

Camp receives American Water Works Association award

BY MARIE NESMITH

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In honor of his professional contributions, Bartow County Water & Sewer Department Superintendent Gene Camp is the 2011 recipient of the American Water Works Association's George Warren Fuller Award. Announced last week, the accolade will be presented June 2012 at the AWWA's national meeting in Dallas, Texas.

"I was totally surprised," Camp said. "It's basically a recognition of your lifetime work. It's one of the top awards that the American Water Works Association gives to somebody like me in my position or anybody in the water field.

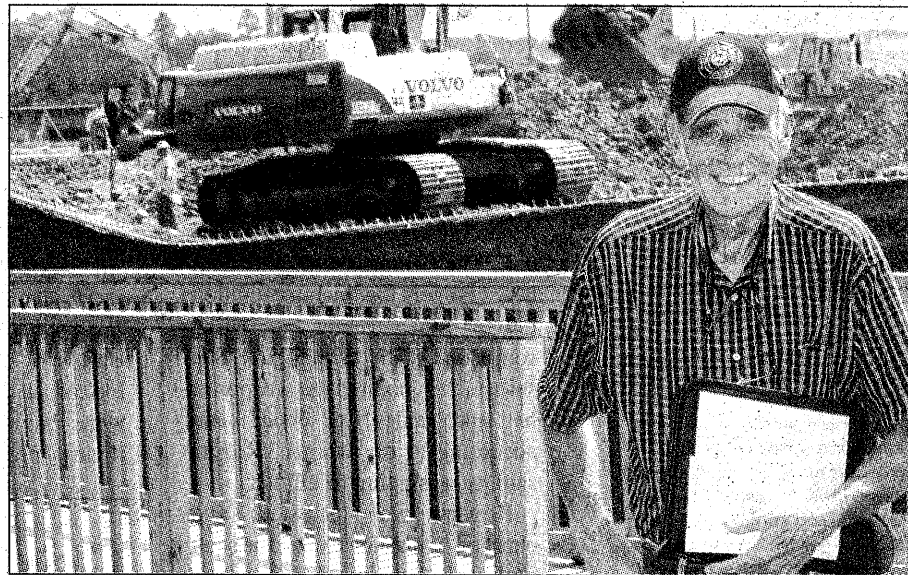
"It [pays tribute to] George Warren Fuller. He passed away in 1934, but he was instrumental in the early days of treating water and waste water. He was a scientist and traveled all over the world doing research and projects. He made a big difference in the industry. The award was named after him, and it started in 1954."

According to AWWA's website,

www.awwa.org, the George Warren Fuller Award is presented annually to an AWWA member "for their distinguished service to the water supply field in commemoration of the sound engineering skill ... the brilliant diplomatic talent ... and the constructive leadership which characterized the life of George Warren Fuller."

Since he became the superintendent in 1987, Camp said his department has experienced tremendous change, such as transitioning to an automated meter reading program and increasing its staff from 22 to 36 people.

Currently, "the Bartow County Water Department provides water and/or sewer utility service to approximately 21,000 service connections through a vast network of approximately 824 miles of water lines, 196 miles of sewer lines, 43 water and sewer pumping/booster stations, 13 water reservoirs and two Wastewater Treatment Plants with an average daily water consumption rate of 4.5 M.G.D. (million gallons per day), equivalent to 1.65 billion gallons per year," stated the Bartow County Water



SKIP BUTLER/The Daily Tribune News

Gene Camp, superintendent of the Bartow County Water & Sewer Department, visits the Georgia Highlands' Cartersville campus, where he is overseeing the expansion of water and sewage facilities to accommodate the school's recently announced new student center.

Department's page on www.bartowga.org.

One of his proudest accomplishments in the past 23 years is a peer review pro-

gram, which he helped develop in the mid-1990s.

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"The Georgia section of the AWWA had a small system's committee but it had been vacant for some time," Camp said. "They asked me to take over that committee and see if there was anything we could do for small systems. So I was kind of a one man show, and I got together with a friend of mine at EPA Region 4 who actually lived in Bartow County. And we sat down and looked at the problems that small systems were having and came up with a peer review program. And [we] actually went

out and got some grant money from the state and AWWA to put this program together.

"So, she and I developed a program and it took off. We did a pilot test all over Georgia, but we were concentrating on south Georgia, particularly one county that had 155 water systems in it and their compliance rate was like 73 percent. So we put this program in place down there and at the end of the year they had a 96 percent compliance rate. So EPA got interested in it and it went to some of the other states. We helped them develop their programs and it also went to the Native American tribes. They adopted the program, and we had the pleasure of going to visit with them and do

some training for them. It was a joint effort between AWWA and EPA and Georgia Environmental Protection Division and National Rural Water. ... I've always felt like anything that's good for the state or the industry is good for us. It's been very rewarding to be able to put together some things that work, some really simple things that work."

Along with the AWWA's recognition, Camp also has received the following accolades, the Elizabeth McEntire Award, Hammer Award from Vice President Al Gore, Operator's Meritorious Service Award, National Partnership for Reinventing Government, Kenneth J. Miller Award and the William J. Green Jr. Award.