



CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY

CELEBRATE Women's HISTORY

HCWA WELCOMES TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS, SELECTS OFFICERS FOR 2023

Bruce B. Holmes and Myra F. Lott join the Authority Board following appointments

During the January Meeting of the Henry County Water Authority (HCWA) Board of Directors, the governing body welcomed two new Board Members to its ranks, while selecting Officers to lead the Authority this year.

Bruce B. Holmes, former Henry County Commissioner, was appointed by incumbent Henry County Commissioner Dee Clemmons to represent District 2 on the Authority Board, while Myra F. Lott, a Professional Project Manager, was appointed by newly elected Henry County Commissioner Kevin J. Lewis to serve the citizens of District 5. All new and returning HCWA Board Members were sworn into office together by the Hon. Holly Veal, Judge, Henry County Superior Court.

After being sworn into office, the HCWA Board Members selected Jimmy Carter to serve the Authority as Chair this year, accompanied by Sandra Rozier as Vice Chair and Lott as Secretary/Treasurer. Mrs. Rozier was the first African American and Woman to be selected as Vice Chair of the Authority in 2021, as she continues in that role this year.



The 2023 HCWA Board of Directors being sworn in during the January Meeting include (L to R): Bruce B. Holmes, District 2; Jimmy Carter, District 3; Sandra Rozier, District 4; Myra F. Lott, District 5; Warren Holder, District 1; and Fred Mays, Member-at-large. Mr. Carter was later selected to serve as Chairman this year, with Mrs. Rozier as Vice Chair and Mrs. Lott as Secretary/Treasurer.

The remaining HCWA Board Members sworn in after reappointment by their respective Henry County Commissioner include: Warren Holder, representing District 1 after his reappointment by Commissioner Johnny Wilson; Jimmy Carter, representing District 3 following his reappointment by Commissioner Dee Anglyn, III; Mrs. Rozier, representing District 4 following her reappointment by Commissioner Vivian Thomas; and Fred Mays, following his reappointment as Member-at-Large by Henry County Commission Chairman Carlotta Harrell.

The complete feature and photo gallery on the January Swearing In Ceremony, as well as profiles on all HCWA Board Members, are available at www.hcwa.com.

TONY CARNELL REFLECTS ON FIRST YEAR AS HCWA GENERAL MANAGER

As the first African-American General Manager in the 60-plus year history of the HCWA, Tony Carnell took over for his mentor Lindy Farmer at the end of 2021. In honor of Black History Month, he was able to reflect on his first full year as the chief executive of the Authority and the significance of his hiring.

"I think there's no question that because of the support of our HCWA Board, management team, and employees we have in place, my first year leading the Authority went better than I could have ever hoped," says Carnell. "What they've done to step up, offer support, show initiative and leadership, I'm very grateful. I'm also excited about our future when observing the work of our employees, especially how our young professionals have taken on new leadership roles."

When reflecting on the HCWA accomplishments of 2022, and priorities for the HCWA this year and in the future, Carnell and his staff identified four major focus areas that will receive extra attention – Customer Satisfaction, Employee Leadership & Development, Infrastructure Strategy & Performance, and Operational Optimization.

Under Carnell's leadership and with the full support of the HCWA Board of Directors, the Authority is investing more time and resources to increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) within the organization, while expanding the Authority's community presence through additional vendor opportunities, public outreach, education, and communication.

"We want to be fair, deliberate, and purposeful in hiring and retaining employees, so we make sure everyone is aware of opportunities for professional growth and development within the Authority," says Carnell. "One of many ways for us to do that is to be more involved and engaged with our community, beginning with the students in our schools, especially those who may not be aware of the benefits and appeal of the water profession."

For the complete Black History Month feature on HCWA General Manager Tony Carnell, please visit our website news at www.hcwa.com.



HCWA General Manager Tony Carnell (right) pays tribute to HCWA Clerk Kim Osborne (left) during her recent retirement celebration.

UNION GROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT WINS ESSAY CONTEST

Sidney Spencer one of 15 winners from the Metro Water District

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District recently announced the winners of their annual Essay Contest, and Union Grove Middle School student Sidney Spencer is among the 15 regional winners from the respective counties and municipalities across the district.

Spencer received accolades from the Metro Water District because of her "exemplary essay that explores how a clean, abundant water supply is critical to the health and livelihoods of people across the globe."

The 21st Annual Metro Water District Essay Contest challenged entrants to write a 300–500-word essay addressing one of two topics – (1) researching the last major drought or flooding event in metro Atlanta, while describing how their local communities and businesses adapted to conditions; or (2) describe how more extreme drought and flooding events affect our access to clean, safe water, and how the region can be more water resilient in the face of these events.



Union Grove Middle School Student Sidney Spencer (center), the Henry County winner of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Essay Contest, is pictured with State Rep. Lynn Smith (left), who chairs the House Natural Resources Committee, and Glenn Page (right), who is Chairman of the Metro Water District.

DR. GERALDINE HELTON PERSONIFIES BLACK HISTORY, WOMEN'S HISTORY IN HENRY COUNTY

With February's Black History Month followed by March's Women's History Month, former Henry County educator Dr. Geraldine Helton personifies these two national celebrations locally, as one who played a significant role in the history of Henry County, with ties to the Henry County Water Authority (HCWA) as well.

Dr. Helton, 92, is a Henry County native who lives in McDonough, while also owning 50 acres of property in Locust Grove, handed down to her from her father. Her family's 500 acres of farmland was located next to what makes up the HCWA Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center today.

During a visit to the Cubihatcha Center this past summer with her family, which was prompted by District 1 Board Member Warren Holder, she shared stories about growing up around Cubihatcha, and reflected on how far her home county has come in terms of growth, development, and diversity.

Born in 1930, Dr. Helton is the youngest of the 11 children of John and Sheneal Walker. She spent 40 years as a teacher and administrator for Henry County Schools, including 15 years in the classroom and as a librarian at Shoal Creek Elementary, when it was an African American school prior to integration. After teaching and overseeing the library at Shoal Creek, she was one of the first two African American faculty members at McDonough Primary School.

Following her years teaching, she was an administrator at the County Office of the Henry County Board of Education, where she served as the Curriculum Director for all Elementary Schools, as well as the Director of Librarians for the entire Henry County School System. She retired from Henry County Schools in 1994.

As a young girl in rural Locust Grove in the 1930's and 40's, Dr. Helton loved taking shortcuts and creating her own paths to find places to play and fish, which foreshadowed her future as a trailblazer in education in Henry County.

For the complete feature of Dr. Geraldine Helton in celebration of Black History Month and Women's History Month, please visit our website news at www.hcwa.com.



Dr. Geraldine Helton (second from left) is pictured with her family at the HCWA Long Branch Reservoir, just across from where she grew up on land she still owns in Locust Grove next to the HCWA Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center. Her family visiting with her last summer included (left to right): Son-in-law Sylvester Lee, great grandchildren Savannah, Sylvester III, Santoine, Shealee, Sarah, Grady, and daughter Jacques Helton Lee.

HCWA CELEBRATES SYSTEM AWARDS

During the year-end Fall Conference of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), held Nov. 15-16, in Jekyll Island, the Henry County Water Authority (HCWA) celebrated the end of the program year with three coveted industry awards.

The HCWA won the GAWP Water Distribution System Platinum Award and Collection System Platinum Award, as well as the Laboratory QA/QC (quality assurance-quality control) Award.

The Water Distribution and Collection System Platinum Awards honor those respective water and sewer systems that achieve a grade of 95% or higher for those respective operations for at least five consecutive years.

The HCWA water and sewer systems are reviewed annually by industry judges to provide the helpful exchange of information and ideas among the state's water professionals, in addition to grading systems to quantify degrees of excellence. The purpose of these awards is to recognize those utilities that strive to continually improve their systems through proper management, maintenance, and operations.

The Laboratory QA/QC Award recognizes those utility laboratories that are demonstrating outstanding quality assurance programs. The HCWA won the GAWP Lab Award for the outstanding operation of its Walnut Creek Water Reclamation Central Laboratory.



The HCWA staff receives the utility's 2022 GAWP Water Distribution System and Collection System Platinum Awards, as well as the GAWP Laboratory QA/QC Award during the GAWP Yearend Fall Conference. Pictured (left to right): General Manager Tony Carnell, Tara Brown, Scott Sage, Al Gardner, Cliff Sims, Cliff Hardin, and Ray Sanders.



(L to R) Graduates of the first HCWA Leadership Academy Class included Travis Jackson, Chris Walker, and John Wilson, who are pictured with Lindsey Sanders, HCWA Environmental Compliance Coordinator and Leadership Academy administrator, and Tony Carnell, HCWA General Manager. Not pictured: Leadership Academy graduates Waymon Cody, Matt Jenkins, and Nikeva Silverton.

HCWA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

With an internal mission to cultivate future leaders within the utility and community, while fostering diversity and inclusion at every level of the organization, the HCWA established a Leadership Academy and graduated its first class this past year.

The first HCWA Leadership Academy had six graduates from different departments throughout the organization. That inaugural class consisted of Waymon Cody, Travis Jackson, Matt Jenkins, Nikeva Silverton, Chris Walker, and John Wilson. This year, the HCWA Leadership Academy 2023 class has doubled, with 12 Authority employees taking part in the program.

During the year, the Leadership Academy class spends one day each month in a different HCWA department learning how everyone in that department operates. That experience includes a "Lunch & Leadership" session where participants hear from guest speakers about various leadership topics.


The purpose of the HCWA Leadership Academy is to identify and develop leaders at the Authority, while expanding communication and cross-training among departments. Participants discover a wide perspective of all aspects of the Authority, learn about growth opportunities, and participate in a mentorship program to share their increased knowledge with others.

HCWA ENCOURAGING CUSTOMERS TO FIND AND FIX HOUSEHOLD LEAKS

There was no better reminder of the potentially devastating effects of household water leaks than the Georgia State of Emergency declared during this past Christmas holiday, when freezing temperatures caused hundreds of HCWA customers to lose water due to water line leaks or pipe bursts.

So, in the spirit of finding and fixing household leaks, the HCWA is celebrating national **Fix A Leak Week from March 20-26, 2023**. However, you can find and fix leaks inside and outside of your home to save valuable water and money all year long.

For more information on how to find and fix leaks around your property, please visit our website at: <https://www.hcwa.com/community-education/how-to-fix-a-leak.cms>.



March 20-26, 2023

Fix a Leak Week

THE CUBIHATCHA CORNER

The Spring/Summer calendar is full of activities at the HCWA Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center, with several targeting community groups, outdoor enthusiasts, and HCWA customers. Here are some of the events you may want to consider.

HCWA Fishing Season!
The first week in March brings with it the opening of the HCWA Fishing Season. **Beginning Wednesday March 3, and extending through the end of November**, the HCWA Tussahaw and Upper Towaliga Reservoirs will be open for public fishing, boating (except for gas powered boats), canoeing, and kayaking. These select reservoirs are open on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays during these months. Public fishing on HCWA reservoirs requires a Reservoir Use Permit, which is available during Customer Service hours at the HCWA Headquarters. A permit is good for a year from the date of purchase and allows you to bring a guest with you for free.

Earth Day
With Earth Day falling on Saturday this year (April 22), the Cubihatcha staff will celebrate by hosting activities at the Center that day, including a trail cleanup for volunteers who want to help us preserve and protect our natural resources.

Safe Boating Week
The HCWA Cubihatcha Center will be supporting the **Safe Boating Week Campaign during the week of May 20-26**. The campaign aims to increase life jacket use, especially among children, as well as other safe boating practices. The HCWA owns and operates nearly 3,300 acres of reservoirs, some of which host anglers, boaters, canoers, and kayakers almost daily. Come be a part of our efforts to assure safe boating on HCWA reservoirs and Georgia waters this year.

Family Fishing Day
After welcoming more than 100 kids, accompanied by their parents, for a Fishing Derby last June, the Cubihatcha Center will once again host a **Family Fishing Day on Saturday June 10**. This event falls on one of the select days during the year that the Georgia



Greg Street, a sponsor of the annual HCWA Kids Fishing Day, enjoys fishing on HCWA reservoirs. The HCWA 2023 Fishing Season opens the first week in March and runs through the end of November.



This year's Family Fishing Day will be held on Saturday June 10, 2023.

Department of Natural Resources allows fishing on Georgia waters without a permit, to promote the sport and encourage outdoor recreation and education.

Hunting Season Set for the Fall
After enjoying the success of two Youth Hunts and a Veteran's Hunt this past fall, the HCWA Cubihatcha Center staff is preparing for the 2023 Hunting Season. The Authority sponsors Hunting Safety Education classes throughout the year, including one on March 4, and the Cubihatcha Center staff will be accepting applications for this year's hunts beginning in mid-July and extending through mid-September.

For more information on these Cubihatcha Center activities and more, please visit our website at www.hcwa.com, or the Cubihatcha Center Facebook page.

ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP	Jimmy Carter	Chairman	Tony V. Carnell
	Sandra Rozier	Vice Chair	General Manager
	Myra Lott	Secretary/Treasurer	Karen Lake-Thompson
	Warren Holder	Member	Clerk
	Bruce B. Holmes	Member	
	Fred Mays	Member	



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