

NHA's Water Supply Update Luncheon Draws Attention to Regional Issue

The North Houston Association's July Quarterly Membership Luncheon accomplished much more than expected. Its purpose was to educate the audience on north Houston's water supply issue; its outcome was community-wide awareness of this critical topic.

All of the large community newspapers, as well as the *Houston Chronicle*, ran stories not just about the luncheon, but about the water supply issue and the community's options.

At the event, Joe Wozny, WSBC Civil Engineers, provided an overview of the issue. He noted the existing sources of groundwater for north Houston are the Chicot and Evangeline Aquifers, and currently, the sole source of surface water is the city of Houston.

According to Wozny, groundwater levels have been declining for some time, and the water flows at a very slow rate of 60 feet per year. Wozny also outlined deficiencies in the area's existing sources of water: subsidence, depletion ("mining" of aquifers), poor water quality and inadequate supply of water during drought.

He also highlighted the fact that as an area, north Houston is pumping water out of the ground from two to 20 times faster than nature is able to recharge the aquifers. The current local decline rate is one to 10 feet per year; the average recharge rate is only six inches per year. In addition, the water level is expected to decrease as much

as 250 feet in some area subdivisions along FM 1960.

A number of options were presented at the luncheon, including conservation, recycling, local surface water, interbasin transfer and seawater desalination.



(l. to r.) Senator Jon Lindsay, Ron Neighbors, Harold Wallace, Joe Wozny, Cooper Slay and Representative Peggy Hamric discuss north Houston issues at NHA's recent luncheon.

Water is needed to sustain housing and economic growth as well as to retain and improve the home market value. A large number of businesses in the area, including Compaq Computer Corporation and Reliant Energy, are dependent on water to continue conducting their daily business activities.

State and local government has responded to the need for new water supply in two primary ways.

Ron Neighbors, executive director of the Harris-Galveston Coastal Subsidence District, spoke on the recently-approved District Regulatory Plan 1999, that addresses the issue.

In its plan, the District redefined the goals for conversion to surface water. This revised plan divides the District

into three areas which must comply with surface water conversion mandates. All groundwater users in "Area Three" (essentially the north Houston region) are required to satisfy particular regulatory requirements in accordance with the District's schedule or be subject to a disincentive fee. NHA representatives testified in support of the guidelines contained in this plan at a public meeting this summer.

Also, in the recent Texas legislative session, House Bill 2965 was passed. Senator Jon Lindsay discussed this bill, which provides the framework to build out the necessary infrastructure to meet the Subsidence District's surface water conversion mandate while ensuring a long-term

supply of water for both businesses and residents.

The bill provides that a regional water authority to be known as the North Harris County Regional Water Author-

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- ◆ See the Results of the Fifth Annual NHA Golf Tournament.
- ◆ Business Issues and Resources Committee Creates Goals and Subcommittees.

From the President...

Dear NHA Members:

The North Houston Association has been involved with the issue of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission's (TNRCC) 401 Certification Program for more than a year now, and I'd like to update you on the latest developments.

NHA hosted a meeting last summer to educate NHA members and the public on the program. At that meeting the TNRCC realized the importance of this issue and created a work group to address program details. A number of NHA members were a part of this work group, but not much progress was made with the TNRCC.

Because of this, I drafted SCR56, which was a directive to the TNRCC not to require 401 Certification because it duplicates the Army Corps of Engineer's 404 permit process. Unfortunately, the Governor vetoed my resolution.

However, TNRCC Chairman Robert Huston travelled from Austin to the NHA office to speak with me about this issue. He assured me that the TNRCC wants to continue communication with the work group members. Huston plans to set up an initial certification process and anticipates changes in this process as it develops. He will finalize the interim operating protocol and communicate this to the 401 work group members. Then, he will create a three-tier 401 Certification Plan based on number of acres. Huston has also committed to drafting a Memorandum of Understanding between the TNRCC and the Corps regarding the operations of both programs. The purpose of this is to eliminate duplication of efforts.

As always, my staff and I will keep you updated on this issue. To become involved, you may want to join NHA's Environment Committee.

Senator Jon Lindsay

ity is created, subject to a confirmation election. The territory of the authority is comprised of the following state representative districts: Representatives Crabb, Hamric, Culberson, Elkins and Hilbert. The cities of Houston and Humble are excluded from the authority.

HB 2965 also establishes five single-member districts with a temporary board appointed by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). The board is responsible for drawing the single-member district boundaries and calling the election of the initial permanent directors as well as the confirmation election on January 15, 2000.

The three temporary board members are Ray Laughter, associate vice chancellor at the North Harris Montgomery Community College District (NHMCCD), Cooper Slay and Mary Jay Sizenbach.

The North Houston Association's Environment Committee continues to monitor this regional issue, and will keep members updated on its progress. ■

NHA-TMO Announces Vanpool of the Month Program

The North Houston Association Transportation Management Organization (NHA-TMO) recently began a Vanpool of the Month program that rewards vanpool participants for going the extra mile to ensure the success of their individual vanpool.

"We just want to say thank you to those commuters that choose to utilize the option of vanpooling for their daily ride to work," said Staci Adams, NHA-TMO project coordinator. "For the month of July, we chose a group of commuters that ride a vanpool from their homes in Kingwood to their workplace in Greenspoint. For the last two years, the people in this particular vanpool have kept the vanpool alive through a number of challenges including layoffs, job changes and relocations. They did

this by taking steps to recruit riders and working with the TMO to sustain the vanpool."

"Vanpooling saves me a car note," said Ian Norton, Exxon Exploration Corporation. "When my car was totaled, I didn't have to replace it, since I ride the van to work."

Joe Wallace's children are glad he uses the vanpool for his daily commute. "I have teenage drivers at home. Riding the vanpool frees up a vehicle for my kids to go to work," said Wallace, Exxon Production Company.

The August Vanpool of the Month was awarded to a vanpool that commutes from The Woodlands to the Medical Center.

"The Woodlands/Medical Center vanpool has been in operation for more

than 15 years, and the riders have consistently worked to keep the vanpool running despite a number of economic and personal challenges," said Adams.

Recipients of the award are greeted with a "Vanpool of the Month" sign for the van, soft drinks, and other various incentives such as gas cards from the NHA-TMO. METRO also provides various rewards for the vanpool.

The Woodlands/Medical Center vanpool is currently in need of six new riders. The vanpool leaves The Woodlands (2002 Timberloch) at 6:40 a.m. and returns to The Woodlands at approximately 6 p.m. For more information on this vanpool or other ridesharing information, contact the NHA office at 281-875-0660. ■

Board Profiles

Dennis W. Petersen, Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc.

Even though NHA Chairman Dennis Petersen has led the Association for less than a year, he is no newcomer to north Houston. Petersen, who was elected as chairman of NHA at the beginning of the year, has lived in the Association's service area for 30 years.

Petersen, president of Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc. (LAN) since 1997, has been with his firm for nearly 20 years. This longevity has become a rarity in the engineering industry in recent years.

"LAN offers so much autonomy to its employees. I was never told no," said Petersen. "That freedom to grow, combined with the firm's outstanding reputation, is what made me stay with the company for so long."

As with many successful businessmen, growth is a top priority for Petersen.

"I would like to see LAN continue to diversify and expand both geographically and in services offered. We also need to continue to be flexible and

do what it takes to meet our clients' needs," he said.

LAN is a full-service engineering and architectural firm with offices in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Austin and Omaha, Nebraska. LAN has provided professional services for infra-



structure, facilities planning, design and management for more than 65 years. The firm's history includes such diverse projects as Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and the Sam Houston Tollway.

Regarding NHA's direction in the near future, Petersen would like to see the Association "return to its roots" regarding membership.

"I would like to see an increase in the number of members from larger firms. This mix of large and medium-sized companies in a variety of industries is the key to continued success of the organization," he said. "We have a good start on addressing this issue with the creation of the Business Issues & Resources Committee." (see related article on page six)

Petersen is treasurer of the Clear Lake Area Economic Development Foundation and serves on the Greater Houston Partnership's government relations advisory committee, Consulting Engineers Counsel of Texas and University of Houston Engineering School advisory board, just to name a few.

In addition to Petersen's work and volunteer activities, he stays busy with two teenage daughters, Dana and Lora, and his wife Beverly. ■

James R. Royer, Turner Collie & Braden Inc.

From the jungles of Peru to Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport, it's clear that James R. Royer has had a variety of experiences in the engineering industry.

Royer, president of Turner Collie & Braden Inc. (TC&B) since 1986, recalls his greatest engineering project as building a runway for his client, Occidental Petroleum, so they could fly DC3s in and out of Andoas, Peru, in the Amazon Jungle.

"It reminded me of what the gold rush must have been like," said Royer. "The first time I went there, it was practically uninhabitable, but after oil development began, the area just exploded."

Watching areas develop, especially north Houston, is Royer's favorite part of his job. He especially received satisfaction from handling the roadwork and infrastructure for Bush Intercontinental Airport's Terminal C, runway 9/27 and the International Arrivals Building.

According to Royer, TC&B is the largest infrastructure office in Houston, in terms of number of employees and volume of work. It also has offices in Brownsville, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Fort Worth, and Pharr, Texas and Denver, Colorado. In 1996, TCB was merged into AECOM, which is the largest group of public works and infrastructure companies in the country.

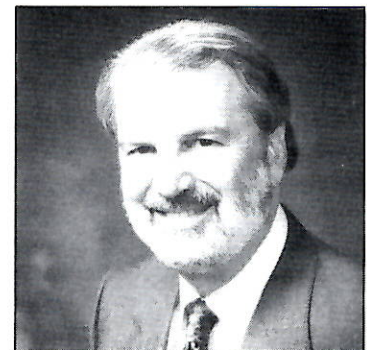
Royer not only helps the area develop through his professional services, but also is deeply involved in the community through a number of community, economic development, medical, aerospace and engineering organizations.

"In order for Turner Collie & Braden to succeed, the community has to succeed," he said. "What I find fascinating is working with the community to make it attractive to businesses and employees. Going into the next century, Houston has to be a great place to live; quality of life is essential to bring people

to the area."

Royer said his involvement in more than 10 organizations (including chair-elect of the Greater Houston Partnership) does take time, but organizations like the North Houston Association are great sources of information, knowledge and satisfaction.

Royer is married to Carol Batie Royer, with whom he pursues his hobbies of golf, bird hunting, skiing and cooking. ■



Golf Goonies & Overcast Skies Big Hit at Tournament

Despite the approaching hurricane Bret, the NHA Fifth Annual Golf Tournament was a huge success. In fact, the storm provided nice cloud cover and cooled off what may have been a scorching day.

Financially, the event was the most successful tournament in NHA's history, raising \$32,375 to support the programs and projects of the Association.

This year, the addition of "golf goonies" was a big hit, since they had the potential of lowering a team's final score.

Each player received a "goonie" at the beginning of the tournament, which they could use at any time by tossing the colorful, plastic creature toward the hole. Goonies could only be used once, and golfers quickly found out they can bounce in unpredictable directions. Many golfers practiced their "goonie toss" while waiting to tee off.



Vinson & Elkins' team member Shay Shafie had his own ideas about using his "golf goonie" as he teed off at the Association's tournament.

Tournament format remained the same as in years past; each team was completed by a public official, which always makes the day more interesting. Both business and fun took place on the course at Raveneaux Country Club.

Late in the afternoon, a short burst of rain made its appearance at the tournament, which captured a number of golfers and volunteers (including NHA President Sen. Jon Lindsay, Golf Tournament Chairman Roy Hearnberger, NHMCCD volunteer Joyce White and NHA Director of Public Relations Marlisa Stanley) huddling together under a covered restroom area in the middle of the course.

When the rain turned into a drizzle, everyone met at the clubhouse for an early dinner and awards ceremony.

Once again this year, Harris County Commissioner Jerry Eversole and Montgomery County Judge Alan Sadler served as honorary cochairmen of the tournament.

Roy Hearnberger, Carter & Burgess, not only served as the tournament's chairman but also made the hole sponsor signs. The week be-

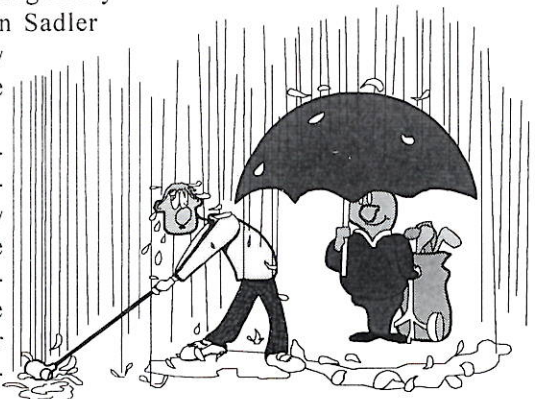


NHA staff members (l. to r.) Catherine Wray, Staci Adams, Marlisa Stanley and Pat Wisniewski assemble tournament hole sponsor signs in Golf Chairman Roy Hearnberger's garage.

fore the tournament, NHA staff and volunteers (spouses) met at Hearnberger's home for a "sponsor sign assembling party."

WSBC Civil Engineers Inc. took first place in the tournament. Second place went to Klein Bank, and Ferro-Saylors Inc. won third place.

A number of contests were also held at the tournament. The Closest to the Pin contest was won by Milton Konstantin, Harris County. Wayne Kovar, The Jewel Vault, took the Longest Drive prize. City of Houston Fire Chief Lester Tyra won the Chipping Contest, and Everett Owen, PBS&J, won the Putting Contest. ■



Thanks to All 1999 Tournament Sponsors!

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...and More Thanks!

In addition to the above sponsors, a number of NHA members donated silent auction and goody bag items.

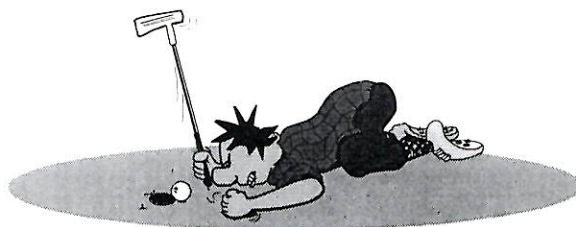
Other members donated their staff members as volunteers for the day. The tournament couldn't run without these volunteers. Thank you!



WSBC team members (l. to r.) Joe Wozny, Bill Lester, Milton Konstantin, and Bill Papp show off their first place trophy.



(l. to r.) Jerry Newell, Jim Royer, Turner Collie & Braden, and Bobby Adams. Turner Collie & Braden. enjoy their dinner during the awards ceremony and membership meeting.



Business Issues & Resources Committee Sets Goals, Creates Subcommittees

NHA's Business Issues & Resources (BI&R) Committee has met several times during the last quarter, discussing the committee's direction and creating two subcommittees.

Steve McPhetridge, The Woodlands Operating Company, L.P., will serve as the committee's chairman beginning in October.

Committee members would like to see the committee focus on issues directly relevant to the business community in the Association's service area. This will allow NHA to service its members more effectively as well as aid in recruitment of new members.

Through its subcommittees, it will produce and provide data and resources on the NHA region that will attract businesses to the area as well as help with

retention. It will also serve as the NHA legislative affairs group.

The Resource Subcommittee is currently chaired by David Daleiden, Weingarten Realty Investors. Its purpose is to serve as a resource for economic development information relating to NHA's service area.

Subcommittee goals include updating the NHA resource book, developing a marketing presentation on the area, hosting site consultants and reviewing the current Rapid Response Network.

Bob Stout, The Woodlands Operating Company, L.P., is the chairman of the Legislative Subcommittee. The purpose of the subcommittee is to address legislative issues and communicate NHA's positions to legislators.

Committee goals include identify-

ing relevant legislative issues and institute a procedure for developing position papers, act as a legislative "clearinghouse", formulate the flow of information to and from legislators, and continue to build relationships with legislators and policy-makers.

The BI&R Committee was created when the NHA Board of Directors decided at a retreat there were a number of issues being grouped under the Economic Development Committee that didn't fit under any current committee.

At that time, it was decided to fold the Economic Development Committee into a new committee (BI&R) that would address the issues in question. To join the committee, contact Pat Wisniewski in the NHA office. ■

NHA-TMO Hosts Two Free Workshops

During the past quarter, the NHA-TMO hosted two free workshops - one focused on commuting options and the other educated attendees on teleworking.

On August 18, Stuart Anderson of Urban & Transportation Consulting, told human resources professionals from 14 area companies how to minimize employee stress, improve recruitment/retention, reduce parking and facility costs, enhance the company's public image, reduce traffic congestion, and decrease employee tardiness -- all by using alternative modes of commuting.

Anderson outlined transportation issues that relate to commuting, noting the need to double the use of personal vehicles and the fact that there are limited funds available to increase road space.

In addition to the financial constraints, the region's population continues to increase, and labor recruitment

and retention is becoming a top priority among north Houston companies. There is also a need to maintain the community's high quality of life standards.

Anderson noted that carpooling and vanpooling serve commuters that travel longer distances and benefits include saving money, reducing employee stress, decreasing parking demand, reducing tardiness and decreasing congestion around the work site.

Public transportation is effective for employees that travel shorter distances. This transportation option can save money, is a necessary alternative for those who can't drive or don't own a vehicle, can be less stressful and reduces the demand for parking.

Variable work hours is another strategy that may be used and often results in greater productivity.

Another alternative that improves productivity is teleworking. This option

was discussed in another NHA-TMO workshop, held on August 30.

Consultant Elham Shirazi outlined the employer's benefits of teleworking: increased productivity, improved morale, increased recruitment/retention of employees, reduced overhead, decreased absenteeism and an added employee benefit.

Shirazi noted that Los Angeles County saves \$10 - \$12 million per year because of its teleworking program; the county also saw absenteeism reduced by two to four days per teleworker.

Shirazi taught workshop attendees how to implement a telework program and highlighted the common denominators in successful programs.

The NHA-TMO plans to conduct additional related workshops in the future. Members may watch the Friday Facts for details. For a copy of either presentation, contact Staci Adams in the NHA office. ■

Issues Update

Business Issues & Resources Committee

Members of the Business Issues & Resources Committee are working to reach their newly-set goals. See related story on the previous page for details, including committee and subcommittee goals. Contact the NHA office to join the committee.

Environment Committee

NHA's Environment Committee hosted a luncheon in July to educate members on the north Houston water supply issue (see cover story).

The committee also continued its work on the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission's (TNRCC) Regulatory Guidance Document for Implementation of Texas Water Quality Certification Rules. Details are in the related "Letter from the President" in this issue of the *NHA Vision*.

The deadline to comment on the 1999 Draft Nationwide Permits has been extended to October 7th. NHA, in partnership with the West Houston Association, hosted a joint meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers to update members on the new changes to the 1999 Draft Nationwide Permits as well as the Regional Conditions.

NHA, in partnership with Harris County Toll Road Authority, submitted an application for the statewide transportation enhancement program through the Texas Department of Transportation. The specific project includes enhancement of the Hardy Toll Road Airport Connector in terms of beautification, including landscape planting, earth work, irrigation, specialized paving surfaces, walls and retaining walls.

Private sector support has been secured in terms of land donations and funds. Continental Airlines committed \$25,000 to the project, the City of Houston Department of Aviation committed

\$150,000 in cash donations, and Harris County Toll Road Authority provided \$250,000 to leverage federal funds.

The committee will continue to follow and monitor the project's progress. The Texas Transportation Commission should make project selections by the end of the year.

Transportation Committee

The Mobility Update Subcommittee continues to compose the Mobility Update, which should be available by year-end, and sponsorships will be available.

The Mobility Update will include brief profiles of funding agencies, information on the Clean Air Act as it relates to transportation, description of alternative modes of transportation, example of multimodal projects, an update on expansions and improvements at Bush Intercontinental Airport, and an inventory of current and future projects.

Regarding the Grand Parkway, committee members attended a recent public meeting on Environmental Impact Statements for Segments E, F & G. The committee continues to monitor and support the project.

The North Houston Association and the Greater Greenspoint District recently received funding and approval

from the Houston Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) for a pilot shuttle program that will connect the Greenspoint and Bush Intercontinental Airport areas.

The shuttle service will run every 15 minutes on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and will make three stops in the Greenspoint area. Work is underway to define a start date for the project. Read the next issue of the *NHA Vision* for further details.

Workforce Development Committee

In August, the Workforce Development Committee sent a letter to NHA's membership discussing creation of the committee, and requesting assistance on identifying necessary workforce skills for the Houston area.

In order to identify these skills, the committee first needs to identify target occupations. In the letter, member contacts were asked to review a list of occupations and identify those that pertain to their companies. Members were also asked to add any occupations important to their companies that were not on the list.

At press time, responses were received from 39% of NHA's membership. The next step for the committee is to compile and analyze the results.

New NHA Board Members Approved

Four members were added to the NHA Board of Directors at the Association's Annual Membership Meeting on August 23.

New NHA Board members are Bruce Hillegeist, Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce, Everett Owen, PBS&J, Oliver Pennington, Fulbright & Jaworski, L.L.P., and Alex Sutton, The Woodlands Operating Company, L.P.

Board members who renewed their terms are David Daleiden, Weingarten

Realty Investors, Nene Foxhall, Continental Airlines, Karen Hoylman, South Montgomery County Woodlands Chamber of Commerce, Steve Krueger, Bank One, Charles Manley, Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, Gary Montgomery, Montgomery & Associates, Vice Chairman Robert T. Moore, Compaq Computer Corporation, and Dr. John Pickelman, North Harris Montgomery Community College District. ■

Upcoming Events

NHA Committee Meetings

Board of Directors

Dates: Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14
Time: 7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Place: The Greenspoint Club
R.S.V.P.: 281-875-0660 (regrets only)

Business Issues & Resources

Dates: Oct. 22, Nov. & Dec. TBA
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Place: Greenspoint Conference Center
R.S.V.P.: 281-875-0660

Environment

Dates: Oct. 14, Nov. 12, Dec. 9
Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Place: Greenspoint Conference Center
R.S.V.P.: 281-875-0660

Transportation

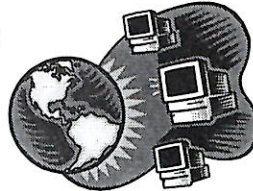
Dates: Oct. 27, Nov. 12, Dec. 15
Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Place: Greenspoint Conference Center
R.S.V.P.: 281-875-0660

Workforce Development

Contact Pat Wisniewski in the NHA office for details (281-875-0660).

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Marlisa Stanley: marlisasta@aol.com



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