

TEHA

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jose Victor Baldovinos, Environmental Health Director, City of South Padre Island

Jose Victor Baldovinos is the proud father of two wonderful children and husband to his beautiful wife of 12 years. Victor, as he is commonly known, graduated from Port Isabel High School and studied Criminal Justice at Texas Southmost College in Brownsville. For almost 10 years, he worked as the manager of Intercontinental Translations, Inc. in Austin, before relocating back to Port Isabel with his wife. In 2002, Victor was offered the opportunity to work in Code Enforcement with the City of South Padre Island, where he began his career in public service. After many years of training, research, development and experience his dream finally came true of becoming South Padre Island's first Environmental Health Director. As Director, Victor Baldovinos oversees many divisions and enjoys a successful career working in a field that he's so passionate about.

Victor has been very active and served in many organizations. His first year in code enforcement, he had to travel to big cities such as San Antonio and Dallas for required Continuing Education Units because opportunities of that magnitude were unavailable and not offered in the South Texas Region, but that has changed. Victor recognized the need for local, reputable training and worked to bring it to his colleagues in South Texas. He is currently busy planning the ninth annual South Texas Environmental Health Association Educational Conference on beautiful South Padre Island. To date, he has been instrumental in bringing various trainings to the area, including the FDA Plan Review Course, The Texas Department of Agriculture Pesticide Applicator Course, The Texas Department of State Health Services Sampling, Packaging & Shipping Outbreak Course and the Advanced Animal Cruelty Investigator Course, just to name a few. Additionally, he has been influential in bringing the Code Enforcement Association of Texas Conference and paving the way for many more op-



portunities for trainings and conferences in the area and creatively creating a positive economic impact for our area.

These trainings and conferences have provided Victor the opportunity to network with many colleagues throughout the nation, making Victor Baldovinos a well-known name around the state, but it has also provided the unexpected opportunity for friendships in many different places, such as one of his dear friends from Hawaii that he met at a conference. Victor has enjoyed working on various local and state boards, and has now set his eye on representing South Texas at the national level, on the National Environmental Health Association, in the future.

TEHA

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Dr. Bryan W. Brooks,
Director of Environmental Health Science program and
Professor of Environmental Science and Biomedical Studies
Baylor University, Waco, Texas**

Dr. Bryan W. Brooks is Director of the Environmental Health Science program and Professor of Environmental Science and Biomedical Studies at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. The Baylor Environmental Health Science program is one of only 30 nationally accredited undergraduate environmental health programs in the United States (www.ehacoffice.org). Bryan holds a Ph.D. in environmental science from the University of North Texas (Denton) and a M.S. and a B.S. in biological sciences from the University of Mississippi (Oxford). His research interests often integrate aspects of environmental toxicology and chemistry, environmental health, applied aquatic ecology, and risk assessment. Bryan has given over 75 invited lectures, plenaries and keynotes in 12 countries, and has published 95 refereed journal articles, book chapters and editorials. Bryan was a fellow of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Environmental Public Health Leadership Institute, received a Scientific and Technological Achievement Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and served as an ad hoc member of U.S. EPA's Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act Science Advisory Panel. He is a past president of the Lone Star Chapter of the Society of Toxicology and South Central Chapter of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry. Bryan's research has been supported by the US EPA, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, NOAA Sea Grant, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, German Environment Agency, WasteReuse Research Foundation, American Cleaning Institute, 3M Foundation, Altria Foundation, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Texas Environmental Health Institute. He presently serves as Associate Editor of *Science of the Total Environment* (Elsevier) and *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management* (Wiley).



TEHA

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

HAVE YOU HEARD

Congratulations to Dolores Martinez, R.S, Code Enforcement Officer/ Spanish Translator, Northeast Texas Public Health District. Dolores got married on September 22, 2012 in Canton, Texas to a wonderful man, Hunter Price.

Congratulations to Duane Barrit, Tarrant County Public Health Department. Duane and Sylvia Cook are to be married on December 31, 2012 in Abilene, Texas.

Congratulations goes out to Panhandle West Texas Chapter Member, Renee Witherspoon, MS, RS, CSP, CHMM, CIH, as she is becomes a diplomat of the American Board of Industrial Hygiene and a Certified Industrial Hygienist. Renee is a graduate of Texas Tech University and currently works for the Safety Services Department at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Lubbock



What do you want to be when you grow up?

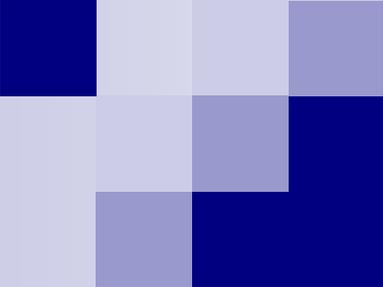


By: Tommy Bartley, MS, REHS/RS, CP-FS, Panhandle West Texas Chapter Member, TEHA Honorary Life Member

In the Bug-inning

I always liked animals and insects growing up. Starting in fifth grade I worked at a pet shop on weekends. I learned all about hamsters, mice, rats, fish, and small turtles. Typical pet shop critters. Then I got into snakes and larger beasts. We had a zoo in Lubbock when I was in Junior High, now called Middle School. I secured a part time job there and cared for the lions, tigers, and bears, (Oh My), alligators, reptiles, elephant (we only had one), buffalos and camels, to name a few.

What I really enjoyed – bugs, but at the time I didn't know much about them. I was more interested in “stomping um” because they were still a little “creepy,” and never even thought that one day that stomping would become an exciting career move.



TEHA

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

What do you want to be when you grow up? (continued)

Lights, Camera, Television

When college rolled around, many of my friends were drafted and were sent to Vietnam. My draft number was high so I went to Texas Tech University and chose a major that had nothing to do with snakes, beasts or critters. I majored in telecommunications.

Although we were told that there were not many jobs in the television field with only three stations in town, I snagged a full time job at KCBD TV, the NBC affiliate. By the time I graduated with a BA in television, I knew all about television production, marketing, public relations, advertising and so forth. I was the technical director for the station, switching all the news casts and putting all the commercials together for advertising agencies. I thought I was going to have a career in television, until the TV station sold and the really talented technical personnel moved on to larger markets. So much for a career in television.

After a short stint at Southwestern Bell Telephone, I decided I wanted to own my own business and changed my career to pest control. The business tripled in size over the next few years, and quickly I became the proud owner of a Chemlawn Franchise and enjoyed every minute of it. All of my advertising background in television was paying off. My scientific background was a life saver. Starting in the lawn and ornamental side of the business provided opportunities in general pest control and then to golf courses.

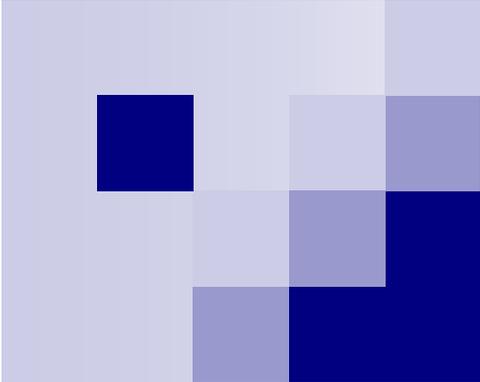
Although I enjoyed the business, I decided to sell it in 1990. I figured part of owning a business was knowing when to sell it. With the selling of the business, I had to sign a four-year non-compete agreement so pest control, at least for now, was out of the picture.

From Pest Control to Environmental Health

While attending Texas Tech I had a part time job which turned into a full time position with the National Pesticide Telecommunications Network. I was a pesticide specialist for an EPA funded program. I now had access to the medical databases and research concerning pesticide exposure that I never had when I owned my own business. It was overwhelming. Most of the research was conducted by chemical companies and focused on farmers that were over exposed to agricultural chemicals. Little information was provided on pest control operator exposures. This perked my interest in environmental health.

Working for the City of Lubbock Health Department in the area of food, I quickly saw many opportunities in the environmental field, including lead, asbestos, mold, day cares, swimming pools, institutional sanitation, tattoo parlors and code enforcement. While many professionals were specializing in one or two areas, I wanted to be more of a generalist in the field. So learning as much as I could, I added to my credentials.

After 10 years with the City, I took a job with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center as the manager of environmental safety. This position demonstrated how diverse the field of environmental field really was. Not only did it include environmental health issues, like food, lead, asbestos, swimming pools and institutional sanitation, but also included indoor air quality, bio-medical waste disposal, hazardous waste disposal, radioactive waste disposal, laboratory inspections, radiation inspections, pest control, EPA regulations, OSHA regulations, storm water permits, pathological waste incineration, vendor contracts, housekeeping,



TEHA

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

What do you want to be when you grow up? (continued)

lighting and noise, chemical storage, DOT shipping, TCEQ audits, fire safety and emergency response.

A Couch Potato?

After retiring from the Health Sciences Center in April 2012 at the young age of 60, I still wonder sometimes what I want to be when I grow up. After a wonderful, but brief two week vacation in a four story condo on shores of a North Carolina beachfront property, I realized that one thing I didn't want to do was to retire and become a couch potato.

I took a position in something that I had enjoyed all of my life – entomology and pest control. Currently, I am the director/manager for Bug Tech, a division of Carpet Tech in Lubbock. When Carpet Tech decided to expand its carpet cleaning, floor care and emergency restoration business into the area of pest control with Bug Tech, I knew that I wanted to be a part of this exciting industry again. With 20 certified technicians on staff and about 20,000 active customers, I am indeed sitting on a gold mine with endless opportunities. Once I get my technicians trained and organized there will be nothing we cannot accomplish. Being the oldest employee, I feel like a father to them. The company is wonderful, and they have become my extended family.

TEHA My Passion

The Texas Environmental Health Association has played a very large part in my career. I was first a regular member of the Panhandle West Texas Chapter at that time we had only three members! The chapter was dying. Heck – It was dead.

As Chapter President we were able to build the Chapter up to 120 members. We had an excellent team, but after being the local chapter president many times, I realized that it was hard to find a President who could attend the governing council meetings. Because there was no money in our Chapter account, attending the governing council meetings cost \$1200-\$1500 out of pocket every year.

At the time of my very first governing council meeting, I felt out of place. When most of the members were directors and managers for local health department and health districts, I was the only worker bee. But as I listened and learned, and finally realized that I had just as much knowledge and experience as they did. And after 19 years and serving as State President in 2003-2004, TEHA became my passion.

I cannot stop thinking about the great people I have met and worked with and those that have mentored me through my journey. I am truly thankful. Through the TEHA network and its people, resources are available so that you can accomplish any goal. This association is my association and I take ownership in it and encourage you to do the same.

Having written about myself I have realized that maybe I have grown up. I grew up and became an environmental health specialist and TEHA was a big part of it. I love TEHA!