

# PRESS RELEASE



## A Tribute and Fare Thee Well

*By Sharon H. Kneiss*

*President & CEO – National Waste & Recycling Association*

**Washington D.C. (August 30, 2016)**- Earlier this summer, it was with much regret that NWRA's Sunbelt Regional Manager, Mike Huff, let us know that he was ready to move on after twenty years with our Association. Mike's final "official" day with us is this week, however, Mike will be working with us on a consulting basis as we seek his successor. I intentionally chose to use the word "successor", as many of us in our industry know that no person can actually replace Mike and the far-reaching impact he has had for the benefit of our members.

In the past few weeks, many of our member company executives have shared their experiences with Mike – from many late night telephone strategy sessions, to victories on important issues that make our industry safer, smarter and stronger, and to the friendships that have grown over the years. I wanted to take a few moments to share what our members have said in tribute to Mike as he prepares for his next chapter.

As you enjoy these tributes to Mike, I wanted to share that the phrase I've most often heard when it comes to Mike is that he is a true "Southern Gentleman." When we reflect on Mike's countless contributions, his steady hand of leadership and his accomplishment over these past twenty years, I'm reminded of a quote from George Bernard Shaw, who said "A gentleman is one who puts more into the world than he takes out", and the words and reminiscences below are a testament to NWRA's true "Southern Gentlemen."

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, our Supplier and Services Boards of Governors, our 30 chapters nationwide, our NWRA staff and all of our members, please join me in wishing Mike well as he begins a new chapter in his life.

### ***From Gentry Shows – NWRA Alabama Chapter:***

*"Mike Huff is one of the most genuine people that I have ever had the privilege of working with. Mike is the face of the National Waste and Recycling Association in Alabama. There would be no chapter in Alabama without Mike's effort and determination. And, speaking as Chapter Chair, I don't know how I would have been able to fulfill my duties without his help and guidance. Mike is always the voice of reason, he steadies the group when controversy arises, and makes sure that everyone's voice and opinion is heard. He's a great organizer and communicator that keeps the chapter aimed in the right direction. I will miss my friend. There will never be another Mike Huff. This industry is better through his efforts."*

### ***From Phil Carter at Waste Industries:***

*"Mike Huff has been a true asset to the Association, to our Carolina's Chapter, as well as the numerous other chapters he has shepherded throughout the Sunbelt Region over the past 20 years, and most important, he has been a good friend to all in our industry that have come to know him. He will be sorely missed."*

Phil went on to detail two examples of Mike's exceptionalism in serving our members:

*"In 2005, I had recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq and one of my first assignments...was to get involved with the Just Compensation effort. I jumped in head first and poor Mike didn't know me from Adam. All of a sudden, he's getting countless questions and phone calls from some guy who's supposed to be working for Waste Industries and says he wants to help get Just Comp passed. Over time, we became acquainted and with the help of representatives from other companies and lobbyists, our Chapter was successful in overcoming the onslaught by local government associations, and the end result was that our Chapter was victorious and now the State of North Carolina has one of the strongest just compensation laws for private solid waste and recycling collectors in the country."*

*“In 2007, a sweeping and draconian landfill regulation was proposed that would make the already extremely difficult task of siting a landfill in North Carolina virtually impossible. For many months, our chapter fought valiantly under the guidance of Mike Huff. There were countless hours of conference calls, legislative and stakeholder meetings and more late night phone calls between Mike and me than I can remember. Unfortunately, that act was passed and we have been fighting for repeal ever since. Mike has been right there in the trenches with us – guiding, directing and facilitating. And, most important, representing the Association in the best possible way.”*

**From Charlie Latham of Waste Management, Mayor of Jacksonville Beach, Florida:**

*“I have been an active participant in the NSWMA/NWRA for almost 20 years. I have worked for large companies, small companies and consultants, but have always stayed active in the Chapter. Mike Huff is the main reason I was a consistent member for those two decades. He treats all members exactly the same, whether from a large company or small. Mike and I developed a close friendship from day one. We shared many good times and bad times together. The Florida Chapter of the NWRA will NOT be the same without our friend Mike Huff!”*

**From Chaz Miller, Director of Policy for NWRA:**

*“I have had the joy of working with Mike since he started here twenty years ago and I had the opportunity to manage him for a decade or so. His professionalism and dedication to our industry is without parallel. He could always be depended on to get the job done. His annual conferences ran smoothly and if anything went wrong, only he and other staff would know because the problem got fixed before anyone else knew about it. Mike is not a glory hound; instead, he believed that success for the industry was all the glory he needed. Mike will be missed by the members of the Sunbelt Chapters and by those of us who worked with him. He loved his job and the members he worked for.”*

**From Keyna Cory at Public Affairs Consultants (Florida):**

*“Twenty years ago when Chuck Button told me he was leaving as Sunbelt Region Manager, I said no one could ever replace him. Then I met Mike Huff. I have really enjoyed working with Mike over the years on a variety of issues in Florida. No matter the challenge, he stepped up to the plate and found a solution. And always did it with a smile! The Florida Chapter is going to miss Mike and hopes he will come back and visit us! We promise to have a nice glass of wine waiting for him!”*

**From Peggy Macenas – NWRA Midwest Regional Manager:**

*“I have been extremely fortunate that Mike Huff has been my colleague and water cooler buddy of 20 + years. The advocacy team in the field – Steve Changaris, myself, Mike Dobson, Bob Kania along with Chaz Miller and of course Mike Huff, sought out each other and enjoyed industry discussions on issues and how best to serve the membership. Along the way, we definitely had fun too. Mike will be the first to say the Sunbelt’s members are the best. I know Steve Changaris and I allow him to think that, fully aware our Region, or should I say the Midwest, has the best members. I am saddened by Mike’s departure, but can’t help but smile because, it has been a blast.”*From Randall

**Essick – Waste Management:**

*“I will always remember the look on Mike’s face the first time I ask him how we had done something in the past and after he told me I said, “I do not want to do it that way this time.” After his initial shock, he said “how do you want to do it?” While that look on his face was “priceless,” the biggest compliment I can give Mike is that no matter how unusual my idea was, Mike was always willing to listen and provide feedback. Once we agreed on how we should move forward, I had total confidence that Mike would handle every detail to make sure it came off as we had planned. The association will be losing a person of integrity, professionalism, and someone who everyone just loves to be around. Mike, as you turn down the lights on your time at the association, please know how much you will be missed!!!”*

**CONTACT US**

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