



In my acceptance speech at the Annual Meeting, I quoted a proverb, “May you live in interesting times.” This may well serve as the theme for my year as president of NYWEA.

I am proud to carry on the tradition of recent past presidents I have served with: Adam Zabinski (newly elected vice president of the Water Environment Federation), Dave Ellis, John Cameron, Kirk Rowland, and my immediate predecessor, Ken Skibinski. (Thanks, Ken, for a job well done and an easy handoff.) They all were involved with their own interesting times, which included significant organizational change, additional fiscal responsibility, and improved member services. Supporting all of these accomplishments is the exemplary work of our executive office led by Patricia Cerro-Reehil and her staff, Maggie Hoose and Maureen Kozol. They continue to be our foundation and allow us to move forward with all of our many ventures.

The 77th Annual Meeting now goes down in history as our best attended meeting of all time, with over 1,200 in attendance. Of note was the significant number of nonmembers attending, which speaks to the quality, diversity, and reputation of our program and technical activities. The technical programs were first-class and well attended, and the exhibit hall was packed. Of course the social aspects of this meeting cannot go unnoticed, as it is always a good time to mix and trade stories with our NYWEA friends in the Big Apple.

Many interesting times await us over the next year. NYWEA is embarking on some familiar paths—the Legislative Forum, the Spring Meeting in Grand Island, the Operators’ Challenge, numerous chapter activities, board meetings, board meetings, board meetings...and of course, preparation for next year’s 78th Annual Meeting in New York City. In our spare time, we are also working on some exciting carryover exercises such as our second annual business plan headed by Janice Jijina, the advancement of young professionals at the chapter and state level, our new \$1,000,000 scholarship drive, and a stronger emphasis on membership retention and recruitment at the chapter level. And yes, we have some new efforts, most notably our humanitarian outreach with a \$4,000 contribution to tsunami relief, and a \$2,500 donation to Water for People in just its first year. Also for this year we will be modifying our bylaws to allow the addition of an operator position on the board of directors to enhance this important perspective on our board. In the fall we will relocate our executive office to meet the needs of our growing staff and workload. Last but not least, we continue our partnership with NYSAWWA through the joint sponsorship of the Tiff Symposium later this fall.

There are, of course, challenges. Membership, although improving, constantly needs our attention. The evolving young profession-

als’ efforts, the new focus on student chapters, and the establishment of a membership assistant position are evidence of our commitment to restoring our membership growth.

Our biggest challenge may be time. How can our volunteer leadership possibly find enough time to keep NYWEA in its preeminent position while still maintaining their “day jobs”? In order to attract the next generation of volunteer leaders, we must first choose to establish worthwhile and gratifying goals for the organization. Volunteers will follow naturally, and many hands will make light work. Humanitarian assistance, scholarships, professional engineer certification, technical program, public education, and women professional, student, and young professional outreach are just a few examples of areas where you can make a difference for NYWEA and in the lives of others. Please join us. There are many worthwhile and gratifying leadership opportunities available.

But all of the aforementioned organizational, financial, and educational activities do not fully define NYWEA. First and foremost NYWEA is, and will continue to be, the preeminent organization dedicated to addressing the many challenges in improving the water environment in the Empire State.

The focus of this edition of *Clearwaters* provides evidence of success. Onondaga Lake has long been infamous as one of our most polluted water bodies. The issues have ranged from historic industrial pollution, sediment contamination, sewage discharges, and combined sewer overflows. The articles in this issue describe these problems as well as the remedial efforts under way. Major efforts to provide tertiary treatment of the municipal wastewater, control wet weather overflows, reduce industrial wastes, and remediate the contaminated sediments are well under way.

These problems and their solutions are not unique to Onondaga Lake. Throughout New York State, members of NYWEA including municipal, government, and private entities have helped identify, study, attack, finance, and construct solutions to improve our water resources. From the Long Island Sound to trout streams in the Catskills to the Rochester embayment to the Niagara River, our membership has played a significant role in this historic effort.

Though many challenges lie ahead, NYWEA is well positioned to be an active and positive participant in their resolution.

Yes, we do live in interesting times.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Amend". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "A".

John R. Amend