



Highlights of a Successful Year

I have really enjoyed my term as NYWEA president and this year passed very quickly. While much has been accomplished this year, I plan to continue working on some initiatives over the next year. NYWEA's focus on providing more services to members has been achieved in many ways, and our goals of increasing membership and incorporating twenty-first century tools into our organization have had good results, with more progress to come. There have been many high-

lights this year, thanks to our staff and the many volunteers who support our association.

- A Joint Spring Meeting with New England WEA was held, featuring 17 technical sessions, eight Operations Challenge Teams, 50 exhibitors, over 500 attendees, and a net revenue of over \$30,000 for each association, making this a very successful meeting for both associations. We are in discussions to repeat this event in five years by inviting New England to our spring meeting.
- The Lower Hudson's successful Watershed Conference became an event cosponsored by NYWEA, NYSDOS, NYSDEC and WPCC. The conference featured 13 technical sessions with 274 people in attendance.
- Elected Officials Roundtables provided important information on water quality to officials from several western and Lower Hudson municipalities.
- The First Energy Management Conference, cosponsored with NYSERDA, explored the issues surrounding the design, operation and implementation of energy efficiency measures at wastewater treatment facilities.
- The first web-based training was held with 78 participants at six sites around the state.
- Over 250 new members joined NYWEA!
- Operator training programs were conducted at three locations, with 140 participants.
- Sixty-five members were certified through our Voluntary Collection Systems Certification program.
- Over 650 PDH certificates were issued to engineers who attended our events.
- Teams from the Metropolitan and Long Island Chapters represented us at WEFTEC, with Long Island's Brown Tide finishing fifth in the country at the National Operations Challenge, one of the highest New York finishes ever.
- A successful Upstate Scholarship Cruise raised nearly \$30,000.
- Web-based surveys were accomplished on various topics, including young professionals and government affairs.
- Many chapter events took place.

Ongoing efforts in several areas include:

- Increasing the number of members who have pledged to the NYWEA Scholarship Program. We achieved full participation by the

state board, and are nearing that level among the remainder of the leadership including committee chairs and chapter board members. Currently 10 percent of our members have pledged to the scholarship fund, and we would like to increase that percentage and focus on major corporate donations from outside the membership.

- Increasing the use of the internet for many NYWEA issues, including online chapter and committee reporting, online awards nominations, web-based training and online surveys to determine how best to meet members' needs.
- Encouraging members to become more engaged in the association in whatever way works best for them, whether by joining committees, supporting the scholarship or humanitarian efforts, attending events, or authoring publications.
- Supporting the *Water is Life and Infrastructure Makes it Happen™* Campaign to educate the public and elected officials about the true costs of clean water.
- Continuing to increase membership.
- Encouraging our past presidents to stay involved through specific initiatives that would benefit from their experience and leadership.

By the time this is in print, we will have finished our strategic planning session for the next four years, establishing the goals to move our association forward. I hope that many of you have become more active in the association this year, and for those who have not, there is no time like the present.

I look forward to seeing you all at the 79th Annual Meeting on February 5-7, 2007 in New York City. Over 80 presentations in 20 technical sessions and over 150 exhibitors will bring you the latest technological information and you will have the opportunity to network with over 1,200 operators, engineers, scientists, vendors, students and academicians from the municipal, private and educational realms. At the awards luncheon, it will be my honor to pass on the gavel to Tom Lauro, our incoming president. Tom has a lot of new and exciting ideas. Watch for his new membership drive, "Just One More," with great incentives for encouraging friends and colleagues to join NYWEA. Tom is first deputy commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities, which is responsible for planning, operating and maintaining wastewater treatment facilities, wastewater collection systems, water filtration facilities, water distribution systems and solid waste facilities. Tom's insight into the issues faced daily by our members, and his exemplary leadership skills will serve the association well in the coming year.

My sincere thanks and appreciation go to our staff and every member who participated in any way, and especially to those who helped to lead NYWEA this year.

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