Whe! It’s April already? I find it hard to fathom that we are finished with the first quarter of 2013. There is so much going on that it literally gets my head spinning. Remember my January article? I had listed several benefits of membership with FSAWWA. Let’s take a look at your membership benefits in action:

- FSAWWA Distribution Award Presentations
- FSAWWA Landmark Award Presentations
- FSAWWA Legislative Day
- Business Practices and Leadership Workshop
- AWWA Fly-In
- Region Taste Tests

This is just a sample of what the section has to offer its members.

Award Presentations

We have successfully presented five out of the six distribution awards to the following utility members:

- City of Clermont
- Bonita Springs Utilities
- Bay County Utility Services
- City of Ft. Lauderdale
- Ozello Water Association

We have yet to honor Hillsborough County with its award at the time of this writing. When presenting these awards, it’s humbling to see how important it is to the utility. This award and its presentation give the utility an elevated presence in front of its board, council, or commission. It’s no surprise that the utilities make this a focal point every year. The award highlights the unseen work that goes on every day to maintain a safe and reliable drinking water system.

We also presented two Landmark Awards this year: to City of St. Augustine and the City of Tarpon Springs. These awards highlight the dedication of the utility and the governing body to maintain and preserve facilities in operation. Some facilities receiving this award have been in operation for more than 100 years.
Both of these awards provide excellent public relations opportunities and are part of your membership benefits. A special thank you to Carl Larrabee, Mark Lehigh, Grace Johns, and Marvin Kaden for their help in presenting these awards.

**FSAWWA Legislative Day**

The Legislative Day was held on February 18 and was very well attended. One of the interesting facets from this year’s event is that it was scheduled around committee week instead of the general session. This allowed the delegates to sit in and watch some of the committees in action.

This was a new experience for me, and I must admit I felt more involved this year than I had in past years. We had, in my opinion, more face time with key legislators and it appeared to me that they understood our industry concerns. This was very different than just talking with the staff members.

As I mentioned in my January article, this is a great opportunity for utilities to have their voice heard by our state legislature. A huge thank you to Pat Lehman, Edgar Fernandez, Frank Bernardino, and the entire Utility Council for putting together this event. Another membership benefit in action!

**Upcoming Events**

We have several events that are coming up, including the Business Practices and Leadership Workshop, held at FSAWWA headquarters in St. Cloud; the AWWA Fly-In, held in Washington, D.C.; and our twelve Region Taste Tests.

All of these events represent your membership benefits in action. They help with public relations for your local community, present an opportunity for networking and education, offer professional development, and provide a voice for industry leaders to the nation’s lawmakers.

On a final note, please do not forget about the upcoming Florida Water Resources Conference at the end of this month. This is an excellent opportunity to network with your fellow FSAWWA members and Florida’s water professionals. If you have not already met the FSAWWA board of governors, please make it a point to do so at this event. Look for the blue ribbon hanging from their name badges indicating them as a board member. Ask us how you can get involved with the FSAWWA; you will find that we are all very happy to have the opportunity to talk with you about it.

Please visit the FSAWWA website at www.fsawwa.org for more information and to see what upcoming events you might be interested volunteering for or attending. Remember, these are your benefits—put them to action and let them work for you.