

July 2013



GREETINGS!

Greetings fellow ARCSEA AP's...

Thank you for reading this second edition of the ARCSEA AP newsletter. This edition features **Ken Blair from Washington**. Ken has truly followed his calling with his personal gifts of talent and commitment. Most of us do our best work in life and attain satisfaction and success when we follow our calling. I think one of the best things about being involved in the Rain Water Harvesting Industry is that we are making a difference. Through our continued experience, education, and networking, we are able to provide our clients with real world solutions to their water challenges. The recent ARCSEA survey is an excellent example of how you can provide useful information that can aid in policy and product development as well as in allocation of resources and areas of development.

As the modern RWH industry continues to emerge in the United States, it becomes increasingly evident that we need ARCSEA to take the lead in developing national standards for the safe use of rainwater that can be implemented by municipalities that want and need to have acceptable regulations. Challenges from public policy, regulators, long-range planners, and consumers are increasingly evident. ARCSEA continues to meet these opportunities with education, implementation, and trained installers. The first personal contact with the Rain Water Harvesting Industry many people have is with an ARCSEA AP. We have a tremendous responsibility to put forth an informed and professional response so that the public will understand that water conservation, reclamation, and catchment can give us enough water to meet our needs and protect our natural resources.

Thanks again for your involvement in and your dedication to ARCSEA. Your comments, questions, and suggestions are always sought after and welcome. Enjoy the newsletter!

Ed Craig

AP PROFILE

Ken Blair, ARCSA AP



Ken Blair is the principal and founder of [RainBank Rainwater Catchment Systems LLC](#), a designer and installer of commercial and residential, potable and non-potable rainwater systems throughout the Pacific Northwest. Ken has designed and built rainwater catchment systems in Washington State for more than eight years and is a lifetime member as well as an ARCSA AP.

Ken served in the United States Navy for three years on active duty during the Vietnam era and achieved the rate of E-4 Machinist Mate, after which he continued to work in the maritime industry. A career entrepreneur who helped develop green initiatives before the term was coined, Ken innovatively created a new business focus for a commercial dive company in Hawaii in the early 1980's, to respond and clean up oil spills, oil spill equipment training, service and maintenance for an oil co-op service industry.



Ken is passionate about having a positive impact on the environment and is also a founding director of [Bank on Rain](#), a non-profit organization whose mission is to create grassroots solutions for rainwater collection for consumption and agriculture in developing countries. Bank on Rain is a member of Peer Water Exchange, a participatory decision making system to select, fund, manage, monitor, and share grassroots water and sanitation projects currently in Sierra Leone Africa. "We have a positive effect on peoples' lives. We teach and give the tools for people to become their own purveyors of their water by instructing and funding rainwater collection systems rather than using an unsanitary source, such as the river", Ken explains. "We focus on schools, so our system will be a model of simple water systems that others may build for their homes. The pride and ownership of the water system is evident in the fact that the systems we have installed are still up and running, unlike most of the dug well projects."

After installing his own system on Lopez Island with the help of ARCSA board member Tim Pope, Ken began his apprenticeship working with Tim, installing potable systems in the San Juan Islands. In 2005, Ken launched [RainBank Rainwater Catchment Systems, LLC](#) and continued designing and installing potable systems for residential customers. The need for a reliable water source in the San Juan Islands was due to low producing wells and saltwater intrusion, although many customers were having systems installed because it was the right thing to do. By offering residential customers routine maintenance and

encouraging them to participate, many have gained the knowledge to maintain their own systems. "If you empower people and give them the tools, they in turn, become an advocate and help promote the industry and your business." Ken feels that education and awareness is part of his job and engages with health departments and building departments in counties that may be considering rainwater collection (RWC) for potable usage. Recently, Ken, on behalf of RainBank, exhibited and provided an educational seminar -- the first RWC business at the Seattle Home Show, the Northwest's largest consumer home show.

Since 2009 RainBank has added installation of Cor-Gal water tanks for Braley-Gray and Associates for commercial applications. In the Puget Sound area, storm water is a contributing factor to pollution, so Federal, state and local agencies are mandating that storm water run-off be addressed. Engineers and architects have discovered that rainwater collection (RWC) is positive to their designs. Its uses for irrigation, toilet flushing, fire suppression and wash down mitigates run-off as well as reducing costs of city water. The term Green



Building has taken off in the commercial building industry, with builds that have included fire stations, schools, and office buildings. "The collaboration of Cor-Gal, Braley-Gray and RainBank has had a positive effect on my business", Ken explains. "We have installed tanks for the Federal government - state and local, too, as well as in the private sector. The high profile that commercial jobs have for rainwater collection creates more awareness, thus helps to generate more jobs."

"Customer service is the most important aspect of my business." Ken adds, "Staying in touch with customers after the install and being available to gladly answer questions or concerns shows the customer that you have a genuine interest in them. I try to promote the feeling to my customers that they have bought into a lifestyle and, with that choice, have essentially joined a community. Staying in contact with customers through social media and [email newsletters](#) has proven to be beneficial. A quarterly newsletter helps to keep the customer involved. My customers feel a sense of pride when they read an article in my newsletter about the last trip to Africa and will share this with others."

Webinars, conferences, and continuing education from ARCSA have proven to be a valuable resource. ARCSA AP, CP, and IS programs offer expertise in our growing industry. The combined knowledge of ARCSA members along with networking opportunities is unsurpassed. Some local and county agencies are beginning to offer incentives for RWC in Washington. But without the proper knowledge, these programs are floundering. The need for education for government at local and federal levels is key. Public awareness can be achieved with education about RWC and water conservation. Understanding that rainwater is a viable resource can have long term positive effects. The

fact that ARCOSA has had a part in writing segments of the IPC puts ARCOSA as the leader of knowledge in RWC. By being an involved member with ARCOSA and a knowledgeable, honest and fair professional, you will be helping our industry thrive.

Visit RainBank company website at:
www.rainbank.info

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