR Trust and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) welcomed Katie Morrison and Clark Lupton as its new interns. Morrison and Lupton, both students at Sewanee, decided to pursue the internship program in hopes of gaining knowledge in water policy and water quality, as well as first-hand, real-world field experiences. The GBR Trust's mission is to promote and encourage conservation, stewardship and the enjoyment of the land and water resources of the Guadalupe River Watershed while maintaining its unique and irreplaceable natural heritage.

During their internship, Morrison and Lupton shadowed GBRA's Executive Manager of Science, Intergovernmental Relations and Policy and the GBR Trust's Executive Director Todd Votteler, Ph.D., at several water policy meetings in Austin, Seguin, and San Antonio.

But the experience was not all meeting intensive. Morrison and Lupton had several opportunities to get their hands and feet wet while collecting water samples from springs, rivers, and San Antonio Bay. They also participated in several community clean-up events near the San Marcos Springs — among the largest springs in the southwestern United States.



Courtesy Photo

Katie Morrison and Clark Lupton

The interns also put their classroom knowledge and practical experience to use when they assisted GBRA's Education staff with elementary environmental education classes that toured the Canyon Lake Gorge and visited Comal Springs. By visiting springs and creeks, the elementary students learn how vulnerable water systems are and what they can do to protect endangered species and water quality for future generations.

Lupton is a senior from Lynchburg, Virginia, majoring in natural resources with a focus in geology and hydrology. The GBR Trust internship marked Lupton's first time in Texas. He said he enjoyed studying the local springs and river systems.

Morrison is from Charleston, South Carolina, and will be graduating from Sewanee in 2017 with a degree in environmental studies. Her main interests are policy, management, and water conservation in irrigated agriculture.

Both the GBR Trust and GBRA staff appreciated Morrison's and Lupton's time and commitment over the summer and wish them well in their future endeavors.



GBRA Training & Licenses

Jason Irby of Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir attended the annual Texas Aquatic Plant Management Conference.

Darryl Jandt of Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Cynthia Thomas-Jimenez of Education and Communication attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Jaynellen Kerr of Gorge attended CPR/First Aid Training

Joey Kisiah of Port Lavaca WTP attended Day School-GCTWUA

Don Koble of Calhoun County Rural Water Supply Division attended Introduction to Monochloramine/Free Ammonia, Customer Service Insp., Day School-GCTWUA, Wastewater System Asset Management-US-EPA, Financial Tools/Resources for Small Water Systems US-EPA, Rev Total Coliform Rule-TAWWA, Customer Service Inspector License, and received a Class B Surface Water Treatment Operator License.

Scott Kolbe of Hydro Division attended Level 2 Electrical Work and Electrical Safety.

Wilfred Korth of Coletto Park and Reservoir Division attended Public Information Act, GBRA Electrician Workshop, Annual Victoria Farm and Ranch Pesticide Training, Texas Watershed Steward Program, TWUA Day School, and TPWD-First Response to Drowning Workshop.

Allen Lawson of Western Canyon Division attended Electrical Safety and received a Class B Surface Water Treatment Operator License.

Jose Leal of Lockhart WTP Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training

Jason Lewis of Coletto Park and Reservoir Division attended the annual Texas Aquatic Plant Management Conference, Texas Watershed Steward Program, and TWUA Day School.

Josephine Longoria of Regional Lab attended Sample Master Laboratory Information Management System, User/Administrator (Accelerated Technology Laboratories, Inc.), Sample Master Laboratory Information, Management System Advanced User (Accelerated Technology Laboratories, Inc.), and CPR/First Aid Training.

Manuel Lopez of Hydro Division attended CRP/First Aid Training.

James Lucas of Luling WTP attended Electrical Safety Training.

Brian Lyssy of Hydro Division attended Identification of Microorganisms, Water Utilities Calculations, Electrical Safety, Texas Watershed Steward Program, CPR/First Aid Training, and received a Class B Wastewater Treatment Operator License.

Denise Lyssy of General Division attended Advanced Microsoft Excel and CPR/First Aid Training.

Jesi Mann of Buda WWTP attended Electrical Safety, CPR/First Aid Training, and received a Class C Wastewater Treatment Operator License.

Steven Maricle of Hydro Division attended Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Richard Matheaus of RUD attended Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Richard Maxwell of Hydro Division attended Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Marlon McAdams of Coletto Park and Reservoir attended Electrical Safety and GBRA Electrician Workshop.

Jeffrey McKee of Hydro Division attended Texas Rural Water Assn. (TRWA) Water Utility Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Adrian Medrano of Lockhart WWTP attended CPR/First Aid Training.

James Medrano of Hydro Division attended Electrical Safety.

Eric Mendez of Lockhart WWTP attended Electrical Safety, CPR/First Aid Training, and received a Class B Ground Water Treatment Operator License.

Eduardo Montana of Lockhart WWTP attended Electrical Safety, Level 2 Electrical Work, and CPR/First Aid Training.

John Moryl of Hydro Division attended Electrical Safety and CPR/First Aid Training.

Mary Newman of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Allen Ognoskie of Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Ronnie Parenica of Port Lavaca WTP attended Golden Crescent TWUA Camera Inspections/Sewer Lines and Day School-GCTWUA.

Juan Pena of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Carmen Phillips of Regional Lab attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Yolanda Pierce of General Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Regan Ploetz of Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Jeffrey Robison of Hydro Division attended CPR/First Aid Training.

Gerardo Rodriguez of the Lake Wood Division attended GBRA Electrician Workshop, Annual Texas Aquatic Plant Management Conference, Pesticide Safety & Laws, Level 2 Electrical Work, CPR/First Aid Training, Safety Meeting-Texas Snakes, First Aid, CPR, and AED Training.

Samuel Salas of Luling WTP attended Electrical Safety, Level 2 Electrical Work, and CPR/First Aid Training.

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

EMPLOYEES ANNIVERSARIES

GBRA recognizes the following employees for their dedication of service. These employees started with GBRA between the months of February and June.

February

2/29/2016	Jimmy Wyatt	General	36
2/27/2016	Linda McPherson	Port Lavaca	32
2/1/2016	William West	General	22
2/4/2016	Cheryl Gordon	General	17
2/18/2016	Richard Gonzales	Lockart WTP	13
2/1/2016	LaMarriol Smith	General	9
2/20/2016	Manuel Lopez	Hydro	4
2/27/2016	Enrique Segura	Western Canyon	4
2/18/2016	Joann Gonzales	Water Resources	2
2/29/2016	Thomas Scott	San Marcos WTP	NH

March

3/4/2016	Michael Schultze	Hydro	40
3/23/2016	John Smith	Water Resources	35
3/26/2016	Michael Thompkins	Calhoun Canal RWSS	32
3/31/2016	Marlon McAdams	Coletto Creek Res.	30
3/21/2016	Richard Matheaus	RUD	28
3/15/2016	Michael Helmke	Hydro	12
3/29/2016	Christopher Lewis	General	11
3/21/2016	Leigh Crittenden	General	10
3/11/2016	Russell Hester	Hydro	3
3/17/2016	Michael Hunt	Rural Water	1
3/21/2016	Michelle Henson	Regional Lab	NH
3/4/2016	Michael Gerdes	RUD	NH

April

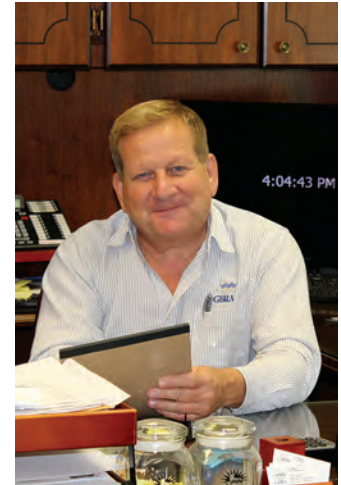
4/16/2016	Darryl Jandt	Hydro	34
4/24/2016	Roland Henry	Hydro	29
4/7/2016	Reagan Ploetz	Hydro	29
4/11/2016	David Maltony	Hydro	21
4/22/2016	Curtis Gosnell	Calhoun Canal RWSS	14
4/13/2016	Paulette Cowey	General	10
4/18/2016	Billy Penny	Calhoun Canal RWSS	5
4/8/2016	Rodney Guice	Calhoun Canal RWSS	3
4/14/2016	Carl Westergard	General	2
4/1/2016	Anna Daniels	Water Resources	NH
4/11/2016	Robert Perez	Hydro	NH
4/23/2016	Jesus Guillen	San Marcos WTP	NH
4/25/2016	Lauren Willis	Water Resources	NH

May

5/10/2016	Thomas Hill	Water Resources	40
5/17/2016	Juan Juarez	Hydro	40
5/2/2016	Joseph Downey	Luling WTP	38
5/5/2016	James King	Hydro	36
5/4/2016	Alvin Schuerg	General	35
5/19/2016	Michael Urrutia	Water Resources	29
5/1/2016	Leroy Garza	San Marcos WTP	27
5/1/2016	Yolanda Pierce	General	15
5/12/2016	Cynthia		
	Thomas-Jimenez	General	13
5/2/2016	Norma Harvey	General	11



GBRA Archive Photo



Jim Wyatt

Photo by Danielle Wilson

5/11/2016	Denise Lyssy	General	9
5/18/2016	Hunter Duncan	Western Canyon	9
5/19/2016	Jaynellen Kerr	Water Resources	8
5/19/2016	Joey Kisiah	Port Lavaca	8
5/4/2016	Clint Retzloff	Hydro	7
5/14/2016	Charles Hickman	Water Resources	4
5/27/2016	Jennifer Blinder	Regional Lab	2
5/4/2016	Mary Newman	Water Resources	1
5/10/2016	Albert Soto	Luling WTP	NH
5/10/2016	Ernest Wilhelm	Luling WTP	NH
5/16/2016	Rafael Urbina	Buda WTP	NH
5/2/2016	Kevin Patteson	General	NH
5/3/2016	Amado Ledesma	Western Canyon	NH

June

6/25/2016	David Welsch	Water Resources	43
6/27/2016	Jeffrey McKee	Hydro	39
6/1/2016	Carl Korth	Coletto Creek Res.	33
6/10/2016	Sammy Salas	Luling WTP	30
6/1/2016	Todd Votteler	General	16
6/21/2016	Janet Thome	General	15
6/23/2016	Teresa Van Booven	Water Resources	13
6/15/2016	Allen Lawson	Western Canyon	7
6/8/2016	Todd Hoff	Port Lavaca	1
6/1/2016	Darrell Nichols	General	NH
6/1/2016	Jonathan Stinson	General	NH
6/2/2016	Jace Shock	Water Resources	NH
6/27/2016	Healy Beaty	Calhoun Canal	NH

NH - Newly Hired

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

Where Are They Now?

Robert Nieto

By Danielle Wilson

The two words that come to the mind of Robert Nieto to describe his time at GBRA are “respect” and



“royalty.” Hired on Sept. 11, 1967, Nieto was one of the first members of the hydroelectric crew. He came to GBRA after his service in the U.S. Navy and, although he had other job offers on the table, he chose GBRA to be close to his family in Seguin, a decision he says he never regrets.

When asked what he remembers most about his time at GBRA, Nieto says he remembers the development of the Lower Basin and his many trips there to set up the electrical aspects, running from one plant to the next while they were being developed. On two of those occasions, Nieto would have to rush home to witness the birth of his children. “When it came to my children being born, GBRA treated me with so much respect that I felt like royalty. I was allowed to take as much time as I needed to be with my family,” he said.



Photo by Connie Rothe

Nieto credits GBRA with helping him develop his skills by sending him to training courses throughout his career that helped him climb the ladder of success. As technology advanced, he attended additional courses to learn the newest technology and how to man new machines to help improve the Hydro Department. When he returned from training, he would then teach his crews the skills and tools he learned. In his later years as a senior technician, he loved giving others the same opportunities he had been afforded. “When I was first hired, I started at the very bottom. My boss told me that since I was at the bottom the sky was the limit.” To this day, Robert still comes to visit his GBRA family and is willing and able to consult when asked.

Where can you find Robert nowadays? Well according to him, he can be found working on what he calls “Honey-Do’s,” which are tasks his wife will ask him to complete, helping out his son and mother-in-law by being an all-around Mr. Fix-it. He also spends quality time with his family. Next year, the Nietos will celebrate their 50th anniversary and are planning a vacation to an island to celebrate the occasion.



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September

Sept 5, 2016

Labor Day Holiday
GBRA Offices Closed

Sept 21, 2016

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

Sept 30-Oct. 2, 2016

Come and Take It Festival
Gonzales, TX
<http://www.gonzalestexas.com/come-and-take-it/>

October

Oct 12-14, 2016

Texas Water Conservation Association Fall Meeting
Wyndham Riverwalk Hotel, San Antonio, TX
<http://www.texaswca.com/meetings/index.html>

Oct 19, 2016

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

November

Nov 16, 2016

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



Photo by Jim Payne