



FEDERAL WATER QUALITY ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER.....by Tim Schmitt

Spring is just around the corner and it's time to start thinking about how we are going to spend the upcoming year. One thing I'd like everyone to consider is how to play a greater role in FWQA. It might be a little too late for New Year's resolutions, but it's never too late to become an active participant in a great organization. One opportunity worth mentioning is the opening for a newsletter editor. We always knew we were fortunate to have 2 great volunteers from Tetra Tech to act as our volunteer editor in the past several years, Melissa DeSantis and Helen Siverling. But we never knew how fortunate until they were unable to continue. Our heartfelt thanks to both of them who served us so well through the years. Presently, our secretary, Sharon Nye, has helped out temporarily with that extra duty. If you have the skill, creativity, and interest to work on our newsletter and put your own 'personal' touch on it, please let me know if you would be interested. We do rely on our volunteers, and would like to mention the assistance of Karen Cunningham of Weston Solutions, who is helping us on the technical implementation of a new website. She has only just begun and there are always transition issues to contend with, so bear with us and we'll keep you posted on any major changes. If anyone out there is interested in generating the content that Karen implements, please let me know. I believe the two items above fall neatly within this year's theme of "Evolving Perspectives on Water Resources Management." As Paul Freedman, our February luncheon speaker and President-elect of WEF, pointed out in his talk, "it is crucial for our profession to 'get the word out' about what we do and about the importance of clean water and water infrastructure. For a long time, our profession felt that our work spoke for itself," Paul added, "It's time that our perspective evolves to realize that we must speak out for water." I believe the stimulus package coming through Congress highlights this fact as well. We will hear more regarding this package at our upcoming March 26th luncheon (see above). We are excited about our April speaker also – Jeff Corbin, the Virginia Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources, will be giving us insight into what's going on affecting Virginia waters (rescheduled from January). Some of FWQA's primary activities, including judging science fairs are going on now, and we are all looking forward to a renewed focus on water.

LOCAL AREA SCIENCE FAIR JUDGES NEEDED.....by Jan Goodwin

Every year FWQA participates in area science fairs sending volunteers to judge science projects of middle and high school students in Washington, D.C., and Maryland and Virginia counties. Being a judge is a great opportunity to encourage budding environmental scientists and engineers. Several FWQA members, myself included, have judged for many years. We can attest to the lift that it gives us to interact with these eager students and see firsthand, the creativity and interest they bring to science. FWQA awards science fair winners with 1st Place through Honorable Mention awards – you may have met some of our winners at the annual FWQA Scholarship Luncheon held in the spring in their honor along with local scholarship winners. Upcoming science fair dates are as follows: Washington, D.C (March 14), Montgomery County, MD (March 21), Prince George's County, MD (March 28), Fairfax County, VA (March 28). Please contact me if you are interested in being a judge. – Jan Goodwin, EPA (202)566-1060.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS – MARCH 26th LUNCHEON

Impacts of the Infrastructure Stimulus Package on Local Utilities

Make your reservation now – space is limited – call Jim Wheeler (202) 564-0662

\$25 reserved, \$30 walk-in, Channel Inn – 650 Water Street, SW, Washington, D.C.

WEF PRESIDENT-ELECT SPEAKS AT FEBRUARY LUNCHEON...by Tim Schmitt

On February 19, FWQA was pleased to welcome Paul Freedman, President-elect of WEF and the president of Limno Tech, Inc. as our luncheon speaker. Mr. Freedman, who has been a WEF member since 1980, spoke about the "Top Ten Challenges for the Water Professional in the 21st Century." He began by explaining that as President-elect of WEF and a water professional for over 30 years, he is often requested to speak as an expert on various topics, and therefore, he wanted to explore how "experts" express themselves. He went on to use some quotations from the book *The Experts Speak: The Definitive Compendium of Misinformation*, to illustrate that sometimes even experts get things wrong, but that this should not stop us from moving forward as experts in the water field. He also suggested that water professionals "get no respect" even though a British Medical Journal survey indicated that the greatest public health achievement in modern times – more important than the development of antibiotics and vaccines – was the development and implementation of sanitary pipes and sewers. Mr. Freedman highlighted the fact that after this initial achievement, the infrastructure was allowed to deteriorate over time, and the water professionals lost control of their image. The passage of the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act in the early 1970s changed the focus to water professionals as being "polluters" that need to be regulated to clean up water bodies. Mr. Freedman noted that during this time, water professionals failed to communicate their value to the communities at large, while advocacy groups dictated the terms of conversations about water issues, often putting water professionals in a bad light as presiding over polluting practices. Mr. Freedman then outlined the top 10 challenges facing water professionals in the 21st century. The first being "think green, then grey." He pointed out that water professionals can lead the effort in redesigning cities to go green from grey, and that it is actually easy for the water profession to focus on green infrastructure because we have been doing a lot of this for many years. Secondly, he focused on sustainability, suggesting that water professionals have typically focused only on the environmental impacts of their work, but that they must now focus on the "triple bottom line" of environment, economics, and social impacts of what we do. Challenge number three is to achieve funding for clean water on par to its value to society, and to then spend that funding wisely to achieve results. For example, beyond a certain point, is it good use of precious funds to spend millions of dollars for diminishing returns in pollutant reduction? Mr. Freedman then spoke about the paradigm of "think global, act local," pointing out that for the water professional, this also works the other way – we must think local, and act global, because many of the local impacts that we experience in our water resources are generated from global causes – such as acidification of creeks from acid rain, or local water resources drying up because of changes in weather patterns. He warned that we must face the big challenges and not run away from them. Drinking water supply accounted for only 13% of U.S. freshwater withdrawals in 2000, but irrigation used 40% and thermoelectric power used 39%, there are other players that must be engaged in discussion- (pg.3)

FWQA

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Newsletter Editor – VACANT-volunteer needed

FEBRUARY LUNCHEON..... (cont'd. from pg. 2)

of water use and pollution. He suggested that we must use new regulatory tools to deal with our current challenges. He pointed out that the Clean Water Act is now over 36 years old, and may no longer provide the best tools and framework for dealing with watershed-wide issues, such as climate change and multiple pollutant sources discharging into watersheds. His eighth point returned to the theme of "who speaks for water," where he suggested that we must bring together all of the disparate voices to have one coherent voice that advocates for water issues. This will be a challenge considering Mr. Freedman's ninth point – the graying of the water profession. He pointed out that large numbers of water professionals are moving to retirement age, and that they will leave a labor gap and a knowledge gap behind them. Based on all of these issues, Mr. Freedman's last point was that it is every water professional's job to get the word out about the importance of what we do. This inspired the audience to do just that.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FOCUS & CLAUDIA COPELAND.....*Dawn Kristof Champney*

FWQA's year-end luncheon featured Claudia Copeland as speaker. Ms. Copeland is a Specialist in Resources/Environmental Policy Resources, Science, and Industry Division at the Congressional Research Service. Claudia focused on the top environmental issues that will likely be acted upon by the Obama administration in its first year in office. Issues that may follow later, which the new president made reference to during his campaign, include restoring funding for the state clean water and drinking water revolving fund programs; greater monitoring and regulating of confined animal feeding operations; wetlands preservation and restoration; and water conservation and efficiency measures. The Democrats increased their majority in the Congress, having gained 22 seats in the House and seven in the Senate, with five House races. While all committee ratios will be increased in favor of the Democrats, the only significant change in leadership among the House committees with jurisdiction over environmental issues will be in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, with jurisdiction over the Safe Drinking Water Act. Looking ahead at the environmental priorities of the 111th Congress, they are expected to be water infrastructure financing, followed by climate change. After tackling these two issues, Congress may then turn its attention toward refining the Clean Water Act; reauthorizing the Water Resources Development Act to maintain waterways serving U.S. ports; providing more support for Farm Bill conservation programs; and reinvigorating resources of federal agencies. Expectations are that the Obama administration and the 111th Congress will work in close coordination to ramp up environmental policies and their enforcement, while increasing resources for research and infrastructure – all positive trends for companies serving the water and wastewater industry.

FWQA FORMS ALLIANCE WITH WATER FOR PEOPLE

On March 22, 2008 (International World Water Day) a new alliance was formed between the Federal Water Quality Association (FWQA) and Water For People (WFP). As outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the FWQA agrees to be the official parent organization of the Water For People, Washington, D.C. Committee (WFP DC Committee). As the parent organization, the FWQA will offer financial oversight on the activities of the WFP DC Committee, and both organizations will collaborate in support of each other's initiatives and activities. WFP is an international non-profit organization that helps people in developing countries improve their quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities and health and hygiene education programs. Their vision is a world where all people have access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The organization was founded in 1991 by the American Water Works Association. It has been endorsed by the Water Environment Federation, the National Association of Water Companies,

ALLIANCE.....(cont'd. from pg. 3)

the National Association of Clean Water Agencies and the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. The WFP DC Committee raises funds to undertake activities in support of WFPs mission in Bolivia, Honduras, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Nicaragua, India, Malawi, Uganda and Rwanda. To become involved with WFP, contact WFP DC Committee Chair, Cynthia Hartley at (202) 223-1733 or cynthia.hartley@mwhglobal.com.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETS.....*K.Jack Kooyoomjian, Ph.D.*

The WEF Government Affairs Committee (GAC) and the Regulatory Subcommittee of the GAC held a meeting during WEFTEC.08 in Chicago in October. Adam Zabinski, outgoing WEF president, complimented the work of the GAC and stressed that their work essentially defines WEF. He also asked if secondary treatment standards should be re-defined, and remarked that municipalities are 'boots on the ground.' The theme of the importance of collaboration emerged. The GAC recognized the need to continue collaborative efforts between the GAC and the WEF technical committees, as well as the Member Associations, and association partners. In new business and crossover issues, a major theme was Clean Water Act modernization and the challenges of the next 35 years. Discussion and challenges identified included climate change, green infrastructure, emerging contaminants and micro constituents and pharmaceuticals, pathogens and biosolids, EPA's antimicrobial rule for pesticides, stormwater issues, nutrients, and TMDLs. Issues and experiences were shared by MA reps, unique to their areas, offering rich discussions and a variety of topics, including a White Paper on Water Resources Stewardship, maintaining standards of ethical conduct, avoiding conflict-of-interest, trade association roles, and more. The Regulatory Subcommittee of the GAC discussed TMDL-related issues; NPDES permit fees, nutrients, the NRDC petition to EPA and a variety of issues, including the importance supporting the Farm Bill in leveraging resources to achieve clean water strategies.

WATER FOR PEOPLE EVENT & WORLD WATER DAY.....*by Cynthia Hartley*

The Washington, D.C., Water For People Committee cordially invites FWQA members, colleagues and guests to join us at our 2nd Annual World Water Day Event from 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. on Friday, March 20, 2009 at D.C.'s newest urban restaurant/lounge, Policy, located at 1904 14th Street, NW. This annual event aims to increase awareness of water, sanitation and hygiene education needs for millions of people lacking these services. An estimated 884 million people live without safe drinking water and 2.5 billion lack adequate sanitation, worldwide. Water For People helps those in developing countries improve their quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities and health/hygiene programs. Give support to a good cause and help build awareness about water issues facing our planet. Special guest filmmaker, Sam Bozzo will speak and there will be a raffle, too! Admission for the event is \$15. Visit www.waterforpeopledc.org for more information and RSVP at waterforpeopledc@gmail.com. PLEASE JOIN US!