

Panhandle Water News

OCTOBER 2006

Points of Interest

TALL Group Visits District

1st Place Water Essay

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New Director

PGCD Sponsors Student to State Water Camp

PWPG Update

Ag Loan Money Available

TALL Group Visits District Office



Approximately 25 members of the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership (TALL) group visited portions of the Texas Panhandle on October 5th and 6th. TALL is a practical, action oriented, two-year program in which participants meet eight times. Six of the meetings are held at different sites across the state. It is funded by dedicated individuals and institutions through private gifts and grants. Participants pay tuition, and the Texas Cooperative Extension Service



The District served the TALL group a fajita lunch at the District office, before they continued on their tour.

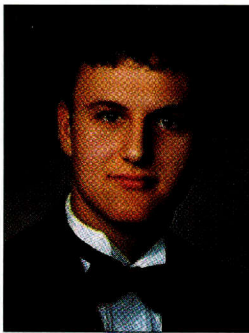
provides administrative support. The program includes seminars, on-site tours and meetings with leaders of government and business. International study is the highlight of the program's second year. Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz is the director.

The group's Panhandle itinerary included tours of the White Deer wind park, the PGCD office, the McLean Feedyard and O'Brien Ranches, Tyson Fresh Meats, Xcel Energy-Harrington Station, and a reception at the Kwahadi Kiva Indian Museum in Amarillo.

The stop at the PGCD office was highlighted by a panel discussion on High Plains issues and opportunities. Moderator for the discussion was Dr. Nolan Clark, USDA-ARS, and Panel members were C. E. Williams, PGCD general manager; Dr. Bob DeOtte, WTAMU; Wes Durham, Panda Energy; and Jody Bradford, TAES.

Should Cities Enforce Stricter Guidelines on Water Use?

Rustin Dakota Carter, of Shamrock High School, submitted the winning essay in the 2006 Scholarship Contest. His essay follows.



*Dakota Carter
Shamrock H. S.*

Water. We are told to drink eight, eight-ounce glasses of it in a day, and it is known as that life-force that everything needs. Not only does it make up the majority of our bodies, but it covers over seventy-five percent of the Earth. Water is simply an integral part of our lives. However, with the continual use, the continual waste, of our fresh water sources, we are now on the brink of catastrophe; lack of rainfall and aquifer recharge has opened the door to disaster. Benjamin Franklin once said, "We know the value of water when the well runs dry." People do not understand the consequences of wasting water; it does not cross their minds that their precious resource might be close to dissipating. Something must be done before the people of the Texas Panhandle unknowingly squander away this vital resource.

Growing up on a ranch, I have had firsthand experience of seeing an area in desperate need of water; however, not only the farms are harmed by the overuse of water. Our cities and towns are seeing the results of less and less water, as well. Overuse and wasting is causing the natural recharge of the Ogallala Aquifer to not equal the discharge. We are experiencing shortages of ground water, which means less drinking water and irrigation water; basically we are draining the very water we use for everything. Therefore, conservation is imperative. I wholeheartedly support stricter guidelines on water use. We must, however, educate the Texas Panhandle and actually be willing to commit to long-term water conservation.

Accomplishing the enforcement of new guidelines will be no easy feat. Not only would ordinances and guidelines be passed, usually with protest, but what guarantees it will work? The average person of the Texas Panhandle does not realize, or does not think, about this colossal water problem. To make new guidelines work, the support of the Panhandle towns and cities is needed. The message must be put out for all to see that there is a problem, and something must be done or all our water will be gone. A good start is this scholarship; getting students to research and learn about this problem is a great foundation to enforcing new guidelines. Students are actually having to look at this problem and become educated about it; understanding that there is a problem will be the driving force in making guidelines work. However, students alone cannot make a difference; support of the entire Panhandle is the only way to make sure our water is conserved for future generations. Seminars and brochures over water conservation and the need to limit use would help to build acceptance. More ways to inform the people would be to go to the local businesses, hold public meetings, and use the local television and radio mediums. When people are offered the in-

formation and showed the reasoning behind something, such as new guidelines on conserving water, success is almost guaranteed. It is all about education and showing why something must be done. Winning the support of the Texas Panhandle will be the determining factor, if any water conservation program is to work.

Another benefit of gaining support of new guidelines is that more than just the guidelines will be followed. When people are made to "sit up and pay attention," not only will the guidelines be followed, but they will work on conserving water on a personal level. They'll take shorter showers, make their landscapes more water-friendly, and install water-efficient appliances. After gaining their backing, there is less likelihood we will have a water problem. With the support of the people of the Texas Panhandle, they will go up and above those rules placed on them by the city and follow their own personal rules on water conservation.

So to answer the prompt simply and effectively, do I believe cities should enforce stricter guidelines on water use? Yes. How could cities accomplish this task? By educating and ultimately gaining the support of the Texas Panhandle, the people will gladly follow the guidelines and do their part in saving our valuable resource for future generations.

Introducing New Employee: Anita



Anita Haiduk joined the District on August 28, 2006. Anita's principal duties will be secretary/web administrator, but she will also be assisting in several other areas. Most recently, Anita was employed with the City of White Deer, where she served as secretary, and later as City Administrator.

Anita was born and raised in Miami, Texas, where she lived until moving to White Deer in 1992. Her parents are Frank and Evelyn Heare, who still reside in Miami. She is married to LeRoy Haiduk and, together they have four children, Michelle Wolfe and husband Rick, Melanie South, Brad Haiduk and wife Janie, and Jeff Haiduk and wife Stacey. They have been blessed with seven grandchildren and enjoy spending as much time as possible with them.

Anita enjoys sewing, yard work, gardening and working with her husband on lots of "little projects." She especially enjoys being outdoors, when weather permits. LeRoy is employed at K&K, Inc., in White Deer, and runs the family's farm/ranch five miles northeast of White Deer. Together, LeRoy and Anita own L&A Metal. Anita is also a member of the Venado Blanco Study Club and the White Deer Park Committee.

Media Strives to Raise Water Awareness Across the Panhandle

KVII-TV Director of News and Operations, Dusty Green, invited area water experts to discuss the possibility of a far-reaching initiative to raise water awareness in the Texas Panhandle. "This is an important, if not the most important, issue in the Panhandle area," Green said. Realizing that the media can be used as a tool for education as well as promotion, the

experts shared ideas about information that the media could use to promote the interests of the water conservation districts, cities and water providers in the area. Discussion of the Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWP) and its projections for the future raised eyebrows in the Channel 7 News crew. Green took notes as Colby Waters, former administrator for the PWP, explained some of the work the group has done and its impact on water use in the area. As the meeting progressed, it became clear that much newsworthy information concerning water often goes unnoticed by the media and the general population.

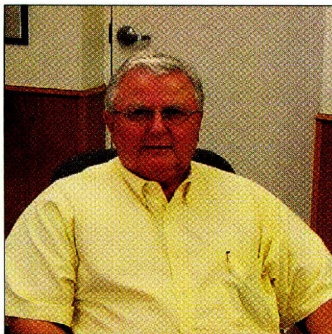
At the meeting, Channel 7 committed to act as a mouthpiece to communicate messages and promote issues of water awareness and conservation, both as a service to the groundwater districts and to panhandle area residents; whom will reap the benefits for generations to come.

Channel 7 started running a daily "Watching our Water" spot. This series of broadcasts gives water use and conservation tips. They regularly give the lake level at Lake Meredith which, with the drought of this summer, dropped to record lows. They also give tips on how and when to water your lawns, the use of xeriscape gardening, etc.

District manager C. E. Williams said, "Dusty and his group of reporters and cameramen have been an extremely valuable asset, in getting out to the general public the message that we must make wise use of every drop of water. I believe that Dusty has shown how we do things here, as they say, "in the Panhandle Spirit" of cooperation."

New Director Appointed to the Board

Tom Cambridge will fill spot vacated by John McKissack



John McKissack, PGCD Director for Precinct 9, resigned from the Board of Directors on July 12, citing the lack of time to be an effective member of the Board. McKissack had served on the Board since September 2000.

At their meeting on August 16, the Board appointed Thomas Cambridge to fill the unexpired term in Precinct 9. Mr.

Cambridge is a geologist and serves as president of Cambridge Production, Inc., in Amarillo.

51% of the people in the U.S. depend on groundwater for drinking water. — USGS

Money is Still Available

The District still has funds to loan for low pressure sprinkler systems.

The interest rate is 5.4%, with 20% down payment required. For more information, call the District office, 806-883-2501, or come by 201 W. Third Street, White Deer.

PGCD Sponsored High School Student to State Water Camp

Austin Sinclair, of Panhandle, spent five days at the State Youth Water Camp in Monahans, Texas. This educational camp featured hands-on experiences, guest speakers and field trips designed to teach high school youth the importance of water stewardship, water conservation and preservation. The camp is held each July on the 50-acre George and Opal Bentley 4-H Center and is co-sponsored by the Texas Cooperative Extension Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Austin, the son of Earl and Rhonda Sinclair, is a sophomore student at Panhandle High School. Activities he participated in included learning water basics, field trips and group projects. Over the course of the week, each group collected data and gave a final oral report on the following topics: Watershed Management, Saline Water Use, Lawn and Home Water Use.

The District was pleased to sponsor this deserving youth for the 2006 Water Camp and hopes to sponsor more students to the camp in future years.



Austin Sinclair is the third student from the left, on the back row (blue shirt). For recreational activities, the students visited the Balmorhea State Park and spring-fed Olympic-size swimming pool, as well as the municipal swimming pool in Odessa.

Water District Lowered Tax Rate by 14 Percent

The Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District's Board of Directors voted to lower its tax rate 14 percent, at the September meeting. The tax rate for the 2006-2007 fiscal year will be .0124 cents per \$100 valuation. The groundwater district has lowered its tax rate each of the last five years.

District Rules Amended

Following a hearing, on September 20, the Board of Directors voted to amend the District's Rules. The amendments were necessary to comply with the new statutory notice and hearing requirements of Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, mandated by the 79th Texas Legislature, through its passage of House Bill 1763, effective September 1, 2005.

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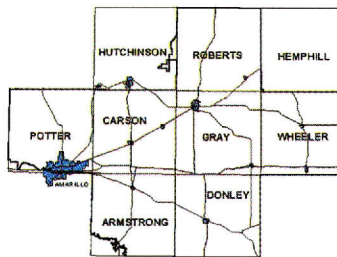
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Panhandle Water Planning Group Begins New Research

The Panhandle Water Planning Group (PWPG) is one of 16 regional water planning groups designated by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to help develop and revise a regional water plan that is being incorporated into the comprehensive 2007 State Water Plan for Texas.

The PWPG is made up of 25 individuals representing 12 different interest groups. In 2002, regional water planning groups across Texas entered the second round of regional water planning, and they submitted the second regional plan for the Panhandle in January of this year.

In June, the PWPG and the Llano Estacado Regional Water Planning Group, held a joint meeting in Plainview. The two groups determined that a joint committee was needed to develop a scope of work (SOW) to research the recharge rates of the Ogallala Aquifer in the eastern panhandle of Texas. This project would be valuable to both Regions, because of the groundwater that the Canadian River Municipal Water Authority (CRMWA) pumps to its 11 member cities.

The joint committee met and researched proposals from various sources. Ultimately, the sub-committee recommended a SOW to each region for this study. Both Regional Water Planning Groups agreed that the proposed SOW would benefit each region and would recommend the number one project be the Eastern Panhandle Recharge Study and the number two project would be the Brackish Groundwater Study in Deaf Smith, Palmer, Castro, Bailey, Lamb and Hale Counties. These would be the priorities for the funding assistance being sought from the Texas Water Development Board.

An application for funding assistance was presented to the TWDB. The scope of work in the application is to determine the recharge rate of the Ogallala Aquifer, in the eastern panhandle of Texas, and includes utilizing the Chloride Mass Balance approach to quantify the recharge rates, numerical modeling of groundwater recharge and geochemical studies.

A coordinated effort of this magnitude is something unusual in the state, among water planning groups, and the hope is that the extra coordination will enable the application to rank well among the other applications. The TWDB will score all applications in November and contracts will be received in January of 2007.



C. E. Williams has served as chairman of the Panhandle Water Planning Group, since its inception in 1997.

