



The Water Spout

Upcoming Dates in 2024

- Texas Water Conservation Association Summer Conference, June 12-14, Arlington, TX
- TWCA Fall Conference, October 23-25, San Antonio, TX
- Texas Groundwater Summit, August 20-22, San Antonio, TX
- IA Irrigation Show and Education Conference, November 4-7, Long Beach, CA
- TGWA Annual Convention, January 28-30, 2025, Lubbock, TX
- Texas Water, March 18-21, 2025, Houston, TX

2023 Annual Meeting

The TAIIA Annual Meeting and Membership Banquet was held January 24, 2024 in connection with the TAWC Water College in Lubbock, Tx. Some 25 members and guests enjoyed a meal at Cagles Steak & Barbeque. In the absence of President David Wiens, VP Jeremy Gowdy called the meeting to order.

Education Advisor, Dana Porter, introduced the speaker for the evening, Dr. Hope Nujki Nakabuye. Dr. Nakabuye is the recently named Assistant Professor, Irrigation Research, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Lubbock. She briefly compared irrigated agriculture in her home country, Uganda, and the United States. She related some of her research experiences with the University of Nebraska, then introduced current research topics she will be pursuing in her new position in Texas. One of her interesting conclusions was, *"all farmers have the same heart"*.

Officers and board members elected were: President, Jeremy Gowdy; Vice President, JD Martinez; Secretary-Treasurer, Jason Simkins; South Region Representative, Josh Brown; At-Large Representative, Bobby De Leon; North Region Representative, Ross Roberts.

It was noted that the financial resources of TAIIA continue to decline for various reasons, including the declining membership and discontinuing the High Plains Irrigation Conference which generated revenue for the Association. Considerable discussion followed on recruiting new members, raising the membership dues and fund raising activities. Action was deferred to the incoming 2024 Board of Directors.

Incoming president Jeremy Gowdy assumed the 2024 Presidency. The Presidents Plaque for 2023 will be presented to David Wiens at a later date.

New Members Welcome

The Board of Directors of the Texas Agricultural Irrigation Association thanks all its members for their past and continuing support. How about recruiting some of your friends and colleagues to join TAIIA in 2024 to increase our membership and strengthen our organization?

TAIA Participation in Recent Ag Conferences

Exhibitor and Sponsor at the Texas Plant Protection Conference, December 5, 6, 2023 in Bryan, Texas, and also hosted a special breakout session on Irrigation and Water Management.

Exhibitor and Sponsor of the Water College organized by the Texas Alliance for Water Conservation, January 24, 2024, Lubbock, Texas

Exhibitor and Sponsor, Texas Panhandle Water Conservation Symposium, February 28, 2024, in Amarillo, Texas.

From Here and There

No day gets by without news or comments about global warming, climate change, changing weather patterns. Whatever your take is on these there is little doubt that the distribution and availability of water is critical, particularly with regard to irrigated agriculture production and its role in feeding and clothing a growing population. Water shortages are growing in the West and supplies are unable to meet all the demands of power generation, municipalities and agriculture.

The state of Texas has its share of water supply problems as well. Of particular concern for much of Texas is the Ogallala Aquifer, largest underground storage reservoir in the US, underlying parts of eight states. Unfortunately, the Ogallala Aquifer is being depleted due to excessive withdrawals that exceed natural recharge. This depletion poses a significant challenge to the sustainability of agricultural industries and rural communities that rely on this water source.

The Ogallala Aquifer Program, beginning in 2003, is a significant initiative aimed at addressing the challenges posed by the Ogallala Aquifer. Its primary focus is on innovative scientific research and technology transfer to enhance water management practices. The program brings together various stakeholders, including producers, scientists, groundwater managers, students, and public and private organizations. Their collective efforts support research and encourage the adoption of practical approaches to extend the productive life of the Ogallala aquifer.

Scientists and researchers have made significant strides in understanding the aquifer's hydrogeology and behavior. Their findings have informed better management decisions and policies. For instance, studies on recharge rates and groundwater movement have guided efforts to protect the aquifer. A recent study in Kansas indicates 18% to 32% cut in groundwater pumping may stabilize aquifer.

Farmers and ranchers in the Ogallala region have adopted more efficient water management practices including precision irrigation techniques, soil moisture monitoring and crop rotation strategies. As a result, water use efficiency has improved, leading to sustainable agricultural production. TAIA, both as an organization and as individual members, play a significant role in the adaptation of improved irrigation water management practices.

Annual Ogallala Summit meetings are held with all of the interested entities participating. This year's Summit was held in Liberal, Kansas, March 18,19, where some 250 were in attendance with a great mix of producers and agencies. All aspects of the agricultural industry were present, from production to transportation. Seed companies, farmers and ranchers, cattle feeders, national security experts, and more gathered and had impactful round table discussions.. One standout idea was the push from both cattle producers and crop producers for better and more efficient water use and consumption.

“Change is not necessary, but survival is not mandatory,” was a recurring theme at the 2024 Ogallala Aquifer Summit.

Recent Retirees

Roger Schultze, owner of ATS Irrigation in Brenham, TX , sold his business and retired last year. Roger was one of the founding members of the Texas Agricultural Irrigation Association in 1991 and served as its second president in 1992 Roger has seen many changes in the irrigation industry during the more than 30 years of involvement - new products, new technology and computer-aided design. TAIA congratulates Roger on his retirement and expresses its appreciation for his contribution to the ag irrigation industry.



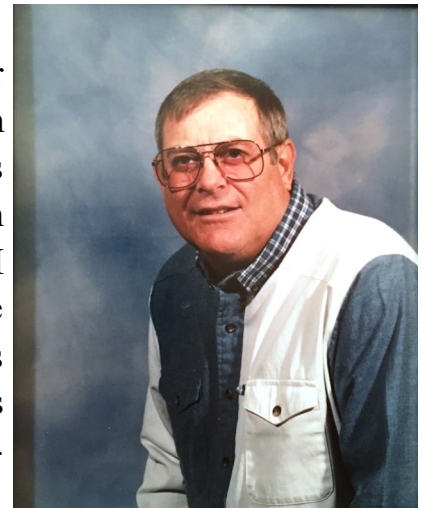
Long-time member of TAIA, David Lott of Fresno Valves and Casting Lubbock, retired in December, 2023. David has been on the Board of Directors of TAIA and served as president in 2022, as well as several years on the scholarship committee. Congratulations and best wishes on his retirement and thanks for the many contributions to TAIA over the years.



These retirements remind us all of the need to recruit new members and carry TAIA forward!

Dick Laursen Memorial Scholarship

The Dick Laursen Memorial Scholarship was created in honor of Dick Laursen, a life-long irrigation specialist. Dick was born in 1942 into a Nebraska ranching/farming family. He began his career as a purchasing agent for a pivot manufacturer; then moved on to Rainbird Ag before partnering to open SWISH Inc., an irrigation company. With his partners, Dick spent the rest of his life building SWISH, until his death in 1998. He was one of the founding members of TAIA. The scholarship was established in 2002 and has assisted students pursuing ag related majors in each of the years since.



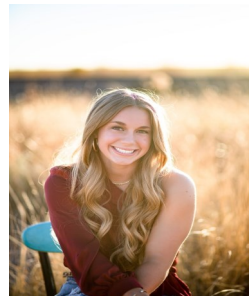
The Scholarship Committee; Craig Jones, Edie Canale and Jeromy Gowdy reviewed and evaluated the 34 applications received for the 2014 Scholarship. Justin Hill, Dumas, was named this year’s recipient. Justin will be attending Texas A&M University this fall, majoring in Agricultural Systems Management. He has been a 4-H Water Ambassador the past four years, which has strengthened his interest in irrigated agricultural. He will join current recipients: Mallie Williams at Tarleton State University, Hadlee Cook at West Texas A&M University and William Jones at Texas A&M University.



Justin Hill



William Jones



Hadlee Cook



Mallie Williams

2023 Annual Meeting - Cagles Steaks & Barbeque, Lubbock



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T A I A

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