The FSAWWA is comprised of 12 local regions that provide training, public outreach, networking, and fundraising in their communities to enhance member services and develop section leaders throughout Florida. Initiated in 1995, this system has increased the number of active members who are engaged in all aspects of AWWA and the Florida Section. Our regions have become the workhorse and the heart and soul of our organization and have created a steady flow of leaders from all parts of Florida who together have created a strong, valuable, and influential FSAWWA.

Members are encouraged to become active in the region where they live or work. Each region has a slate of officers, including chair and vice chair, who lead FSAWWA members at regular meetings to plan and hold events consistent with AWWA’s mission and goals. Each region has established its own specific goals, including:

- Engaging and promoting new FSAWWA leaders within the region
- Being the go-to entity for water professional engagement in their region
- Increasing young professionals involvement
- Enhancing FSAWWA’s relationship with local colleges and students to encourage careers in the water industry
- Hosting activities at high schools and middle schools that encourage students to pursue water industry careers
- Increasing cooperation with other associations and other FSAWWA regions
- Continuing Water For People and the Likins Scholarship fundraising with events held throughout the year

In this column, I want to introduce you to these regions and give you an idea of what they do so you don’t miss out on their activities in 2017.

Training is Easy When it’s Local

The most valuable benefit of the local regions is the opportunity to attend local training classes that provide professional certification for the many plant operator, distribution system, and engineering licenses required to be renewed on a regular basis. The following are good examples of the training events held by our regions in 2016:

- “People are Talking about Water: What is Hillsborough County Doing to Address 21st Century Water Challenges” at winter luncheon (Region IV – West Central Florida).
- “Operation and Groundwater Quality Impacts of the Turkey Point Cooling Canals” at technical seminar (Region VII – South Florida).
- New technology and training showcase presented by FSAWWA Manufacturers Council: “Metering Technology, HDPE Technology, Joint Restraint, Gate Valves, and Dry Barrel Fire Hydrant Operations and Maintenance Technology” (Region X – West Central Florida).
- Second Annual CIP Night – Utility members presented their capital improvement plans for the upcoming year. Presenters were from Sarasota County, Manatee County, Englewood Water District, Lakewood Ranch Improvement District, City of Sarasota, and Town of Longboat Key (Region X – West Central Florida).
- “Protecting Florida’s Water Resources – Creative Solutions That Work” at full-day workshop (Region IV – West Central Florida).
- “Town of Longboat Key Force Main Assessment” at Joint FWEA Manasota Chapter/FSAWWA Region X luncheon.
- “Corrosion Control and Condition Assessment: Six Steps to Safer Digging - 811” at Protect and Prevent Workshop presented by FSAWWA Operators and Maintenance Council (Region IV – West Central Florida).
- “Implementing Conditional Use Permit Requirements for JEA’s Main Street Wellfield” presentation followed by a tour of the drilling of Main Street Well 6A (Region II – Northeast Florida).

The 2016 FSAWWA Young Professionals Summer Seminar hosted presentations on the Lead and Copper Rule. Most of the regions participated by providing a local venue to watch the webinar and hosting a local networking activity afterward. More than 300 members throughout the state participated.
More than 110 members and guests enjoyed the Region VI – Southeast Florida Best Tasting Drinking Water Competition in 2016, with 21 water utilities competing. The event included a bluegrass band featuring one of our own members, dinner, and a raffle that raised more than $700 for Water For People. Judges for the contest represented academia, the media, and a regulatory agency.

More than 230 members and guests enjoyed the Region VII – South Florida 2016 Best Tasting Drinking Water Contest, with six local utilities participating. This event recognized 45 FSAWMA sponsors.

Towers of the Model Water Tower Competition at Creekside High School in 2016 sponsored by Region II – Northeast Florida.

Region X – West Central Florida incorporated its 2016 Model Water Tower Competition into the Sarasota County Technology Student Association curriculum to introduce students to the water industry.

Above: Region VII's second annual Water For People Golf Tournament at the Country Club of Miami raised more than $3,000 for the cause. More than 100 members and guests participated.

At left: Region II – Northeast Florida hosts a very popular deep sea fishing trip each year on the Mayport Princess. This group photo was taken in 2016.
Enjoy Local Outreach and Networking

The two most popular outreach and networking events held each year by most regions are the Model Water Tower Competition and the Best of the Best Tasting Drinking Water Contest. Region IV – West Central Florida also participated in the Great America Teach-In by visiting high school classes to speak about careers in the water industry and educate students on the importance of water and wastewater treatment.

Networking is a very popular and productive activity and our regions are experts in providing fun and engaging opportunities to meet fellow water professionals and share experiences and knowledge. Common networking events include bowling, fishing, and golfing tournaments; minor and major league baseball group outings; deep sea fishing excursions; and clay shooting. Our regions have created wildly popular fundraising and outreach events that have raised more than $60,000 each year for Water For People and provided more than $25,000 per year in scholarships.

Contact Your Region Chair

It’s easy to get involved with your region. All of the information is at www.fsawwa.org under “Regions” where the chair’s name and contact information are provided. Attend the next meeting and be watchful of the FSAWWA training and event emails and newsletters that are sent to all members in the region. We look forward to seeing you soon!

There is an FSAWWA Region Near You

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<tr>
<th>Region Name</th>
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<th>Region Chair</th>
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<td>I – North Central FL</td>
<td>Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla</td>
<td>Edward Bettinger, Florida Department of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>II – Northeast FL</td>
<td>Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns</td>
<td>Larry K. Miller Jr., St. Johns County Utility Department</td>
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<td>III – North Central FL</td>
<td>Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Volusia</td>
<td>Lance Littrell, Kimley-Horn</td>
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<td>IV – West Central FL</td>
<td>Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sumter</td>
<td>Steven King, Black &amp; Veatch</td>
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<td>V – Southwest FL</td>
<td>Collier, Hendry, Lee</td>
<td>Ron Cavalleri, AECOM</td>
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<td>VI – Southeast FL</td>
<td>Broward, Palm Beach</td>
<td>Gerrit Bulman, CH2M</td>
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<td>VII – South FL</td>
<td>Miami-Dade, Monroe</td>
<td>Maricela Fuentes, Miami Dade Water and Sewer Department</td>
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<td>VIII – East Central FL</td>
<td>Glades, Highlands, Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, St. Lucie</td>
<td>Valerie Schulte, Ft. Pierce Water Authority</td>
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<td>IX – West FL Panhandle</td>
<td>Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton</td>
<td>Monica Autrey, Destin Water Users Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>X – West Central FL</td>
<td>Charlotte, De Soto, Hardee, Manatee, Sarasota</td>
<td>Terri Holcomb, HDR Engineering Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>XI – North FL</td>
<td>Alachua, Baker, Branford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Marion, Lafayette, Levy, Suwannee, Union</td>
<td>Kristen Sealey, Gainesville Regional Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII – Central FL Panhandle</td>
<td>Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Jackson, Holmes, Washington</td>
<td>Bobby Gibbs, Bay County Utility Services</td>
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