

Aquifers: Largest in panhandle

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but overuse is rapidly depleting this vital resource while the state's other 11 aquifers are either healthy or there is not enough data collected to make a determination.

The state's primary aquifers are believed to contain 320 million acres of fresh water and supply more than 60 percent of the water used in Oklahoma. To protect them as a water source, state regulations prohibit storage or disposal of hazardous waste materials above or within the aquifers.

Another factor in protecting them for future use is the abundance of man-made lakes in the state.

State Sen. Eddie Fields, R-Wynona and author of the Water for 2060 Act, is a firm believer that the state's aquifers must be part of Oklahoma's answer to its water needs.

"The state needs to know exactly what water resources we have, underground as well as on the surface," Fields said. "I believe it's very important that Oklahoma continues to look at the state water issues and look at all possibilities for meeting the needs of a growing population."

The Roubidoux aquifer to the east of Tulsa discharges 4.8 million gallons a day, and the Vamoosa-Ada aquifer to the west of Tulsa discharges 12 million gallons a day. But most of that water goes to small towns and irrigation in northeast Oklahoma. Some 90 percent of Roubidoux's water goes to Ottawa County.

Tulsa's water supply comes from Spavinaw and Oologah lakes, and Lake Hudson if needed. Tulsa operates two water treatment plants for the purification of those waters, according to spokeswoman Kim MacLeod.

Oklahoma City also does not draw water from an aquifer, although the city sits on top of the Garber-Wellington Aquifer that produces 5 billion gallons of water annually to 20 Oklahoma communities.

"It is simply a matter of supply and demand," said Oklahoma City Utility Department spokeswoman Jennifer McClintock. "There is not enough to draw out for our customers. We haven't pulled out ground water for 100 years since Lake Overholser was constructed."

The largest Oklahoma community drawing water from an aquifer is Enid, which sits on top of the Enid Isolated Terrace aquifer and also draws from the Cimarron aquifer west of that city.

"Our main source of water is the Cimarron aquifer," said Steve Kime, director of public relations for Enid. "We add chloride to the water for treatment and fluoride is added for dental purposes."

Most studies and statistics for the state's major aquifers are out of date, but the Oklahoma Legislature has set aside funding to update the information.

"The funding was provided by the Legislature beginning in 2012 through an allocation of the Gross Production Tax proceeds," said Cole Perryman of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board.

Father: Lessons passed down include work ethic

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around here and throughout the industry. It's definitely a goal of mine to be able to mirror a lot of the things he's been able to accomplish and a lot of that is because of the abilities he possesses," Joey Ragsdale said.

A sweet tradition

Allison Dickens didn't think much about following in her dad's footsteps until she had children of her own.

Her stepfather, Ludger Schulz, is the namesake and founder of Ludger's Cakes & Catering.

When it was time for him to retire in 2007, Dickens started to think about the future of the business, and she couldn't imagine the Bavarian cream cheesecakes — and the legacy attached to them — being passed on to a stranger.

"As a kid you forget about the fact that your parents age, so when these life decisions start happening, it was a shock," she said. "I never thought there'd be a time in my life when my parents weren't doing this."

That year she started working with her stepfather and mother, and shortly after she and her husband decided to purchase the bakery portion of the business. One of the chefs who worked with her stepfather purchased the catering portion.

Dickens graduated from the University of Tulsa with a mechanical engineering degree and previously worked in that field.

"Once you start having a family of your own, it puts things into perspective and it really made having a family business and something to pass down to our own children something that was very important," Dickens said.

Dickens said her stepfather's work ethic has always stood out to her and helped shape how she approaches the business.

"He always seemed to be having fun and enjoyed his customers," she said. "There's not a time that we go somewhere in Tulsa that someone doesn't recognize him or comes up and shakes his hand and talks to him because he did treat his customers like friends."

Moving through the years

Rhonda Page represents the fourth generation of her family to work at Page Storage and Van Lines.

The company provides packing, storage and shipping of household goods and office furniture.

She started working full time with the company in 1992. She grew up around the family business and was her grandfather's shadow for a long time.

"I learned how to pack and crate and inventory," she said. "I tried to keep everything in order and tell the men what to do. Most of them probably didn't want to hear what to do from a young girl."

Through the years she has put in 14-hour days in 100-degree weather and learned that it's not glamorous work in the process.

The most important thing she learned from her dad was to "get out there and get it done."



My dad taught me that this business is hard work, and that's why we're still here. We've seen bigger companies come and go.

Ron Page

Page Storage and Van Lines president, on what he learned from his father



Allison Dickens took over her stepfather Ludger Schulz's cake business — Ludger's Bavarian Bakery — because she wanted to keep the legacy in her family. STEPHEN PINGRY/Tulsa World file



Page Storage and Van Lines has been on 11th Street since 1975. Ron Page and his daughter Rhonda Page are the third and fourth generations to work at the business. STEPHEN PINGRY/Tulsa World file

"You always try to keep a smile on your face," she said.

The moving and storage company opened in 1910 and has helped move some of the largest oil and gas companies and their executives over the years.

It has been located on 11th Street between Utica and Lewis avenues since 1975.

Her father, Ron Page, is the president of the company and started working for his father when he was a teenager making 35 cents an hour to push a broom.

"It was something we had to do every summer," he said.

His first big job with the company was helping with a move after Warren Petro-

leum merged with Gulf Oil.

"They said that Warren couldn't be moved within 48 hours, and Dad proved them wrong," Ron Page said. "We had 100 men working around the clock in shifts."

He remembers sleeping in the yard behind a hedge on the company's property during the move.

"My dad taught me that this business is hard work, and that's why we're still here. We've seen bigger companies come and go," Ron Page said.

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Trust Company of Oklahoma Hires Bri Ghosn

The oldest and largest independent trust company in the state is pleased to welcome Vice President Bri Ghosn. At Trust Company of Oklahoma (TCO), she will provide individuals, families and organizations with asset management, trust administration, and retirement planning expertise.

Bri has over a decade of experience helping clients navigate the complexities of financial planning. She is a CPA and holds both the Certified Financial Planner (CFP®) and the Certified Divorce Financial Analyst (CFDA®) designations.

She comes to TCO after 5 years at Mariner Wealth Advisors. Before that, she was a tax analyst for individuals and small businesses at CCK Strategies, as well as a relationship associate in trust administration for Bank of Oklahoma. Bri graduated from Northeastern State University with a bachelor's in business administration with an emphasis in accounting.

"We are pleased to add someone with Bri's experience and skills to our team. This is an exciting time for our company. We remain committed to our mission to provide financial peace of mind to our clients while our professional team grows and we broaden our range of services," stated Thomas W. Wilkins, president, chairman and CEO of the Oklahoma asset management firm.



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