

ALABAMA ONSITE WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION

AOWA news

Better Living Through Improved Sanitation

Vol. 28 No. 2 August, 2022



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Reviewing the AOWA Annual Trade Show
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and more.

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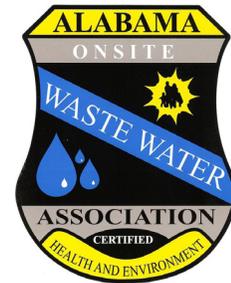
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This News Magazine is a publication of the Alabama Onsite Wastewater Association (AOWA).

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Vice President..... Marc Geiger

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On the cover: Roger Youngblood is the subject of this issue's feature article. He is also an AOWA board member. Read more beginning on page 10.

A Word From the AOWA President



*Randy Anderson
AOWA President*

As the new President of the AOWA, thank you for your trust and support as we continue on this path to build the Association into a first-class organization. Our past president, Alan Astin, did a great job of leading us through the minefield that was laid by others. We have all grown because of this and it is my hope that we can build on his leadership.

Safety Lids – One of the major topics that the board is working on is ways to protect our customers children. While it does not happen often, we have seen what happens when septic tank lid fails or when they have not been reinstalled properly. We don't want to learn of another child drowning in a septic tank. Stay tuned for more information as we work on a solution.

Orange Beach Trade Show – It has been a few months back but the AOWA trade show in Orange Beach was great. If you did miss it, then make plans now to come to my town, Guntersville, for the 2023 AOWA tradeshow.

Education – Continuing Education is a hot topic.. while this is required for all of us, we continue to look for new topics and speakers of interest to you. We are also working to expand our online classes for those of you who can't get away and attend one of our regional sessions.

Sherry Bradley – I know that many of you may not know Ms. Bradley but she heads the Onsite Wastewater division for the ADPH. She was recently awarded the ADPH employee of the year. I agree with the ADPH on their choice. She has been a true champion in our industry and works closely with the AOWA and AOWB. Her leadership and extensive work to improve the onsite wastewater systems in Lowndes County while fighting an uphill battle is truly reaping benefits for the citizens of that county and our state. Join me in congratulating Sherry on a job well done!

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H H A A
HELPING HANDS ACROSS ALABAMA



Helping Hands Across Alabama

The mission of the AOWA Helping Hands program is to provide or make repairs to onsite sewage systems giving individuals a better quality of life.

Over the years, the Helping Hands program, with the help of its partners, has demonstrated a commitment to serving the community and making the world an overall better place.

In April, AOWA Helping Hands was able to participate in such a project for the Exodus Ranch located in Opelika, Alabama. The Exodus Ranch is a non-profit charity focused on helping children that are in difficult life situations by providing them with something we all need, a place to call home.

AOWA Board member and Vice President Marc Geiger coordinated this project. Below is a thank you letter from Marc as well as several photos that sum up a job well done. We are proud to have such an incredible team of people doing meaningful work!



EMAIL: geigersllc@gmail.com
Office: (334) 749-9810

We recently had a Helping Hands project for the Exodus Ranch located in Opelika, AL. The ranch takes in children of all ages and gives them a place to call home. At the time of the project, they had approximately 12 children under the age of 18 living at the ranch.

We, as an association and an industry, stepped up to install a very large and expensive septic system for the Exodus Ranch. On behalf of my wife and I, we would like to say thank you from the bottom of our

hearts for all the help and support that was donated for the Exodus Ranch. We would like to say Thank you to the following companies who donated their time and products for a wonderful cause.

- AOWA
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- Infiltrator Water Technologies
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- Davis Concrete
- Williams Grading
- Habitat for Humanity
- Morgan Backhoe Service
- Zellner Backhoe Service
- Hovey Precast Concrete
- Thompson Supply
- Jay Hovey

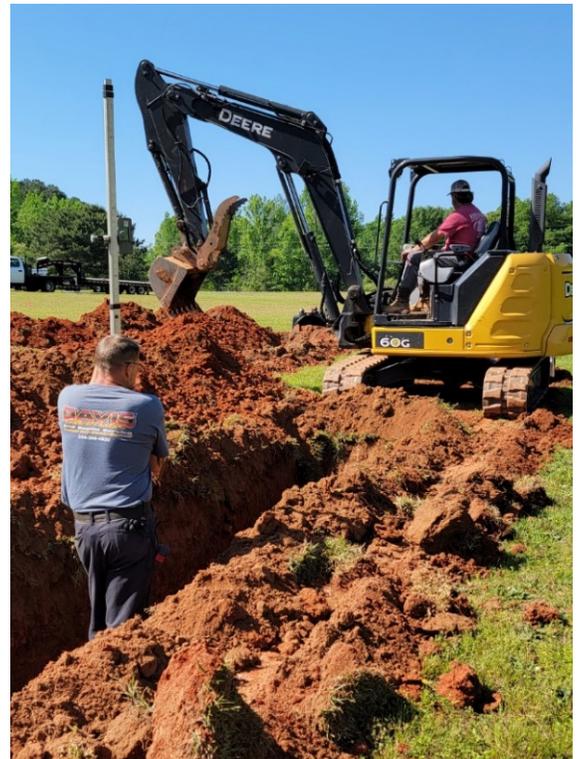
And a very special thanks to my wife Cindy Geiger, Haley Geiger, and Kyle Smith for their unselfish help in coordinating the helping hands event for the Exodus Ranch.

May God bless each of you!
Marcus Geiger



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State Legislative Update

The 2022 regular session of the Alabama Legislature ended on April 7 and members soon returned to their districts and the campaign trail. This year is the end of the quadrennium, or the four-year term that legislators are elected to serve. The legislative session ended on a high note with record-setting appropriations in both the Education and the General Fund budgets, pay raises for education and state employees, and tax relief for small businesses and retirees.

Since that time a number of interim committees have held meetings in Montgomery over the summer. Of interest to AOWA, the Sunset Committee reviewed several state agencies including the Alabama Onsite Wastewater Board. The role of the Sunset Committee is to review and evaluate certain state agencies and make a recommendation for their continuation. Otherwise, these entities would be discontinued or "sunset" after a certain number of years. After reviewing the most recent audit of the AOWB, which is

performed by the Alabama Department of Public Accounts, the committee recommended

a four-year extension. That recommendation, which is a standard extension period given to most agencies, will now be presented to the Legislature for consideration when they return next year.

Also meeting this summer is the Alabama Construction Contract Indemnification Interim Study Commission. The Commission is reviewing existing laws and practices in Alabama and other states regarding indemnification clauses and agreements, and recommended changes will be presented to the Legislature. At this point, the Commission has held two meetings, but no final recommendations have been approved. Any suggested changes that are proposed would still need to be acted on by the Legislature next year.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Oversight Committee met in August and heard presentations on the progress of appropriations made with the

federal funds that the state received earlier this year. Alabama Department of Environmental Management Director Lance LeFleur reported on the \$225 million appropriated to ADEM for water and sewer projects as part of the ARPA funds, which included \$5 million for demonstration projects in the Black Belt. Director LeFleur reported that \$2.2 million has been released to the Department of Public Health for projects involving individual septic tanks and \$2.8 million will soon be released to the University of South Alabama for a cluster system demonstration project in Hale County.

Election Day is November 8 and all state legislators, the governor, and many statewide offices are up for election this year. As a reminder, there are 35 senate seats and 105 house seats in the Alabama Legislature. With a number of legislators retiring or seeking higher office, along with a few defeats in the primaries this year, there will be a good number of new faces in Montgomery for the upcoming

quadrennium. In addition, there will be significant changes in House leadership

Dates to Note:

November 8 Election Day

January 10 Organizational Session of the Alabama Legislature

March 7 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature

since the current Speaker of the House (Mac McCutcheon) and Speaker Pro Tempore (Victor Gaston) are both retiring and did not seek re-election this year. The Legislature will convene in January for a short organizational session where leadership is elected, committee chairmen and committee members are appointed, and rules are adopted. Then, barring a special session that can only be called by the Governor, members will return to Montgomery for the next regular session on March 7, 2023.

Speaking of Election Day, I want to take this opportunity to encourage you to VOTE! A primary election for a state senate seat was decided by one vote this year, in an election where 16,745 votes were cast. Just another reminder that every single vote counts.



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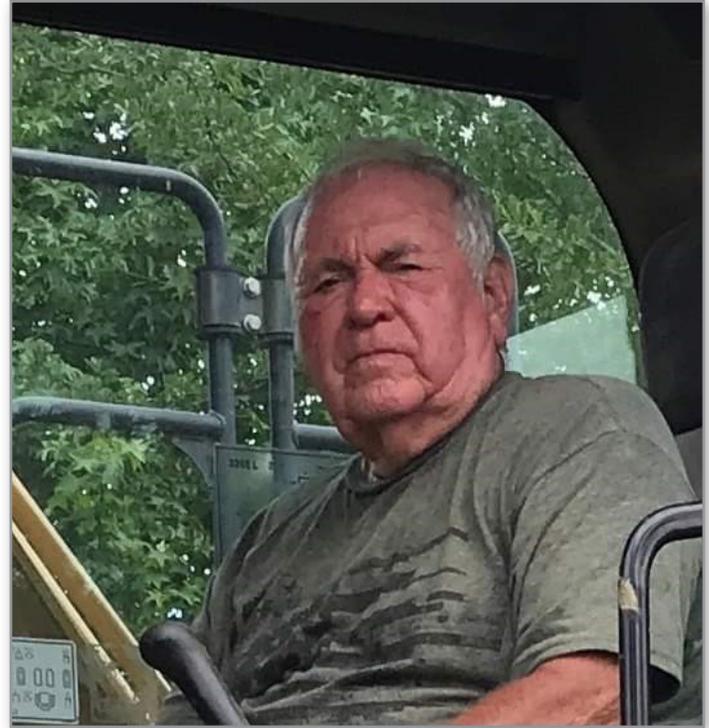
Roger Youngblood: An Entrepreneur at Heart

The business world and wastewater industry are no strangers to Alabama Onsite Wastewater Association (AOWA) Board Member Roger Youngblood. A Jefferson County native, Roger has been dedicated to not only his business but his community as well.

Fifty years ago, in February of 1972, a young Roger began his business in Jefferson County Alabama. Roger's business, Youngblood Enterprises, was not always in the wastewater industry. In fact, he began his operations in mobile home retail sales, service, and installation. A true entrepreneur and self-starter at heart, Roger bought mobile home parks and did the repairs himself on the properties. He now owns four mobile home parks where he takes care of the home repairs, installations, and plumbing.

In addition to all these services Roger now has his hand in excavating as well. His work in the mobile home parks gave him his start in taking on operations in the wastewater industry. Roger has even gained his certification in plumbing. It was through this work that he recognized the benefit of joining AOWA and added wastewater as a part of his services.

It was through this work that he recognized the benefit of joining AOWA and added wastewater as a part of his services.



Roger Youngblood, owner Youngblood Enterprises and AOWA Board Member

Despite all his success over the years Roger still faces some challenges. He is now working towards getting his general contracting license with the state of Alabama. Which has not been easy, but it would enable him to do more work for some of the local cities.

Roger became an AOWA member around 1996 and has been a proud member of the board ever since. Over the past twenty-five years as a member of AOWA, Roger has served as Vice President for two years and President for another two years.

In addition to his service on the AOWA Board, Roger dedicates his time to the boards of other organizations that make a difference in his industry and community. Roger has served

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on the Alabama Manufacturing Housing Commission Board for several years. Roger has also been a member of the Lions Club International Foundation for over fifty years and was elected president this year.



Roger Youngblood and fellow AOWA board member, Rhonda McMichael

With his hand in so many efforts from community programs to business operations, Roger still makes time to enjoy himself as well. When Roger is not busy running Youngblood Enterprises or serving on AOWA or other boards, he likes to enjoy time on the beach when he visits his beach home.

Running a business and being an active member of your community is not an easy task. When asked how he has been able to remain so motivated and dedicated over the past fifty years, Roger simply responded, "I've been going to the same church for fifty-two years."



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AOWA Scholarship WINNERS



AOWA is pleased to announce and congratulate the following
2022 AOWA Scholarship Winners:



Mallory Allen
Abbie Grace Morgan
Brock Renicks
Olivia Spencer
Molly Wheelis



A scholarship recipient may attend the school of their choice, whether ACADEMIC, VOCATIONAL, or TECHNICAL, in or out of the state of Alabama. Scholarships are \$1000 per school year for the recipient.

Applications were judged by the Scholarship Review committee with the following criteria:

- Academic Achievement – 35%
- Youth Leadership – 30%
- Commitment to Education and Career Goals as stated in the cover letter – 30%
- Financial Support – 5%

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News from the AOWB

Tis the season!!!

We are not talking about Turkey Season, Duck Season or Deer Season. Your Alabama Onsite Wastewater Board license has a Renewal Season, October 1st – December 31st each year. It is important to renew your license before the end of the current year to have an active and valid license on January 1st. Remember that you can always call the Board's office for any assistance or questions you may have regarding the renewal of your license – (334) 353-9250. Below is information that will be helpful to you regarding your license renewal process:

RENEWING YOUR LICENSE WITH THE ALABAMA ONSITE WASTEWATER BOARD

As you can see on your AOWB license certificate, the expiration date is December 31st of each year. The renewal season for each year begins October 1, of each year. Licenses are recommended to be renewed online, however; a renewal application can be requested by contacting our office. Renewal notices are not mailed out as they are the responsibility of the licensee. Licenses that are not renewed before January 1 of each year shall pay a late fee of \$100.00 per license. Your bond must be current, so make sure AOWB has your bond continuation or renewal on file. Continuing education is also part of the renewal process and shall be obtained before December 31 of each year.

CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS REQUIRED

Portable Restroom License (only) is **4 hours** of continuing education annually.

Basic, pumper, or manufacturer, or portable restroom licenses (or with any combination) is **6 hours** of continuing education annually.



Advanced Level I Installer (or combined with a pumper, manufacturer, or portable restroom) is **8 hours** of continuing education annually.

Advanced Level II Installer (or combined with a pumper, manufacturer, or portable restroom) is **10 hours** of continuing education annually.

WHERE CAN I GET CONTINUING EDUCATION?

Call the Board's office or view the "Continuing Education" tab on our web page for a listing of all approved continuing education courses. Our website is www.aowb.alabama.gov.

In addition to those approved by the AOWB, courses may be taken at educational institutions in your area. *Call the AOWB before attending any course not listed as an approved course for more information.*

Kindest Regards,

Melissa Hines,
Executive Director
Alabama Onsite
Wastewater Board
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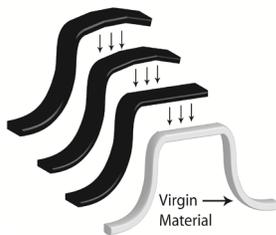
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REVIEWING THE 35TH ANNUAL AOWA TRADE SHOW & ONSITE WASTEWATER CONFERENCE

Thank you to everyone involved in making the AOWA Trade Show and Conference a success. Our generous sponsors, great speakers, interesting exhibitors, and many behind-the-scenes workers all contributed. Attendees were given numerous opportunities to gather information and network - helping to renew businesses contacts and careers related to Alabama onsite wastewater management. Here are a few photos recapping this event.







**Thank you
to our 2022
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- **A.H.Deveney & Company LLC**
- **ADPH**
- **Advanced Drainage Systems**
- **Alabama Habitat for Humanity**
- **Anua International**
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- **AOWB**
- **Autocar Truck**
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- **Concrete Sealants, Inc**
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- **Engine & Accessory Inc**
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- **Go For Digger (RH&M Machine Co.)**
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- **Imperial Industries Inc**
- **Infiltrator Water Technologies**
- **Liberty Pumps/ SJE Rhombus**
- **Morrow Water Technologies**
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- **Riovation**
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- **Satellite Industries**
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Continuing Education Class Schedule:

SEPTEMBER 15

Montgomery County
Health Dept
Montgomery

OCTOBER 6

The Event Center at
Roto-Rooter
Huntsville

NOVEMBER 16

Anniston City Meeting
Center
Anniston

DECEMBER 13

Montgomery County
Health Dept
Montgomery

Registration and Questions

All registration forms can be found on our website at <http://www.aowainfo.org/>.

You may call the AOWA office at (334) 396-3434

Licensing Classes:

Steps to take when registering for a Basic Installer, Pumper or Manufacturer licensing class:

1. Fill out the AOWB's Eligibility Application and submit to the AOWB.
2. Wait for approval from the AOWB. (You will be notified by letter)
3. If approved, your approval status will be sent automatically to the AOWA. The AOWA will contact you directly to register you for the next available class, or the class date of your choice.

BASIC INSTALLER Sept. 12 – 15, 2022
Jan. 9 – 12, 2023
April 10 – 13, 2023
July 17 – 20, 2023
Sept. 25 – 29, 2023

PUMPER Oct 19 – 20, 2022
Feb 15 – 16, 2023
May 17 – 18, 2023
Oct 18 – 19, 2023
Nov 29 -30, 2023

ADVANCED LEVEL I Nov. 28 – Dec 1, 2022
March 20 -23, 2023
Aug 14 – 17, 2023
Nov. 13 – 16, 2023

ADVANCED LEVEL II June 12 – 15, 2023
Dec. 4 – 7, 2023

Advanced Installer - Level I & II Classes

Before registering for an Advanced Installer - Level I or II class, please make sure you have completed the following requirements.

Advanced Installer - Level I:

- Must hold a Basic Installer license for a minimum of 2 years.
- Must have installed a minimum of 5 Conventional Septic Systems.

Advanced Installer - Level II:

- Must hold an Advanced Installer I license for a minimum of 2 years.
- Must have installed a minimum of 5 Engineer Designed Septic Systems.

In case you missed it, AOWA member Shane Seale was featured in the June issue of *Pumper* magazine.

By Tim Dobbins *Pumper Magazine*, June 2022

He Started a Pumping Company at 22 Years Old and the Business is Booming

Fired one day, in business the next, Shane Seale continues building on his dreams while providing a myriad of wastewater services for customers in central Alabama.

Playing the hand he's dealt led Shane Seale to success in the pumping industry. The road wasn't always smooth, but he learned to embrace opportunities as they came his way. Today his company, Crimson Construction, in Wilsonville, Alabama, is doing better than ever.

Seale was introduced to the industry through a family connection. His uncle worked for a local power company and installed septic tanks east of Birmingham, Alabama, as a sidelight. "I've been helping my uncle ever since I was big enough to help. I think I was 14 or so," Seale says.

After a few years as his uncle's right hand, Seale had a good grip on running the excavator and doing system installations, skills that came in handy when his uncle sustained a wrist injury during a job. "He busted the tendons in his wrist," Seale said. "He called me and told me if I took care of the tank installs while he was healing and made his backhoe payment, I could keep the rest."

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At the time Seale was working full time for another construction and excavation company but still helping his uncle when he had the time. He thought he had an arrangement worked out with his boss at the time, but when he asked for the day off to put in a system for his uncle, he was told to take the week off, and not come back.

"I was young and didn't know what to say or do," Seale says. "I was kind of panicked, so I called my uncle and asked, 'What the heck do I do now?'" His uncle told him not to worry and that he would get him more work installing septic tanks. "One by one I picked up local builders and got busy.

"Our original deal was that if I made the backhoe payment, I could keep the rest of what I made on the job," Seale says. "Well, I made the backhoe payment off the first job and as soon as that was over, I realized the rules changed."



The Crimson Construction crew, from left are Darryl Blankenship, Logan Jackson, Rachel and Shane Seale, and Jimmy Lewis. Photo credit: Med McKinney)

He was essentially leasing his uncle's machine and realized buying one would make more sense for him. He brought that up and his uncle offered to sell. It was 1999, Seale was 22 years old and Crimson Construction was born.

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HIGHS AND LOWS

In the beginning, Crimson focused only on installing new septic systems and business was good thanks to the booming housing market. Seale was able to quickly buy more equipment including a tandem-axle dump truck and a brand-new excavator. In 2007, when the housing market crashed, business took a hit. "I went from putting in three to five systems a week to, I think, three tanks all year in 2007," Seale recalls.

The downtime was tough, and Seale was considering what he should do to make ends meet. In 2009, while weighing a couple career options, he came across a vacuum truck for sale in North Carolina. After looking at the truck and contemplating his next steps, Seale eventually decided if a deal worked out with the truck, it was meant to be and that would decide his career path moving forward.

He made an offer, and after some back and forth with the seller, it was accepted. Seale officially owned his first vacuum truck, a 1998 cab-over GMC with a 2,500-gallon tank. "I started pumping right away and that really made things more consistent for me," Seale says.

The shift in services was a learning experience, but one Seale embraced.

"Basically, everything I know about pumping I had to learn myself," Seale says. "I didn't have background knowledge on what I was doing, how to do it, or any tricks with pumping trucks." But being a hands-on learner, Seale has overcome the challenges with only a few bumps in the road along the way.

"The business side was a challenge when it started growing; I had to learn how to deal with people differently. My role really changed," Seale says. "And thank goodness it did. Everything in life has kind of pushed me toward something else."

TIME FOR UPGRADES

Now, Crimson Construction is a multiservice company serving the Shelby County, Alabama, area and spends about as much time pumping as he does repairing systems and installing tanks.

However, it's pumping that provides steady work week in and week out.

"We really started growing over the past few years. I had older equipment that I have been updating



Shane Seale, in foreground, inspects an outlet filter as technician Logan Jackson pumps the inlet side of the septic tank.

or buying multiples of, and pumping has really become our consistent work," Seale says. "So much so, that we recently just bought a new truck."

Seale's new rig is a 2021 International HV built out by Dellinger Fabrication in Conover, North Carolina, with a 3,500-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tank and NVE 4310 blower.

"I had a jetter that I previously mounted on a trailer, but it would have been a separate job to use," Seale says. "Now that it's on the truck we'll be able to use it right away at the job if there's a problem, and not have to come back."



Shane Seale connects suction hose during a septic service call.

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ALWAYS ADAPTING

From a helping hand to business owner and from installing to pumping, Seale learned changing with the times and seizing opportunities are key ingredients to a successful run in this industry. Adjusting to changes never stops if the business continues to grow.

"One of the biggest things I had to learn was how to deal with people, and I'm still learning lessons in patience," Seale says. This doesn't only apply to customers, but with new employees as a company expands. "Letting someone else do the task that I am used to doing myself has been a challenge. Delegating has been the hardest task for me."

Finding new team members he can trust has been necessary to keep up with recent demand. Crimson Construction now employs five people. "I have great help. Really good folk that work together here and we care about each other," Seale says. "We butt heads; don't get me wrong. But we love each other and help each other."

Besides Shane and his wife, Rachel, Crimson's team includes operator Darryl Blankenship, technician Jimmy Lewis and apprentice Logan Jackson.

Crimson is scheduled at least two months out for repair work, and Seale is getting used to managing the team more than getting his hands dirty. "I'm learning how to balance being in the office more taking care of those tasks, and less in the field," he says.

EAR TO THE GROUND

Crimson had no trouble keeping and acquiring customers. Seale says basic communication is one of the easiest ways to gain and keep loyal customers.

"People tell us all the time they appreciate that we call them back and talk to them," he says. "Even if we are backed up, I will at least talk to someone and tell them where we are and what we can or cannot do for them."

Listening carefully to the needs of customers is one way Seale will determine how to expand his menu of services. "We've had a number of customers over the years ask us about pumping grease traps, but in our county we have no place to dispose of grease," he says. "We really want to get set up with dewatering so we can handle that waste."

Rachel has a lot of interest in an environmental services business and specifically dewatering. She also recently got licensed as a pumper so she could help on that side of things. "Her interest is more on the dewatering side of a business," Seale says. "She wants to degrease and save on the dumping while getting the compost out of it."

Crimson Construction recently bought a 50-acre property as a location to start on-site dewatering. Seale has attended a variety of trade shows and visited manufacturers looking at different products and methods to dewater. His goal is to choose a dewatering system and have it up running in the next year or two.

Rachel also plays a crucial role in the office and managing the business. "She helps me stay organized. We've had a couple projects where we have done multiple things on top of pumping four to five times per week and it got to where I couldn't keep up with it," Seale says. "She started making reports and keeps track of what has been paid or not paid, and I wouldn't be able to do some of these projects without that."

REWARDS ARE MANY

Seale built Crimson Construction by adjusting to the needs of customers. He realizes the value in developing a well-rounded arsenal of services that doesn't stop at installing and septic pumping.

"We do a lot of maintenance and repairs. I think we have a knack in that," Seale says. "The fact that we can do all aspects of it is big. When we go out to pump and there is a problem, we can fix it." It's a benefit to homeowners when they can make one call and take care of all of their wastewater needs.

"We don't sell things people don't need," he says. "But if we see potential problem and can save someone money in the long run, we will let them know we have the ability to take care of those things."

Even though owning his own business can be stressful at times, Seale says the reward and satisfaction outweigh the strain.

"What I really like is when people really need and want your help, and then being able to go help them," Seale says. "I don't always like going out on Saturdays for an emergency, but when you do go out and help somebody and they are appreciative and say 'thank you,' that's the part I enjoy the most."



Welcome!

New AOWA Board Members

Welcome to these four new AOWA board members. Below is a brief introduction for each.

- Thomas Graves, District 5**
Thomas Graves with Superior Septic and Tank out of Pell City, Alabama is now representing District #5.
- Brock Allen, District 1**
Henry Brock Allen with Allen Plumbing and Piping LLC in Killen, Alabama is now representing District # 1
- Shane Hayes, District 12**
Shane Hayes with Hayes Septic Tank Service in Grand Bay, Alabama is now representing District #12.
- Shane Gilbreath, At Large Pumper**
Shane Gilbreath with Marshall Septic Service LLC is the new At Large Pumper out of Crossville, Alabama

 			
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AOWA Board of Directors			
2022-2023 OFFICERS PRESIDENT Randy Anderson VICE PRESIDENT Marc Geiger SECRETARY/ TREASURER Ronda McMichael	DISTRICT 5 - Exp. 2025 Thomas Graves <i>(First term)</i> Superior Septic & Tank P.O. Box 448 Pell City, AL 35125 Office: (205) 338-3840 Cell: (205) 559-0016 alabamasuperior@yahoo.com	DISTRICT 11 - Exp. 2025 Glenn Huett Right on Time Septic, LLC 2031 Co. Rd. 123 Marbury, AL 36051 Office: (205)319-3244 Cell: (205) 258-6366 rotseptic@outlook.com Glenn.huett66@gmail.com	AT LARGE - PORTABLE RESTROOM - Exp. 2023 Ronda McMichael <i>(First Term)</i> Wise Environmental Solutions DBA Annes Cans P.O. Box 1061 Trussville, AL 35173 Office: (205)655-5546 Cell: (256) 310-1940 ronda@wiseenviro.com ronda@annescans.com
	DISTRICT 6 - Exp. 2023 Randy Anderson <i>(First Term)</i> Roto-Rooter 1009 West 34th St. Anniston, AL 36201 Office: (256) 831-7220 Cell: (256) 477-0378 randy@rotorooter-nebama.com	DISTRICT 12 - Exp. 2023 Shane Hayes Hayes Septic Tank Service 12547 Grandview Dr E Grand Bay, AL 36541 Phone: (251) 259-6150 hayesseptic@yahoo.com	AT LARGE - MANUFACTURER - Exp. 2023 Chris Wells <i>(First Term)</i> Wells Septic Tank, Inc. 21165 US-231 Pell City, AL 36522 Office: (205) 338-8590 Cell: (256) 343-9308 wellsseptic@aol.com
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DISTRICT 2 - Exp. 2025 Chris Gulley Gulley Construction 38090 US Hwy 72 Stevenson, AL 35772 Office: (256) 437-8691 Cell: (256) 608-8771 gulleyconst@aol.com	DISTRICT 8 - Exp. 2025 Bryan Connell Connell Septic Tank Service P.O. Box 230 Milry, AL 36658 Office: (251) 846-2610 Cell: (251) 242-0597 bryanconnell6172011@gmail.com	AT LARGE - ADVANCED LEVEL I - Exp. 2024 Roger Youngblood Youngblood Enterprises P.O. Box 147 Adamsville, AL 35005 Office: (205) 674-5696 Fax: (205) 674-5695 Cell: (205) 966-2726 Rogerdyoungblood@bellsouth.net	ADPH Matt Conner Alabama Dept of Public Health 6501 Highway 231 Wetumpka, AL 36092 Office (334) 567-1171 Cell: (334) 462-5655 matthew.conner@adph.state.al.us
DISTRICT 3 - Exp. 2023 Carl Brown <i>(First Term)</i> Central Tank Company 10975 Commercial Drive Tuscaloosa, AL 35405 Office: (205) 758-0801 Cell: (205) 242-6701 carl.brown51@yahoo.com	DISTRICT 9 - Exp. 2023 Marc Geiger <i>(First Term)</i> Geiger's Backhoe & Septic 881 Lee Rd. 375 Valley, AL 36854 Office: (334)749-9810 Cell: (334) 559-5418 gbss1121@att.net	AT LARGE - ADVANCED INSTALLER II - Exp. 2025 Jason Carter Carter Septic Tank Service 9444 Hwy. 17 Maylene, AL 35114 Office: (205) 663-4377 Cell: (205) 365-6094 co17fire211@gmail.com	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Debbie Johnson - AOWA P.O. Box 10 Lanett, AL 36863 Phone: (334) 396-3434 djohnson@asginfo.net
DISTRICT 4 - Exp. 2024 Phillip Crews Phil Crews Septic Tank Services 4953 Hollis-Goodwin Rd. Dora, AL 35062 Office: (205) 438-2266 Cell: philcrews58@icloud.com	DISTRICT 10 - Exp. 2024 Alan Astin Davis Concrete P.O. Box 697 Phenix City, AL 36868-0697 Office: (334) 298-4620 Cell: (706)442-6974 davisconcrete1@att.net	AT LARGE - PUMPER - Exp. 2025 Shane Gilbreath <i>(First Term)</i> Marshall Septic Service LLC 2375 County Rd 26 Crossville, AL 35962 Office: (256) 582-3445 Cell: marshallsepticsevice@yahoo.com	*Expiration date is the AOWA Annual Meeting for that year.

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News from the Alabama Department of Public Health

Congratulations to Sherry Bradley, director of the Bureau of Environmental Services.

SHERRY BRADLEY NAMED EXECUTIVE BRANCH EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

In celebration of State Employee Recognition Week 2022, the State Personnel Department spotlighted the achievements and contributions of state employees and selected Sherry Bradley from among all employees in every state department, agency, commission, and board for the special honor of Executive Branch Employee of the Year. Congratulations for this exceptional accomplishment.

Ms. Bradley is originally from Covington County. After earning a B.S. degree from Troy State University in Sanitary Science (now called Environmental Science), she completed an M.P.A. degree from Auburn University at Montgomery. She was first employed as a Public Health Sanitarian on September 21, 1977, and was assigned to work Bullock County.

In her 44 years of employment in environmental health, Sherry Bradley acknowledges that she has never been reluctant to work in the soil or get her hands dirty; in fact, she enjoys it. In her early days of ADPH employment, one of her first responsibilities was supervising all environmental activities in Bullock County where she would get up and be at the dairy farm by 5:30 a.m. to collect milk samples from the stainless-steel milk tank while the dairymen were milking the cows. She has since worked Autauga, Lowndes and Elmore counties before being promoted to the Central Office by Jack Brewer, then Director of Community Environmental Protection.

As the years have passed, her career has progressed from an entry-level public health sanitarian to assistant director, and for the past 8 years directing the bureau which has a vital presence in all corners of the state. Throughout her tenure, she has dealt with environmental health concerns of the public ranging from A to Zika virus. Her everyday matters of concern include regulations of onsite sewage disposal systems permitting, installation and maintenance, food service safety, milk and food processing, seafood safety, insect and animal nuisances, tattooing, and even bedbugs in lodging facilities. On occasion, she and her fellow environmentalists have weathered the elements to work in disaster situations including the aftermath of devastating floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, an oil spill, and most recently assisting the public during the COVID-19 pandemic by staffing testing and vaccination sites.

In the past few years, Ms. Bradley has focused on making effective and reliable wastewater disposal available to Alabama residents, especially people living in homes in the Black Belt, which have straight-piped, failing or nonexistent sewage disposal systems. The clay-like Black Belt soil makes it hard for filtration of water in these soils. Finding no local ordinances on the books, she worked from the ground up to learn about impediments such as unclear family property ownership and sewage disposal systems that cost more than the value of homes.

Addressing these needs has been a mammoth challenge, Ms Bradley said, especially with gaining the trust of local residents. Local community leader Perman Hardy has assisted her in the effort that created the nonprofit Black Belt Unincorporated Wastewater Program (BBUWP) in 2018. BBUWP's mission is building a sanitation infrastructure for low-income residents. Her pursuit for solutions involved studying wastewater disposal in remote areas and even took her to Alaska where sewage disposal problems are similar to those in the Black Belt.

Progress has clearly been made, and her activities have resulted in international attention and acclaim, including an appearance on the famed CBS program 60 Minutes. Her work was featured in the four-part Paramount Plus Wasteland documentary series, and her activism has yielded positive results. BBUWP partnered with the International Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Foundation (IWISH) and in March 2022, volunteers from IWISH came to Lowndes County where they installed hot water heaters, toilets and fixtures for low-income residents at no charge.

An application for a USDA \$2.1 million grant to install onsite sewage disposal systems in Lowndes County was supported by the Governor's Office allocating at least \$300,000 towards match funding, \$180,000 from ADPH, \$5,000 from a former Lowndes County Commissioner, and \$135,000 from the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

In addition, several meetings have been held with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management to address rural sewage and wastewater issues. Funds are being provided through a bipartisan infrastructure bill for a \$2.2 million pilot project for the Lowndes County Unincorporated area.

In addition to her many work responsibilities, Ms. Bradley is the legal guardian for her disabled nephew who lives in Montgomery.



State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris presents the Award of Excellence certificate to Sherry Bradley.

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