



Photo by Colleen Janssen

From left, James Vanderbilt, OCWD board member, and Sandy Scott-Roberts, Groundwater Replenishment System Program Manager, take a drink of recycled water at the Orange County Water District.

District OK'd to bottle, distribute recycled water

Stanton is one of the cities that will benefit

By Colleen Janssen

Whether by nature or science, all water is recycled water. In large areas of Orange County, much of the water is recycled by scientific methods, allowing residents to have a more sustainable water supply.

At the Orange County Water District, located in Fountain Valley and serving Stanton and other cities, something new is happening. The district is approved to bottle and distribute recycled water for demonstration purposes. The water is purified to state and federal drinking water standards.

"AB 2022 passed in September 2016, and became effective January 1, 2017," said James Vanderbilt, district board member. "This bill permits public utilities to bottle purified re-used water. We are the only agency in the western hemisphere to receive approval."

"Water is collected from showers, sinks, toilets, laundry, and dishwashers," said Sandy Scott-Roberts, Groundwater Replenishment System Program Manager. "The Orange County Sanitation District puts the water through two cleaning processes, then we purify it through three more processes before putting it into the groundwater basin."

The purifying removes human and animal waste products, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and anything else that is not pure water. Purifying processes include: microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and UV advanced oxidation, then it is sent to the groundwater basin.

"The groundwater basin is used like a storage tank. It is a natural filter using sand," Scott-Roberts added. "The water moves through the basin with a travel time of two months."

At this point, a total of 19 cities and water agencies collect the water from the basin, and may add chlorine, fluoride, and other substances before it is delivered to the consumer.

Areas supplied with this water are outlined on the district website, but, in general, include: Stanton, Westminster, Anaheim, Buena Park, Fullerton, Cypress, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin, Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach, Costa Mesa, and Irvine.

The new bottling program, approved in 2016, allows the district to collect some of the purified water before it goes into the groundwater basin, and bottle it. They may then distribute the bottled water at community events, street fairs, conferences and other places to demonstrate the quality of the recycled water.

Water in Orange County comes from three sources: rainfall, the Santa Ana River, and the groundwater replenishment system which uses recycled water. Rainwater is diverted from the Santa Ana River to replenishment basins for treatment.

The Prado Dam, built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, holds 7 billion gallons of water, which is stored until ready for recharging. When it gets too full, water is released into the river to go to the Pacific Ocean.

"We can't capture it from the Santa Ana River during a release since the water is traveling too fast," said Scott-Roberts. "That water is lost."

"Since 2006, we have been in a depletion trend due to the drought. We are now on an upward trend. Our storage was at 40 percent in January, but the recent rains have helped it increase," said Scott-Roberts. "The board just voted to add a surplus of 22,000 acre feet of additional water. We are being proactive."

"This has been a huge learning curve," said Vanderbilt, who joined the board in January. "We live in a desert; everyone wants to live here. We need to manage growth and be inventive."

One of the most important is-

ues that faced the agency was how to prevent seawater intrusion to the groundwater replenishment basin. Since the 1970s, an innovative system creates a water wall to block the seawater contamination of the basin.

Constant monitoring of the basin, treatment facility, water sampling and more, keeps the drinking-water quality consistent. Should monitoring equipment find problems outside normal levels, the processing shuts down completely until analysis can be conducted and corrections made.

One time, a company dumped a large amount of chemicals into a sewer and the monitoring system caught the problem with staff shutting down all processing. The advisory panel complimented the facility for their fast response and for following procedures. Also, thanks to the location of monitoring equipment throughout the service area, the source of the dumped chemicals was identified.

The facility currently processes 100 million gallons or more of recycled water per day. They are in the design phase for expansion and expect to be processing 30 million more gallons daily by 2023.

For those interested in learning more about recycled water and the groundwater replenishment project, public tours are held the first Friday of each month at 10 a.m. Those wishing to take the tour must register in advance. Registration information is online: www.ocwd.com/gwrs. Special group tours may be arranged on other days.

At the end of the tour, visitors get to try a sample of the purified water. If you expect it to taste different from your tap water at home, it doesn't.

Those wishing to learn more about water, may attend the 10th annual OC Water Summit on June 16. Tickets are \$130.

For information, visit OCWaterSummit.com.



Courtesy photo

Garden Grove resident Jake Marley, left, won the grand prize Golden Pen Award Winner at the 33rd annual L. Ron Hubbard Achievement awards held in the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles on April 2.

Garden Grove writer wins Golden Pen Award

Jake Marley takes home the honor and a \$5,000 check

Jake Marley of Garden Grove was honored as the grand prize Golden Pen Award Winner at the 33rd annual L. Ron Hubbard Achievement awards held in the prestigious Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles on April 2.

The event celebrated the winners in the L. Ron Hubbard Writers and Illustrators of the Future contests before a packed hall of more than 1,100 guests and thousands more from around the world who watched as the event was streamed live.

The night's keynote speaker was Pat Henry, president and co-founder of Dragon Con, who said, "This is quite a spectacular event, recognizing talented aspiring writers and artists of science fiction and fantasy from all over the world. Good fantasy is magic."

Marley was presented with a check for \$5,000.

Marley's winning story, "Acquisition," appears in the science fiction anthology series, L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future Volume 33, which was officially released on April 4 and is now available everywhere books are sold.

"There is no better contest for

new writers in the world than L. Ron Hubbard's Writers of the Future," said Marley. "This experience is unparalleled. Read, write and finish what you write. Persistence is invaluable. This is an incredible honor."

The Writers of the Future writing contest was initiated by L. Ron Hubbard in 1983 to provide a means for aspiring writers to get that much-needed break.

The companion Illustrators of the Future Contest was created in 1988. The intensive mentoring process has proven successful. The 380 past winners of the writing contest have published 1,150 novels and nearly 4,450 short stories. They have produced 32 New York Times bestsellers and their works have sold more than 53 million copies.

The 310 past winners of the illustrating contest have produced more than 4,500 illustrations, 356 comic books, graced 594 books and albums with their art and visually contributed to 36 TV shows and 46 major movies.

For more information and to see the awards ceremony online, go to www.WritersOfTheFuture.com.

City offers homebuyer assistance

The City of Garden Grove is offering First-Time Homebuyer and Home Improvement programs for manufactured housing in Garden Grove until Oct. 1.

The program is funded by CalHOME through the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

The First Time Homebuyer program assists low-income applicants purchasing their first home. In order to qualify for the program, an applicant cannot have owned a home in the past three years and must: purchase a manufactured home in Garden Grove; occupy the manufactured home throughout the life of the loan; attend a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved Homebuyer Education Program; occupy the manufactured home throughout the life of the loan; and meet the program income requirements. The home purchase price cannot exceed \$120,000.

The city is also offering six free eight-hour, HUD approved, homebuyer workshops for anyone interested in the First Time Homebuyer program. Workshops will be held at the city's Courtyard Center, 12732 Main St., from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the following dates in 2017: July 29 and Sept. 9. You can register for the workshops at www.homeingardengrove.org.

The Home Improvement program assists low-income applicants to rehabilitate their manufactured homes. In order to qualify for the program, the home must be a manufactured home in Garden Grove. The applicant must occupy the manufactured home throughout the life of the loan, and meet current income requirements. All repair/rehabilitation work must meet Garden Grove Municipal Code and Uniform Building Code standards.

For more information, call 714-741-5789 or visit www.homeingardengrove.org.