

## WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

### SERVICE AWARD OUTGOING WEF DIRECTOR 2002-2005

**...in honor of his dedication, outstanding service, and tireless efforts in support of the objectives of WEF and WEAT.**

#### RON L. MAYO



Ron Mayo grew up in the water and wastewater environment as he accompanied his City Manager father to City meetings and on regular maintenance rounds to various treatment facilities in Union City, Tennessee. While a high school student, he began seasonal work for Komline-Sanderson Engineering Corporation, a manufacturer of wastewater treatment process equipment, and accompanied co-owner Wally Sanderson on sales demonstration trips across the United States to assist with pilot testing of their newly-patented dissolved air flotation unit. Attending the University of Tennessee as a co-op student with K-S, he alternated six-month periods of studies in engineering and business administration with travel across the U.S. as an equipment installation and startup supervisor and warranty service man for company projects. After completing college in 1970, he was named Southeast Regional Sales Manager for K-S in Atlanta, Georgia, covering Georgia, the Carolinas, Florida, and Alabama. In 1974, he accepted an offer of partnership in Haynes Equipment Company, a manufacturers' representative firm in Kansas City, and headed the Oklahoma City office marketing multiple lines of water and wastewater treatment equipment for national factories. Under his twelve years of supervision, the Oklahoma City office grew from a one-man operation with sales of approximately \$200,000 per year to a staff of eight full-time employees in a free-standing building and sales of approximately \$10,000,000.

In 1986, he moved to Dallas, Texas, and founded his own manufacturers' representative organization, Hydronics, Inc. Representing over 40 national and international factories, Hydronics offers a full range of products and services for the water and wastewater treatment industry in the five-state area of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and West Tennessee. He remains President and 100% owner of the corporation.

Throughout his career, Mr. Mayo has pursued an active roll in professional organizations that promote environmental improvement. He became a member of the Georgia Water & Pollution Control Association in 1971 and served on the Local Arrangements/Hospitality Committee helping plan the Atlanta WPCF (now WEF) annual conference and continued active participation in the Georgia Association for four more years. In 1974, he moved to Oklahoma and immediately joined the Water Environment Association of Oklahoma (WEAO) and helped re-establish and motivate the inactive group for the next twelve years. He promoted and moderated a privatization seminar for the State, helped organize the State's Short Schools for Operator Training, and assisted with numerous seminars and meetings. He was a member of multiple committees and served in the following positions of leadership: Membership Chair; By-Laws Revision Chair; Government Affairs Chair; Liaison to the Governor's Office; Secretary; Vice-President; President Elect; and President (1984-1985). He was a member of the Oklahoma Water Pollution Control Association (OWPCA) for municipal operators and held the offices of Vice-President, President Elect, President, and WEF Liaison. He was a member of the American Water Works Association of Oklahoma and served as Co-Chair for the Southwest Regional Meeting in Oklahoma City in 1980.

In 1986, he joined both the Texas Section-American Water Works Association and the Water Environment Association of Texas. He has served WEAT in numerous positions of leadership including: Co-Chair Building Fund (1986-1988) helping raise \$55,000 toward financing the new WEF building in Washington, D.C.; Exhibits Chair (1989-1996) increasing number of exhibitors 300%; Government Affairs Committee (1988-1993); Government Affairs Committee Co-Chair (1991); International Liaison Committee Member (1991-1993); Ethics Education Committee founder (1992); Ethics Education Committee Chair (1992-1994); Ethics Education Committee Member (1992 to present); Membership Review Committee (1993-2004); Vice-President (1996-1997); President Elect (1997-1998); President (1998-1999); Past President (1999-2000); Nominating Committee (1999-2002); Long Range Planning Committee (2003-2006); Management Review Committee (2003-2006); Manufacturers and Representatives Committee Founder/Co-Chair (2004); North Texas Section WEAT Secretary (1992-1993); NTS-WEAT Vice-President (1993-1994); NTS-WEAT Seminar Chair (1993-1994); NTS-WEAT President Elect (1994-1995);

NTS-WEAT President (1995-1996); NTS-WEAT Nominating Committee (1996-1999); and NTS-WEAT Section Representative (2000-2005).

He has served nationally for WEF in the following capacities: Director from Water Environment Association of Oklahoma (1980-1983); Director from Water Environment Association of Texas (2002-2005); Long Range Planning Committee Member (2002-2005); Professional Development Committee Member (2000 to present); Ethics Subcommittee of the WEF Utility Management Committee Member (1999 to present); and National Ethics Chair (1995 to present).

Through Hydronics, Mr. Mayo is a regular exhibitor and frequent sponsor at water and wastewater conferences and short schools in Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. The company regularly sponsors North Texas Section WEAT meetings and the NTS Operators Association Annual Appreciation Banquet. He has helped organize and has participated in numerous WEAT and NTS-WEAT seminars and has assisted with planning the Texas Annual Short School Program. He has been a frequent sponsor of the WEAT Operations Challenge Teams. He helped organize and has participated in WEF-sponsored seminars in Ohio, Arizona, Texas, and California promoting the Ethics Education Program at the national level, has presented papers on "Equipment Procurement" at both WEFTEC '95 in Anaheim, California, and WEFTEC '96 in Dallas, Texas. He helped organize and participated in the Arizona AWWA-WEF-Design/Build Institute of America's seminar "Aqua-Economics – Design-Build for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Water and Wastewater Facilities" where he presented a paper on design/build ethics. He will be presenting an Ethics Workshop during the upcoming WEFTEC '06 in Dallas.

Mr. Mayo has been recognized with the following honors: Pollution Control Association of Oklahoma Service Awards in 1983 and 1984; WEF Arthur Sidney Bedell Award - Oklahoma MA (1985); Outstanding Achievement Award in Building Fund Accomplishments - WEAT and WEF (1987); Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers Membership – WEAT (1988); NTS-WEAT Certificate of Recognition (1991); NTS-WEAT Service Awards (1991/1993/1994); WEAT Service Award (1992); Asociación Mexicana de Aguas, A.C. and La Sociedad Mexicana de Aguas, A.C. Certificate of Appreciation (1993); WEF Arthur Sidney Bedell Award - WEAT MA (1993); Texas Section of AWWA Certificate of Appreciation (1995); WEAT Outstanding Service Award (1996); Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers Membership - Oklahoma WEA (2002); and numerous other service awards through the years.

## WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

### MEDAL OF HONOR FOR HEROISM

...recognizing a member of WEAT who has demonstrated exceptional courage and bravery in either personal or professional life to perform an act of heroic behavior toward his/her fellow man.

A single courageous act can be viewed as heroism, and rightly so. Placing one's own life at risk day after day so that others can have freedom is equally heroic. These two men are the kinds of heroes that make this country great. We honor them and all the men and women in our armed forces whose strong sense of duty and patriotism has led them to put their own lives on hold in order to preserve all that our nation represents.

### Charles M. Schoening and Tarlton Wade "Trooper" Smith, II

#### Charles M. Schoening



Charles Schoening earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Science from Concordia Lutheran College in Austin. He has been with the Austin Water Utility since 1983 when he worked as a Student Lab Aide while attending college. He has served the Utility in several positions including Laboratory Technician, Engineering Assistant, Senior Engineering Technician, Project Manager, and Project Management Manager. He has served as the Capital Program Manager for the Austin Water Utility since 1990.

Mr. Schoening has served with the Army National Guard of Texas since 1989. He attended Officer Candidate School in 1991 and holds the current rank of Major. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, he has been called upon to devote more and more time to his military service. He served as the Operations and Logistics Officer for Task Force Iron Confidence providing Airport Security as part of Operation Noble Eagle in 2001 and 2002. For the first five months of 2004, he served at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Virginia, as an Action Officer for the National Guard Bureau on Operation Noble Eagle. He spent the last six months of 2004 at Fort Hood preparing his Battalion for their mission in Iraq. From January 2005 to December 2005, Major Schoening served with great distinction as the Tactical Forces Commander of Base Defense Operations in Camp Slayer, Iraq. His primary focus was securing the camp from the constant insurgent threat and providing the measured response to the frequent attacks against the installation. In addition to these leadership duties, he used his extensive knowledge of water utility work to assist in the implementation of a gray water management program on Camp Slayer. It had been common practice to discharge sewage directly into the extensive Tigris River canal system, thus creating highly unsanitary, unhealthy, and noisome conditions. His enforcement program made a significant contribution toward reversing this practice and protecting the public health and environment in and around Baghdad. The enforcement required a great deal of initiative and the application of personal skills from both his military and civilian experience, as well as his ability to negotiate and manage difficult projects, to complete this task under such adverse and dangerous conditions. Major Schoening's knowledge of water systems also proved useful when he conducted a vulnerability analysis and developed an improvements plan for the camp reverse osmosis water purification unit. This treatment facility provides drinking water for several thousand people living at various camps in the Baghdad area. The facility has been targeted by mortar and rocket attacks, but as a result of protective improvements, has sustained no damage or service interruption. His knowledge of pipeline operations and maintenance also helped him in assisting local communities with repair of leaking water systems. Most pipelines in this area are shallow and are easily damaged by vehicular traffic. It is not uncommon for leaking pipes to go unattended for months due to the lack of maintenance



personnel in the governmental agencies responsible for the infrastructure. Major Schoening collaborated with local community leaders in order to develop a joint plan for repairing leaking pipes and maintaining water supply canals.

As a result of his leadership and use of the proper force protection measures he implemented to reduce the possibility of casualties, Major Schoening's team was able to accomplish these tasks without a single casualty, injury, or even minor safety infraction. His exceptional inter-personal skills in maintaining good relations with the local civilian population have helped create goodwill toward the United States in a difficult and dangerous situation.

In addition to the assignments previously mentioned, Mr. Schoening has also performed duty on the island nation of St. Kitts and Nevis (1995) and in Germany (1996 and 2000). During the 17 years he has served with the National Guard, he has received over 20 different awards and decorations including the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, and Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters.

## **Tarlon Wade "Trooper" Smith, II**



Trooper Smith earned his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Environmental Engineering from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. He interned with West Central Texas MWD in 1998 and with Camp, Dresser & McKee, Inc. in 1999. He has since been employed with Freese and Nichols, Inc. as Engineer IV. He has experience with water and wastewater plants, local limits, industrial ordinances, WAS/RAS piping, pump replacement, pump stations, sewer modeling, pipelines, GIS, site maps, and a water filter plant pilot study. His environmental and civil engineering experience includes water and wastewater treatment permitting, process evaluation, water and wastewater plant design, plant operation and maintenance, sludge handling and disposal, pump design, industrial treatment facilities, construction management services, and program management services.

Mr. Smith distinguished himself academically, worked hard, and was living the American dream with a beautiful bride, a home in the suburbs, a promising career, and a wide circle of friends through volunteering with the WEAT Young Professional Committee.

When the September 11 tragedy affected this nation so drastically, he made the commitment to serve the country that had blessed him with the ideal life and enlisted in the United States Army National Guard (Texas). By January of 2002, he was in Basic Training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. His talent and drive for perfection led to his being one of the few selected to attend Officer Candidate School as well as the Engineer Officer Basic Course. Assigned to the 111<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Texas Guard, he was given just enough time to make a short visit home to see his first child born before his Battalion was deployed to Baghdad to assist with Operation Iraqi Freedom in January of 2005. He has served as Platoon Leader for Bravo Company, Escort Officer-Platoon Leader for Alpha Company and Bravo Company, and Executive Officer for Bravo Company. His current rank is First Lieutenant. His military obligation continues until 2010.

As Escort Officer for the Joint Visitors Bureau, Multi-National Force Iraq for 2005, First Lieutenant Smith was in charge of security of high-level distinguished visitors and delegates from the United States and Coalition forces from around the world. His missions frequently involved travel through the Red Zone, a term used to describe any area not secured by U.S. or Coalition forces and thus most vulnerable to terrorist attacks. He was responsible for planning and executing the entire missions from arrival of the distinguished visitor in Iraq to departure, including travel plans for fixed wing flights, helicopter flights, HMMWV (High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle) convoys, route reconnaissance, risk assessments, contact lists, resource tasking, rehearsals, coordination with Federal Agents, and all other facets of high-risk visits. While serving in this position, he directed missions that included: U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of State Rice, Members of U.S. Congress (Hayes, Shelton, Clinton, and others), U.S. Governors (Kansas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and others), General Abizaid of U.S. Central Command, Lieutenant General Petraeus of Multi-National Security Transition Command and NATO Training, Lieutenant General Smith of U.S. Central Command, General Kim of the Republic of Korea, Major General Mock of 63<sup>rd</sup> Regional Readiness Command, and other visitors.

He was decorated with the Bronze Star for his dedicated service in Operation Iraqi Freedom from January to December of 2005.



**WATER ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION**  
**WILLIAM D. HATFIELD AWARD**

**...recognizing operators of wastewater treatment plants for outstanding performance and professionalism.**

**John Bennett**



John Bennett has been employed by the Trinity River Authority (TRA) since the day after he graduated from high school. Originally hired as a seasonal grounds care employee for TRA's Central Regional Wastewater System (CRWS) on June 1, 1986, he was promoted to Maintenance Mechanic I on June 21 and then was promoted to the position of Chief Maintenance Mechanic just three years later. His skill, intelligence, and perseverance in this position have led to his reputation for being the person to get the job done. During his career, he has accrued a total of 904 hours of TCEQ-approved training hours and earned Class "A" Wastewater Certification in August of 2000. He graduated Phi Theta Kappa from Tarrant County College with AA in Management in December of 2001. He is a past recipient of the V. M. Ehlers Scholarship and is currently pursuing an undergraduate degree in Management at The University of Texas Arlington.

Mr. Bennett's leadership abilities resulted in his serving at a supervisory level in every maintenance-related division within the TRA Central System's 162 MGD facility. He played a key role in the development of a very successful maintenance department and was instrumental in developing the plant's Overhaul and Machine Shop. With his extensive knowledge of the plant's operational processes and with a close working relationship with the operational staff, he provided numerous innovative ideas for changes to operational equipment design resulting in optimization of the treatment processes. On being selected in 2000 to develop and expand the personnel training program at the TRA Central plant, he worked closely with managers of the Operations, Maintenance, and Technical Services Departments to create training programs specific to the technical requirements of each, and those training programs have received TCEQ "Approved Provider" status. With his encouragement and support, two other CRWS personnel completed the training and became approved instructors as well.

In 2003, Mr. Bennett was promoted to the position of Manager at the TRA Denton Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCRWS). The DCRWS plant expanded to a 5 MGD facility in 2005. It is located in one of the most rapidly growing areas in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and is already in the process of planning the next expansion. The plant produces a highly polished effluent with ammonia and BOD levels consistently under 1 mg/l. This is achieved through several process trains utilizing traditional activated sludge treatment along with sequential batch reactors and tertiary treatment comprised of sand and cloth media filtration. The final effluent is disinfected by ultra violet technology. Since assuming responsibility for the plant, Mr. Bennett and his two-man maintenance staff have completed the overhaul or reconditioning of four sand filters, two main lift pump stations, one lift station, and four clarifiers. The DCRWS plant's biggest challenge occurs three times a year while treating 100% of the flow from the Texas Motor Speedway. With an average attendance in excess of 250,000 people, the Speedway produces additional flows to the plant over a four-day period of up to 2 MGD with an ammonia concentration consistently above 100 mg/l. Under his leadership, the DCRWS staff has not had a TCEQ permit infraction during any NASCAR-sanctioned event.

Mr. Bennett uses his 904 hours of TCEQ approved training for the benefit of others in the water and wastewater industry. His knowledge of maintenance procedures and process control allows him to serve as a technical advisor not only to operators at TRA but also to operators state-wide. He served as a co-instructor at the Texas Water Utilities Association Short School for the Pump and Motor Maintenance Course from 1990 through 1992. He became an approved instructor in 2000 for TCEQ accredited courses and in 2001 for First Aid/CPR with the National Safety Council. He has served as a volunteer instructor for the Utilities Safety Course at the Texas Water Utilities Association North Central Texas Regional School since 2000, and he organized a joint training and testing program that paired a 40-hour Wastewater Technologies Course (instructed by TEEX) with an on-site TCEQ testing day immediately following the training that has become an annual event with 23 of the 32 attendees from North Texas earning Class "A" Certification. The pass rate for this training/testing day has been 72%, as opposed to the state average of 45% for the same time frame. According to Susan Hier of the TCEQ, this is the highest pass rate of any program statewide. In 2003, he volunteered as a subject matter expert for the TCEQ, analyzing job tasks of wastewater and collections system operators. Additionally, he teaches TCEQ and National Safety council approved

wastewater, safety, and instructor development courses statewide as a contract instructor for Eagle Training Resources. To date, he has trained over 175 people in First Aid CPR and 480 people in Confined Space Certification.

Since becoming a WEAT member in 1985, Mr. Bennett has dedicated numerous hours in service to the Association. Beginning in 1995, he became involved in the Operations Challenge efforts as Captain of the TRA CReWSers team. Under his leadership, the team has won many State and National awards, including six straight WEAT State championships. The TRA CReWSers is the first team from the state of Texas to ever receive an award at the WEF National competitions. In his eight years of National competitions, his team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> twice and 3<sup>rd</sup> four times, narrowly missing the coveted National Championship Trophy on numerous occasions. He has continued to volunteer his time and talents toward the success of the WEAT Operations Challenge efforts since his retirement from the team in 2003. Serving as the WEAT PWO Chair, he is responsible for the WEAT Safety Committee and organizing the WEAT State Operations Challenge Competition at annual Texas Water conferences. During his tenure, he has increased the participation of teams from across the state and has brought in teams from the WEA of Arkansas to compete as well. He works closely with the teams prior to the competition and provides guidance in several aspects of the events they must perform. Through his fundraising efforts, WEAT was able to sponsor the participation of three Texas teams at WEFTEC 2005 in Washington, D.C., which is the biggest number of Texas teams ever sponsored at a single WEFTEC. Even though WEFTEC 2005 was their first national competition, the Dallas Aquatechs finished 10<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> in the Safety Event for Division II and were voted the team to watch at the future WEFTEC 2006. Their Team Captain James Ray attributed much of their success to the “personal training that Mr. Bennett offered”. At the same WEFTEC, the TRA CReWSers finished 1<sup>st</sup> overall in the Division 1 National Championship. This feat is not only a first for the State of Texas but for any team from the southern United States. According to CReWSers Captain Dale Burrow, “Without the contributions and efforts that John (Bennett) performs for the WEAT State Competition, the teams would not be as prepared for the WEF National Competition. The closer the State event is run to the National event, the better prepared the WEAT teams are to face the challenges of the National Competition, and we believe his efforts over the past two years have really paid off for all of us.” Mr. Bennett served as Special Assistant to the WEF Competition Committee in 2004 and 2005 and has been selected Chair of the Local Competition Committee for WEFTEC 2006 in Dallas. He has committed to find funding necessary to send all four Texas teams to National Competition at WEFTEC 2006.

In 1999, Mr. Bennett helped originate and implement WEAT’s Safety Committee, serving as the Co-Chair in the first year and Chair the next. During the Committee’s initial year, he was instrumental in the development of the Committee’s *Safety Scene* newsletter, serving as the newsletter’s first editor and frequently writing safety articles for the monthly publication. As Safety Committee Chair, he also authored a regular column on safety issues in WEAT’s *Texas WET* magazine. In February of 2002, he led the Committee in organizing a one-day WEAT-sponsored Safety and Security Conference for Water and Wastewater Utilities. Since then, the Committee has hosted three other very successful safety conferences with average attendance of over 100 people. This program is now an annual event with locations around the state. He serves as a Safety Committee consultant on the WEAT Awards Committee in the evaluations of Texas candidates for the WEF Burke Safety Award. The Safety Committee’s successful efforts were recognized nationally when WEAT was presented with the 2004 WEF Member Association Safety Award.

In recognition of being the top recruiter of new WEAT/WEF members, Mr. Bennett was honored at Texas Water 2000 and 2005 with a Golden Shovel and membership in the Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers. In 2001, 2002, and 2004, he received WEAT Presidential Service Awards. In 2003, he was honored as WEAT’s Municipal Operator of the Year.

## **William L. “Bill” Pippin**



A native Texan born in Rockwall County, William L. “Bill” Pippin grew up in the then small communities of Rowlett and Garland. He is a 1973 graduate of South Garland High School. He holds Class “A” Wastewater Certificate of Competency from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Class “A” Wastewater Operator Certification from Colorado Certification Board. He is a member of the Water Environment Association of Texas and the Water Environment Federation.

Bill Pippin began his twenty-six year water and wastewater career in March of 1978 as part of an inflow/infiltration study team assessing the City of Garland’s need for sewer rehabilitation. Shortly thereafter, he transferred into the wastewater department at the City’s 30 MGD Duck Creek WWTP, holding numerous positions until his transfer to the 24 MGD Rowlett Creek WWTP as Plant Manager in 1988. He was responsible for planning, organizing, and directing operations and solids handling staff, as well as preparing and managing the annual O&M budget of 2.2 million dollars. During his association with the Duck Creek WWTP, he coordinated and conducted numerous facility tours for local and professional groups and foreign citizens. Both Rowlett Creek and Duck Creek facilities received recognition from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (Gold & Silver Awards) during his tenure. He co-authored public presentations including “Thermal Drying is Appropriate for Medium-Sized Plants” (Houston - 2001) and “Why Not A High Pressure Anaerobic Digester?”

(Miami - 1995). In October 1990, he conducted the WEF Conference Poster Presentation “Interim Measures Achieve Permit Compliance”.

Mr. Pippin retired from the City of Garland in April of 2004 and is presently living in Lake City, Colorado, with his wife Teresa, “enjoying life and the stunning beauty of the mountains around them”.

## WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

### EXEMPLARY EMPLOYER AWARD

**...recognizing a Texas employer who has exhibited companywide support of and involvement in WEAT and WEF activities, has rendered financial assistance toward employee memberships in WEAT and WEF, has encouraged employee participation in WEAT and WEF activities, and has encouraged technical and professional growth among its employees through participation in WEAT and WEF meetings, seminars, conferences, and publications.**

#### MWH



Headquartered in Broomfield, Colorado, MWH is a global leader in providing knowledge-driven services. With more than \$1 billion in revenue and over 6,100 employees in 36+ countries, MWH provides premiere solutions to municipalities, government agencies, multinational companies, industrial concerns, and military organizations worldwide. In Texas, MWH has offices in Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio. The company is among the

world's most prominent firms in water, wastewater, energy, natural resource, program management, consulting, and construction services to industrial, municipal, and government clients in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, India, Asia, and the Pacific Rim. Recent MWH awards include: the 2006 American Council of Engineering Companies, Arkansas Section-Excellence in Engineering and Grand Conceptor Award for the Raw Water Intake Structure for the Beaver Water District; and the United States Conference of Mayors 2006 Award for Excellence in Public/Private Partnership for the Kansas City Capitol Improvement Management Office.

MWH has always been a strong supporter of affiliations with professional industry organizations that provide opportunities for employees to advance their knowledge and networking skills. Consequently, the firm uses a variety of incentives to encourage its employees to join WEAT and WEF and participate in WEAT and WEF activities.

First of all, MWH provides financial support to facilitate active employee involvement in professional organizations. Corporate policy states that the company will pay for membership in up to two organizations for each employee with additional memberships granted for demonstrated need. In addition, costs for registration, transportation, lodging, and meals associated with authorized attendance at organizational conventions or conferences are paid by the company. The same expenses are paid for employee spouses or partners should their presence be of benefit to the company. This policy allows MWH employees to participate in events such as WEFTEC, Specialty Conferences, WEAT conferences and seminars, committee meetings, and local section meetings and activities. The company also supports WEAT and WEF organizations as a whole through sponsorships and donations. MWH has served as a Platinum Sponsor for two consecutive WEFTEC conferences as well as a Diamond Sponsor for Texas Water 2005. The company has also co-sponsored local WEAT North Texas Section meetings and seminars and has contributed to Operations Forum competitions.

MWH facilitates employee attendance at WEF and WEAT events that frequently occur during working hours and in distant cities. MWH provides its employees with the time and flexibility needed to attend meetings and be actively involved whenever and wherever the meetings are held. For example, the firm has consistently allowed employees who are members of the WEAT Board and related committees time to attend these meetings as well as reimbursement for travel and lodging expenses. When Texas Water 2005 was held in Galveston, MWH allowed its Houston staff the time and opportunity to be involved in all phases of the planning efforts and to volunteer to serve at the conference.

MWH wholeheartedly supports technical and professional growth among its employees. The firm encourages employees through a generous paper and conference honorarium program developed to place emphasis on the importance of writing and presenting papers for publications and conferences. Participation is rewarded with monetary bonuses. The company also channels funds toward programs established to inspire budding engineers and Young Professionals. For three consecutive years, the firm has co-sponsored the Student Design Competition, developed to provide a forum at WEFTEC to showcase the capabilities of top young environmental engineers. MWH also co-sponsored the WEF 2004 and 2005 Undergraduate Student Paper Competition. Company efforts have succeeded with many employees serving in leadership roles within WEAT and WEF, attending WEAT and WEF events, and submitting abstracts and papers for meetings and publications. Several WEAT and WEF Offices and Committees have been chaired and are being chaired by MWH employees.

## WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

### EMERGING LEADER AWARD

...presented to a young member of WEAT who has provided outstanding service in support of the Association in the form of committee involvement, recruiting, volunteer time, event participation, or other contributions.

#### Jennafer “Jenna” Piper Covington



Jennafer “Jenna” Piper Covington graduated from Texas Tech University in 2001 with a Bachelors and Masters in Environmental Engineering. She joined the Dallas office of CH2M HILL as an intern for the summer of 2000 and has been employed as a full-time employee with the firm since graduation. She obtained her Professional Engineers license in April 2005.

Ms. Covington’s professional experience has covered a wide variety of projects. She served as the lead modeler on a Water System Master Plan for the City of Waco, Texas. The model was used to evaluate the performance of the existing system and make recommendations for future improvements. A genetic algorithm was used to optimize the improvement to reduce costs while still maintaining operating criteria. The project was completed in 2003. She has been involved with a Class A Biosolids Pasteurization project for the Trinity River Authority’s Central Regional Wastewater System facility since its inception. She began working on the project during the study phase in 2002, helped complete the design, was the construction representative for CH2M HILL, and is currently assisting with startup. This project was presented by Ms. Covington at a technical session for Texas Water 2004 and also was published in the March 2005 issue of *Texas WET* magazine. Additionally, she has submitted another abstract on the belt

filter press selection procedure for Texas Water 2006. She is also currently serving as lead mechanical engineer and assistant design manager for a pump station located at the discharge of Tarrant Regional Water District’s wetland treatment system. The initial capacity of the pump station is 45 MGD, and it will ultimately be 90 MGD. Other components of the project include passive intake screens located in the creek and a discharge structure into Richland Chambers Reservoir. As a young engineer, her goal is to get a broad base of experience. She is rapidly attaining that goal.

Ms. Covington’s first involvement with the Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) and the Water Environment Federation (WEF) began as a student in 1998. She was instrumental in the development of the Society of Environmental Professionals, the first Student Chapter of WEAT, serving its Founding President for 1998-1999 and Vice President for 1999-2000. Her involvement included drafting of the organizations bylaws and constitution, working with WEAT and WEF to obtain the Chapter’s charter, participating in a student design competition, and attending WEFTEC in 1999.

Upon graduation, Ms. Covington began attending the North Texas Section/WEAT bi-monthly dinner and business meetings. In 2003, she accepted the position as Chair of the WEAT Membership Committee, a committee with no members prior to her acceptance of the position, and became a non-voting member of the WEAT Board of Directors. Responsible for promoting the benefits of membership to encourage others to join WEF and WEAT, she has built her Committee from the ground up. She has implemented innovative ideas not only to attract new members but also to encourage existing members to become more involved in all levels of WEAT, whether they are young or experienced professionals. She attended the WEF Leadership Conference in 2003 and participated in the WEAT Long Range Planning Committee’s annual meeting for 2004 and 2005. She chaired a WEAT sub-committee to make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the development of WEAT Group Memberships and played an active role in the final development of Utility Memberships. At Texas Water 2004 and 2005, she received Service Awards for her work with the Membership Committee. At the national WEF level, she presented at the Membership Association Leadership Meeting at WEFTEC 2004 and has been an active member of the WEF Membership Committee since 2004. She chaired a subcommittee in 2004-2005 to make recommendations for the WEF Board of Trustees regarding the development of Group Membership within WEF. Her recruiting efforts have been recognized by WEF. She received the Second Place Prize for Recruiter of the Year in 2004 and was inducted into WEF’s VIP Circle for recruiting 50-99 members. Her positive energy has made significant impact on the membership of WEAT and WEF.

## WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

# OUTSTANDING MUNICIPAL OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

**...presented to a municipal wastewater treatment plant operator in the State of Texas who has demonstrated outstanding professionalism at his/her facility and has performed his/her duties tirelessly and with dedication to the betterment of the water environment.**

## Gary W. Burton



Gary W. Burton held Texas Perpetual Class “A” Wastewater Certification until the provision allowing for perpetual licenses expired and has held Texas Class “A” Wastewater Certification since 1982. He also holds Texas Grade “B” Surface Water Certification. He earned Texas Commission on Environmental Quality certification as a Certified Water Utilities Instructor qualified to teach all courses required by the State for certification as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator. He has an Associate of Arts degree in Mid-Management.

Mr. Burton began his professional career with the City of Fort Worth in 1974 in the Pretreatment Division and transferred to wastewater treatment at Fort Worth’s Riverside Wastewater Treatment Plant in 1976. He helped in the 1979 decommissioning of the Riverside Wastewater Treatment Plant and was among the last people to turn off the lights at Riverside before moving out to Fort Worth’s “new” Village Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. His first position at the Village Creek Plant was Operator II and then Trainer after earning Certified Water Utilities Instructor Certification. He is currently the Operations Superintendent, a position he has held since 1989. During the last 30 years at Village Creek, he has witnessed the rated capacity at the facility increase from 45 MGD to its current 166 MGD conventional treatment process. He has participated both directly and indirectly in plant construction and expansions. He has coordinated plant operations to accommodate contractors’ needs to take process equipment out of service and re-route flows within the plant, while continuing to provide complete treatment of incoming wastewater. He played a significant role in the recent design, construction, and operation of the innovative physical/chemical treatment process at the Village Creek facility for increased flow during rain events. Mr. Burton was very instrumental in earning the EPA National O&M Award for the Village Creek plant in 1988 and 1998. During his tenure, the plant has been in perfect compliance with permit and has experienced no permit violations since 1989 as reflected by AMSA/NACWA Gold and Platinum awards.

As a Certified TCEQ Instructor, Mr. Burton has been active in teaching at the Texas Water Utilities Association (TWUA) North Central Texas Regional School and the TWUA Annual School at Texas A&M and training of hundreds of wastewater treatment operators from all over the State of Texas. As Village Creek Operations Superintendent, he encourages employee suggestions and involvement in plant operations. He has created ad hoc committees to solve specific problems in plant operations and supported the creation of an Employee Council to address and make recommendations on various management issues. These committees have introduced recommendations that have resulted in numerous policy changes to make operational procedures at the plant more efficient. He proposed and implemented an Operator Recognition Program that allows employees to recognize and nominate peers as Operator of the Quarter and Operator of the Year for their professional competence and their abilities to work with peers. He has actively encouraged and supported his facility’s team, the Village Creek Cowtown Hustlers, in their Operations Challenge competitions. His commitment to fellow employees is evidenced by low employee turnover and by the fact that many of the plant’s operators have over fifteen years of tenure at the plant.

In 1993, the Water Environment Federation honored Mr. Burton with the William D. Hatfield Award for outstanding performance of his duties as a wastewater plant operator. He also has been accepted into the membership of the elite WEF Quarter Century Operators’ Club. He was elected President of the North Central Texas Chapter of the Texas Water Utilities Association in 1997 and has received TWUA’s Community Service Award. He has also served on several committees for the TWUA Regional Schools. He served as Chairman of the WEAT/TAWWA Scholarship Golf Tournament and served on the State and National Scholarship Golf Tournament Committees for many years.

as they are completed. All major and critical equipment and related components are integrated into the CMMS. Predictive maintenance practices use advanced technology for anticipating and diagnosing equipment problems. This predictive maintenance consists of vibration analysis, motor circuit evaluation, infrared thermography, and oil analysis.

By blending technical expertise, a safe working environment, and facility maintenance, the staff of the Larremore Street Wastewater Treatment Plant has been able to operate an older facility that consistently produces high-quality effluent necessary to protect the water resources of the Guadalupe River basin.

## **WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS**

# **MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT OF THE YEAR AWARD Category 3 (>15 MGD)**

**...presented to a municipal wastewater treatment plant in Texas that has consistently exhibited outstanding performance of daily activities beyond the normal call of duty.**

## **Central Regional Wastewater System Trinity River Authority of Texas**



The Trinity River Authority (TRA) pioneered the concept of regional wastewater treatment by establishing the Central Regional Wastewater System (CRWS) in 1957. Now the third largest plant in the state, the CRWS facility has over 200 miles of pipeline serving all or part of 21 contracting parties with approximately 100 million people being served in the Dallas/Fort Worth geographical area.

Complete treatment can be provided to monthly average flows of 162 MGD and daily maximum flows of 335 MGD with total secondary and tertiary treatment and the ability to treat a 2-hour peak of 405 MGD. During the treatment process, biological oxygen demand, suspended solids, and ammonia nitrogen are reduced by 99 percent. The Central plant has the mechanical dewatering capability of

processing 232 dry tons of sludge daily. The resulting sludge product, or biosolids, is beneficially reused in a land application program.

CRWS is not only a very large collection and water reclamation unit capable of producing a very high quality effluent, but is also a full-service facility with in-house capability to accommodate virtually all of its operations, maintenance, administration, and technical service needs. CRWS has a fully integrated environmental laboratory providing complete analytical capabilities for plant process monitoring and control for liquids and solids operation around the clock. It has a full-service industrial pretreatment division whose services include industrial permitting, inspecting, and sampling. When coupled with the analytical capabilities of the laboratory, CRWS is capable of complying with all state and federal pretreatment laws. CRWS is one of the few treatment systems with on-site biomonitoring facilities which provide a broad range of toxicity testing capabilities.

The facility maintains a sterling safety record with less than one lost-time incident per 100 employees in 2005. Safety awareness and education permeate every aspect of daily work at CRWS. To ensure the safest possible work environment, a multi-faceted Safety Education Program begins with day one of employment at the plant and continues for the duration of an employee's tenure. New employees undergo three days of safety education including training and certification to make confined space entries and perform lock-out/tag-out procedures. New employees also become right-to-know certified and receive risk management information before they are released for work. In addition, new employees complete 24 hours of general safety training using IPRA, a computer-based training program accredited by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Employees receive ongoing training and annual certification on confined space, lock-out/tag-out, right-to-know, forklift safety, emergency response, pathogenic bacteria/blood borne pathogens, trench safety, plant evacuation, risk

management, and competent person certification. The CRWS Safety Committee, comprised of twelve members of the plant staff and two managers, meets regularly to address safety issues. Members of the Committee make monthly plant inspections bringing information back to safety meetings for action. Safety awareness is reinforced with posters, banners, and an annual Safety Awareness Day celebration.

CRWS has a long history of 100% compliance with its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. This record of permit compliance is best illustrated by the awards the system has earned from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), formerly the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA). NACWA honors those agencies achieving 100% permit compliance with a Gold Award. A facility receiving the Gold Award for five consecutive years earns the NACWA Platinum Award. CRWS has achieved 100% permit compliance continuously since 1994 resulting in ten Gold Awards and two Platinum Awards.

The Central facility promotes public awareness of the importance of protecting our water environment with virtual tours of the treatment plant for local school districts on a regular basis. The primary purpose of the presentations is to promote understanding of environmental issues and the wastewater treatment process as well as the importance of chemical and environmental safety.

## WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

### PILLARS OF THE PROFESSION AWARD

**...honoring an individual who has demonstrated meaningful and substantial contributions toward the improvement of the water environment via a distinguished career in the wastewater or water quality industry. The honoree shall be a person of proven preeminence in the water environment profession whose career has positively impacted the success and growth of these fields within the State of Texas.**

#### Ronald B. Sieger



Ronald B. Sieger graduated from Iowa State University with a B.S. Degree in Civil Engineering and holds professional engineering registrations in Texas, Arkansas, and California. He is a Vice President and Principal Technologist for CH2M HILL, and as such, is involved with wastewater and residuals projects worldwide as part of the Global Residuals Technology team. His range of project experience in water and wastewater treatment extends from planning treatment systems, including designing pilot facilities, through startup and operation of completed plants.

Mr. Sieger has been and is currently involved with many professional associations. He serves WEF at the national level as Vice-chair of the Residuals and Biosolids Committee and Co-chair of the Bioenergy Subcommittee. He is one of the Coordinators for the WEF National Biosolids Partnership and was Program Chair for two very successful Residuals and Biosolids Specialty Conferences. He has presented technical papers at several national specialty conferences. He is a member of the International Water Association Biosolids Committee, attends international conferences to assess the latest technology, and focuses on bringing the latest and most practical ideas and technology to our U.S. technologists.

Over the years, he has enthusiastically contributed his time and talents in numerous capacities to the Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT). He has served WEAT as President, Director for WEF, Chair of the Program Committee, Chair of the Research Committee, Chair of the Audit Committee, and member of the Long Range Planning Committee. He has written a column for the WEAT magazine on consultant issues, has presented a multitude of papers at state conferences and specialty conferences, and has been a featured speaker on many occasions. Currently, he is the Chair of the WEAT Residuals and Biosolids Committee and is a member of the WEAT Nominating Committee. In honor of his dedication and extraordinary personal service to WEAT and WEF, he received the prestigious WEF Arthur Sidney Bedell Award in 2000.

For the North Texas Section (NTS) of WEAT, Mr. Sieger has held all the offices through President, as well as Chair of the Specialty Conference Committee and Chair of the Audit Committee. He originated the NTS newsletter and served as Chair of the Newsletter Committee for over ten years, winning a Watermark Award for his work. He originated the Photography Committee and the History Committee and has helped organize several other standing committees within the Section. He has been a featured speaker at many NTS meetings and has presented technical papers at NTS specialty conferences. He is an enthusiastic supporter of the NTS Scholarship Fund and has helped ensure the success of the Fund through his early and continued support.

In addition, Mr. Sieger has been actively involved with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Texas Water Utilities Association, the American Water Works Association, and the American Academy of Environmental Engineers. He has been recognized with numerous awards and honors throughout his career including Samuel A. Greeley Award (ASCE) for Best Technical Paper, American Academy of Environmental Engineers Diplomate, Who's Who in America, Chi Epsilon (civil engineering honorary association), and the ABC Excellence in Construction Award for the Dallas Grit Removal Project. He has contributed to and authored numerous technical papers and articles across several technologies.

Ron Sieger exemplifies the leadership, dedicated service, and technical contributions that have helped make WEAT the successful organization that it is today. He maintains a positive and professional attitude while performing untold services at the National, State, and Regional levels of WEF. He consistently recruits members to attend meetings and conferences and become active on committees. He has always been a mentor and resource for new members, a strong advocate for our programs, and deeply cares for our people and organization.