

GEORGETOWN CITY Reporter

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Georgetown Utilities

Georgetown Utility Systems marks a significant anniversary this year. One hundred years ago, the Georgetown Light and Water Works plant on West Ninth Street was built as the City's first municipally-owned utility facility. The building currently serves as the City's police station and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The history of electric and water utilities in Georgetown goes back to 1883 when the City negotiated a franchise with W.N. Coler Jr. to build and operate an electric light plant and water distribution system. The City's first privately-operated plant, called the Georgetown Water and Electric Co., was located along the San Gabriel River on N. College Street. Water was drawn from springs in the river and pumped to a water standpipe at the corner of Ninth and Main Streets next to the old fire station.

Over time with more electric load, this initial plant was not adequate, and on October 17, 1910, the voters of Georgetown approved two bond issues for a new light and water works plant. The City took over operations of the water and electric utilities on January 1, 1911.

Starting in early 1911, the City used the bond proceeds to build the Georgetown Light and Water Works plant on West Ninth Street. It began operations in the summer of 1911. Initially, coal-powered steam engines were used to generate electricity and pump water. In 1921, the City purchased a 250-horsepower engine and a Westinghouse generator, doubling the plant capacity.

The facility generated power for the city until 1945 when Georgetown signed an agreement with the Lower Colorado River Authority to purchase power. Georgetown's citizens, through the



municipal utility, continued to own the electric distribution system, and the first electric substations were built in the 1970s to handle increasing electric demand.

100 years: 1911 – 2011

In 1985, the City held a \$13.5 million bond election to fund the construction of the first water treatment plants. The bonds were approved, and in 1986, the Lake Georgetown Water Treatment Plant and the San Gabriel Water Treatment Plant were constructed. Other plants were constructed in the last two decades as Georgetown's population grew.

In 2010, the City signed a purchased-power agreement with Southwestern University, making Southwestern the first university in the US to be 100-percent wind-powered. Electricity comes from a wind farm in West Texas. Georgetown Utility Systems seeks to expand its renewable portfolio with more wind, solar, and other renewable generation capacity in the coming years. Most recently, Georgetown executed contracts with JPMorgan Ventures for a portion of the system energy needs beginning in 2016. Additional contracts will be executed in order to satisfy the generation portfolio needs of the community.

Georgetown Utility Systems continues to be community-owned, which means it is owned and operated by the citizens of Georgetown with revenues invested in the community. As Georgetown Utility Systems celebrates its centennial year in 2011, the mission remains the same as it was in 1911—serving the local community with safe, reliable water and electricity at competitive rates.

Sources: *Williamson County Sun*, City of Georgetown city council meeting minutes. Research by Rachel Saucier, assistant city secretary.

Georgetown Aging Initiative

Survey to assess senior services

Over the last 10 years, Georgetown has experienced a 141 percent increase in residents age 60 and older, according to the 2010 census. Such growth indicates a need to explore how well our community serves older adults and their caregivers. Are there adequate services and amenities to meet the growth? What factors make Georgetown a great community to live in as one grows older?

Georgetown residents, age 60 and older, are urged to participate in a community survey to identify the strengths and benefits of Georgetown in providing an elder-friendly community. This 20-minute survey will be available in September through the City of Georgetown's web site.

The survey is sponsored by the Georgetown Aging Initiative and the City of Georgetown. Family Eldercare is directing the survey process. The Georgetown Aging Initiative is a task force of key leaders who began meeting in 2009 to address these issues.

The survey also will be available at key locations, including the public library, Recreation Center, Madella Hilliard Neighborhood Center, Stone Haven

Senior Center, Lone Star Circle of Care Senior Health Clinic, and Sun City Social Center. Additionally, local social service agencies are distributing the survey to ensure homebound and isolated individuals participate. The Georgetown Ministerial Alliance will distribute the survey to area churches. To ensure all our residents can take part, the survey will be offered in English and Spanish.

The survey results will inform planning for new activities and services including health and social services, transportation, opportunities for social and civic engagement, and support for families and caregivers. These key elements will shape Georgetown's growing recognition as a city of excellence for senior adults.

For further information on survey accessibility, please contact Vickie Orcutt with Family Eldercare at vorcutt@familyeldercare.org or (512) 628-1685.

Para información participar en la encuesta, en español contacte a Vickie Orcutt a 512-628-1685 o vorcutt@familyeldercare.org.

September Events

Farmers Markets

Sun City Market, Tuesdays

9 a.m. to Noon,
2 Texas Drive at Social Center

Georgetown Market, Thursdays

3:30 - 6:30 p.m.,
E. Morrow Street

Details at www.gtfma.com

The Palace Theater

The Wizard of Oz,
August 5 - September 4

Details at
GeorgetownPalace.com, or call
(512) 869-7469.

First Friday, Sept. 2

Downtown live music, shops and restaurants are open late. See the Downtown Georgetown Association website at TheGeorgetownSquare.com.

Market Days, Sept 10

Handmade arts and crafts, food, and more on the Square from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Details at TheGeorgetownSquare.com.

Best of Georgetown TX contest

Online voting Sept. 1 - 30
shop.georgetown.org

Upcoming Events

- Oct 1, Georgetown AirFest
- Oct 4, National Night Out
- Oct 15 - 16, Art in the Square & Up the Chisholm Trail
- Oct 22, Pink Heals 5K
- Oct 23, Art for Animals
- Oct 25, Pink Heals Tour on the Square
- Oct 27, Halloween Carnival & Trick-or-Treat Village

Labor Day, September 5
City offices & facilities closed

Williams Drive Pool open
Other outdoor pools closed

Regular solid waste and recycling collection.

College Street Bridge Wins Award



The College Street Bridge was named the top transportation project of the year by Texas chapter of the American Public Works Association. The bridge, which opened last year, was given the Public Works Project of the Year award in June for transportation projects in the cost category of \$2 million to \$10 million.

The bridge goes between two large pecan trees that were saved by careful site placement. The locations of the columns were adjusted to minimize impacts to the root systems of the pecan trees. In addition, the middle of the traffic circle is a landscaped area that serves as a water retention pond, filtering

pollutants and sediments from storm water that drains off the bridge.

The new bridge was built above the 100-year floodplain, allowing for the closing of the last low-water crossing in the city to vehicular traffic and removing a significant flooding hazard to drivers. The low-water crossing, built in 1935 to 1937 as a Work Progress Administration project, is no longer open to vehicles, but is used by pedestrians and bicycles as part of the City's trail system.

The engineering and design firm for the College Street Bridge was Aguirre & Fields and the construction contractor was Capital Excavation.



Austin Avenue Traffic Safety Project

Lane closures on N. Austin Avenue began in July for a project to add medians, curbs, retaining walls, storm sewers, an upgraded water line, and modified off-street parking. The modifications are designed to increase traffic flow and reduce unsafe turns. Work should be completed by November.

Look for lane closures on N. Austin Avenue in the one-quarter-mile segment between the North San Gabriel River bridge and Williams Drive. One lane in each direction will be kept open to traffic for the duration of the project.

Glinka and Shostakovich Concert, September 11

The Georgetown Symphony Society presents the Temple Symphony Orchestra in an afternoon of works by Russian composers Glinka and Shostakovich. The concert at the GHS Klett Center for the Performing Arts starts at 4 p.m. Southwestern University's Kiyoshi Tamagawa joins the orchestra in the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2. Concert tickets and season tickets are available at the *Williamson County Sun*, both Georgetown HEB stores, the Sun City CA office, and at the door. Call (512) 864-9591. Details at www.gsstx.org.

Animal Shelter Golf Benefit, September 22

Friends of the Georgetown Animal Shelter and the Rotary Club of Georgetown are co-sponsoring a golf tournament on Thursday, September 22 at Cowan Creek in Sun City. Funds raised will benefit education and the Animal Shelter. If golf isn't your thing, then please join us afterwards for our first annual "Education and Puppy Fest" featuring an all-inclusive wine-tasting, dinner and music event! For more information go to www.friendsofgeorgetownshelter.org.

Williamson County Wine & Food Festival, Sept. 24

This event will highlight cuisine from seven restaurants and wine from eight wineries. Held in the Georgetown Public Library from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets (only 300 available) are \$35 per person and are available at the Downtown Georgetown Association office, Georgetown Winery, and Scentchips. Details at www.thegeorgetownsquare.com.

The *Georgetown City Reporter* is a publication of the City of Georgetown Public Communications Department, P.O. Box 409, Georgetown, Texas, 78627. For questions or comments, contact Keith Hutchinson, public communications director, at (512) 930-3690 or by email at keith.hutchinson@georgetown.org.

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