



Water Professionals Complete Rigorous Leadership Training

"A leader . . . is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind." Nelson Mandela

Bill Watkins, President of the Board of Directors of Beaver Water District (BWD), recognized graduates of BWD's second Leadership Program during a luncheon and ceremony held March 3, 2016, at BWD in

Lowell. The program requires two years of study and work. The class follows in the footsteps of the inaugural class of 10, who graduated almost exactly two years ago, on March 4, 2014.



The graduates of the Beaver Water District's Second Leadership Program, are (second from left) Rob Bottoms of Patrick (Plant Electrician), Frank Blowers of Siloam Springs (Maintenance Mechanic II), Sabrina Bowman of Bentonville (Environmental Specialist), Rick Sims of Lowell (Maintenance Mechanic II), and Kelly Payne of Seligman, Mo. (Maintenance Mechanic II). They are joined here by Bill Watkins of Rogers, President of Beaver Water District's Board of Directors (left) and Alan D. Fortenberry P.E., Beaver Water District's CEO (right).

Alan D. Fortenberry P.E., CEO of BWD, presented certificates of achievement to Frank Blowers of Siloam Springs, Maintenance Mechanic II; Sabrina Bowman of Bentonville, Environmental Specialist; Rob Bottoms of Patrick, Plant

Electrician; Kelly Payne of Seligman, Mo., Maintenance Mechanic II; and Rick Sims of Lowell, Maintenance Mechanic II.

The checklist of requirements for completion of the program included topics and classwork in areas of financial

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management, people management and skills, oral and written presentations, and computer skills. The diverse reading list included titles such as “Excellence in Action: Water Utility Management in the 21st Century,” by Mike Feder and William C. Lauer (American Water Works Association); “Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don’t,” by Jim Collins (Harper Collins Publishers); and “The Future of Water,” by Steve Maxwell with Scott Yates (AWWA).

Graduates also had to complete job shadows with co-workers in other departments. Additionally, they were required to complete Toastmasters International Basic Program, volunteer in community events, and attend at least one state or national water conference meeting.

“So much of leadership is not saying anything, and valuing others around you,” Watkins told the graduates. “I’m really glad to see you all have gotten exposure through this program. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank you for going through this process. ... Now go out and continue to make this an effective and efficient organization.”

Fortenberry led a roundtable discussion about some of the basic knowledge or takeaways from the program, which included the following:

- BWD has an elected Board of Directors who serve staggered six-year terms with three from Washington County and three from Benton County.
- BWD was formed in 1958.
- SDWA, adopted in 1974, stands for Safe Drinking Water Act. In Arkansas, the agency responsible for enforcing the SDWA is the Arkansas Department of Health.
- The five components of conventional water treatment are coagulation, flocculation, clarification, filtration and disinfection.

- The values associated with BWD’s Strategic Plan include providing the highest quality drinking water and being a leader in environmental responsibility.

“I’m just very proud of your dedication and hard work over this two-year period,” Fortenberry said. “One of the greatest things you’ll have in your lifetime is a network of people and you’ve developed that over this past two years.”

Participants had several comments about the program.

“There’s a lot more to Beaver Water District than producing drinking water,” Bowman said.

“There’s also planning for future growth, for example. The Leadership Program just brings it all together.”

Blowers commented on the improvement in his communication skills, a direct result of his participation in the Toastmasters program. Sims talked about the growth that occurred in his knowledge of water in general. While Bottoms mentioned how he has a better idea now of the direction in which the water industry is headed. For Payne, the reading proved essential. He said his favorite book was “Good to Great,” and he intends to read it again.

Beaver Water District established the Leadership Development Program in 2012. The purpose is to provide leadership training opportunities for employees. One of the benefits of the two-year program is that it creates a pool of potential candidates for supervisory positions. For example, one graduate of the inaugural program is now the Operations Supervisor and a graduate of this class will be assuming the Maintenance Supervisor position in mid-May of this year.

Employee Profile: Frank Blowers, Incoming Maintenance Supervisor



Editor's Note: I hope you enjoy the Q & A below and learning more about Frank Blowers of Siloam Springs, one of our many outstanding Beaver Water District (BWD) employees. BWD has selected Blowers to replace our current Maintenance Supervisor, Lenny Millar. Millar is retiring on May 12. – Amy Wilson, BWD Director of Public Affairs.

Q: Where did you spend childhood years? Who were your parents?

A: I was born to Frank and Nelda Blowers (both now deceased). I was raised in south-west Missouri.

Q: Where did you graduate from high school?

A: McDonald County High in Anderson, Mo. I also attended Tulsa Welding School.

Q: What got you interested in working at a water utility?

A: Prior to working for Beaver Water District, I built water tanks and grain silos for most of my career.

Q: What year did you get your start with Beaver Water District and what position were you hired to fill?

A: I began work with BWD in 2003 in Facilities Maintenance.

Q: What inspired you to want to move toward a leadership role? I understand you've participated in an internal Leadership Program at Beaver Water District. Talk about that.

A: I take great pride in the role Maintenance serves at BWD, knowing we assist every other department the best we can. I plan to retire here. Being able to lead the Maintenance Department to serve the District is my motivation. One of my favorite aspects of the Leadership Program is the required participation in a local Toastmasters Club. At first, I was hesitant, but I enjoy it a lot now. It has helped me tremendously with communication and speaking skills.

Q: What do you like most about working at Beaver Water District?

A: I enjoy having such an important job in serving the public while being able to work with a relatively small number of people.

Q: Tell us a little about your family. Does family

keep you busy when you aren't at work? Wife and children names, ages?

A: My wife's name is Angel. We recently welcomed our first grandson, Logan, into the family. We have four children – Brandon, 11, Hannah, 17, Ariel, 22, and Britney, 27. We like to have Logan at least one night a week, but it takes both Angel and me to handle him. We're getting too old (laugh out loud). Both older girls are my stepdaughters, but I think of them as my own.

Q: Have you any hobbies or passions outside of work that you'd like to share with our readers?

A: We enjoy going to the local dirt track races, watching college football, and riding the paved trails on our bicycles.

Q: Are you active in any professional or civic organizations? Do you hold any licenses required for your job?

A: I'm a member of Deihl Toastmasters, which meets in Rogers. I currently serve as the Officer of Membership. I'm also a member of the American Water Works Association (AWWA), the Southwest Section of AWWA (SWAWWA) and the Northwest District of Arkansas Water Works & Water Environment Association (AWW&WEA). I also serve on the Top Ops Team for BWD. Top Ops is a "quiz bowl" style challenge where teams compete while answering questions about all aspects of water operations. We took 1st place in the Top Ops Challenge held this past October in Shreveport, LA, during the annual meeting of the SWAWWA. We're headed to the national competition this June in Chicago. I'm looking forward to it! I hold Grade IV Water Operators Treatment and Distribution Licenses.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: I'm proud to have the opportunity to be the Maintenance Supervisor. It's an honor to be selected and to play a part in maintaining the future of the department and the District as a whole.

Generator Construction Update



By mid-May, construction is slated to be complete on additional backup diesel generators that will ensure Beaver Water District (BWD) can supply up to 73 million gallons a day to its four customer cities in the event of a power outage.

On a typical day, BWD uses electricity from Carroll Electric to power its drinking water treatment plants. Construction on the generators began in mid-August of

2015, with Crossland Heavy Contractors serving as the general contractor. The total project cost is \$5,048,242, which includes the construction contract, generators and switchgear.

Black and Veatch (B&V) is the engineering firm tasked with overseeing the project. Bill HagenBurger, BWD's plant engineer, is working closely with B&V to monitor the project throughout construction.

In addition to using the generators during power outages, they are also utilized in the summer when BWD practices "load-shedding." Load-shedding means that BWD switches from Carroll Electric power to the generators during peak electrical use, which occurs during the hot summer months. This takes stress off the power grid and allows BWD to save up to \$500,000 each year on electrical demand charges.

"Bill gave a great presentation. We learned a lot about the importance of water in our community, Beaver Water District, and Beaver Lake." – Jason Lind, President, Springdale Kiwanis Club.

**Beaver Water District
provides speakers
for events.**



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Winter Flood Event Created Challenges for Water Treatment Operators

From Dec. 26-28, 2015, eight to 10 inches of rain fell in Northwest Arkansas. Beaver Lake swelled to approximately 1131.50 feet in elevation. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers opened the flood gates at Beaver Dam to 9.5 feet. Meanwhile, War Eagle Mill in Benton County, home of the famed craft fair as well as a working gristmill with a gift shop and restaurant, flooded yet again. Property and homes were threatened with rising water and flooding from the lake and the White River.

When it rains a lot in a short amount of time, operational management challenges are top of mind for Beaver Water District (BWD). Jesse Burch, Operations Supervisor, experienced a few moments of stress and a sleepless night or two.

“With flood comes increased sediment or dirt in the raw water we bring in from the lake through our intakes,” Burch said. “Instead of treating water with turbidity of about 4 units (NTU), the water was coming in as high as 288 NTU. That means the water is very muddy and turbid. Turbidity is measured in nephelometric turbidity units or NTUs.

“Usually, the NTU in the raw water at the District’s intake is below 10. Our challenge as water operators is to adjust chemicals in such a way as to ensure the particles are removed, while at the same managing for the optimal pH when the water leaves the plant on the way to our customer cities.”

Alan D. Fortenberry P.E., CEO of BWD, said he was very pleased overall with the water operators performance during this difficult situation. At the end of the day, it’s all about ensuring that clean, safe water is delivered at customers’ taps and no one is even aware there are challenges at the facility.

“When there’s lots of dirt and uprooted trees and other debris in the water, it makes it very difficult for us to operate,” he said. “We manage, but it’s tough. Our operators have to work hard and work smart. It’s a very tense situation.”

The dry solids removed from the water increased from 513 tons in December to 946 in January. This material is landfilled or land applied. Dedicated water operators handle this part of the process. The increased solids will continue for a while longer. Beaver Lake is large and it will take time for all of the excess dirt and debris to make its way to the intakes and/or drop out along the way prior to reaching the BWD intakes, which are located in the vicinity of Hickory Creek. When there are more solids, then costs to collect and transport the



Credit: NWA Democrat-Gazette

solids to be land applied or landfilled also increase.

“Overall, we had a 50% increase in alum, a 37.5% increase in caustic and a 15% increase in lime,” Burch said. As of Feb. 18th, when a formal presentation about the flood event was made to BWD’s elected Board of Directors, the cost increase was about \$17,000. While that might not sound like much in the grand scheme of things – BWD’s annual operations & maintenance budget is over \$11 million – the cost will continue to grow as more solids are collected in the next several weeks and months.

“It could have been worse,” said Fortenberry. “Since we had a lot of late spring rains and flooding when vegetation was established, this big rain event did not do as much damage as it might have. That simply means that the rain came down hard and fast, but the dirt stayed in place better and didn’t reach the lake, and therefore, less made it to our intakes. In contrast, in an April 2011 flood event, we dealt with more than 600 NTU in the raw water coming in. The lake looked like a big mud hole and it took months to recover. We spent thousands and thousands of dollars dealing with the aftermath of that.”

Beaver Water District sells water at the wholesale price of \$1.29 per thousand gallons to Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers and Bentonville. These cities invest in the infrastructure to pump the water to their customers throughout northwest Arkansas. Maintaining proper pH in the water is difficult during times of flooding. The pH is related to a number of factors, including ensuring that the water is aesthetically pleasing to the customer and that it doesn’t scour pipes along the way as it travels through pipes to holding tanks (above and below ground) to customers’ taps.

UA Students Earn Steele-Croxton Memorial Scholarships



Bill Watkins (2nd from left), President of BWD's Board, posed for a photo with (from left) L. Dave Smith, Andrew Stephens, and Shelby Sidney.

Andrew Stephens of Rogers does not take his scholarship award lightly. "Thanks to your generosity, I won't have to pay any money out of pocket this year, I am deeply grateful and honored to receive your Beaver Water District Scholarship."

Stephens, who is a junior at the University of Arkansas (UA) in Biological Engineering-College of Engineering, also won a scholarship last year.

During its regularly scheduled board meeting held Jan. 21st, the Beaver Water District (BWD) Board of Directors recognized Stephens and two other UA recipients with Steele-Croxton Memorial Scholarships. Others recognized were Shelby Sidney of Lowell, Civil Engineering-College of Engineering and L. Dave Smith of Avoca, Environmental, Soil and Water Sciences-Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences.

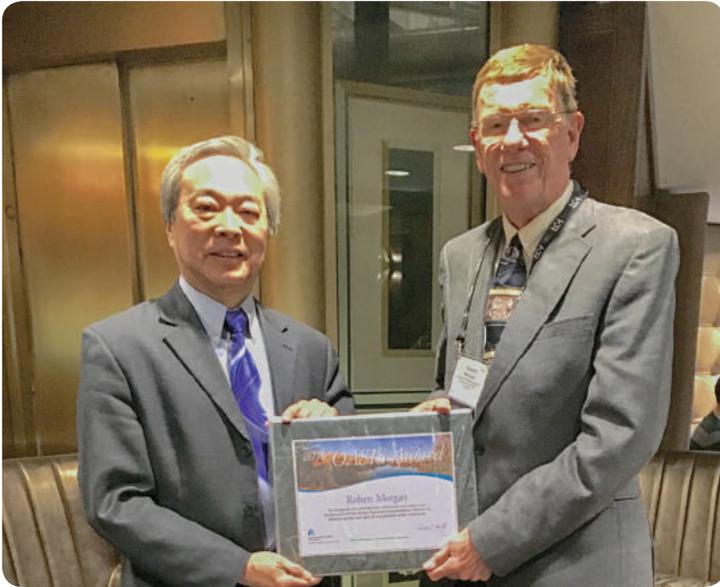
"I plan on obtaining my bachelors in Civil Engineering and then my Masters in the Environmental area of Civil Engineering," Sidney said. "Currently, I'm assisting a graduate student with her research in water treatment with carbon nanotubes for the Civil Engineering department and will be an author with her on her upcoming paper."

Smith, a non-traditional student, returned to school after 30 years, when her youngest son graduated from high school. Her specialty area is soils. She's on the UA Soil Judging Team and has attended national competitions. "I have always had a great love for the outdoors, and when selecting a major, I wanted to study something to do with natural sciences and gain skills to help pass that knowledge on to future generations."

The scholarship, funded through voluntary contributions by BWD Board members and other interested individuals and organizations, is named for the late Joe M. Steele and the late Hardy W. Croxton, leaders and past Board members. The Memorial Scholarship Fund provides support to qualified students within the UA's College of Engineering and College of Agriculture. The scholarship's aim is to support students studying and exploring careers related to water.

"Thank you for supporting students in the College of Engineering at the University of Arkansas," wrote John R. English, Ph.D., P.E., Dean of Engineering, in a letter to the BWD. "Your generosity provides these future engineers with a quality education and opens doors to opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable."

Dr. Morgan Recognized with National OASIS Award for Volunteerism



On March 8, Dr. Chi Ho Sham of The Cadmus Group (left) presented Dr. Robert Morgan of Beaver Water District (BWD) with the 2016 OASIS Award. This award recognizes the outstanding volunteer in the American Water Works Association's (AWWA's) Water Resources Sustainability Division. Dr. Morgan received the award during the Sustainable Water Management Conference in Providence, Rhode Island.

"This recognition is very well deserved," said Alan D. Fortenberry P.E., CEO, of Beaver Water District, who brought Dr. Morgan on board with BWD over a decade ago. "Dr. Morgan has an amazing energy that he devotes to his

endeavors. He loves water, he loves his profession, and it shows. BWD is proud that he works for us." The award is given based on an individual's contribution, initiatives and dedication to the work of the AWWA Water Resource Sustainability Division in advancing the concepts of sustainable water resources.

"Dr. Morgan has been a thoughtful and productive member of the Division and has promoted sustainability at many levels (i.e., national, regional, state, and local)," Dr. Sham wrote in his nomination for Dr. Morgan. "He has continuously contributed to the various activities and successes of the Division since 2011."

Mission

To serve our customers' needs by providing high quality drinking water that meets or exceeds all regulatory requirements and is economically priced consistent with our quality standards.

With One Community “It’s Easy... Just Turn the Handle!”



#nvwatwater
By Amy Wilson

Have you ever wondered what it’s like to be on a movie set? I know I have. And I know a few folks who have told me stories about their experiences as extras in films.

The closest I’ve come, however, was just the other day, when Beaver Water District (BWD) spent a late afternoon shooting stills (photographs) and video for a public service announcement (PSA).

Our campaign – It’s Easy... Just Turn the Handle! – began about a year ago. In the first installment, we focused on showcasing our many dedicated staff who ensure that 24/7, clean, safe water is available from the tap in Northwest Arkansas.

This year, we wanted to shift our focus to include the people on the receiving end. Who’s drinking our water? We know our community in Northwest Arkansas is diverse. We wanted to represent that aspect of our culture. We also wanted to stress the value of tap water, trust in Beaver Water District and our customer cities (Fayetteville Springdale, Rogers and Bentonville), and how the water is readily available anytime you need it.

So, we decided to make a 30-second PSA celebrating the diversity of Northwest Arkansas that drinks our tap water, which is sourced from Beaver Lake and cleaned and disinfected at our utility located at 301 N. Primrose Road in Lowell.

To create the PSA, we began with brainstorming and writing a script. Donna Hamilton of Image Builders held the key to this part of the process. And of course, a good photographer (Keith Branch of Branch Photography) and a skilled videographer (Josh Irwin of Arkansas One Media) must be enlisted. Additionally, there are logistics and timing to

be managed (Donna Hamilton again). I was in charge, along with BWD Education Coordinator Dot Neely, with ordering, supplying and arranging the party food. And of utmost importance, one must have the proper “set” for the story one wants to tell. Linda Slothower of Springdale stepped up to provide her lovely home and kitchen as the setting. She also agreed to appear in the PSA.

Then there’s what’s known as recruiting talent. Al Lopez (Papa Rap) turned his attention to creating a bilingual (Spanish/English) jingle for the PSA with a refrain that our partygoers would sing during filming. With the help of Lopez and Dr. Diana Gonzalez



Worthen, founders and board members of the organization One Community, we enlisted families to play “parts” in the party scene. We also reached out to a couple of BWD staff members and their families (Jesse Burch, BWD’s Operations Supervisor, and Joe Pineda, Facilities Maintenance).

I can’t imagine what a movie set must be like. But I can tell you that a 30-second PSA focused on a lively dinner party with about 15-20 people requires at least 30 people and lots of equipment and supplies for it to actually be filmed and produced! It takes several hours and lots of “get busy quick” and “stop and wait over there” moments. It’s hectic and it’s fun and I’m glad it’s over! Visit Beaver Water District’s YouTube Channel for a preview.

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