

# OKLAHOMA WATER NEWS

Bimonthly Newsletter of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board



*from  
the desk  
of the  
Director...*

Because your numbers are so great, and for fear some kindness may be overlooked, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and Office of the Secretary of Environment extend thanks to all who raced to our aid at the time of the disaster. We were deeply touched by your messages of sympathy and concern. Encouraging words rushed to us from all over Oklahoma and the nation.

We were overwhelmed by your generosity in providing the day-to-day necessities to get our agency up and running and your thoughtful gifts of plants and flowers to cheer us.

We especially thank Governor Keating and the Oklahoma Legislature for their support; the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Wildlife Conservation for providing meeting space while we were "regrouping;" the Governor's Performance Team for their warm hospitality as our neighbors in this building we occupy temporarily; to the State Insurance Fund for their generous lease of office space; to the Office of State Finance for the loan of telephones and computer equipment; to the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Agriculture for their assistance in personnel and insurance matters; to the Motor Pool for assistance in retrieving our damaged cars; to the Department of Commerce for the loan of computers; to the Depart

*Continued on page 2*

## Board Recovering from Bombing; Relocated, Restoring Services

*Blast kills two, injures many, devastates offices;  
Agency temporarily moves to 1901 N. Walnut, OKC*

At 9:02 the staff of the OWRB were well into the workday in the offices at 5th Street and Harvey Avenue, across the street from the Alfred P. Murrah federal building. Then the Water Board's corner of the world broke apart in a storm of glass and concrete cloaked in black and choking smoke.

Staff fled the ruined building and counted losses. Two of the Water Board "family" had been swept to hospitals where they died, dozens were cruelly injured, others retreated bruised and frightened.

Among the seriously injured were Denise Hill of the Water Quality Programs Division; Photographer Barry Fogerty of the Water Management Division; and Brenda Maxey, Laura

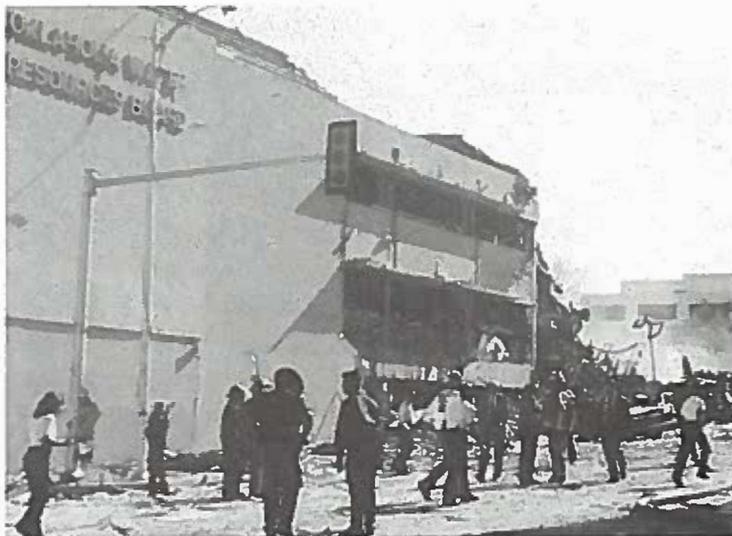
Oak, Shelly Bacon and Paul Hodge of the Financial Assistance Division. By early June, all had returned to work.

The two OWRB fatalities of the bombing were Trudy Rigney, a University of Oklahoma senior geography student serving an internship, and Robert N. Chipman, a financial analyst in the Financial Assistance Division. Rigney and Chipman were the only two State of Oklahoma employees killed in the blast.

Rigney joined the Water Resources Board June 27, 1994 as a geographic information system (GIS) assistant based in the Drafting Section. She lived in Midwest City with her 11 year-old son, Jonmichael, attended classes on

*Continued on page 2*

The southeast corner of the OWRB building was directly across the street and approximately 200 feet west of the explosive-laden truck. Truck fragments were found on all three floors.



*Director, continued from page 1*

ment of Central Services for snacks and helping in our move; to all our sister agencies in state government who have provided support and myriad kindnesses in these trying times.

We were moved by the tree planted on the Capitol grounds May 3 by the Oklahoma Public Employees Association as a living memorial to two of our Water Board family killed in the bombing.

Generous loans of computers and office furniture made it possible to resume our work in a timely manner. Our heartfelt thanks to the Tulsa District Corps of Engineers for their generous loan of computers; to the Great Plains Region and the Oklahoma-Texas Project Office of the Bureau of Reclamation

for the loan of computers and office furniture; to the U.S. Geological Survey for providing maps and data.

Nice folks with whom we do business rushed in to help. Pagenet Paging Network of Oklahoma City, Inc., loaned us pagers; Precision Computer Services provided a network operating system; Mountain Network Solutions, Inc., provided a tape backup unit; Microage loaned token ring adapters, cables and access units; and Data General loaned a laser printer.

Marie Kash Weltzheimer, a former OWRB employee, now a noted pastel/watercolor artist, loaned our plain walls nine original artworks to cheer us.

We cannot tell you how deeply we were touched and comforted by the love and concern of our friends new and old...far and near. □

*Bombing, continued from page 1*

OU campus and worked 30 hours a week at the Water Resources Board. Before enrolling at OU in 1993, she attended Tulsa Junior College, where she was awarded a Phi Theta Kappa honors scholarship and served as presi-

dent of the TJC student body. At OU, she founded the Geography Club and served as its president. According to the OU Geography Department, Rigney will be posthumously awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography.

Bob Chipman joined the OWRB in January. He retired as a major from the U.S. Air Force, where he directed a department that developed the standardized office procedures for a 1100-person unit. Chipman held a Master of Science degree from the University of Arkansas with a major in Operations Management; a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from

**OWRB Moves**

As a result of the April 19 disaster which damaged the office at 600 N. Harvey, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board is temporarily located at 1901 N. Walnut (in the State Insurance Building), Oklahoma City 73105. The Board continues to receive mail at P.O. Box 150, OKC 73101-0150.

To reach the OWRB by phone: (405) 525-4700; to send a FAX: (405) 525-4799.

Eastern New Mexico University with majors in Marketing and Management; and a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the University of Central Oklahoma with a major in Business Education. Chipman entered military service as an enlisted man and rose through the ranks. He completed Squadron Officer School and Air Command and Staff College.

Chipman is survived by his wife, Gloria, of their Edmond home, a daughter who is a student at OSU; a daughter and her husband in the military service stationed in Japan; a grandson, and a son who is a National Merit Scholar in Engineering at OU. Among the casualties of the bombing must be counted the 3-story building at 600 North Harvey that had housed the Oklahoma Water Resources Board since January 1991. The ruined and broken shell stood sentinel over the ravaged federal building. The Alfred P. Murrah Building, was razed May 23, a month and four days after the atrocity committed there. Then great mechanized claws snatched the rubble away to its last resting place. By June 17, the corner had been swept clean.

Surely, not one who endured the dreadful day can but wish that hurt and sadness could be also borne away with the debris. In the meanwhile, the Water Resources Board is temporarily housed in space generously leased by the State Insurance Fund at 1901 North Walnut, a few blocks southwest of the Capitol. □



Trudy Rigney



Robert N. Chipman



The damage inflicted to the library in the center of the OWRB building, on the second floor, was typical of damage throughout. Almost all glass windows were blown into the building, ceilings and walls were crushed.

# Water Board Honors Firefighters Who Rescued Them

To show their appreciation to the firefighters of Oklahoma City Stations #1 and #5, staff honored them at a breakfast on Friday, May 19. The firefighters of Station #1, 820 NW 5th Street, and Station #5, 24 NW 22nd Street, were the first rescuers to arrive at the Water Resources Board building on April 19.

A month later to the day and under happier circumstances, 14 of the firefighters came to visit the grateful staff of the Water Resources Board and Office of the Secretary of Environment, some of whom they had carried injured from the shattered building the day of the bombing. Employees prepared breakfast, presented the firefighters with an enormous thank-you banner and posed for pictures with the firefighters and their rescue truck from Station #1.

Executive Director Gary Sherrer said, "We cannot begin to express our deep gratitude for your courage and selflessness in bringing our people to safety. All of you will long remain in our

thoughts and prayers," he said. "The debt we owe you is beyond description, and we thank God for you." As a memento, the OWRB presented

the firefighters with a glass brick dislodged from the building by the blast and engraved with their thank-you message. □



Cpl. Jimmy Shiner shakes hands with Board Photographer Barry Fogerty. Looking on are Cpl. Rick Harris, Lt. Rick Yarbrough, OWRB Draftsman Mike McGaugh and Captain Nathan Shipman. After the bombing, McGaugh led rescuers to Fogerty's aid. It was Shiner and Shipman who carried the injured Fogerty out of the building.

Firefighters pose with Barry Fogerty and Paul Hodge (in cap), two of the OWRB employees they rescued. Left: Maj. Keith Bryant, Lt. Mike Hardy, Firefighter Mike Foster from Station #5; Major Cornelius Young, Cpl. Billy Billeg, Maj. Mark Woodard, Cpl. Rick Harris, Capt. Nathan Shipman, Lt. Rick Yarbrough, Cpl. Jimmy Shiner and Cpl. Ivory Brent from Station #1.



Firefighters line up for breakfast at the Water Board. Left: Maj. Cornelius Young, Cpl. Ivory Brent, Maj. Keith Bryant, Cpl. Jimmy Shiner, Capt. Nathan Shipman, Firefighter Mike Foster, Cpl. Rick Harris and Maj. Mark Woodard.



# Jack Givens Named to Board

Mangum irrigation farmer Jack N. Givens was recently appointed by Gov. Frank Keating to serve on the Oklahoma Water Resources Board. Givens owns Givens Farms, Inc., and serves as vice-president of the Lugert-Altus Irrigation District.

Givens, a lifelong resident of Oklahoma, attended Mangum High School, Oklahoma State University and Oregon State University at Corvallis, where he earned BS degree in Agriculture.

He was previously president of Laughlin-Simmons & Co. of Texas, Inc., an oil well elevations and surveying firm, and served six years as chairman of the Oklahoma Agriculture, Stabilization and Conservation Committee in Stillwater. His farming and ranching operations extend into Jackson, Greer and Kiowa Counties.

Givens, an officer and prisoner of war in WW II in Europe, was awarded a Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts. He and his wife, Helen Jane, have two adult daughters.

He serves on the board of directors

of Oklahoma Art Institute, OSU Alumni Association, Oklahoma Baptist University National Board of Development; Cotton Incorporated, New York City; and Western Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company. He is Southwest Director and Board member of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau. □



Jack N. Givens

# FEMA Honors Staff

Gov. Frank Keating recognized the OWRB June 13 for its leadership in reducing flood losses in Oklahoma. Planning Division staff and Field Office staff administer the National Flood Insurance Program in Oklahoma under the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Raymond "Buddy" Young, FEMA Region VI director, Denton, TX, met with Gov. Keating and the Board to honor OWRB staff for their efforts in promoting the goals and objectives of the National Flood Insurance Program through the application of sound floodplain management strategies.

Young proclaimed the OWRB floodplain management program the best in Region VI and one of the best in the nation. He attributes the state's success in the NFIP to the partnership between the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Water Resources Board and the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management.

Officials of FEMA Region VI had recommended to FEMA Director James L. Witt, Washington, D.C., that the Water Board receive the Outstanding Public Service Award.

Ken Morris coordinates the National Flood Insurance Program for the Oklahoma Water Resources Board.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATE

Approved at April and June 1995 Board Meetings

### FAP Loans

(5.172%, 28.5 year maximum term)

Lawton Water Authority \$ 5,575,000.00

### FAP Grants

Osage RWD #15 \$ 25,000.00

Hughes RWD #6 \$ 60,000.00

Chandler Municipal Authority \$ 60,000.00

Woodward RWD #1 \$ 54,000.00

Town of Alluwe \$ 100,000.00

Hughes RWD #2 \$ 75,000.00

### SRF Loans

Harrah Public Works Authority \$ 1,400,000.00

Kiefer Public Works Authority \$ 270,000.00

### TOTALS AS OF 6/13/95

	FAP Loans	FAP Grants	SRF Loans
<b>APPROVED</b>	156	362	28
<b>Amount</b>	\$190,135,000.00	\$20,119,386.00	\$124,779,726.48
<b>FUNDED</b>	148	329	22
<b>Amount</b>	\$178,625,000.00	\$18,067,864.25	\$116,875,726.48



Gov. Frank Keating displays the plaque awarded the OWRB by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Front: Executive Director Gary Sherrer, Board Chairman Ross Kirtley, Raymond "Buddy" Young, FEMA Region VI director; Ken Morris of the Planning Division, Board Member Mike Henson. Behind: Col. (ret.) Tom Feuerborn, executive director of the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management; OWRB members Richard McDonald, Bill Secrest, Jack Givens, Dick Seybolt and Ervin Mitchell. Center back: Mike Mathis, Planning Division chief.

# J.A. Wood Retires from OWRB; Honored for 22-Year Career

He came to the Water Board January 1, 1973, armed with a new Civil Engineering degree from OU and a careful mind for detail, both of which served him well in a career in water resources. Add to that, advice from then-director Forrest Nelson, who told him to "Get the water to the people who need it and help the people as much as you can. Follow the law and the rules." Wood followed Nelson's advice to the letter all his twenty two and a half years at the Board as Division Chief of Planning, Groundwater, Stream Water and Water Management.



J. A. Wood

He also brought with him to the OWRB an appreciation for water acquired in his early life on the dry, tough plains of western Oklahoma. Wood grew up on a farm near Reydon, a half-mile south of the Washita River in Roger Mills County, close to where his grandparents had homesteaded.

"I was the second-youngest in a family of 10 kids, and we were luckier than a lot," he recounts. "My folks had lived through the Dust Bowl, and in 1936, they built a homemade irrigation system that watered an acre of garden and provided water for the family, carried in buckets to the house. We had a well with a windmill that pumped water into a big open-topped tank salvaged from the oilfield," he recalls. "That 25-foot tank was our bath tub and swimming pool too."

Wood says everyone worked in those hard times, and "we made a living without ever seeing much money." He and his sisters still own that 160-

acre farm that was the homeplace. Wood first pulled cotton with a potato sack strapped over his shoulder when he was three years old. He also recalls working long days in the broom corn and hay fields.

He declares he loves that country of his childhood around Cheyenne, Durham and Reydon, but never wanted the hard life of farming the homeplace. However, his roots in the Ogallala sand, his love for the red hills and devotion to friends and family bring Wood back to visit often. Sister Lorene Gault lives in Cheyenne and another, Barbara Cloyd, and her family live east of Sayre. The other sister, Pearlina Cowan, lives with her husband in San Jose, California.

Wood admires the state's early water giants for their foresight. He was especially fond of the late L.L. "Red" Males, Cheyenne banker and Board member for 25 years. It was Males, who in the 1940's, persuaded Sen. Robert S. Kerr to seek Congressional funding for the construction of small SCS flood control reservoirs. Roger Mills County's Sandstone Creek Project, a system of 17 small flood control structures on tributaries of the Washita, was the nation's first such project.

In reviewing his 22 years at the Water Resources Board, Wood says the most satisfying work has been helping thousands of citizens, as well as cities, towns, rural water districts and industries find dependable groundwater or stream water supplies and obtain

water rights. During his tenure, the OWRB has determined reservoir yields and inventoried streams and groundwater basins to determine the total amount of water available for beneficial use. Wood oversaw studies of many of the major groundwater basins and hydrologic studies of most of the state's stream systems.

Wood and his staff also worked with the state's water well drillers in developing the first minimum standards for the industry. He pressed for Board Rules and Regulations that were fair to the drillers and pump contractors and protected the state's fresh groundwater basins.

"I've enjoyed it all," Wood says, "but at 54, it's time to travel, go to the horse races, buy and sell more antiques, and see more rodeos." Wood's first trip will be to Wyoming in July to see the "granddaddy of them all," the Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo.

On June 13, at the regular meeting of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, members presented him with a plaque recognizing Wood's "dedicated service and steadfast loyalty and leadership as Chief of the Water Management, Groundwater, Stream Water and Planning Divisions since January 1, 1973."

Staff, friends and colleagues gathered at Board offices for a reception on June 29 to wish Wood godspeed. When he walked out the door the last day, he closed the door on an unforgettable era of Water Board history. It was the 22 year-long era of the Gentleman Cowboy in boots and "Mo" Betta shirts. J.A. Wood had a smile and a handshake for everyone he ever met. □

At the June 13 Board meeting, J.A. Wood was presented a plaque by Board Chairman Ross Kirtley, in appreciation for 22 and a half years of service.



## Trust Fund Set Up for Victim's Son

Executive Director Gary Sherrer, announced that a guardianship account has been established for Jonmichael Rigney, the 11 year-old son of Trudy Rigney, a Water Resources Board employee killed in the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. Sherrer said Board Attorney Lou Klaver has assisted Barbara Bartlett, a Tulsa attorney, in establishing the guardianship account which will underwrite the support and education of Jonmichael Rigney.

Contributions to the fund may be addressed to:

**Jonmichael Rigney Guardianship Account**  
**Bank of Oklahoma**  
**320 S. Boston Avenue**  
**Tulsa, OK 74192**



Cecil Bearden of the Water Resources Board, who serves as Oklahoma representative to the Association of State Dam Officials, presents \$2500 scholarship check to Shawnita Sterett, senior OSU civil engineering student. Dr. R.K. Hughes, OSU Civil Engineering Department Head, looks on. Each year, the ASDO recognizes one outstanding senior and one outstanding junior engineering student in the nation. According to Bearden, Sterett is the first Oklahoman to receive the award. ASDO recognized Sterett for scholarship, leadership, character, and dedication to dam safety goals. She is a native of Hugo.

Employing university students to assist with special projects and water quality programs has been one of the OWRB's most successful efforts. Left, seated: Kashi Stephens, Management, Langston University; Christy Hobbs, Environmental Science, OSU; Jane Sund, Civil Engineering\ Environmental Science, OU; Jennifer Ezell, Environmental Science, OSU; Julie Cunningham, Environmental Science, UCO. Standing: Jason Milner, Geography, OU; Donald Stover, Civil Engineering\Environmental Science, OU; Myles Mungle, Agricultural Engineering, OSU; Bill Tanksley, Geography, OU; Angela Brewer, Civil Engineering\Environmental Science, OU. Shanon Haraughty, upper right, is a Carl Albert Executive Fellow in the PhD program in Zoology at OSU.



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**BULK RATE**  
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- J. Ross Kirtley, Chairman
- Bill Secrest
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- Robert S. Kerr, Jr.
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- Richard McDonald
- Dick Seybolt
- Lonnie L. Farmer
- Jack N. Givens