I’m looking forward to our Fall Conference, which will be held November 26-30 at the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate. This hotel is one of my favorites—it’s homey and luxurious—so don’t miss this chance to enjoy becoming a better water professional by speaking, listening, and networking with your peers.

Last year’s conference attracted more than 1,500 water professionals representing a diversity of expertise and skills, including utility managers, engineers, water plant operators, water distribution system operators, customer service providers, water technology vendors, chemists, geologists, economists, accountants, geographic information system and information management specialists, and anyone providing the chain of products and services that create safe and reliable water for all. This conference welcomes new participants and students to a variety of networking, learning, and competitive events.

This year our theme is “Stewardship and Responsibility” and we expect at least 1,500 attendees, plus more than 150 exhibitors. Online and mail registration, and information on conference activities and sponsorship opportunities, are available at fsawwa.org/2017fallconference.

Six workshops are featured at the conference on Monday, including:

1. 50 Shades of Gray Areas: Understanding the Ethical and Legal Responsibilities of Water and Wastewater Sample Collection From Operators to Management
2. What is the Future for Chloramines?
3. Brain Drain Solutions: Innovative Ways to Fill Openings and Keep Current Staff
4. Utility Systems Symposium: Smart Cities Integration into the Utility Industry
5. Finance, Rates, and Perspectives on the Value of Water
6. The Utility’s Role in Environmental Stewardship in Light of EPA’s Revised Priorities

These workshops are included in the full and Monday-only registrations.

The Opening General Session (OGS) follows the workshops and, as in past years, will feature an engaging, interesting, and memorable session.
keynote speaker. Also at OGS, we will recognize our AWWA Silver Drop Awardees and our 2017 Operators Scholarship recipients. We will be presenting the Regions’ Volunteer of the Year Awards and the Councils’ Awards of Excellence for Distinguished Service. Immediately following the OGS, the exhibit hall opens at 4 p.m., with a welcome reception until 6 p.m.

Monday night is our annual BBQ Challenge and Incoming Chair’s Reception. This dinner party is a fun time for everyone and is included in the full and Monday-only registrations. Last year, nine teams competed for the honor of “Grand Champion.” The food was fabulous and so was the company.

This year, we will be toasting Bill Young as our incoming chair. It will be quite a party and a fun networking opportunity. The day ends with an old-fashioned poker tournament to benefit the Roy Likins Scholarship Fund.

Tuesday features technical sessions, including the following:

- Reuse as a Drinking Water Supply Solution
- Status of Membrane Treatment in Florida
- New Alternative Water Supply Planning Methods
- Water Quality Assessment in the Water Distribution System
- Communicating With Stakeholders
- Water Pipe Replacement: State of the Industry in Florida
- New Water Treatment Methods and Design Options

You can observe a variety of competitions throughout Tuesday, including:

- Backhoe Rodeo
- “Best of the Best” People’s Choice Water Tasting Contest
- Iron Ductile Tap and Fun Tap competitions
- Students “Water Bowl”
- Meter Madness
- Students and Young Professionals Poster Session

Don’t know what some of these are? Then come to the conference and find out how our water professionals have fun while fine-tuning their skills. More networking opportunities on Tuesday include the Students and Young Professionals Luncheon at 11:30 am and the Exhibitor “Meet and Greet” at the exhibit hall from 4 to 6 p.m.

The Water For People Duck Race starts at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday at the hotel’s Lazy River. Purchase a “ride” on one or more of our rubber duckies for $5 each, or five rides for $20. All duck-ride sales go directly to Water For People, a charitable organization with the following mission: “To see communities break free from the cycle of poverty and spend time growing, learning, and thriving, instead of walking for water and fighting off illness. We’re working to reach Everyone Forever with safe water and sanitation.”

Technical sessions continue on Wednesday, including:

Continued on page 36
The FSAWWA Annual Business Luncheon and Awards Ceremony begins at noon. This is an easy opportunity to learn more about FSAWWA and meet many of our active volunteers.

After the luncheon, the Water Use Efficiency Division meeting will be held, and anyone can attend and learn more about water conservation and efficiency.

The conference concludes on Thursday with the annual Fall Conference Golf Tournament at the ChampionsGate National Golf Course. This tourney is always well-attended and is a great opportunity to golf with colleagues in a beautiful, relaxed setting. Sponsorship opportunities are available and all proceeds benefit the Roy Likins Scholarship Fund.

We look forward to seeing you at our 2017 FSAWWA Fall Conference!

Customer Service Committee

Our first FSAWWA Customer Service Committee meeting was held by telephone on July 25, with 10 FSAWWA members participating. The committee’s new officers are:

- Chair – Sandra Anderson
- Vice Chair – Georges Gonzalez
- Secretary – Paul Haskins

The committee’s next meeting is via teleconference on October 12 at 10 a.m. All FSAWWA members with an interest in customer service and billing are urged to join in. Please email Paul Haskins at haskinsp@HillsboroughCounty.org to be added to the email list for meeting updates.