

The PWO Pipeline

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PWO Delegate at Large



This year has gone by fast! WEFTEC is just around the corner. I attended a very good WEFMAX in Philadelphia and must say that it was a great time. The Pennsylvania MA did a great job hosting this event. The WEFMAX is a great way for MA's to get together and exchange ideas. One of the ideas that were suggested to me is to conduct a survey for POW's on the retirement rate over the next 10 years. This has become a hot topic among engineers and consultants but has not been addressed within the PWO ranks. Over the next year I would like to work with WEF on creating this survey. If you receive a survey please be sure to fill it out.

Right after the WEFMAX, the Residuals and Bio-Solids Conference took place at the Philadelphia Convention Center. If you have not had the change to attend one of the many specialty conferences that WEF has to offer, please take the opportunity to do so. I must say they are well worth the price and the educational benefit that can be gained is abundant. In 2007, I was able to attend the Disinfection conference in Pittsburgh, PA and came back with all kinds of technical benefits to share with the plant staff.

One of the committees that I have been working on is the Operations Challenge Committee. Rich Leger has been the Safety Event Coordinator for the past four years and has done an excellent job. He has been mentoring me to take over as the new Safety Event

Coordinator starting this year. Next year we are going to be making some changes to the Safety Event. Anytime we make changes (even minor ones) there are some challenges that go with the changes. This is why we call it Operations Challenge? Well I guess not.

We are looking forward to the Operations at WEFTEC 08 in a few weeks which are going to be bigger and better and more efficient. There are going to be 43 teams this year and one team from Argentina.

On a personal note, for the past two months I have been coaching the Defensive Line for the Sierra Youth Football League, the North Valley JV Panthers. This is my first time coaching anything. I have found this experience very rewarding. My nephew, Melando, has been playing running back and is lightning fast for an eleven year old. He already has two touchdowns! This week he is starting at quarterback.

The PWO Delegate does represent a large part of the membership in the Water and Environment Federation; please feel free to contact me anytime on how I can better serve you. Also don't hesitate to send me an e-mail and tell me what is going on in your MA. I would love to hear from you and do need material to put in this newsletter. You can tell me about how a special event in your MA turned out. Also if you would like to put someone on the contact list for this newsletter just e-mail me. If there is anything that I can do to be of service, please do not hesitate to contact me anytime:

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The House of Delegates

At WEFTEC '07, the House of Delegates elected the following slate for offices for 2007-08:

Adam Zabinski	President
Rebecca West	President Elect
Paul Freedman	Vice President
Chuck Weir	Treasurer
Barton Jones	Delegate-at-Large
Kevin Marsh	Associate Members
Terry Krause	Corporate Members
Starlin Jones	PWO Delegate-at-Large
(Immediate) Past President	Mohamed Dahab

Elections will take place at WEFTEC 08 in Chicago

2009 Budget-The Board of Trustees approved a 2008-2009 budget for just over \$25,000,000. The budget provides for continuation of WEF's successful programs and services, and places particular emphasis on Board initiatives of public education, enhanced web presence, and technical topics to include climate change and sustainability. Additionally, the budget provides for a continuing level of effort for the bio-solids program, government affairs and public policy, a \$25,000 graduate studies scholarship, Speaker of the House travel for participation in Board and WEFMAX meetings, training materials development, and utility programs. This includes a \$3.00 increase in professional member dues. Information: Chuck Weir, Treasure: cweir@ebda.org.

This past year the House of Delegates has been assigned to various work groups. The work group that I was familiar with is the WEF HOD - WEF-MA Relations Workgroup that was led by Carl Janson and Bob Wimmer. They both worked very hard and did a very nice job heading up this group. A ten question survey was conducted and quite a bit of information was gained from the survey. I hope you were able to participate in the survey, the following ten questions were asked:

Question 1: Provide a brief description of your MA's view of the current WEF and MA relationship?

Question 2: Does your MA feel ownership of WEF?

Question 3: Please describe that sense of ownership.

Question 4 – What would encourage a greater sense of ownership of WEF for your MA?

Question 5 – What responsibility do you think MAs have to support WEF?

Question 6: What responsibility do you think WEF has to support MAs?

Question 7: Why do you think MAs need WEF?

Question 8: Why do you think WEF needs MAs?

Question 9: Does your MA have paid staff, and if so, how many?

Question 10: Provide the total number of members of your MA and the number of WEF members?

It was pretty nice that 42 Member Associations participated in this survey. The results were interesting and one thing for sure is we have our work cut out for us. Since the recent survey, there have been several good suggestions on how to improve this relationship. The main thing that stood out is the need for communications improvement between WEF and the Member Associations. Additionally, sixty percent of the Member Associations do not feel they have a sense of ownership with WEF.

I am happy to say that Nevada's experience with WEF have been nothing but positive. In 2004, Nevada hosted a WEFMAX and the WEF staff was great to work with. WEF Staff provided the resources and support to help make it successful. Additionally, we invited Phyllis Ross on two separate occasions to help us with strategic planning and she did an excellent job helping us to produce realistic goals for the future. In my opinion, if we don't ask for help, help is not available. If an MA communicates to WEF and asks for help, the WEF Staff will be there for them as a valuable resource.

The next meeting of the House of Delegates is scheduled for October 18, 2008 at 8am in Chicago, IL. ♦



Water for People

Water for People—Promoting Environmental Stewardship in Guatemala

By Nina Miller, Ph.D., Manager of Program Education, Water For People (Article Contributed by: John Kayser)



Talk to Water for People-Guatemala country coordinator Edgar Fajardo about water and sanitation development in his country and you quickly realize he is focused on the big picture. Beyond the gravity-fed water systems and household latrines that support the health and growth of rural communities, Fajardo has trained his sights on the sustainability that flows from watershed management.

This environmentally based approach broadens Water for People's work model, extends the timeline for impact, and links together a range of issues that communities face. Best of all, by its very nature, watershed management expands the knowledge and capacity of local governments, local NGOs, and communities, particularly in their ability to cooperate on common goals.

So, what is watershed management? Indeed, what exactly is a watershed?

A watershed is a geographic area from which water drains toward a common watercourse (such as a lake, stream, or ocean) in a natural basin. It is defined by water but includes topography, geology, and land use. Watershed management entails balancing all of the needs that must be met within its terrain: personal and household use, sanitation, irrigation and animal husbandry, and even manufacturing and transportation. Balancing these needs depends on bringing all stakeholders into the discussion and empowering them to plan for their mutual benefit and the stewardship of shared resources.

The goals of watershed management are conservation of water and soil, appropriate development of natural resources, and poverty reduction. Nothing could be

more logical or, in truth, more ambitious. In the Water for People-Guatemala program, as in the world of international development more generally, the paradigm of watershed management is guiding exciting efforts that will take time to come to fruition. Still, the promise is there to move the world toward ultimate sustainability.

Of Guatemala's 38 watersheds, the second largest is the Salinas, encompassing 4,639 square miles in the middle-western highlands. Contained within the Salinas Watershed is Quiché, the department where Water For People-Guatemala has made a multiyear commitment to four regions. Like nine other Guatemalan watersheds, the Salinas flows north into the Gulf of Mexico.

Fajardo sees watershed management as an enhancement of the community empowerment model that Water For People has long used. "In addition to questions of need, affordability, and maintenance," he says, "communities must consider their water use within a larger network of communities connected by water. When our staff began exploring where we would focus our efforts in Guatemala, the entire team was struck by how interconnected the communities are."



Improper treatment of wastewater affects those "downstream," as does the failure to protect a source from domestic animal use. Soil erosion contributes to the diminishment of the water table, and exposure makes springs more vulnerable to storms and floods. A watershed-aware community will strive to keep trees around water points. Such practices protect future generations as well as one's own family and neighbors.

Watershed awareness includes the knowledge of each area's place in the watershed, in terms of factors like rainfall and soil quality. One village might be well positioned to grow vegetables, while a village 6 miles away would make the wisest use of their land in grazing cattle. Education in sustainable agriculture may lead to the introduction of new plant species that produce more food for families and for market. Over time, knowing such optimal uses can spur planning for sustainable

economic development and consequent poverty alleviation.

Fajardo points out that people can make better choices about technology in the context of watershed management. For example, where a community might have opted for VIP (ventilated improved pit) latrines because of their low cost and ease of installation, consideration of the high water table in their area might lead them to choose pour-flush technology, which does not threaten drinking water supplies. Additional expense in the initial phase would thus be offset by savings in avoidable water treatment down the line.

A sound idea in a “stable” natural environment, watershed management, Fajardo notes, will become essential under the increasing stresses of global warming. “We are already seeing more extreme weather events like Hurricane Stan, which hit Guatemala just weeks after Katrina,” he says. “Deforestation contributed to the devastation and damage from mudslides, while the poverty of subsistence farming made rebuilding painfully slow.”

Additionally, Fajardo points to the need to find new sources of water in the face of increasing scarcity. Last year, Water for People–Guatemala developed its first rainwater catchment project in a mountain village in the region of Nebaj. With an average 100 inches of rain a year, Visivan was perfectly situated within the watershed to take advantage of this simple technology that frees its women and girls from hours of daily hauling from unsafe sources.



Watershed management certainly has its challenges. Fajardo notes that “because water can be used for many things and there are competing demands for the same resource, watershed management is inherently political.” For that reason “it is essential to involve government in any watershed management activities.”

Fortunately, Water for People–Guatemala is well positioned to do just that. As an organization, Water for

People puts strong emphasis on working with local government to increase their capacity for the regulation and infrastructure support that rightly belong to government. Within the expanded purview of watershed management, such capacity building can include helping government with long-range planning around the arbitration of competing water interests. Even in this early stage, Water For People–Guatemala regularly partners with the ministries of environment, forestry, and health, all of which will be central players in a future of integrated environmental stewardship.

Water for People’s director of International Programs, Ned Breslin, sees Fajardo’s groundwork in Guatemala being played out in other Water For People country programs and the international water development sector as a whole. Says Breslin, “Important practices and awareness can be generated at the community level, and Water for People has always believed strongly in education and self-determination of communities. But a watershed exceeds the boundaries of any one community. Real management of the resource begins when communities cooperate through the larger supporting structures of government ministries.” More broadly, “Watershed management is in its earliest stages. It will be a challenging process to work it out for the whole sector, but Water for People is very well positioned to do it because of its focus on government participation and capacity.”



About Water For People

Founded in 1991, Water For People is a nonprofit international development organization that supports safe drinking water and sanitation projects in developing countries. Water For People partners with communities and other nongovernmental organizations to help people improve their quality of life by supporting sustainable drinking water, sanitation and health and hygiene projects. Water For People supports projects with professional development advice, financial support and volunteer technical services. Typical projects include protected spring-fed community water systems, gravity-fed systems, wells with hand pumps, latrine construction, operator training, and hygiene education. Water For People is currently working in Latin America, Africa and Asia. In 2007, Water For People supported the provision of safe and sustainable drinking water resources and/or sanitation facilities benefiting more than 108,000 people in the developing world. More information is available at www.waterforpeople.org.

Operations Challenge

Operations Challenge Competition Brings Wastewater Treatment to the Surface. **By: Lori Harrison**



2007 Champions Commode Commandos

Alexandria, Va. – Do you ever wonder what happens behind the scenes at a wastewater treatment plant or how professionals deal with emergencies like a sewer collapse or overflow? Well, wonder no more. More than 200 of the world's best and brightest wastewater treatment professionals will compete in Operations Challenge 2008, a unique, fast-paced skills competition for wastewater operations and maintenance professionals. Now celebrating its 21st year, the one-of-a-kind competition will take place Tuesday, October 20, 2008 at McCormick Place in Chicago, Ill.

Growing from an original 22-team event to its current 43-team, two division format, and each four-member team will be judged on the best combination of precision, speed and safety. Winners are determined by a weighted point system for five events including collection systems, laboratory, process control, maintenance and safety. The events are designed to test the diverse skills required for the operation and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities, their collection systems and laboratories - all vital to the protection of public health and the environment.

The current champions, the Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association's Commode Commandos, will defend their title against the top regional teams (see full list below) from the United States, Canada, and Argentina. Three local teams are among the competitors in this year's event, including Chicago's own Illinois Water Environment Association's Windy City Wizards, Central States Water Environment Association Pumpers, and Central States Water Environment Association Shovelers.

Operations Challenge is presented in conjunction with WEFTEC®.08 - the Water Environment Federation's 81st annual technical exhibition and conference. The first event

kicks off on Tuesday, October 21, at 9:15 am in Hall C2 of McCormick Place.

As the largest water quality event in North America and largest annual water quality exhibition in the world, WEFTEC.08 is expected to host more than 18,000 of the world's leading water quality experts and 1,000 companies featuring the latest in water quality technology. WEFTEC.08 will be held at McCormick Place from October 18-22, 2008. For more information, visit www.weftec.org.

Note to editors: Credentialed media representatives may receive complimentary registration. Please visit the online press room at www.weftec.org to register in advance by September 19 or register on-site beginning Sunday, October 19 in the WEFTEC.08 press room located in Room N427 of McCormick Place.

2008 Operations Challenge Teams

AIDIS Argentina Todo Terreno
Arkansas Water Environment Association LRWU Connection
British Columbia Water and Waste Association Canadian Cross Connection
California Water Environment Association L.A. Wrecking Crew
California Water Environment Association North Bay Ryders
California Water Environment Association SRCSD Interceptors
Central States Water Environment Association Pumpers
Central States Water Environment Association Shovelers
Chesapeake Water Environment Association Centrifugal Force
Florida Water Environment Association Lauderdale Knights
Hawaii Water Environment Association Maui Reclaimers
Illinois Water Environment Association Windy City Wizards
Indiana Water Environment Association Mr. Hankey's Crew
Michigan Water Environment Association Midland Microbes
Missouri Water Environment Association Cross Connection Saints
Nevada Water Environment Association Reno/Sparks Rattlers
New England Water Environment Association Fecal Matters
New England Water Environment Association Force Maine
New England WEA Seacoast Sewer Snakes
New Jersey Water Environment Association Cape Shore Workers
New York Water Environment Association Bowery Bay Boys
New York Water Environment Association Brown Tide
North Carolina Water Environment Association Weirwolves
Ohio Water Environment Association s.C.R.A.P.P.E.R.S.
Ohio Water Environment Association Silly Eights
Water Environment Association of Ontario OCWA Jets
Water Environment Association of Ontario Sludge Hammers
Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association River Rangers
Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association Toxic Force
Pennsylvania Water Environment Association DELCORA Loonatics
Pennsylvania Water Environment Association Die-Jesters
Rocky Mountain WEA Aurora's Ascending Aerobes
Rocky Mountain WEA Commode Commandos
Water Environment Association of South Carolina Influent
Water Environment Association of South Carolina Liquid Force
Water Environment Association of Texas Aqua Techs
Water Environment Association of Texas Power SAWS
Water Environment Association of Texas TRA CREWSers
Water Environment Association of Utah Wasatch All Stars
Water Environment Association of Utah Wasted Gas
Virginia Water Environment Association Terminal Velocity
Virginia Water Environment Association Team HRSD

Calendar of Events

2009 WEFMAX Meetings

New York City

March 12-14, 2009

Birmingham, Alabama

March 19-21, 2009

Omaha, Nebraska

April 16&17, 2009

Las Vegas, NV (YP Summit included)

April 23-25, 2009

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

May 7 & 8, 2009

WEFTEC 2008

Technical Exhibition and Conference

McCormick Place

Chicago, Illinois

Conference: October 18 - 22, 2008

Exhibition: October 19 - 22, 2008

The Utility Management Conference

New Orleans, Louisiana

February 17 - 20, 2009

Disinfection 2009

Atlanta, Georgia

February 28 - March 3, 2009

AWWA/WEF Information Management & Technology Conference and Exposition

Charlotte, North Carolina

March 1 - 4, 2009

Collection Systems 2009

Working Together to Address Wet Weather Challenges

Kentucky International Convention Center

Louisville, Kentucky

April 19 - 22, 2009

Residuals and Bio-solids 2009

Portland, Oregon

May 3 - 7, 2009

Nutrient Removal Conference 2009

Omni Shoreham

Washington, DC

Conference: June 28 - July 1, 2009

Exhibition: June 28-29, 2009

Microconstituents and Industrial Water Quality Conference 2009

Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards

Baltimore, MD

July 26-29, 2009

TMDL 2009: Combining Science and Management to Restore Impaired Waters

Hilton Minneapolis

Minneapolis, Minnesota

August 9-12, 2009

24th Annual Water Reuse Symposium

Sheraton Seattle Hotel

Seattle, Washington

September 13-16, 2009

WEFTEC.09

82nd Annual Technical Exhibition & Conference

October 10-14, 2009

Orange County Convention Center

Orlando, Florida U.S.A.



Please visit our Website at
www.wef.org



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