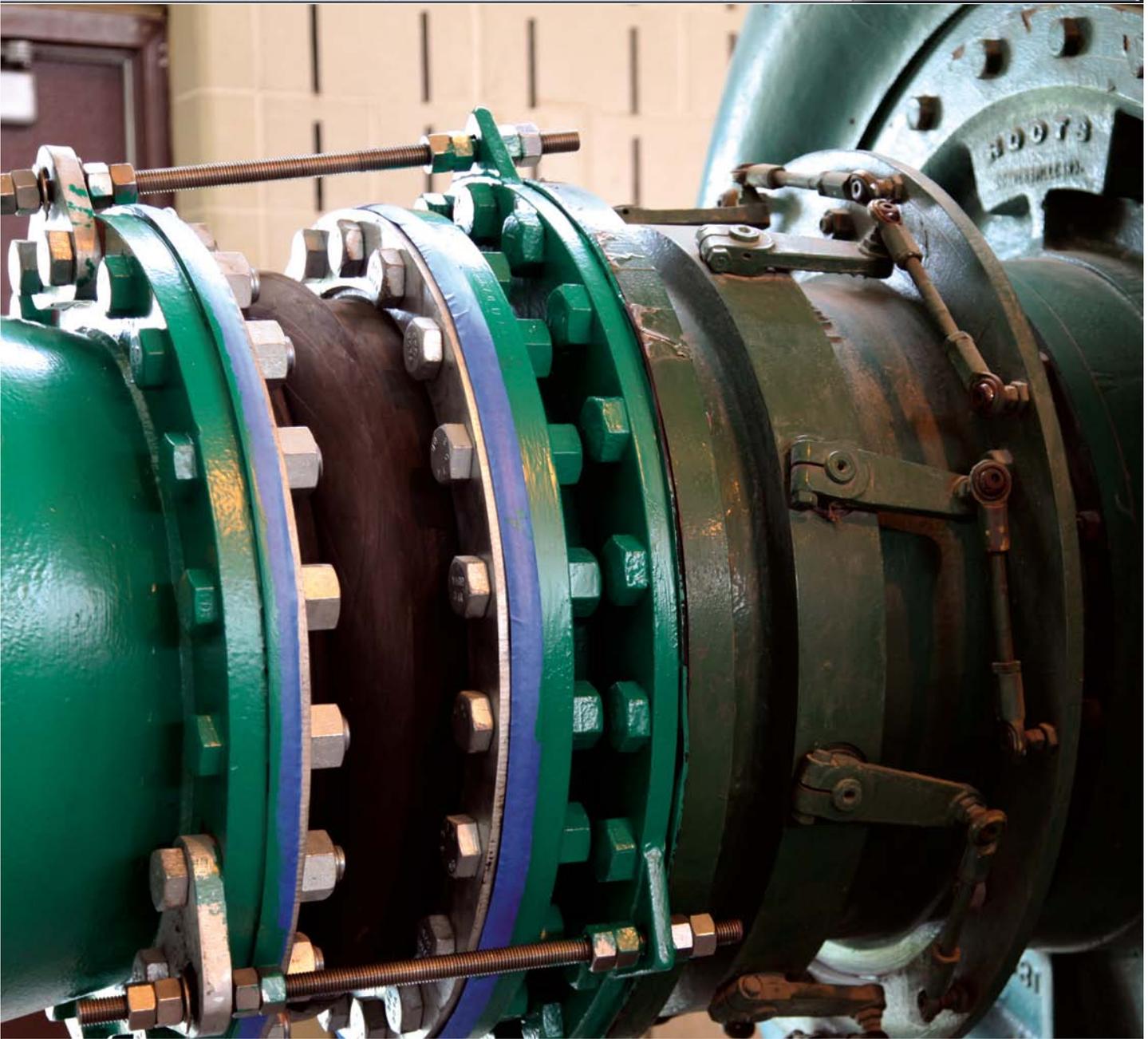


October/November 2012



Newsletter of the Trinity River Authority of Texas



Central Regional Wastewater System  
to undergo major rehabilitation



# TRA board meets in Hankamer

Above: Members of the Trinity River Authority’s board of directors enjoy a tour of the TRA-sponsored U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wallisville Saltwater Barrier at the mouth of the Trinity River. The barrier became operational in 1999 and controls saltwater intrusion by mechanically blocking its upstream movement from the Trinity River during low flows.

Pictured from left to right are Shirley K. Seale, Chambers County; James W. Neale, Dallas County; Dennis “Joe” McCleskey, Trinity County; J. Carol Spillars, Madison County; Harold E. Jenkins, Dallas County; Ronald J. Goldman, at large, Tarrant County; David B. Leonard, Liberty County; John W. Jenkins, at large, Chambers County; Michael Cronin, Kaufman County; Jess A. Laird, Henderson County; Nancy E. Lavinski, Anderson County; Linda D. Timmerman, Ed.D., Freestone County; Kim C. Wyatt, Navarro County; Harold Barnard, Ellis County; Ana Laura Saucedo, Dallas County; and TRA General Manager Kevin Ward.

After the tour, board members enjoyed an overnight stay in Anahuac. The following day, the TRA board of directors held its regularly scheduled October meeting at Whites Park in Hankamer, marking the first time the full board has met outside of TRA’s general office since 2007.

“This was a great opportunity to see more of the Trinity River basin and additional TRA projects,” said Board President Harold Barnard. “The more we’re able to see of the service area that TRA touches and the projects it sponsors and maintains, the better able we are to guide sound policy that best serves the entire basin.”

## Moore retires after 34 years



Robert E. Moore, CPA

Financial Services Manager Robert E. Moore, CPA, recently retired after 34 years in a variety of positions with the Trinity River Authority.

Moore began working for TRA in 1978 as the financial division manager. He later advanced to financial services manager and investment officer, overseeing all accounting operations; maintaining records, controls and budgets; and enhancing the accuracy of reported financial results.

“Under Bob’s leadership, TRA’s total fixed assets increased by almost \$2 billion, and its annual operating budget grew by almost \$200 million,” said TRA General Manager Kevin Ward. “He saw this organization through unprecedented growth and substantial changes in

financial reporting requirements. Bob’s contributions to TRA’s success have been invaluable.”

Prior to joining TRA, Moore worked for Arthur Young & Company and also served as an international accountant with General Dynamics.

Moore earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Texas at Austin and became a certified public accountant in 1978. He is a member of the Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honor Society and the Beta Gamma Sigma Business Honor Society.

In addition, Moore served four years in the United States Navy in the Western Pacific and received the Navy Commendation Medal and an Air Medal for flight operations in a combat zone.

Inside:

- HRWSS construction starts .....2
- Corps honors Gerard .....2
- Null retires .....2
- Sandy Lake Park interceptor replacement triggers memories ...3
- New tax-free benefits for TRA employees .....3
- Wolf Creek Park wraps up season .....4
- CReWSers host practice for Argentine team .....6
- LLP annual inspection .....6
- CReWSers take third at nationals .....7
- LLP installs office lightning protection .....7
- inTRA survey results..... back



See more stories online in Current News.



### Major rehabilitation effort planned for older CRWS components

The Trinity River Authority’s Central Regional Wastewater System contains hundreds of valves, some of which were installed 38 years ago during the first two plant expansions. Older valves such as these present unique operational challenges – they can jam open, stick shut or simply leak, slowing operations and requiring maintenance. In an effort to decrease maintenance-and-operations costs and increase efficiency, engineers are designing rehabilitations to equipment and components, including dozens of valves, in critical areas of the CRWS plant.

Continued on page 5. See CRWS rehabilitation.

## Construction to expand HRWSS gets under way



Construction crews install piping and pumping equipment before pouring concrete for a new 1.2-million-gallon clear well at the HRWSS plant. Increasing clear-well capacity is the first step in expanding the system's capacity from 6.0 MGD to 12.0 MGD.

Construction crews recently broke ground on an \$18.5 million project to expand the Trinity River Authority's Huntsville Regional Water Supply System from a firm capacity of 6.0 million gallons per day to 12.0 MGD. Firm capacity is the volume of water a system is capable of delivering with one of its components out of service.

HRWSS is currently configured to deliver a total of 8.0 MGD to Huntsville and to two Texas Department of Criminal Justice prison units in northern Walker County. The system also delivers up to 7.0 MGD of partially treated water to Tenaska's electric power generating plant in Grimes County.

To increase capacity and reliability, engineers designed upgrades and improvements including increasing raw water pumping and pipeline capacity; doubling the number of filtration units at the plant; adding a new

clear well; and replacing the entire treated-water pump station with new components. They also specified system-wide improvements and upgrades to electrical components.

Construction crews mobilized in late summer and have since begun installing a new 1.2-million-gallon clear well, a tank that temporarily stores treated water prior to distribution. The existing 0.4-million-gallon clear well will be upgraded with a chlorine feed system installed nearby, as well as baffles inside the tank to slow down the water's flow and increase chlorine-contact time at the plant, a change needed to meet state regulations.

Contractors expect to finish expanding and improving HRWSS by August 2014. Huntsville residents passed Proposition 1 to fund system expansion and improvements in November 2011.

## USACE recognizes Gerard



USACE Galveston District Evaluation Section Chief Kim McLaughlin and Deputy District Commander Major Marty Maldonado present LLP Area Administrator Richard Gerard with a plaque and medal in appreciation of his efforts to maintain a great working relationship between TRA and the USACE while issuing joint building permits for structures on Lake Livingston.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District recently honored the Trinity River Authority's Lake Livingston Project Area Administrator Richard Gerard for his efforts to maintain an excellent working relationship during joint permitting procedures on Lake Livingston.

The USACE issues permits to ensure that structures built on U.S. waterways comply with regulations geared toward protecting navigation, as well as the environment. Since TRA issues similar permits for

The partnership expedites the permitting process, saving applicants time and taxpayers thousands of dollars each year.

"The Corps' staff would have up to a four-hour commute to inspect property and consider building plans," said Gerard. "They rely on TRA to carry out inspections on Lake Livingston, and we are happy to be of service. If there are no outstanding issues, we usually approve the application in three to five business days."

Encompassing 83,000 surface acres with 463 miles of shoreline, Lake Livingston currently boasts 3,873 permitted structures.

"There are structures being built and modified all the time on Lake Livingston," said Compliance Section Chief Kenny Jaynes, USACE Galveston District. "On average, a couple hundred permits are issued each year. That's a lot of traveling, and as a result, TRA's assistance saves us a tremendous amount of time and money. The Corps' relationship with TRA is phenomenal, and this partnership is very much a success story."

***"The Corps' relationship with TRA is phenomenal, and this partnership is very much a success story."***

- Compliance Section Chief Kenny Jaynes, USACE Galveston District

structures built on Lake Livingston, the two agencies partner to issue a general permit that complies with both agencies' regulations.

## Null retires after 40 years of service at TCWSP

Tarrant County Water Supply Project Manager Gerald Null recently retired after 40 years of service with the Trinity River Authority.

Null became manager of TCWSP just four years after joining TRA. During his tenure, the project expanded from 6.0 million gallons per day to its current capacity of 72.0 MGD. Known for his problem-solving abilities and diligence in performing his duties, Null maintained an optimistic attitude during TCWSP's many changes and construction projects.

Under Null's leadership, TCWSP consistently accommodated the water supply needs of the project's customer cities while maintaining stringent water quality requirements. He created

an atmosphere of respect and cooperation at the project, with a combination of expertise, staff management abilities and attention to city representatives and consultants.

"Gerald has represented TRA and the Tarrant County Water Supply Project well in his tenure with the Authority, both with professionalism in the water industry and credibility with our customer cities," said TRA Assistant Northern Region Manager Patty Cleveland.

In retirement, Null plans to hunt, relax and travel with his wife.

TCWSP provides drinking water to Bedford, Colleyville and Euless, along with portions of Grapevine and North Richland Hills.



TCWSP Project Manager Gerald Null accepts a framed certificate in honor of his long career from TRA General Manager Kevin Ward as Northern Region Manager Fiona M. Allen, P. E., applauds.

# Current Sandy Lake Amusement Park interceptor replacement triggers memories

Construction Services Manager Thomas Sanders' tenure at the Trinity River Authority began 27 years ago with a baptism by fire. Sanders, who now has managed more than \$1 billion in construction projects, joined TRA in May of 1985, just three months before TRA began the final extension of the Central Regional Wastewater System's Elm Fork interceptor through Sandy Lake Amusement Park in Carrollton.

CRWS' Elm Fork interceptor collects wastewater from Addison, Carrollton, Coppell, Dallas, Farmers Branch and Irving in the northeast portion of the system's service area. TRA began construction on the original Elm Fork interceptor in the 1950s and was ready to extend it to the northern reaches by 1985.

Installing this 1,200-foot segment of the interceptor posed several challenges requiring precise scheduling and timing of construction activities. The Sandy Lake Amusement Park, directly in the path of the pipeline, represented a major hurdle.

"Nobody wants his property dug up for a pipeline, especially a business that operates mainly out doors," said

Sanders. "From design through final construction, we focused as much as we could on accommodating the desires of the amusement park owners. Our top priority was maintaining a good working relationship."

TRA's standing with the park received a sizable boost when the contractor's supervisor found and promptly returned a wallet belonging to the owner's grandson.

"That simple act of kindness solidified our reputation as honest people," said Sanders. "The good relationship we established back in 1985 continues to this day."

The amusement park, established in 1971, is open each year from mid-March through September and comprises carnival rides, a swimming pool, a mini-golf course, picnic pavilions, a food court, an arcade and paddle boats on Sandy Lake, all encircled by a mini-train track.

Engineering plans called for construction crews to install the four-foot diameter pipe via open-cut excavation at an average depth of 12 feet. The pipe would zigzag around most of the park's equipment, but the train tracks would be disturbed at several locations.

To avoid disrupting park activities, TRA worked with the park's owners to complete the project during the winter



Ken Hafner, retired contractor, left, and TRA Construction Services Manager Thomas Sanders renew their friendship, which began 27 years ago when they worked together to extend CRWS' Elm Fork interceptor through the Sandy Lake Amusement Park, seen in the background.

when the park was closed, carefully planning to have all construction activities finished and the grounds restored in time for the spring opening.

In addition to the amusement park, construction crews would also have to work around the weather. While the project schedule allowed for delays caused by typical fall and winter rains, above-average wet weather could put everything behind schedule.

Installing a large-diameter pipe beneath an amusement park within a strict time frame during the winter months poses sufficient challenges, but this project faced an additional complication: an unusually high level of groundwater under Sandy Lake Amusement Park.

"The groundwater table lies just seven feet below the surface," said Sanders. "We installed the pipe at an average depth of 12 feet."

Before any excavation took place, construction crews dewatered the area via hundreds of wells installed at four-foot intervals throughout the park.

Despite all of these challenges, the project finished on schedule with

just one day to spare.

"The contract called for construction to be complete on a Monday. CRWS dispatched plant personnel to assist the contractor's crew with the finishing touches," said Sanders. "They finished Saturday at 6 p.m."

While the original unlined concrete pipe has performed well for the better part of 30 years, hydrogen sulfide corrosion caused a small portion to collapse in 2010. To avoid further problems, TRA is replacing the entire 1,200 feet of the 48-inch concrete pipe with a 66-inch fiberglass pipe.

This new construction project faces the same challenges as the original installation, along with a major new hurdle: there is not enough room to install a parallel pipe to accommodate the 7.5 million gallons of wastewater that flow through the pipe every day. Once again, TRA's construction services division, along with its partners, will have to put its ingenuity to work.

Look for part two of this story in the December 2012/January 2013 issue of *inTRA*.

## Also in 1985...

- Ronald Reagan is sworn in for a second term as president of the United States.
- Gas costs \$1.09 a gallon.
- *Back to the Future* is the movie of the year.
- The car of the year is the Opel Kadett.
- USA for Africa records the single "We are the World."
- Coca-Cola changes its formula and releases new Coke. Response is overwhelmingly negative, and the original formula is back on the market within three months.
- A joint American-French expedition locates the wreck of the RMS Titanic.
- Microsoft Corp. releases the first version of Windows: Windows 1.0.

## CSS: Then and Now

- 1985: TRA's construction services division consists of three office and four field personnel.
- 2012: CSS has grown to five office and 24 field personnel.

# TRA offers employees tax-favored benefits

The Trinity River Authority recently began offering employees a new benefit that will allow participants to save pre-tax dollars from their paychecks toward meeting a wide range of qualified expenses.

"We're very excited to now offer two methods to pay for medical and child care expenses with pre-tax dollars," said TRA Human Resources Manager Taylor Huynh. "Our employees have expressed interest in these types of options in years past, so we're pleased to be able to offer more variety in the types of plans TRA employees can choose."

A Health Savings Account resembles a 401(k) or Individual

**"We're very excited to now offer two methods to pay for medical and child care expenses with pre-tax dollars."**

- TRA Human Resources Manager Taylor Huynh

Retirement Account by allowing the balance to be owned by the participant and to accumulate earnings on a tax-free basis. The account balance also rolls over from one year to another; employees do not forfeit the money if they change jobs or retire. Participants may save up to \$3,100 per individual or \$6,250 per family

each year, and participants age 55 and up may save an additional \$1,000 under the plan's catch-up provision. Contributions to this plan can be used to pay for medical expenses related to the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment or prevention of disease or other types of treatments. Because the health savings account balance is carried over from year to year, participants can save long-term for planned medical expenses.

According to Internal Revenue Service regulations, participants in an HSA must enroll in a high-deductible health plan that does not include co-pays.

TRA also debuts this year a Flexible Spending Account that

allows employees to pay for some medical and child care expenses with pre-tax dollars from their earnings. Each year, participants can set aside anywhere from \$100 to \$2,500 to pay for medical or dental premiums, deductibles, co-payments, non-covered, medical, dental or vision expenses, prescriptions and prescribed over-the-counter medications. Employees can also pay for between \$100 and \$5,000 in child care expenses with pre-tax dollars from the flexible spending account.

In contrast to an HSA, FSA balances cannot be carried into the next plan year, nor does participation require enrollment in a high-deductible health plan.

# General Manager's Message

## TRA's FY 2013 budget reflects strategic opportunities, challenges

This issue marks the last *inTRA* for fiscal year 2012 and finds those of us here at TRA thankful for a successful year and ready to move toward our goals for FY 2013, which begins Dec. 1. For many months, TRA staff have worked to establish goals and benchmarks, propose new endeavors and assign appropriate budget figures for each. As the result of these efforts, the TRA board of directors, as part of its regular October meeting, approved TRA's FY 2013 operating budget – the planning device that allows us to quantify the cost of the work we aim to accomplish throughout the upcoming year. We take our budget-planning process very seriously; the final document holds us accountable for the responsible and prudent management of our resources, plus the effective execution of our programs.

The budget-development process is always an adventure for any organization – it combines fiscal planning, a thorough understanding of organizational objectives and future programs, a little bit of a sixth sense about economic realities, and a healthy dose of trying to predict the unpredictable.

As a political subdivision of the state, TRA exists without the benefit of a tax base and/or appropriations from either the state or the federal government. Instead, our customers compensate us for the services we provide. All TRA projects are independent financial entities, which

allows us to ensure that no one project, city or group of cities ends up subsidizing any other project or group.

Thus, in addition to the internal work we direct toward budget development, we spend a great deal of time reviewing each individual project budget with that system's customer representatives. And, as is our custom, this year our board of directors approved a budget that had been reviewed and supported by all of TRA's customers.

The FY 2013 budget reflects an increase in total revenues of 8.8 percent from \$205.4 million to \$223.3 million – primarily attributed to increases in contract revenue; inter-fund services and charges; professional fees; and administrative overhead.

We anticipate that total expenditures will increase 7.3 percent from \$206.5 million to \$221.7 million. This increase is largely related to increased costs for personal services; other services and charges; and scheduled debt service. In fact, debt service continues to be a key driver of our overall expenditures; the growing services that TRA customers need require the building or expansion of facilities, which are funded through TRA-issued revenue bonds. In addition, costs for treatment of both drinking water and wastewater continue to rise as a result of increased regulations and more stringent requirements for compliance.

We face many strategic opportunities and challenges as we move forward, and I'm confident that the goals we've set for ourselves in the coming year will continue to strengthen TRA's mission of protecting public health and the environment through the highest-quality water and wastewater treatment services available. Improved information technology and software; increased water quality studies; additional personnel support for an expected \$100 million increase in construction at TRA water and wastewater treatment facilities – each of these accomplishments will make our organization more proficient and will directly increase its positive impact throughout the Trinity River basin.

I've challenged the TRA staff during FY 2013 to be innovative and ambitious when it comes to improving the services we provide – everything from assessing watershed quality risks to increasing water sales opportunities, expanding facilities and maximizing current operations.

The chief executive of any organization is faced with basically the same challenge: to manage the organization's time, objectives and resources in order to achieve meaningful goals and implement the ideas that most benefit customers. This is never an easy task, but I am fortunate to be surrounded by a leadership team,



General Manager J. Kevin Ward

a board of directors and a roster of customer representatives who provide solid data and sound budget recommendations that continue to make TRA a success.

For more detailed information about TRA's FY 2013 budget, please visit [www.trinityra.org/CurrentNews](http://www.trinityra.org/CurrentNews).

### Strategic planning continues on course

The Trinity River Authority's leadership team has continued its efforts toward development of a comprehensive strategic plan over recent weeks, and would like to thank everyone who has participated in strategy sessions to gather important feedback about our organization. In addition to these sessions, the executive management team also recently participated in a retreat designed to develop specific strategic imperatives and the paths necessary to reach them. Keep reading *inTRA* for more information and updates as the plan continues to take shape.

## Wolf Creek Park wraps up memorable season

Wolf Creek Park closed Nov. 30 after one of the most memorable seasons on record.

"We are blessed with some of the best visitors any park could hope for," said Wolf Creek Park Supervisor Charles (Eddie) Knight. "They motivate us to make the park the best it can be and provide first-class service during their stay."

Family festivities began early in the year when the park hosted a wedding in the group pavilion in March. Family groups continued to enjoy the park from spring to fall with, among many others, the Doan and Woodcock families in May; the Morris and Owens families in June; and the Littlefair family in August.

The park also welcomed the Kirby Inland Marina Outreach employee picnic in May as well as the Sam Houston Amateur Radio Club for both spring and fall visits.

In September, Country Music Television visited the park to tape an episode of *Big Texas Heat* – a reality show featuring the Trinity, Texas Police Department. For more than two days, film crews documented

Trinity's annual police retreat, which focused on health and fitness, as well as team-building exercises involving canoes and paddle boats, all with a humorous twist.

The 28th Annual Wolf Creek Car, Truck and Bike Show attracted more than 1,200 people in October, not including campers, to see the beautiful cars and partake in the festivities.

Park visitors enjoyed campfires and open-air cooking all season except for one short-lived burn ban in September. With Lake Livingston filled to normal pool level by plenty of rain, fishing was excellent both off the bulkhead and from boats launched at the park's ramp.

Check out the season's highlights, as well as photos park guests have generously shared, on the Wolf Creek Park Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TRAwolfcreekpark](http://www.facebook.com/TRAwolfcreekpark).

Wolf Creek Park is a 110-acre overnight camping and day-use park on the western shore of Lake Livingston. The park has 46 campsites for RVs requiring full



The Sawyer family children enjoy Wolf Creek Park over Thanksgiving weekend. See more photos at [www.facebook.com/TRAwolfcreekpark](http://www.facebook.com/TRAwolfcreekpark).

hookups and 57 sites with water and electricity. All sites have picnic tables, fire rings and grills. Park visitors have access to a boat ramp and fishing pier, three restroom and shower facilities, a group shelter, playground equipment and a marina store.

Over the winter, interested parties can follow park happenings and improvements on Facebook.

By "liking" the page, visitors can receive updates from Wolf Creek Park through their individual Facebook news feeds.

The park will open for the 2013 season on March 1. Visitors can start reserving their favorite campsites Jan. 1.



# Employee Milestones

## New Hires

TCWSP welcomes **Shawen Potts** as operator I.

CRWS is happy to have **Calvin Nguyen** as electronic technician I, **Valery Jean-Bart** as maintenance engineer, **John Durbin** as systems maintenance manager, and **Bryce Haydin** and **Andres Vasques** as operators I and II.

## Promotions

**Richard Gerard** was promoted to assistant manager at LLP.

**Lupe Moreno** was promoted to electronics technician II at TCWSP.

**Ron McCaffrey** was promoted to chief maintenance mechanic at TCWSP.

## Current Events

Congratulations to DCRWS Operator II **Rosario Saldivar** for earning a B wastewater license from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

Public Information Officer **Michelle Clark** has been elected vice president of programs for the Greater Fort Worth chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

CRWS Electronics Technician **Jeffrey Ramsey** has been named Water Environment Association of Texas safety committee chair. See Jeff's first safety article on page 38 of the latest issue of *Texas WET*.



Acting Arlington Police Chief Will Johnson recently recognized Payroll Specialist Peggy Stewart's husband, Richard, at an Arlington City Council meeting for outstanding contributions to the Arlington Police Department and the community for logging 536 citizen-on-patrol hours.



Congratulations to LLP Permit Administrator Lisa Lantrip's son, Andrew, on signing a national letter of intent to play baseball next year for the University of Houston.



LLP Office Coordinator Kristie Munoz's daughter, Brooke, recently participated in her first gymnastics skills meet. Brooke reached the gold level of level-three gymnastics on four apparatuses and received blue ribbons on the vault, bars and beam, plus a red ribbon on floor exercises.



Northern Region Manager Fiona Allen's daughter, Elizabeth, won a 2012 Texas Section American Water Works Association scholarship. Elizabeth is a graduate of the Oakridge School in Arlington and is working toward a degree in chemical engineering from Texas Tech University, with plans to obtain a master's degree in the same field. During high school, she played varsity field hockey and soccer, plus running track. Elizabeth was also a varsity cheerleader, a member of the National Honor Society, vice president of her senior class and involved with the Boys and Girls Club of Arlington.



TRA's General Office winning United Way team enjoys part of the General Manager's Prize: an afternoon at a Texas Rangers game. Seen here left to right on the top row are Susan Davis, senior secretary; Shawn Ballard, GIS support technician; Brenna Witt, senior secretary; and Tahauya Jackson, executive secretary. Bottom row: Melissa Saniuk, senior accountant; Alison Mackey, chief financial officer; and Michelle Harlan, real estate specialist.



Executive Secretary Connie Jones and her husband, Gary, welcomed their seventh grandchild. Jesse Finn Patrick Jones was born Oct. 17 to Paul and Bethany Jones of Colorado Springs, Colo.



TCWSP Operator I Shawen Potts, his wife, LeAnne, and their daughter, Taelynn, recently welcomed a new daughter and sister. Kaileigh Potts was born Nov. 12, weighing 8 pounds, 4 ounces.



TRA General Manager Kevin Ward and Construction Services Supervisor Mike Query lend their talents to a musical group entertaining the crowd at the Water Environment Association of Texas-North Texas Section Operations Challenge Cook-Off. Seen here from left to right are Query, Michelle Feldman, Mike Tidwell, Paul Dryer, Ward and Jeff Caffey.



CRWS Maintenance Mechanic II Anthony Chavarria and his wife, Lorrie, join friends for their annual outing to a Dallas Cowboys game.

CRWS rehabilitation. *Continued from page 1.*

"This is a major rehabilitation project; the design engineers certainly have their work cut out for them. Forty-two valves will need to be replaced, and each one has to be manufactured to specifications," said Northern Region Manager Fiona M. Allen, P. E. "But completing this project will help keep the plant running smoothly, improve safety for our employees,

and reduce the cost of operating and maintaining TRA's largest facility. Our customers stand to benefit the most in the long run."

Engineers will design valve replacements for final clarifiers and aeration basins, as well as other types of equipment throughout the plant. They will also produce specifications for influent gate replacements, equipment coatings, pipeline and mechanical equipment rehabilitation, algae control systems, lighting and vibration control.

Each of these rehabilitation projects was outlined in either the 2005 Phase IV Master Plan Final Report or the 2009 Phase IV Liquid Treatment and Site Security Improvements Report, documents that identified and prioritized CRWS plant components in need of rehabilitation or replacement.

TRA's board of directors has approved an engineering services agreement for \$1,495,600 for design of the rehabilitations.

# TRA CReWSers share knowledge, facilities with Argentine Operations Challenge team

The Trinity River Authority's CReWSers recently helped train Argentina's Operations Challenge team in preparation for national competition at WEFTEC.12 in New Orleans.

The Central Regional Wastewater System hosted a day-long practice session for the Argentine team at the CReWSers' fully equipped training facility. The CReWSers team members were on hand to demonstrate each of the five competition events.

"We showed them how all the equipment and tools work and made sure they knew the rules," said Team Captain Dale Burrow. "Once they knew the basics, we went one step further and gave them tips for improving performance."

Burrow participated on the U.S. dream team in the Argentine Operations Challenge earlier this year, experiencing firsthand the challenges of competing in a foreign country in an unfamiliar language.

"The rules and procedures were in Spanish, and the tools and calculations were metric," said Burrow. "And there were very few people around who spoke English who we could ask for help."

Drawing on his Argentine experience, Burrow arranged to have five Spanish-language interpreters on hand for the day to help everyone understand the competition events as fully as possible.

CRWS management provided the team with a Texas-style barbecue lunch during the practice day. Later that evening, the CReWSers treated the visitors to a tour of the Fort

Worth Stockyards, including the White Elephant Saloon and Billy Bob's Texas – where one member of the Argentine team rode a mechanical bull.

The visiting team finished the day prepared to compete, with ample knowledge of the equipment, rules and procedures.

In the weeks before the national competition, the CReWSers also practiced with the Dallas; Austin; Lafayette, La.; and Little Rock, Ark. teams.

The CReWSers finished in third place for Division I at the national competition in New Orleans, while the Argentine team finished 23rd in Division II. To honor the team's performance and build camaraderie, the CReWSers exchanged uniforms with the Argentine team after the competition, a custom practiced by the country's soccer teams.

Operations Challenge is exciting, but it also benefits participating teams and their agencies in other ways.

"Operations Challenge introduced Argentina to the Water Environment Federation, a tremendous resource for connecting with other water quality professionals and accessing information about state-of-the-art clean water practices," said Burrow.

WEF is a national organization of 36,000 individual members and 75 affiliated member associations whose mission is to promote clean and safe water worldwide by providing bold leadership, advocating innovation, linking water professionals and disseminating knowledge.



*The CReWSers exchanged team jerseys with the Argentine team after the national competition, a custom practiced by the country's soccer teams after a championship match.*

"The spirit of the Operations Challenge is about education and professional development," said Denton Creek Regional Wastewater System Project Manager and Water Environment Association of Texas President John Bennett. "I'm so proud of the way all the Texas teams have embraced this mantra and work not only with each other but with teams from all over the world. The special relationship that we've developed with Argentina is certainly a model for others to follow, and it helps solidify the fact that we're all working toward the same goal: to protect our environment, regardless of where we live."

## Interpreters

- Daniel Gonzalez – CRWS chief operator
- Silvia Zavala – CRWS environmental inspector
- Raudel Juarez – CRWS senior operator
- Ricky Sosa – CRWS senior maintenance mechanic
- Rudy E. Kilian, associate vice president, Carollo Engineers

## Lake Livingston Dam undergoes annual inspection



*In an effort to ensure everything is properly maintained and operating correctly, the Trinity River Authority's Lake Livingston Project personnel recently conducted a detailed inspection of the project's facilities. This yearly examination and data-gathering exercise enables LLP staff to track changes in the project's condition and prioritize repairs, if any. These data contribute valuable information toward a comprehensive inspection report on the overall condition of the project works.*

## Anniversaries

### 25 Years

Harold Hinkle, chief electrician, CRWS

### 20 Years

Tommie Borden, senior storekeeper, CRWS

### 15 Years

Leon Baker Jr., senior chemist, CRWS  
Brandon C. Wooddell, field technician, CRWS

### 10 Years

Paul Carter, senior maintenance mechanic, CRWS  
David Rosnagel, environmental services coord., CRWS

### 5 Years

George Bacon, inspector II, CSS  
Mark Thigpen, land rights manager, GO  
Claudine Rank, accounts payable/procurement coord., GO  
Tina Nguyen, financial analyst, GO  
Bart Hines, NR assistant manager of development, GO

# TRA CReWSers claim 12th top-three win in national competition

TRA's Operations Challenge team, the CReWSers, won second place in the laboratory event and third place overall in Division 1 competition at the Water Environment Federation's national conference – WEFTEC.12 – in New Orleans. The win adds a 12th top-three claim to the team's remarkable record over the last 14 years.

The team also garnered a fourth-place finish in process control, the competition's pencil-and-paper event. The CReWSers finished fourth as well in both the collections

and safety events and sixth in maintenance.

The national competition caps one of the team's most exciting years in recent history. In April, the CReWSers swept the state competition to secure the team's 15th consecutive championship. Shortly after, team members Jacob Burwell and Steve Price, along with members from the Dallas Aquatechs and the Austin Dillo Xpress, represented Texas at an informal regional competition in Atlantic City, N.J. In May, Team Captain

Dale Burrow also competed on the U.S. dream team in Argentina, and in early September, the team took first place in a regional competition in Ocean City, Md. – the first time a team outside of Virginia has won this competition.

Capitalizing on its momentum, the team practiced relentlessly after the regional competition, consistently achieving fast and accurate results.

The hard work paid off in another top-three win for the CReWSers at the national competition.

"It was an honor to advance, once again, to the national competition," said Burrow. "The CReWSers are grateful for support from both TRA and the Water Environment Association of Texas. Their belief in the team's abilities means the world to us."

Scan the QR code at right to see a video of Division 1 teams competing in the pump maintenance event. This event, the most physically challenging in the competition, requires competitors to lift a 212-pound submersible pump and a 180-pound mixer from a wet well with a manually operated jib crane.

Next up for the CReWSers is the state Operations Challenge competition at Texas Water in Galveston in April.



Chief Operator Steve Price, left, and Senior Maintenance Mechanic David Brown work together to change oil on a mixer during the pump maintenance event at the Operations Challenge national competition. The CReWSers will next compete in the state competition at Texas Water in Galveston in April.



Ready, set, go! TRA's Operations Challenge team, the CReWSers, await the starting bell for the collections event at the Operations Challenge national competition.



## TRA CReWSers

- Dale Burrow, interceptor system specialist, team captain
- David Brown, senior maintenance mechanic
- Steve Price, chief operator
- Jake Burwell, construction inspector II

## LLP installs lightning protection in office

Maintenance personnel at the Trinity River Authority's Lake Livingston Project recently installed a comprehensive system of lightning protection in the main office building after experiencing destructive strikes earlier this year.

Previously, 190-foot radio tower near the LLP employee parking area attracted and grounded lightning strikes, rendering them harmless. When the aging tower became unstable and recently was removed, lightning targeted the communications/wind data tower near the office building, bringing electrical charges close enough to cause disruptions to electrical and computing equipment.

"Every time a storm formed in the area, lights would flicker and computers switched off," said LLP Project Manager Mark Waters. "We needed a system that would redirect lightning's electrical charges away from our equipment and into the ground."

LLP maintenance staff first buried a grounding cable attached to nine vertical rods around the back and both ends of the building

to form the crucial backbone of the system. Next, they connected it to all electrical equipment, including the weather radar pole, the switch panel at the generator and the main electrical panel on the building.

They then shortened a communications/wind data tower near the west side of the building from approximately 60 to 26 feet high and attached it to the grounding cable as well. Finally, the maintenance crew mounted three lightning rods to the roof, one at each end and one on the middle gable, and connected them to the grounding cable.

LLP modeled its lightning protection system after another at the Kinder Morgan gas plant control buildings near the dam. The gas plant also suffered multiple strikes before installing a protective system two years ago, but has not had an incident since.

An engineer from the Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, the company that provides power to LLP, visited the project and provided his recommendations as well.

## Trinity River Authority Holiday Schedule FY2013

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Dec. 24, 2012  | Christmas Eve              |
| Dec. 25, 2012  | Christmas Day              |
| Jan. 1, 2013   | New Year's Day             |
| Jan. 21, 2013  | Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| March 29, 2013 | Good Friday                |
| May 27, 2013   | Memorial Day               |
| July 4, 2013   | Independence Day           |
| Sept. 2, 2013  | Labor Day                  |
| Nov. 28, 2013  | Thanksgiving Day           |
| Nov. 29, 2013  | Day after Thanksgiving     |



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
FORT WORTH, TX  
PERMIT # 1359

Trinity River Authority of Texas  
P.O. Box 60  
Arlington, Texas 76004  
(817) 467-4343

*inTRA* is published by the Trinity River Authority's public information division for the Authority's valued employees, directors, consultants and other interested individuals. To request or submit information for publication, contact editor Debbie Bronson, public information assistant, at 817-467-4343 or bronsond@trinityra.org.

## You spoke – we listened

*inTRA survey yields valuable insight*

The Trinity River Authority's public information division thanks everyone who participated in its recent survey designed to gather input about reader satisfaction. Overall, the survey enjoyed a 46-percent response rate, with representation from all stakeholder groups.

**85%** of survey respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with *inTRA's* overall quality.

### Favorites

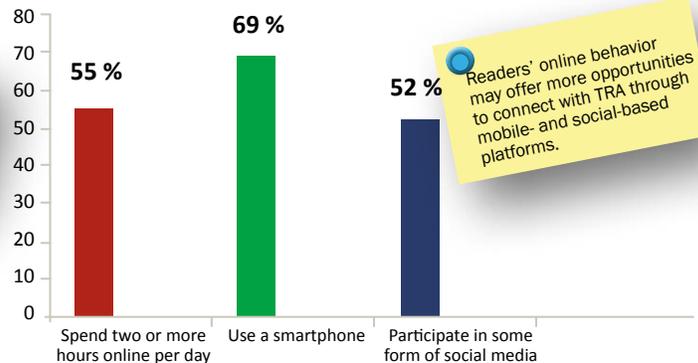
Features that readers say they most enjoy

- 1:** Operational Developments
- 2:** General Manager's Message
- 3:** Employee News
- 4:** Water Industry Issues

PID will work to enhance and maintain the quality of the features that readers say they currently enjoy most about *inTRA*.

### Other online opportunities

Ways TRA can connect with audiences



Readers' online behavior may offer more opportunities to connect with TRA through mobile- and social-based platforms.

### What can you expect?

Content changes based on reader comments

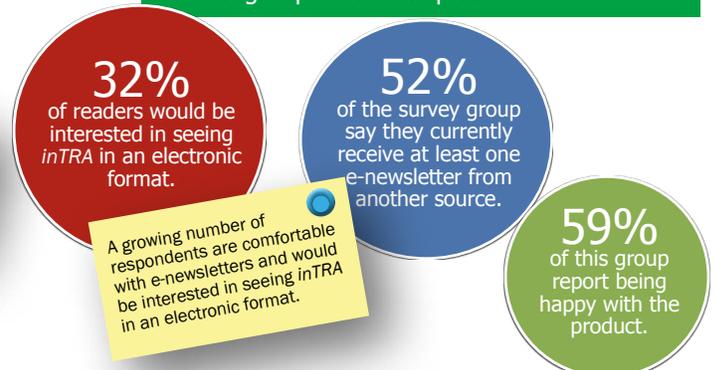


Keep an eye out during fiscal year 2013 for stories and features that align with what readers have said they want to see.

Please keep letting us know how we're doing – feel free to send an email to [clarkm@trinityra.org](mailto:clarkm@trinityra.org) anytime with suggestions for story ideas or other recommendations.

### E-newsletter?

Some groups indicate openness to new format



A growing number of respondents are comfortable with e-newsletters and would be interested in seeing *inTRA* in an electronic format.

Though most respondents indicated they would like to see distribution methods, publication frequency and format remain the same, the opportunity exists among some groups to pursue electronic distribution.