



12 WILLIAMS STREET  
AUGUSTA, ME 04330

## TRUSTEE MEETINGS

The monthly meetings of your Board of Trustees are open to the public. For a complete schedule, visit our website and click on **Trustee Meetings** under the **About Us** menu. You'll also find a link to archived videos of all meetings since November, 2014.

# CURRENTS

FALL 2020

## LEARN HOW WE'RE TRACKING THE CORONAVIRUS IN OUR WASTEWATER...

Visit our website at GAUD.ws and click on the two center boxes at the top of the home page for some positive news about the coronavirus:

**"Learn how we're tracking it via wastewater sampling"** links to the latest results of an innovative study sampling our wastewater as a way to measure the presence of coronavirus in our local community. GAUD's Water Quality Coordinator, Phyllis Rand (pictured at right), collects samples and sends them to Biobot in Massachusetts for analysis. Funding for this testing is provided by a grant from Keep Maine Healthy, an initiative from the Office of the Governor.



## ...AND WHY IT'S NOT A THREAT TO YOUR DRINKING WATER

**"Learn why it won't infect your water supply"** links to news of the EPA's conclusion that "the presence of the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking-water supplies and based on current evidence the risk to water supplies is low."

*The Greater Augusta Utility District is a standalone quasi-municipal entity. Its roots go back to 1903, when the Augusta Water District was formed to take over a private water company. Today, the District is a regional public utility that owns, operates and maintains the water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in Augusta; the wastewater system in Hallowell; and regional wastewater collection and treatment for the communities of Monmouth, Winthrop and Manchester.*



GreaterAugustaUtilityDistrict.org

# CURRENTS

## FALL 2020

## CONY CIRCLE RESTORATION PROJECT

Cony Circle, on Augusta's east side, is famous for being one of the most congested intersections in Maine—and one of the most accident-prone. That makes working there especially difficult. Water main leaks in the area in 2017 and 2019 led to a \$1.3 million restoration project: that's what happens when your water mains are cast-iron and more than a century old. Because of the traffic volume, most of the work has been done at night, to minimize traffic disruption and keep our workers safe.

The project should be completed by this fall. In the meantime, in the words of GAUD General Manager Brian Tarbuck, "It's kind of like Indiana Jones out there." As contractors dig to replace the water mains, they are coming across all sorts of conduits and pipes, some dating back a century or more: water pipes, gas lines, and telecommunications lines.

This buried infrastructure has to be preserved and respected, which forces GAUD to sometimes snake below, above and around existing lines. Threading this needle is exceedingly hard, made harder by the varied types of fill used in the old days, including rocks, branches and whatever else was at hand. Getting there is a challenge, but the end result will be more reliable mains to convey drinking water.



## THE NEW NORMAL IN 2020

Like everyone else, GAUD has had to adjust to the coronavirus in all we do this year. Our office is closed for most public visits and we're wearing masks where we never did before. Following CDC guidelines, and using common sense, our goal is to stay safe while we provide superior service.

*The GAUD Board met via Zoom only during the first few months of the pandemic. They've resumed meeting in person, and you're invited to attend—see mailing panel!*







## CRANK UP THE TANK!

We're just about ready to make the new million-gallon storage tank operational. We began building it in 2019, and now it's practically complete: we're just working on the surrounding landscaping. This new tank will help to prevent sewage from entering the Kennebec River during major rainstorms.

Much of what makes the tank impressive is how much you don't see: it was intentionally built into the hillside; at its highest point, it's only 17 feet above ground level. You can drive down to take a look—the new tank is adjacent to Augusta Waterfront Park, right under the bridge.



## WASTEWATER DEWATERING UPGRADE

The District's wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) is upgrading the 24-year-old belt filter presses (pictured at left) that remove water from the solids produced in the last steps of the wastewater treatment process. The new Ishigaki Screw Presses (at right) consume less energy, produce drier solids, and are enclosed, which reduces odor and mist.

This significant upgrade at GAUD's WWTF will have a dramatic impact on our environmental footprint, and produce long-term cost savings.



## EVERYBODY LOVES FIRE HYDRANTS

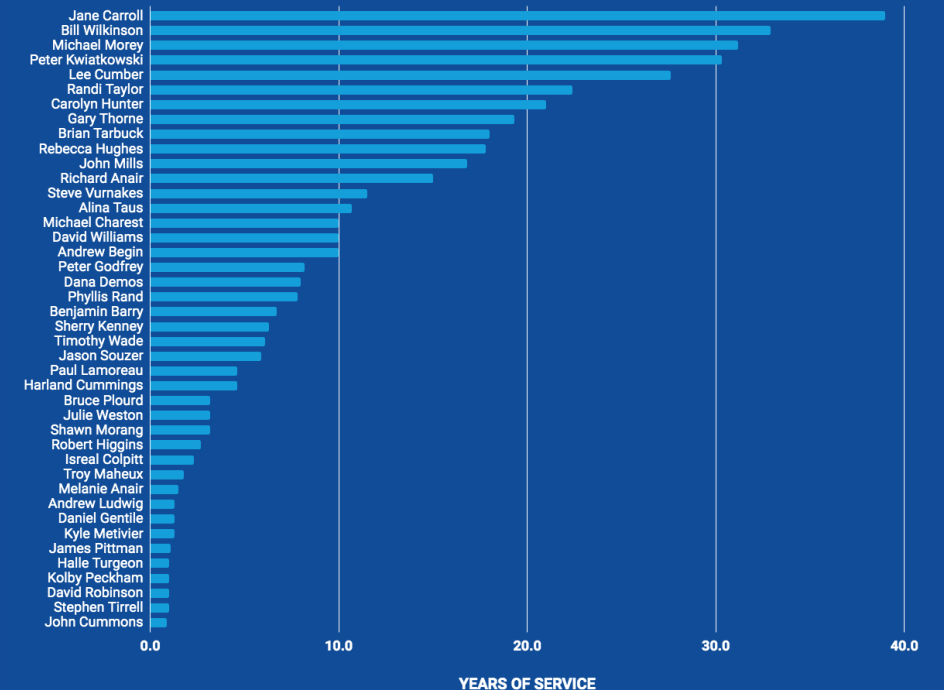
They're cute, they're colorful—and oh yes, they're essential when the fire department is extinguishing fires. GAUD has been hard at work in the past year replacing some fire hydrants throughout our system: 15 since last fall, including 13 this summer. Since the hydrants we're replacing are among the oldest in our system, some going back to 1925, it's not surprising that most were replaced due to repair parts no longer being available.

A new hydrant is more reliable, and reliability is what matters to the fire department. It also helps to improve our Insurance Services Office fire protection rating.



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO EVERYONE!

We're celebrating a lot of long-time anniversaries at GAUD. Foremost among them is Jane Carroll's; Jane runs our Wastewater Treatment Plant and has been with us for 39 years.



## WORKING ON THE TRUNKLINE

In Winthrop, we have been replacing ductile iron pipe installed in 1980 that has rotted away due to acid caused by naturally occurring sewer gas. Thank you to Maine's Department of Environmental Protection, which contributed \$100,000 to this project. It's almost complete and when it is, the system will be more secure and efficient.

