Message from the Chair

Given the recent weather events, I hope everyone has remained safe and has been able to return to their regular routines. This year started as a promising year, with strong support from our 26 regional sponsors and numerous event sponsors. This robust momentum was carried throughout the spring and summer – impressive support and sponsorship allowed us as a Region to host multiple events and trainings, each with tremendous turnouts from our members and the rest of the industry. We had nearly 300 attendees at this year’s “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Contest where North Miami’s tap water won the top prize, and not to mention, went on to win at the state level as well.

Along with the support we receive from our sponsors, members and volunteers, we are thankful for the tremendous work done by Region VII’s six utilities who maintain their service and deliver safe water to the residents of Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. As we have done in the past, we were able to sponsor the statewide Drop Savers Water Conservation Poster Contest, with three of the statewide winners coming from Miami-Dade. We were also grateful to be a part of the 35th Baynanza Biscayne Bay Clean-Up, where over 20 of our region’s volunteers and their families worked together to clean up at the Matheson Hammocks site.

We have multiple events planned for the rest of the year, including our holidays member appreciation social. I hope that you will come out and enjoy these events with us as well as help us spread the word, enabling the Region to grow. Together we can support our rising members, help our community and help the environment.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and look forward to seeing you at our next event.

For any questions regarding FSAWWA Region VII, including volunteer opportunities, email Marisela at marisela.aranguiz@miamidade.gov
Young Professional (YP) Networking Event

The YP Networking event was held on March 16, 2017 at The Bar Venue at Coral Gables.

The event was a combined affair with the Florida Water Environmental Association (FWEA) Miami chapter. There were over thirty attendees—young and seasoned professionals from the water and wastewater industry, both public and private sector, were seen mingling at The Bar along with civil engineering undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Miami. Food and drinks were served while members networked, sharing past and current engineering experiences and discussing upcoming conferences and other FSAWWA events.

In photo from left to right: David Hernandez with Hazen and Sawyer, Veronica Llaneza with AECOM and Nelson Perez-Jacome with Hazen and Sawyer.

DROP SAVERS 2017 Water Conservation Poster Contest

Once again, the FSAWWA sponsored the statewide Drop Savers Water Conservation Poster Contest during National Drinking Water Week, from May 7 to 13, 2017. The contest gives children from kindergarten through high school the opportunity to design a poster about water conservation. This year, 29 utilities around the state participated and over 100 posters were received. Three of the state winners were from Region VII. Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD) had two first-place winners and one third-place winner. The winners received calendars, certificates, plaques, tote bags, water conservation kits, and gift cards. The 2017 winning posters were exhibited during our Region VII Annual “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Contest. Awards to the winning students were presented at Miami-Dade’s Commissioners meeting.
Member Spotlight

1. Why did you choose this industry?
I was interested in a career where I could impact my community. I gravitated towards environmental engineering based on the importance of water in daily life. A driver was growing up in Guatemala where access to water and sanitation is a major challenge. I am fortunate and blessed to do work that brings me daily challenges and improves the lives of others.

2. What is your current position?
I serve as Operations Manager and Senior Project Manager for CH2M’s Miami-Dade County office.

3. How did you get involved in AWWA?
Region VII leadership encouraged me to become active in the Florida Section. After attending the water taste competition, I decided to volunteer my time to AWWA.

4. How has AWWA helped you grow as a young professional?
Being active in Region VII allowed me to interact with local leaders, expand my professional network, and gain technical skills. From leading committees to volunteering in the water tower competition to Co-Chairing Region VII, the experiences have been rewarding and satisfying.

FSAWWA 2017 “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Contest

North Miami’s Water Utility, a division of the City of North Miami’s Public Works Department, celebrated winning the FSAWWA’s “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Contest at both the local, Region VII, and state levels in 2017.

Six water utilities from Monroe and Miami-Dade counties participated in FSAWWA Region VII’s 2017 “Best of the Best” Drinking Water Contest. The local contest was held at the Rusty Pelican on April 12, 2017. North Miami’s tap water won top prize at the local level, with NMB Water (City of North Miami Beach) as the runner-up.

Participating utilities in this year’s Region VII included, City of Homestead Public Works Department, City of North Miami, Florida City, Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, and NMB Water (City of North Miami Beach).

North Miami went on to represent Region VII, and win at the State level contest, at the Florida Section’s 15th Annual Drinking Water Taste Test in West Palm Beach on April 25th. This is the second time a water utility from Region VII won at both the regional and state levels, with North Miami Beach winning both at the local and state levels back in 2003.

FSAWWA sponsors the drinking water taste test in an effort to educate consumers about water-related issues and raise awareness about water conservation.

Juan Aceituno
Past Region VII Chair
35th Baynanza Biscayne Bay Clean-Up

On April 22, 2017, over 20 Region VII volunteers and their families joined forces to participate in the 35th Baynanza. This year’s event featured thousands of volunteers who helped clean up Biscayne Bay at various sites. Together, volunteers picked up trash from the shoreline and islands of Biscayne Bay. Region VII pitched in at the Matheson Hammocks site, continuing a tradition of supporting this event and Miami-Dade County. FSAWWA sponsored the Water Wagon at the event’s main location, Matheson Hammocks Park, which was a great success in keeping the volunteers hydrated while reminding them about the importance and the benefits of choosing tap water.

RUC Tech Talk Series

FSAWWA Region VII has served as a partner for the Resilient Utility Coalition (RUC) since its establishment in August of 2016. In June 2017, RUC hosted the kick-off event for the RUC Tech Talk Series. This initiative is a continuation of RUC’s mission for serving as a facilitator for communication and knowledge sharing regarding topics relevant to the development of joint strategies and actions to achieve resiliency within our utilities.

The event was a resounding success with more than 80 participants representing all branches of the water and wastewater industry. A recording of the presentation, along with the material presented, have been posted on RUC’s website. This information is accessible to everyone. Please visit www.resilientutilities.org to access this material.

We look forward to seeing you at the next RUC Tech Talk to continue to advance utility infrastructure resiliency efforts in South Florida.
2017 Florida Water Resources Conference (FWRC)

The 2017 Florida Water Resources Conference was held at the Palm Beach County Convention Center from April 23rd to the 26th. It was the first time in several years that the conference was held in South Florida, and it proved to be a success. Over 1,000 attendees from throughout the state participated in the conference. These included water and wastewater utilities, manufacturers, consultants, and members of the public.

The conference boasted a robust technical program, which delved into diverse topics including utility management, big data, reuse, and emerging technologies. Region VII had significant participation in the conference, with members presenting within various technical tracks. It was an opportunity to showcase the exceptional work of the water industry in Region VII.

YP Summer Seminar/Bowling Tournament

The YP Summer Seminar/ Bowling Tournament was held on August 3, 2017 at Miami-Dade Water & Sewer Department Building and at Splitsville Luxury Lanes.

The FSAWWA half-day Summer Seminar was designed for young as well as seasoned professionals interested in water quality and water treatment. The presentations covered topics including the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 4), the protocol governing how contaminants become regulated, and an overview of cyanotoxins and how to educate the public about them. Professionals who attended received PDHs along with refreshments and snacks. The Annual YP Bowling Tournament followed the conclusion of the seminar. Teams competed for first and second place and hoped to avoid being awarded worst bowler. Multiple gift certificates were raffled at during the evening of mingling, drinking, eating and bowling.
2017 ANNUAL SPONSORS

THANK YOU TO OUR 2017 REGION VII SPONSORS

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Beth Waters, Hazen and Sawyer

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Water Conservation Committee Chair
Patrick Martin, MDWASD
Melissa Velez, CDM

Florida Section AWWA Chair
Grace M. Johns, PhD, Hazen and Sawyer

Past Region VII Chair
Juan F. Aceituno, CH2M

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEMBER APPRECIATION SOCIAL
When: December 7, 2017
Location: Coral Gables Woman’s Club
1001 Ponce De Leon Blvd