



# Purple Pipe

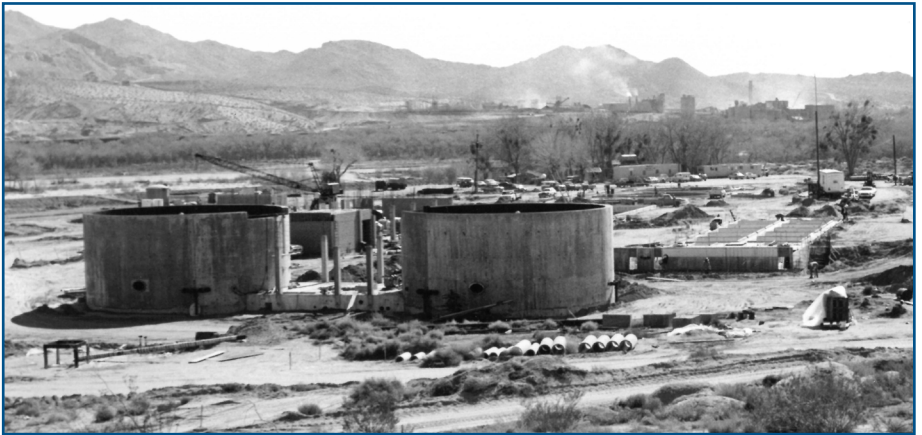
Volume XIV Summer 2018



## VVWRA Marks 40 Years of Service



Officials sign documents creating VVWRA in 1978.



Construction on VVWRA plant at former Culbertson Ranch in February 1979.

VVWRA is celebrating 40 years of serving the Victor Valley. It was June 1st, 1978 that VVWRA became an independent agency with the task of providing wastewater treatment services for our region. However the genesis of VVWRA actually dates back to 1973 when local voters approved a bond measure to build a wastewater treatment plant. VVWRA was originally formed by the Mojave Water Agency in 1977 as Improvement District #1. But by June 1, 1978 VVWRA evolved into an independent agency with it's own bylaws and board. Construction began on the original 2.5 million gallon per day treatment plant in mid-1977 with a groundbreaking ceremony on August 9th, 1977. Congresswoman Shirley Pettis called the new construction "a true example of the vision of the crafters of the federal Clean Water Act". 87% of the cost was paid for by state and federal grant funds while the local bond measure paid the remaining amount. It would take four years to complete, but the small plant built on the former Culbertson Ranch began operations on Dec. 1, 1981. Over the years, the Victor Valley population has expanded dramatically and so has VVWRA's mission. Today, VVWRA treats nearly 11 million gallons of wastewater every day. That's more than four times the amount the original plant was designed to handle when it started in 1981. VVWRA is also handling fats, oil and grease (FOG) from local restaurants as well as anaerobically digestible materials (ADM). Those materials have helped in generating biogas which is used to generate electricity to run the plant. In addition, VVWRA has done a number of expansion projects over the years to keep up increasing flows as the result of the regions growth. The projects have included additional primary's, secondary clarifiers, larger digesters, improvements to the aeration basins, tertiary filters and UV disinfection. In 2015, VVWRA broke ground on two sub-regional water recycling facilities in Apple Valley and Hesperia. Construction has been completed at both sites. When fully operational each facility will be capable of producing up to one million gallons of recycled water per day. The water will be used for irrigating golf courses, parks and civic centers. It will also take the strain off our interceptors, which are reaching capacity, while saving precious drinking water.

### INSIDE THE PURPLE PIPE

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Marking VVWRA's 40th anniversary at our June Board meeting. I-r. VVWRA's Latif Laari, Xiwei Wang, Marcos Avila, David Wylie, Piero Dallardo, Kristi Casteel, Commissioner Larry Bird, Commissioner Jim Cox, Chieko Keagy, Commissioner Scott Nassif, Toni Henning, Commissioner Jeff Rigney, Alton Anderson, GM Logan Olds, Bruce Correia and Robert Coromina.





# A fun look at our past....

by **Bruce Correia**

My first official day with VWRA was on July 1st 1993. Since this was the first day of the fiscal year I got a raise. Also I was informed that we got the 4th of July off and we were having a BBQ that day to celebrate the holiday. I thought to myself WOW! This is a great place to work!

On my first day in 1993, VWRA was barely a 6 mgd (million gallons per day) plant. Today, we treat nearly 11 million mgd. There was little, to no automation in the facility. In the summer time before the contact tanks had covers, we probably "accidentally" fell into the tanks of recycled water to escape the heat far more than we should have. On Saturdays we would bring in remote control boats and have boat races on the North perc ponds and chase the ducks. Or after shift, play basketball out in front of the shop with our home made hoop and key.

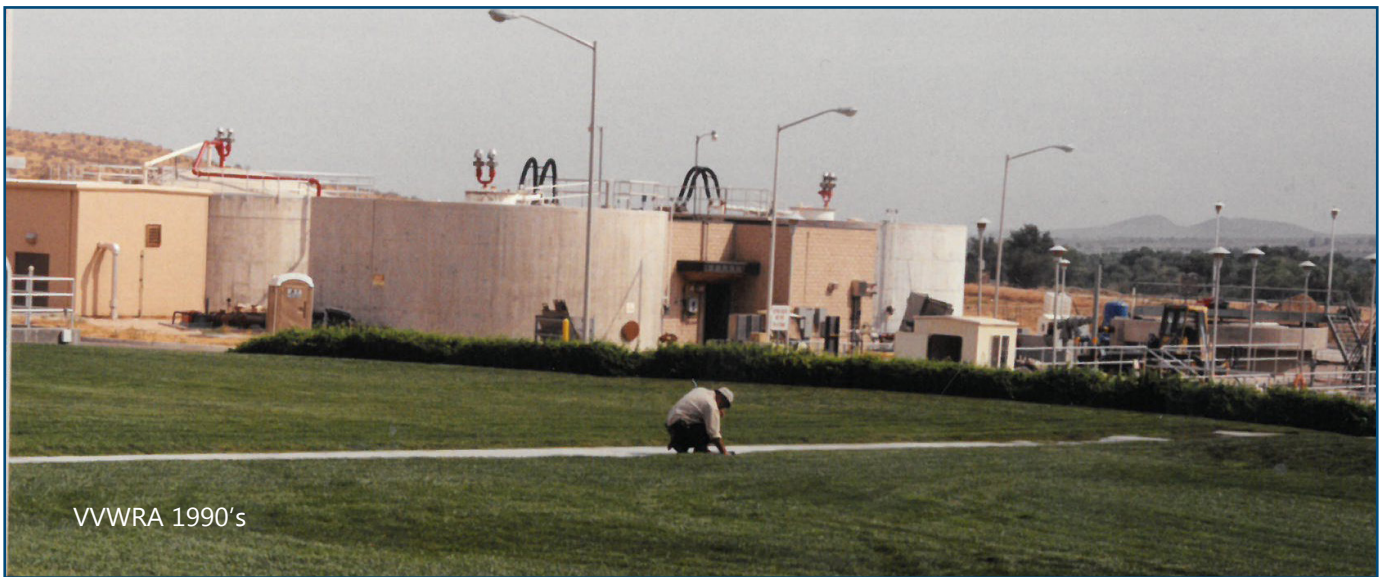
However, some things must change and these activities are, somewhat frowned upon now, for very good reasons. I still miss some of the things we used to do many years ago.

A lot of changes have occurred over the years. New staff, new process, new equipment. Some of these things I predicted and some of these things I hoped for, but did not expect. However one thing I certainly never expected was to be the old sage of VWRA. It seems like just last week I was an Operator in Training running around the plant trying to figure out what valve was for what pipe.

Today we have automation and equipment that practically operates itself. None of the people I started with are still here and while I miss them, I am just as proud of the new staff that have come aboard in recent years. I can only imagine where VWRA will be in another 25 years.



Bruce Correia



VWRA 1990's

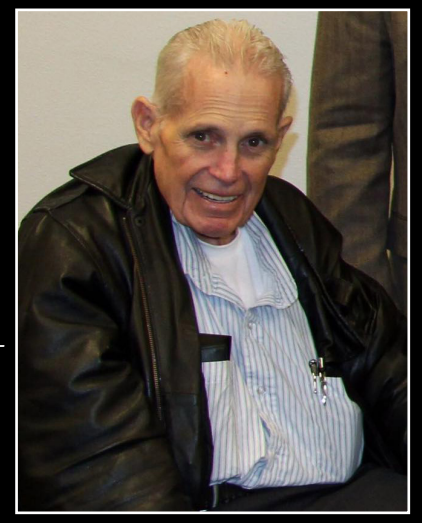
## Purple Pipe newsletter VWRA Board of Commissioners

- Larry Bird / Hesperia
- Jim Kennedy / Victorville
- Scott Nassif / Apple Valley
- Jeff Rigney / SB CSA 42 & 46

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## RIP Commissioner Blewett

*VWRA mourns the unexpected death of Hesperia Mayor and VWRA Commissioner Russ Blewett who passed away on May 23, 2018. He was 74. Mr. Blewett had served as Hesperia's representative on our board since 2011.*





# Around the Plant

## Daniel Enriquez: Employee of the Quarter



Congratulations to Asset Management Technician Daniel Enriquez who was named Employee of the Quarter. In his position, Daniel purchases the equipment needed to keep our plant running and handles many of our permits. He was recognized for his positive attitude and strong work ethic. Daniel has been with VWRA since October of 2014 when he started in the Safety Department. Before joining VWRA, Daniel served eight years in the United States Marines, including two tours of Iraq. Daniel is a native of Washington state and lives in Victorville with his wife Miriam and their two children. Fun fact: Daniel played Irving Dingleberry in the award winning performance by The Dingleberrys at this years VVC Hall of Fame event.

## Mauricio Marin named E & I Person of the Year



VWRA's Mauricio Marin received the California Water Environment Association's award for E & I Person of the Year at their annual conference in Sacramento. The award recognizes Mauricio as the top E & I Technician in the state of California.

## Bruce Correia Celebrates 25 years

Congratulations to MIS Coordinator Bruce Correia who is celebrating 25 years at VWRA. He is the longest tenured employee in VWRA history. Bruce was recently honored by our Board of Commissioners for his service. Over the years, Bruce has worked in a number of positions including an operator and health and safety. In more recent years, he has led the way in transitioning VWRA's operations and communications by incorporating state of the art SCADA systems.



VWRA GM Logan Olds presents Bruce Correia with a "toilet" trophy

\*\*CWEA was founded in 1927 as a not-for-profit public benefit association for water quality professional.

## Promotions and Certs



Congrats to Mike Koncur for being promoted to Mechanic III



Congrats to Latif Laari for earning his Grade 4 Collections Certificate.

## Welcome new employees!



Craig Taylor  
E & I Technician



Bobby Hesse  
Operator





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## Mr. Olds Goes to Washington

VVWRA GM Logan Olds part of National discussion on water issues



VVWRA General Manager Logan Olds spoke on Capitol Hill in April representing the wastewater industry as part of National Water Week. Water Week is the premier national advocacy event for the water sector in Washington, DC, bringing groups together from all across the sector to join together and elevate water as a national priority.

## Finance Team Receives Budget Award

### Master Accountant



Congratulations to VVWRA Accountant Xiwei Wang who earned his Masters Degree in Accounting from Cal State San Bernardino.



Accountant Xiwei Wang

Controller Chieko Keagy

Accountant Kyle Parker

The VVWRA Finance Department has received the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its budget. The award represents a significant achievement by VVWRA and reflects a commitment by our staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting.

**\*\*Fun Fact:** Pooping hippos! Studies show that the average American man produces 24,320 pounds of poop in a lifetime, while women, who generally live longer, produce 25,920 pounds of poop. That's the equivalent weight of three adult hippos. \*LiveScience 3-21-18







# This 'n that

## VWVRA Leadership Program Honors First Graduates



VWVRA recently instituted a new leadership program for its employees. The program included 11 weeks of training in areas such as time management, communications and finance. Our first graduating class was presented with plaques by the VVWRA Board of Commissioners. (photo l-r, Commissioners Larry Bird and Jim Kennedy, Leadership grads Xiwei Wang, Kristi Casteel, Chieko Keagy, Mauricio Marin and Latif Laari, Commissioner Scott Nassif, VVWRA Dir. of Admin Robert Coromina and GM Logan Olds) (kneeling)

## New Brown Bear Helps Dry Bio-solids



Brown Bear Corp. Founder Stan Brown (r) joins VVWRA's Chuck Trammel on the newly delivered Brown Bear.



The new Brown Bear 400 being used to mix biosolids on our solar drying beds.

The Brown Bear has a cute name, but a very dirty job. The Brown Bear 400, recently purchased by VVWRA, is a specially modified hydrostatic tractor made especially for mixing our bio-solids as they dry in the sun. The mixing is done to speed up the drying process and is an invaluable tool at our plant. The Brown Bear features a 250hp CAT C-7 engine and is much more powerful than the previous equipment that VVWRA used. Ironically, the Brown Bear does not get it's name from the dirty jobs it does, but it is named after the founder of the Brown Bear Corporation, Stan Brown.

CWEA/ DAMS **2018 AIR PACK DERBY**  
& Vendor Fair

**August 23rd**  
**9:00am-2:00pm**

*New location!*  
Big Bear Lake Convention Center  
42900 Big Bear Blvd  
Big Bear Lake, CA

details at:  
[damsocwewa.org](http://damsocwewa.org)



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34th Annual Tri-State Seminar  
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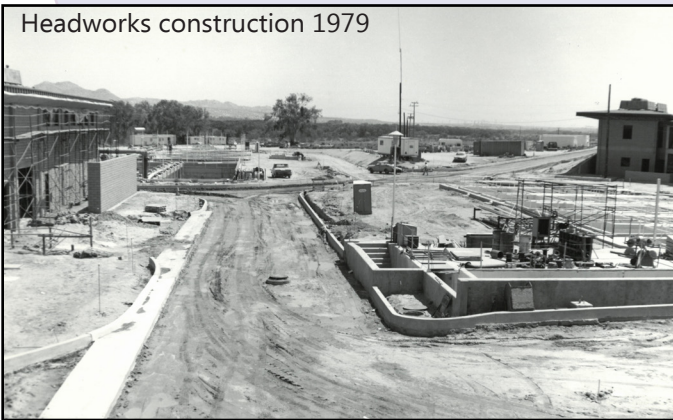


# Memory Lane

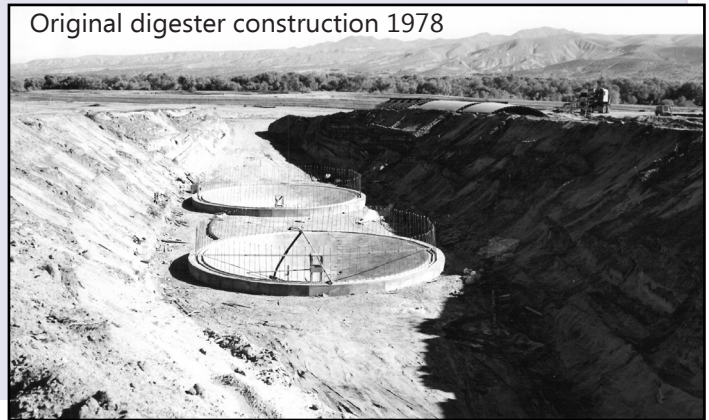
**A look back at VWRA history...**



Culbertson Ranch, future site of VWRA 1977



Headworks construction 1979



Original digester construction 1978



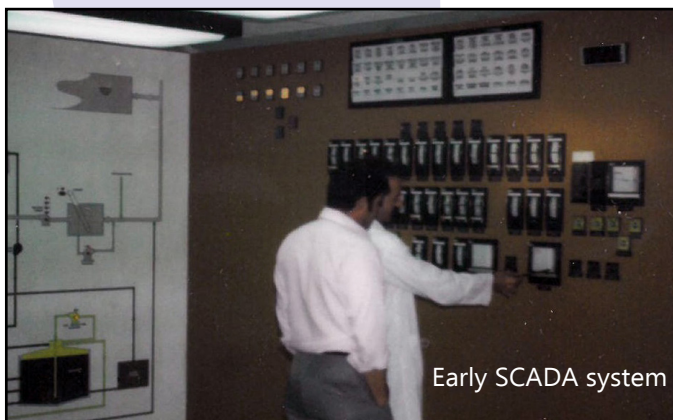
Early board meeting



Original VWRA logo



VWRA 1985



Early SCADA system



Mr. Dingle's first appearance  
September, 2014

*\*\*Fun fact: A 1961 Twilight Zone episode starring Burgess Meredith and Don Rickles was called 'Mr. Dingle, the Strong'.*





# This 'n That

## 20 years in the making...



This is the first recycled water to flow to percolation ponds at the Apple Valley Golf Course from the Apple Valley Sub-regional facility at Brewster Park. VVWRA and it's Board of Commissioners first began envisioning a regional water treatment plan more than 20 years ago. When fully operational, the Apple Valley Subregional Water Recycling facility and a nearly identical facility in Hesperia will each be able to produce one million gallons per day of clean, recycled water.

### Lilla rør



Lilla rør means Purple Pipe in Danish. VVWRA's Latif Laari had a chance to read his copy of the Purple Pipe in the Copenhagen Airport during a recent visit to Denmark. Latif has become our first International reader of the Purple Pipe or Lilla rør.

### Cross-cultural connection



VVWRA has had the opportunity to host tours for dozens of Chinese university exchange student this Summer. The students are part of the Envision cross-cultural learning program and have been staying with host families in the Victor Valley. (Envision: erdtenvision.org)





# The rear end

## Meet the New CWEA/DAMS Board



The new CWEA/DAMS Board was sworn in by CWEA VP Wendy Wert (l) at an installation luncheon in June. The DAMS Board organizes a variety of training events for area water and wastewater workers throughout the year. (photo l-r, CWEA VP Wendy Wert, Josh Peters, Ponton Industries, Wesley Garrison, Barstow, Ron Scriven, Crestline Sanitation, Sam Arvizu, Victorville, Kim Booth, BBARWA, David Wylie, VWVRA, Robert Coromina, VWVRA, Kristi Casteel, VWVRA, Kody Tompkins, Barstow, Latif Laari, VWVRA, Alex Aviles, Helendale CSD)

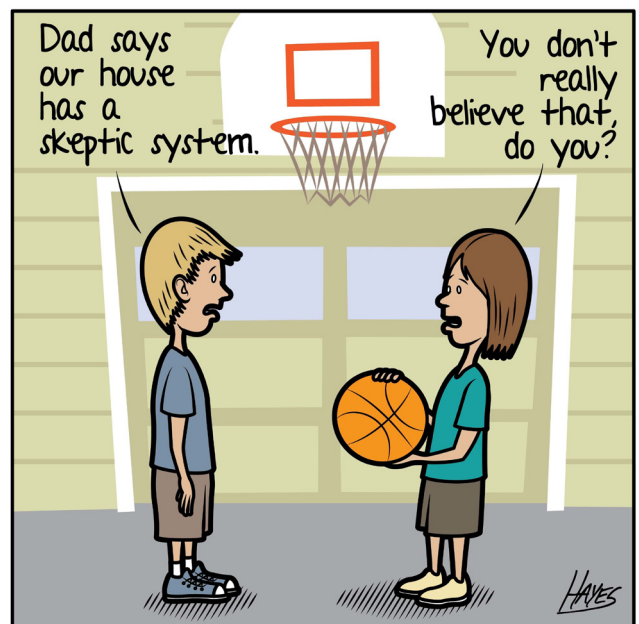
### Know Your 'crobe



#### Nematode

Nematodes look like worms and are the largest of the microbes. Their favorite place to hang out is in our aeration basins where they feed on algae and bacteria. Nematodes are the first to die if any bad chemicals like gasoline or pesticides get into the wastewater. Dead nematodes help alert our operators that there have been changes in the wastewater.

### Dingle's Corner



\*\*Septic fact: Most septic tanks should be pumped every 3-5 years depending on the size of the household.