Message from the Chair

I would like to begin by wishing everyone a healthy and prosperous 2017! Our Region had a very active and successful 2016! Thank you to all the members that participated in the numerous events we hosted, the countless volunteers that supported us, the many companies that generously pledged their sponsorship. Most importantly, we would like to give a “Shout-Out” to Region VII’s six utilities. Thank you for delivering safe water and sanitary services to all residents in Miami-Dade and Monroe County.

Region VII is off to a great start in 2017. A record 26 companies have signed on as regional sponsors for this year and several other companies have committed to sponsor individual events. Their generous support enables us to provide trainings, events, and financial support to Roy Likins Scholarship and Water for People.

We have many activities planned for this year and we ask that you participate and help us spread the word. We will continue to host the Water Tasting Contest in the spring, followed by the Wine Tasting Fundraiser in the Fall. In addition, we will also be holding our third annual Water for People Golf Tournament. We are excited to continue to grow the industry and support our rising members by hosting the Young Professional Summer Seminar and to help our community and environment with the Baynanza Biscayne Bay Clean-up.

We have a tremendous year planned, and I am excited to work with all the professionals, sponsoring companies, and supplying utilities. We, the members, are what make Region VII so successful and I thank you all in advance for all your help, your support, and your participation throughout this coming year! Cheers, and I look forward to seeing you soon at Best Tasting Water Contest on April 12th.

For any questions regarding FSAWWA Region VII, email Maricela at maricela.fuentes@miamidade.gov

Maricela J. Fuentes, P.E.

Maricela Fuentes is a graduate of Florida International University and works as an Assistant Director of Capital Improvements at Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department.
Resilient Utility Coalition (RUC) Visioning Workshop is a Success

The Resilient Utility Coalition (RUC) Visioning Workshop was held on August 18, 2016 at Port-Miami. Over 200 people attended, which included 20 utilities from the Region, 3 major universities, and representatives from across the industry.

With the objective of advancing utility infrastructure resiliency efforts and to operationalize the policy recommendations of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact, the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department has taken a leadership role, along with professional organizations consisting of FSAWWA, ASCE Miami-Dade Branch, and the FES Miami Chapter, in founding the Resilient Utility Coalition. RUC’s visioning workshop was intended to initiate a regional conversation on resiliency and facilitate the development of joint strategies to mitigate the challenges currently faced by utilities in South Florida.

The agenda for the event included presentations from representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, as well as representatives from regional regulatory agencies such as Miami-Dade Department of Regulatory Economic Resources. The main focus of the event was the completion of a Visioning Exercise which intended to initiate a regional conversation among all the stakeholders on resiliency and facilitate the development of joint strategies to mitigate the challenges currently faced by utilities in South Florida.

FSAWWA Region VII Model Water Tower Competition

On December 3, 2016, Region VII and WASD hosted its Model Water Tower Competition. This event was funded with the support of our annual sponsors. Surrounding area high schools and middle schools were invited to compete.
2016 Best Tasting Water Named

The annual FSAWWA Region VII “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Taste Test took place last year on April 14, 2016, at the Coral Gables Country Club in Coral Gables, Florida.

Region VII hosted the 2016 Best Tasting Drinking Water Contest on April 14 at the Coral Gables Country Club in Coral Gables, Florida. Attendance and sponsorship was strong, as in previous years, with more than 230 individuals in attendance, 45 sponsors (26 annual sponsors and 19 event sponsors), and 6 local utilities participating in the contest. The event consisted of a cocktail/networking reception, dinner, and the taste-test contest. A six-judge panel representing the local utilities selected the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA) as the first place winner, with City of Homestead as a runner up. Other participating utilities included Florida City, City of North Miami, NMB Water, and Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (MDWASD).

Member Spotlight

1. Why did you choose this industry?
   I think this industry chose me. As a graduate in Mechanical Engineering, it wasn’t even on my radar. I was hired as a Project Engineer 10 years ago and was immediately immersed into the world of pipelines. My career has brought me to some pretty amazing places and has provided many opportunities.

2. What is your current position?
   Regional Operations Manager – Southeast US.

3. How did you get involved in AWWA?
   My mentors urged me to get involved with the AWWA community. My first exposure locally was at the Region VII Water Taste Test. I’ve attended some of the larger state and nation-wide conferences as well.

4. How has AWWA helped you grow as a young professional?
   AWWA has provided quite a bit of education. From the local workshops to the joining of minds at conferences, AWWA keeps you up with what’s going on in the industry. It gives you an opportunity to grow, get your name out there and be among your peers and clients.
Baynanza Biscayne Bay Clean-Up

On April 16, 2016, over 25 Region VII volunteers and their families joined forces to participate in the 34th Baynanza. This year’s event featured thousands of volunteers who helped pick up trash from the shoreline and islands of Biscayne Bay. Region VII pitched in at the Morningside Park site, continuing a tradition of supporting this event and Miami-Dade County. FSAWWA sponsored the Water Wagon at Morningside Park, the event’s main location, which successfully kept volunteers hydrated while reminding them of the importance and the benefits of choosing tap water.

Young Professional’s Summer Seminar and Bowling Tournament

The 2016 FSAWWA Young Professionals Summer Seminar hosted presentations on the Lead and Copper Rule during a half-day seminar on August 30, 2016. FSAWWA Region VII participated in the seminar, hosting the event at Miami-Dade Water and Sewer’s training facilities.

The event proved successful, with approximately 35 attendees from local utilities, municipalities, and consulting firms. A diverse group attended the Summer Seminar, where water distribution maintenance staff sat alongside engineers and manufacturers.

Following the YP Summer Seminar, the audience was invited to attend the Region VII Annual Bowling Tournament, which took place later that evening at Splitsville. The Bowling Tournament was a success once again, with over 50 participants.

Annual Water for People Golf Tournament

On October 21, 2016, FSAWWA Region VII held its Second Annual Water for People (WFP) Golf Tournament in the Country Club of Miami as part of the fundraising campaigns and public outreach/awareness efforts to support Water for People. The event was a success with nearly 100 players, including representatives of private sector companies and local utilities.

Region VII obtained the support of 26 annual sponsors, 6 event sponsors, and several volunteers to raise more than $3,000 toward WFP. Team Black and Veatch won first place. Shifting the event date to late October paid off with excellent weather for golfing in South Florida. Participants enjoyed the tournament and expressed their desire to participate in the 2017 edition.
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THANK YOU TO OUR 2017 REGION VII SPONSORS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2017 FSAWWA “BEST OF THE BEST” DRINKING WATER TASTE TEST
Date: Wednesday, April 12
Time: 5:30 pm
Location: Rusty Pelican, 3201 Rickenbacker Causeway
Key Biscayne, FL 33149

BAYNANZA BISCAYNE BAY CLEANUP
Date: Saturday, April 22
Time: 9:00 am
Location: Matheson Hammock Park,
9610 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, FL 33156

AWWA Florida Section, Region VII
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