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Established in 1881, the American Water Works Association is the largest nonprofit, scientific and educational association dedicated to managing and treating water, the world's most important resource. With approximately 50,000 members, AWWA provides solutions to improve public health, protect the environment, strengthen the economy and enhance our quality of life.

The Illinois Section of the American Water Works Association (ISAWWA) has more than 2,200 members throughout the State of Illinois and is dedicated to safe and sustainable water for Illinois. The Illinois Section AWWA is the resource for conferences, seminars, workshops, video rental library and teleconferences. The Association develops and delivers low-cost and convenient education seminars for water industry professionals.

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ON THE COVER: Artwork by Marco Villalobos from Seton Catholic School, this year's winner in the annual Moline Water Student CCR Art Contest.

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HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING

It is unbelievable how fast the past several months have flown! WATERCON 2018 was an experience that will be unforgettable! Featuring our veterans touched all of our hearts. Our keynote speaker, Captain Karen Baetzel, did an outstanding job to get us fired up at the start of the conference. The color guards’ presentation of the colors was amazing and the awarding of the challenge coin to our military veterans tugged at the heart with lots of emotion! A couple of Karen’s quotes have stayed with me and are worth sharing: “Say what you mean, mean what you say, and don’t say it mean,” and “Competence is where is grows!” These are great words of wisdom worth sharing. She also shared her experiences of overcoming being a minority in the military. We had record attendance, which was nice for our AWWA visitor, Mitch Kannenberg from South Dakota. He really enjoyed himself and took away several things from our conference to take home to the South Dakota Section.

Thursday was an exciting day for me… Chris Ulm passed the gavel to me at the Awards Breakfast. It was finally official and an honor to represent all our members as Chair. I remember thinking, “what will I say...” – thank God for Google. I searched and realized that Thursday, March 22 was World Water Day and the theme was “Nature for Water,” exploring how nature can be used to overcome water challenges for the 21st century. It is an international observance day designed to inspire people around the world to learn more about water-related issues, tell others about these issues, and act to make a difference! I thought, this is it... you would have thought the description was describing WATERCON! This is exactly what we do every year. Each year it gets better and we continue to grow. It is a busy week filled with lots of technical sessions, networking, committee meetings, and competitions, exhibitors, seeing old friends, and meeting new friends. We continue to expand to include new “groups” such as veterans, our youth represented from the science fair, Lego competition, OIT, and our YPs, who have lots of energy and are tech savvy!

Well, I have hit the ground running trying to keep up with all our activities and committees and my day job. Senate Bill 3080 dealing with lead service lines and associated timelines has given me a crash course on legislation and working together with politicians and our state agencies. We are fortunate to have the Water Utility Council (WUC) who have made many strides since the initiation of SB3080. John Donahue, North Park Water District CEO, wrote a white paper with a great overview of SB3080, titled “Managing Lead Service Lines in Illinois.” It is on our website. I encourage you all to read it and to join in the WUC meetings. The more utilities we have, the stronger our voice becomes. I would like to thank Ted Meckes, Springfield’s CWLP Water Division Manager, for all he contributes on our behalf. He has been instrumental in meeting with IEPA, IDPH, and legislators.

You all should know that you all have a voice and Henry Ford puts it perfectly: “Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” This is so true, because our biggest challenge is finding enough time to do it all. Always remember your opinion is crucial in growing our membership. We want our members to be involved and our programs easily duplicated. My goal during my short time as your Chair will be to continue growing our “toolbox,” making it very easy to access and duplicate the information so you will not have to recreate the wheel. I hope our website and Social Link (SL), our membership’s social network, will be the first place you go when you need information about an issue, have a question, or want to share news with others in the industry.

The past couple of months have been very busy with work educating our youth. April and May are big education months with Illinois American Water’s Mobile Education Center.
ISAWWA will continue to make it an easy access network at your fingertips. I won’t lie, sometimes it is social overload with SL, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Snap Chat to name a few, but to keep up with the times, you need to find what works for you. Technology will not be going away any time soon, so you may want to embrace it and reap the benefits from it. This is where we are lucky as an organization, with our membership being so diverse, we have many members that can weigh in on the pros and cons and what will work best.

Always remember, whenever you have the opportunity to say a few words to students (young or adult), open one of our seminars, or attend an operators meeting, be sure to mention all the benefits one receives by being a member of ISAWWA and share with students the career opportunity of networking with professionals in all aspects of the water industry. With the retirements continuing at a fast pace, we all need to encourage students and people needing a change to look at our field for a career.

The past couple of months have been very busy with work educating our youth. April and May are big education months with Illinois American Water’s MEC (Mobile Education Center). We take this 18-foot trailer every year in April to the Clean Water Celebration in Peoria with 2,500+ students coming together to learn about water and conservation. This year’s theme provided awareness of why plastics are a growing problem in our waterways and environment. We also attend the IEPA Environmental Stewardship Day at the State Fair grounds in Springfield and had several school events. Each event I do with our MEC gives me an opportunity to educate the students about jobs in the water industry. I feel it is never early to put a bug in their ear! You never know when you may have an opportunity to put a plug in for our OIT program. Darrell King and Mike Ramsey are continuing to grow the OIT Program in the northeastern part of the state... I challenge the rest of us to duplicate it throughout the state!

As always keep in the know... visit our website (www.isawwa.org) for upcoming committee meetings, training, career opportunities, latest news, quick links, and much more. Don’t forget to check out SL (Social Link) and post something exciting. Remember it is exclusive to our members. With ACE18 in June, the members who are attending should be posting and sharing events and info for those who cannot attend!

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Past Chair Report

Chris Ulm

A TRIP AROUND THE SUN

I wonder if I am at the same spot in the universe as I was when I wrote last year’s Splash article, on the same date and about the same topic. I know I was at the same spot in my house!

Last year at this time we had just completed a Strategic Planning Session. A group of our Board Members and Committee Chairs had gathered together for two days to create a new strategic plan focused on helping each and every member out in their daily lives and their profession.

The plan included three strategic directions, or goals, for us to focus on for the three years that followed the planning session.

• Enriching the Value of Membership
• Enhancing the Volunteer Experience by Engaging Volunteers Effectively
• Raising the Level of Public Awareness of the Value of Water

Enriching the Value of Membership focuses on the gap between what you currently get out of membership and what you could be getting out of membership. I’ll bet there is someone out there in the industry you haven’t met yet. Or you’ve met them, but you didn’t know they’ve overcome some of the issues you are dealing with. Or they could really use your help with that thing you have mastered and they have no idea you knew how to do that thing (if you know what I mean).

So, getting you and them together in a mentor program, at a social event, or on a committee will enrich the value of both your memberships.

Enhancing the Volunteer Experience by Engaging Volunteers Effectively focuses on growing the committee member involvement and improving the committee’s effectiveness. Committees were made to get something done. When it’s a volunteer committee, it’s impossible to get 100% from 100% of the members 100% of the time. But if we make the experience more rewarding, efficient, and fun, can the input increase? Can the membership numbers grow because more want to be a part of what is going on? We think so. The more committee members, the lighter the individual load and the more that we can accomplish.

Raising the Level of Public Awareness of the Value of Water got a boost from Flint. Now that the spotlight is on us we need to show the customers and consumers that they should consume tap water without concern because we are doing our job to protect them.

Over the course of the year, several committees incorporate the Section’s strategic plan into a plan they created for their committee. They took the three goals and established action items to accomplish the goals through their committee.

Some committees were not able to find time to do this, but had interest in the process. This year, my mission is to check in on the committees that were able to make a plan of their own and see if there is something that can help them keep it going. And for the committees that were not able to incorporate the plan into a plan of their own, I am going to see if there is something we can do to help them get some action items in place to help us achieve the goals.

So, like I said in closing last year, if you’ve made it to this point of my article you are either extremely bored or you are interested and active in the Section’s growth. Either way, help me help you. If you are bored, get involved. If you are involved and active, find someone who isn’t and get them involved so you can move closer to being bored.

Enjoy your trip around the sun and I’ll update you next year (or sooner)!
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Chair Elect Report
Carolyn Grieves

REFLECTIONS ON WATERCON 2018

One of my main responsibilities as the past Vice Chair for the Illinois section was to chair the Technical Program Committee for WATERCON. I was really proud of the theme this year – Honoring our Veterans. Our Keynote Speaker Captain Karen Baetzel and the Challenge coin ceremony really reminded me to say thanks to all the veterans in our Association. I also want to say thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, presented, competed, exhibited (the list goes on!) at WATERCON 2018. Special thanks to our wonderful staff the Illinois Section including Laurie, Sandi, Stacey, Angela, John, and Marianne, who all work so hard (and seemingly effortlessly) to put this conference together. And don’t get me started on the MAC committee led by Todd Schaefer – what an incredible job he and the team did with the exhibit hall and all the competitions!

Time to reflect on the Technical Program. In March we shared 120 technical presentations. As ISAWWA continues to provide Total Water solutions, it’s great to be able to share that we were able to provide dedicated tracks to a variety of topics that affect our industry including the following: Leadership, Lead, Safety and Security, Small Systems, Women in Water, Water and Wastewater Operations and Engineering, Sanitary Sewer Collections, Asset Management, Water Distribution, Stormwater, Mentoring, Source Water, Water Loss, Regulator Updates, and even a site visit to the City of Springfield’s City Water Light and Power Treatment Plant. The Education Committee always works so hard and brought us an Operator Day Track and Stretch Your Education opportunities. The Young Professionals training opportunities, leadership summit, and reception really prove that the future of our industry is bright. I could continue to list all amazing components of this year’s conference but it is time to start thinking about 2019. Jeff Freeman will be leading the charge and I know it will be another fantastic conference in 2019! ☸

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Every drop counts.
Greetings and happy summer! My name is Jeff Freeman, and at WATERCON 2018 I became your organization’s Vice Chair. Thank you so much for the opportunity to continue to serve this great organization. Year after year, I continue to be impressed with the quality of people within the organization and the water industry. If you haven’t taken a minute in a while to think about all the smart, inventive, caring, and fun people you meet in this industry, you might want to take that minute to reflect. You might even be amazed at who you recall, or the path you have taken in your career.

For all of those more experienced members, take another few minutes to think about what it was like when you were first joining the water industry. Think about the one, two, or possibly more individuals who helped you get your feet under yourself and start your career path. In this issue, which is devoted to our young professionals, let’s think about opportunities where we can “pay it forward.” In your work setting, look for opportunities to help less experienced coworkers move along in their career. At ISAWWA functions, or for that matter any water, wastewater, and/or stormwater function, look for opportunities to help less experienced members get more involved.

One super-easy function where our membership has many opportunities to get involved is WATERCON. Whether it is helping with the Technical Program committee, presenting a technical session or teaching a session, moderating a session, helping a committee out with a conference function, or learning more about other committees, there are so many ways to dip your toe in the water or dive right in at WATERCON. If you have not maximized your opportunities at WATERCON in the past, you may want to start thinking about how you can maximize what you get out of WATERCON 2019.

Speaking of WATERCON… holy mackerel, what a great job Carolyn Grieves did leading the charge for WATERCON 2018! She did a great job keeping the things that have worked well, tweaking things that needed to be tweaked, and added in some new activities. That being said, we are always looking for opportunities to make your WATERCON experience even better. If there is something you think we should consider for WATERCON 2019, please let me know (630-466-6718 or jfreeman@eeiweb.com). Since helping with the development of WATERCON 2019 will be my main role as Vice Chair, I will do my best to integrate everyone’s suggestions.

On the education front, I would like to give a shout out to the Education Committee on their first Plant Maintenance Technologist Conference. It was held on May 10 and more than 85 people were registered. It is my understanding that attendee feedback was very positive. Thank you so much to those who presented at the event. Thank you to the Education Committee members (Robert Madura, Elisa Bonkowski, Dave Vavrek, and Mark Siefert) and ISAWWA staff (John Dillon, Stacey Ramsey, and Sandi McGinnis) for all of your efforts developing, programming, and hosting the event!

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the people who facilitated the Water For People Golf Outing on May 24. You certainly ordered up a beautiful day. It is my understanding that there were more than 90 golfers who were all driving, chipping, and putting for a good cause.
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I calculated one time that I have spent one year of my life on conference calls. If you are like me, the worst thing you can do is to be on a conference call where it was unproductive. My measurement of a good and valuable conference call is that every participant feels as though they contributed and it was worth their time to be on the call. Here are some basic tips for those leading conference calls to get the most of their participants’ time.

1. No agenda – no meeting. Would you get in your car and start driving without knowing where you are going? No! Of course not. So why would you join a conference call that you don’t know why you are on the call or what the expected result of the meeting is. Agendas should be sent out in plenty of time for the participants to have time to complete any tasks assigned to them. If you have not assigned any tasks to anyone, and are not expecting them to update the group, then why are you having the meeting?

2. Leaders need to be inclusive. If your meeting consists of the leader of the group talking more than 50% of the time, I would like to suggest you send a memo instead of hosting a meeting.

The reason for meetings is to engage the total group in working together to complete a task, mission, or objectives. If your group is not engaged and volunteering to help with the projects that are on the agenda, then the committee needs to have a discussion about its priorities and what is important to everyone and the organization.

3. Respect those who show up on time. When you state that a meeting is starting at 8 am, for example, the meeting leader should be on the call ready to go by 7:50 am for those who are on early. The meeting should start promptly on time and late arrivals should be acknowledged at the end of the meeting. DO NOT STOP and reiterate everything that has been said when someone arrives late. Offer to stay on the call and “catch them up” at the end of the meeting. If you continue to start over, people will start to call in late knowing that you are starting later and they won’t miss anything. Also, it disrespects those who do show up on time. Things do happen and people are late and always will be. Staying on to coach them on what they missed helps them and also honors the group that was on time.

4. Use technology that is available. There is technology that will make your calls better that doesn’t cost you any money. An example is startmeeting.com, which has an online screen display for the meeting leader (host) that shows you who is on the phone. You can watch as people join the audio call and call out their name, saying hello. It will give you a record of the length of time that someone is on the call. Using technology, you are able to see who is creating that background noise and mute them. They will get a personal voice memo that says “You have been muted.” You can then un-mute them in a few minutes to see if their background noise has stopped. Lastly you can record the calls and share them with those who were unable to attend. Have you ever considered just sending a recording of the call for your minutes?

5. Come to a conclusion at the end of each meeting. Have a wrap-up portion of the meeting. Confirm who is doing what, when the next meeting is, and how you will track actions and follow up. In a future article, we will visit options for tracking action items.
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Marco Villalobos from Seton Catholic School in Moline is this year’s winner in the 12th annual Moline Water Student CCR Art Contest. Third-grade students from ten elementary schools were invited to create art relating to this year’s theme, “Protecting the Source.”

Marcos’ artwork shown on this issue’s cover of Splash magazine best illustrates the theme. Marcos is in grade three and enjoys drawing and creating comics in his free time.

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WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITH ISAWWA?
My title is Office Manager – which sometimes translates to “jack of all trades.”

WHAT IS A TYPICAL WORK DAY FOR YOU?
Most of my day is taken up with interaction with our members. From answering the phone call (how do I log in?) and helping them register for training (from our great collection of both seminars and webinars), to making sure our training hosts are reimbursed. Oh yes, and I do help a little bit with WATERCON.

IF YOU COULD HAVE ANY JOB AT ISAWWA, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
I think I am the most qualified and the best at what I am doing right now, and truly would not want the stress that goes with any other position.

WHAT SECTION WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO VISIT, AND WHY?
I think it would be Hawaii – and the reason seems obvious!

WHAT IS THE TOUGHEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?
Having to tell someone “we can’t do that” – we do our best for our members to make whatever they need happen.

WHEN I AM NOT WORKING, I’M...
Fixing up old cars. A passion brought about by 40+ years of marriage to a “car geek.” We have a great 1930 Model A that we have restored – and our current project is turning an ambulance into an RV (or giant Suburban, as my husband says). I also have eight grandchildren who keep me hopping; and I love animals as well.

IF YOU COULD GO ANYWHERE ON VACATION, WHERE WOULD IT BE?
Well, it is on my bucket list to visit the land “down under.” But for the past 50 years, there has only been one place for me to vacation – Disney World! I am a Disney aficionado – and will go any time, with anyone. Anybody need someone to carry their bags?

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE FAMOUS QUOTE?
“Do or do not. There is no try.”

NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW THAT I...
Am painfully shy.

Meet **Sandi McGinnis** – ISAWWA Office Manager

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APRIL’S DOUBLE-HEADER

Besides snow, there was a double-header in District 2A this past April.

On April 10, 2018, the 11th annual Water Distribution conference was held in Addison, IL. This popular conference had 222 attendees, 26 vendors, and eight presentations. Six renewal training credits/professional development hours could be earned. Water Distribution Committee Chair John Hubsky and his committee members, along with ISAWWA staffers Stacey Ramsey, Marianne Perino, and John Dillon, did a great job.

On April 11, the first annual Sewer Collection conference was held in Addison, IL. This conference had 141 attendees, 16 vendors, and eight presentations. Another six renewal training credits/professional development hours could be earned. Many attendees were at both conferences. This was a great turnout for a first-year conference, and it definitely didn't stink. Sewer Collection Committee Chair Scott Bernholdt and his committee members, along with Stacey, Marianne, and John, did another great job.

There appears to be a friendly (?) rivalry between John and Scott. Competition brings out the best in everyone. Let’s see what happens next year.

Best wishes to all ISAWWA members and their families for a happy and safe summer.

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BEST WISHES TO ALL ISAWWA MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR A HAPPY AND SAFE SUMMER.
AN EXCITING START

2018 has been a fun and crazy busy year so far within Illinois Section AWWA. Being your Trustee at Large has proven to be challenging and exciting all at the same time. As trustees, we are asked to do many things throughout the state to be involved with the Section members. I wish I had time to do more as I will discuss a few of the things I participated in this year after just five months.

I help to organize the trustees who do the kick-off introductions at your training classes. I work on getting the other trustees to sign up for these with the help of the Section staff. I have done three of these myself so far this year and will try and do more before the end of 2018.

At the end of January, I was in Denver at AWWA main office for Membership Summit and Member Engagement Development workshops. We went out there to learn what will be new in 2018 for the members of the AWWA and what they are working on for the future. You should know that our Section here in Illinois is now the fifth-largest section and should be #3 by the end of 2018 if our efforts continue the way they are.

In March, I was able to be a judge at a tank building contest held in Westmont at one of their elementary schools. This is the second one and what we have heard is now there are more than ten schools that want to get involved. The students have to build water tanks out of household supplies and must meet certain requirements. They are our future and their enthusiasm in the contest is amazing.

Also in March was WATERCON, our large state conference, held the week of the March 19. During this time we have different colored badges for new attendees and as a trustee, I go around and welcome those members, chat them up, and see how I can be of assistance to them. We are always looking for volunteers so we like to see what everyone’s interests are so we can try and group them up with the right committee. I am also a judge for the Meter Madness and Hydrant Hysteria contest during WATERCON. Also, I am fortunate enough to represent ISAWWA as a national judge at ACE in Las Vegas this year.

In April, I traveled to Detroit to attend the RMSO for Region 3. Regional Meeting of Section Officers is what it stands for and our Section is in Region 3 of AWWA. We discussed many items and challenges from many of the sections including Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, Nebraska, and Ontario. As a Section we had seven officers attend so we were well represented. We all had enthusiasm and participated in every conversation and team-building exercise. Some of the topics we covered were: Lead Service Line Replacement; Veteran Program; Cyber Security; USDA Grants; Membership Recruitment/Retention.

On May 24 I was fortunate to attend the annual ISAWWA Water For People Golf Outing. It was a great event where we raise money for Water For People, one of our main charity groups to which we donate.

I hope everyone is having a great start to their 2018 and I can’t wait to see what the rest of the year brings for me and the Illinois Section AWWA members!
Happy summer to all of our Section! It sure seems as though it took a long time to get warm outside! As the transition from winter to summer brings change, there have also been changes within the Education Committee. First, congratulations to our past chair Elisa Bonkowski, who still remains active on the Committee. With Elisa’s departure, I have moved to the Chair position. I will miss her, especially since everyone tells me I have “big shoes” to fill. Since I moved up that left the Vice Chair position available. Brandon Thomas was quick to pounce on the position, so there was hardly any time for vacancy. Thank you, Brandon, for stepping up!

Our Committee has several new members who have joined over the last year: Kyle Butler, Deborah Cueva, Steve Dennison, Justin Mamula, and Dawn Walker. Welcome all to the Education Committee. We have many training events planned, and with more active members it helps to share the load.

We just finished our 11th Annual Conference in Springfield. The Education Committee organized several events for WATERCON, including the Operators Oath and Meet the Agencies session, the Operator Track, Stretch Your Education track (with the MAC Committee), and presentation of the E.D.U.C.A.T.E. Awards. This year’s E.D.U.C.A.T.E. Awards went to Kyla Jacobson and Brent Studnicka for their work on seminars. Brian Jack received an award for his work on webinars. The Committee also decided to give a Commendation Award this year to the Sewer Collections Committee.

I would like to thank everyone from the ISAWWA Section, and vendors and volunteers who worked hard to make it a success. So here we are again in the planning stages for the next one! The Section is in the process of coming up with next year’s theme for WATERCON, and the Education Committee is looking for a Champion to help with planning the Operators Track, which includes the Meet the Agencies session—more news to come!

The Committee has decided to rename the Meters and Metering Systems Symposium to “Meters and Water Loss Symposium,” with refreshed material. The current schedule for this year’s Symposium is Oswego (8/1/18) and Crystal Lake (11/13/18). We are currently looking for a Champion who would help John Dillon and Stacey Ramsey coordinate the event. If you are interested, contact me, Stacey Ramsey, or John Dillon!

The National AWWA requested nominations from each Section for educational programs. Elisa Bonkowski submitted the Lead in Schools Outreach program that John Donahue worked on last year. We should hear back from the National AWWA prior to ACE if we have won. Thank you, Elisa, for your hard work putting together this nomination.

We are currently looking for a Champion who would help John Dillon and Stacey Ramsey coordinate the event.

Brandon Thomas, Education Committee Vice Chair

Greetings, I am Brandon Thomas, the new Vice Chair for the Education Committee. I look forward to helping Dave and the rest of the Education Committee continue to provide the training and informational opportunities that best meet the needs of the Section members, while adapting to the changing trends within the industry. These include assisting and developing a new Plant Maintenance Tech Mini-Conference, increasing the number of members and participation of all members within the Education Committee and its sub-committees, providing more opportunities for training by subject matter experts, and increasing the availability of sessions geared more towards engineers and their interests.
One of the newest training opportunities we have worked on is the Plant Maintenance Technologist Conference. This is a new event that covers a wide range of topics from Computerized Maintenance Management Software, Pump Bearings and Seals, and OSHA 10 Overview to Control Valves, and VFDs. Thanks to all the trainers and the Village of New Lennox for hosting the event. Also, thanks to Mark Siefert for his work organizing this opportunity.

So far this year, between January and May there have been a total of 42 seminars, four multi-week courses, one mini conference, and seven webinars that were held on various topics. We will have 71 seminars, one multi-week course, three mini conferences, and 14 webinars before the end of the year.

To find more information on these training opportunities, go to www.isawwa.org/event, where it’s easy to sign up online. Thanks to Stacey Ramsey and John Dillon for coordinating the seminars, multi-week courses and mini conferences, and Marianne Perino for her work on coordinating the webinars. These training opportunities would not come together if it wasn’t for the presenters who take time out of their schedules to share their knowledge and experiences with us. You may have noticed, we have surveys to be completed at the end of all training events. Please be certain to fill these out as we value your input on the training events held, as this helps us improve them.

In other news, I would like to thank Christa Van’t Hul for her time on the Committee. Christa is moving to Florida for new opportunities. Congratulations to the Committee, Steve Dennison has volunteered to replace her on the Committee. Thank you, Steve!

Please remember we are always looking for training session ideas and volunteers. If you are interested in presenting a topic, one you would really like to learn about, or volunteer, please contact Stacey Ramsey or John Dillon and let them know your thoughts. Stacey’s email address is stacey@isawwa.org and John’s is jdillon@isawwa.org. If you ever have any comments or questions about the Education Committee and/or education program, please feel free to contact me at davrek@vopf.com or (708) 829-7677.
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Ask yourself these questions:
Could I explain what a watershed is to a lay person in a few simple sentences?
Can I name five simple actions that the public can take to protect their drinking water sources?
Does my employer have a program to actively educate the community about protecting water quality?

If you answered yes to all three questions then you’re a source water protection rock star. If not, ISAWWA has the tools to help improve your skills. As a wide range of man-made chemicals are increasingly being found in drinking water sources, it’s more important than ever to engage our customers and neighbors in keeping pollutants out of their water supply.

It’s all in the ability to translate water industry jargon to plain talk, both for adults and kids. For example: explaining what stormwater runoff is, and how it can carry chemicals used in the yard straight into the drinking water supply. It might sound simple, but give it a try and you may be met with blank stares.

ISAWWA’s Source Water Protection Committee has scoured the internet to link up the most current and credible public outreach tools on ISAWWA’s website. These resources will help you empower your community to get involved in protecting their water source. Many of the resources are images, videos, or interactive online activities – taking the burden off you to come up with a long speech and instead letting the visuals tell much of the story.

Here’s how to access these great online resources:
• Go to www.isawwa.org
• Scroll down to the Quick Links box and click on Source Water Informational Links
• You’ll find ten categories of resources from watershed basics to homeowner guides to fun activities for school children.

The Source Water Protection Committee also created a portable table-top display for use at community events, conferences, or school presentations. The display uses eye-catching pictures along with starter questions to get the public to think about where their water comes from and how human activity contributes to water pollution. Contact the ISAWWA office at 866-521-3595 to request use of the source water protection display.
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The 11th annual Water Distribution Conference occurred in April again this year, with a great turnout. With the addition of a second day focusing on dirty water, the event was better than ever, with more than 360 attendees and a net income for the section of over $18,000 from the two-day event. There were some changes and minor issues when trying to adapt the conference to meet the standard six credit hours of an all-day conference. The Water Distribution and Sewer Collection committees discussed these problems in a joint meeting after the conference. Thank you Scott Bernholdt and Elk Grove Village for hosting that meeting. The format will shift back to how previous years were organized, leaving lunch open for interaction with vendors and other attendees.

Another change this year was filming of the presentations, for rebroadcast in the future. This appears to have gone well, especially for a first attempt, and the committees are waiting for the final product to see the quality and how this may be repackaged for viewing. The hope and intent of this is to increase access to this training for those in the state who may be too far away to attend or who are unavailable that day or for that length of time. Look for future information to be sent out regarding this exciting opportunity that increases access to training.

Finally, the Water Distribution Committee will be hosting three webinars this year, starting in September. These will fall on the first Wednesday of the month, with the initial topics focusing on software, electrical pumps and motors, and establishing a water main replacement program. These additional training opportunities will be in the traditional webinar format or an Engineering Power Hour, meaning either commercial free or focused on a certain product/service. If you are unable to attend the live version, these become available in the archives for viewing any time shortly afterwards.

The committee is always looking for fresh faces, to help find new and interesting topics for both the annual conference and future webinars. Joining a committee is a great way to get involved with the Section, and give back a little for an organization that provides so much for us and our industry. Anyone is free to join in one of the monthly conference calls, normally held the third Tuesday of the month at 9 am. Contact me at jhubsky@glenellyn.org if you would like more information.

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In this issue of *Splash* magazine, we are focusing on our Young Professionals (YPs).

- Meet Dawn – YP Chair, Carlos – YP Vice-Chair, and Chris – YP Committee member
- Read about a new YP’s first WATERCON experience
- Find information about work/life balance, job interview tips, and mentoring
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WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?
As a child, I found myself wanting to be a number of things but the list didn’t always include similarities. I started off loving the idea of being a teacher, working with small children but I gained a job at a daycare working with 35 children with 35 different personalities. After that experience, I declined a teaching job. I then decided I'd love to be an entrepreneur, then a scientist, a radio personality, a missionary, and a CEO. Needless to say, I decided I needed a career that would help me do what I love most, help others. I started down the path of being a social worker but I still felt unfulfilled. I needed more. I started to work closely with a science teacher who piqued my interest in the field of environment management. I was especially fascinated with topics around water and sustainability. I was able to combine this passion and learning knowledge with a field I also hold dear, community engagement. I’m so pleased that I’ve found a technical skill that I’m able to inform municipal plans and stormwater management plans with the goal of promoting sustainability. I’m also able to educate residents about the value of being sustainable. It’s been a win-win for me.

WHERE IS YOUR FAMILY FROM?
My family is from the Windy City, Chicago. My family has roots in the deep south, namely Fayette, Alabama.

WHAT IS YOUR HERITAGE BACKGROUND?
My family is African American and its original roots are from Africa. My family, though, has deep southern roots.

DID ANY OF YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS SERVE IN A BRANCH OF THE MILITARY?
My uncle served and retired from the United States Army. He loved to tell his family about his training and experience. I’m proud to have someone from my family serve in this capacity.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL MAKES AMERICA GREAT?
America is great because there are so many people willing to take a stand on hard issues. In America, I’ve seen people stand up and be heard on issues that don’t necessarily impact them, they just want to give those who suffer a voice.

HOW OLD WOULD YOU BE
IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW HOW OLD YOU WERE?
If I didn’t know how old I was I’d probably be 60. Why? I’ve been told that I have an “old soul.” I used to resent being called that but now I don’t mind. I’m typically laid back and calm in nature so I guess this accounts for my old soul. I’ve been told that with age comes patience!

IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET A MESSAGE ACROSS TO A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE, WHAT WOULD THAT MESSAGE BE?
My message would be that being aggressive can get you far, but don’t forget to let kindness carry in your journey.

IF YOU COULD BE ANY OTHER PERSON (OTHER THAN YOURSELF) DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO BE?
I thought about giving the names of famous philosophers, water industry pioneers, or great political leaders. I decided against It and choose to be Rihanna, not because of her music or her image, I just like her tattoos! On a more serious note, I think I’d like to be Tracee Ellis Ross; she is a very funny comedian and I’ve always wanted to have the nerve to stand before an audience and tell funny jokes.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST HURDLE THE WATER INDUSTRY FACES TODAY?
I think one of the biggest hurdles the water industry faces is finding cost effective solutions to address decaying infrastructure. This isn’t a new problem, but the water industry is constantly in demand to provide resources to growing urban societies. Each year, the American Infrastructure Report Card from ASCE reports a low score for the water infrastructure category. I've been following this report card for years and the grade never seems to improve. I think the water industry is tasked with finding more innovative ways to fund these types of projects and to find more innovative nature based approaches to manage our water resources.

WHY ARE YOU AN ISAWWA MEMBER?
ISAWWA speaks volumes to the topics I care most about – water stewardship, public awareness, transparency. Its membership is vast and affords me the opportunity to work with likeminded individuals. ISAWWA provides mentoring programs, and has a host of educational resources and great leadership.
The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) hosted tours of the latest phase of the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP). The Young Professionals Committee attended a tour of the Mainstream Pumping Station and the McCook Reservoir, the last and largest of the three reservoirs, on October 15, 2017. The tour provided a complete overview of the TARP system and illustrated how the system protects area waterways from pollution and mitigates flooding.

TARP is a system of deep tunnels and reservoirs that collect combined stormwater and sewage during large rain events that would otherwise overflow into waterways. The stored water is pumped from TARP to the water reclamation plants to be treated before being released to waterways.

Construction of TARP has spanned more than 40 years and has required innovative approaches to drilling and tunneling. The first phase of TARP began in 1975 and consists of nearly 110 miles of 150 – 300’ deep rock tunnels that provide 2.3 billion gallons of storage volume. Phase I was completed in 2006. The second phase of TARP consists of three reservoirs that will improve the pollution control benefits of the Phase I tunnels. The Majewski Reservoir, completed in 1998, provides 350 million gallons of storage and the Thornton Reservoir, completed in 2015, provides another 7.9 billion gallons. The YP Committee toured Phase I of the McCook reservoir, which went online in December 2017 and provides 3.5 billion gallons of storage. Phase II will take another 10 years to complete and will provide another 6.5 billion gallons of storage. Once complete, TARP will have a total capacity of 20.55 billion gallons.

TARP is one of the country’s largest civil engineering projects ever undertaken and benefits 3.9 million residents in Chicago and 51 surrounding communities! Have any site visit ideas for 2018? Let us know!
Throughout my career, I’ve always looked for an opportunity to share the knowledge I’ve acquired with others. You see, I have not one but two passions, being a leader in the water industry and educating the community and youths in making decisions that directly impact them. I’m a firm believer that knowledge is power. As such, I decided to devote my career to not only acquiring the knowledge about the water industry but also developing methods to educate and engage the community in community decision-making.

In my experience, I’ve found that the community, particularly youths, are often left out of the decision-making process that impacts them now and in the future. Youths have the power to make decisions that will have a lasting impact on their community. Community engagement that targets youths helps them to become more reflective, exposes them to things that impact their community directly, and sets them on the course to being effective community leaders. Youths in some communities are never exposed to water resource issues and have little knowledge about topics such as water conservation, stormwater management, and water quality though these things impact their daily lives.

As I looked for opportunities to develop my two passions, I researched several water industry professional organizations and came in contact with ISAWWA. I was thrilled to learn that the organization was not only steeped heavily into mentoring and educating professionals but also in giving members the tools needed to educate youths and the community in the water industry. I joined immediately! I’m proud to say that the tools and training I’ve received through ISAWWA have been invaluable as I work to engage the community in making better decisions about their use of water and stormwater management.

Recently, I used what I learned with a group of young students at the Calumet is My Back-Yard Workshop.1 The workshop engages 9th to 12th graders each year on natural science topics and gives students hands-on activities to arm them with the knowledge to make effective community decisions. The workshop was aimed at youths in the Calumet region, which is part of the Great Lakes Basin. Several communities in this region are severely impacted by urban flooding. Reports, such as the Cost and Prevalence of Urban Flooding2 report flood damages for some zip codes in this region totaling $773 million from 2007-2011.

I was thrilled to educate participating youths about stormwater and wastewater management issues. Students were surprised to learn that increased impervious surface areas such as sidewalks, roadways, and parking lots contribute to increased stormwater runoff. They were equally thrilled to understand that a number of nature-based solutions, such as installing green infrastructure, would help flooding in their community. I also shared tips about becoming a water industry community leader and promoted the value of volunteering at local forest preserves who typically engage youths in green infrastructure practices. Being an ISAWWA YP member has given me the knowledge and leadership skills to continue to engage youths and the community in making effective decisions for their community.

1 www.fieldmuseum.org/at-the-field/programs/calumet-my-back-yard-cimby

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Carlos began his career in the water industry in 2013. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University and began employment at American Cast Iron Pipe Company as a salesman for American Flow Control. He is currently working as a regional manager for ME Simpson Company. As an active member in the water industry, Carlos serves as Chair of the ISAWWA Membership Committee. He is also Vice Chair of the Young Professionals Committee, and actively involved in various other committees and organizations of the ISAWWA. He is also a member of the Illinois Rural Water Association. Carlos has conducted various educational classes and training sessions for members within the association and in multiple areas throughout the state. His passion is bringing new and innovative ideas to ISAWWA and helping continue to growth and improve the water industry.

Carlos resides in Chicago. In his spare time, he enjoys snowboarding, playing basketball in the Naperville Park District League, and spending time with his close friends and family.

**WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?**

Surprisingly, when I was in middle school I decided that I wanted to be a lawyer. That decision all stemmed from a mock trial we asked to perform their debate/"lawyering" to the rest of the class. I enjoyed being in front of the entire class attempting to convince the audience of my position. That dream isn’t exactly dead just yet. However, once I got older and noticed the financial and required schooling I decided to go in a different direction with my degree and career choice. I still to this day believe I made the right decision for myself.

**WHERE IS YOUR FAMILY FROM?**

My family is from Mexico. My father is from San Luis Potosi, MX and my mother is from Mexico City, MX. I am actually first generation born in the United States. I was fortunate enough to spend my summers as a child in San Luis Potosi with my grandparents. All of my cousins and I would hop on a Greyhound bus with one of our parents and take that to San Luis Potosi. At the time I didn’t mind the bus ride. Today, I will not be taking a 40-hour bus ride to the USA/Mexican border.

**WHAT IS YOUR HERITAGE BACKGROUND?**

I am not that familiar with our family history and if we have some European heritage in there. From what I do know is that both sides of my family were born and raised in Mexico. My dad's side of the family has deep roots in San Luis Potosi and were considered upper class until the Mexican civil war. When the Mexican civil war happened, many property owners were forced to give up their land or face death.

**DID ANY OF YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS SERVE IN A BRANCH OF THE MILITARY?**

I do not have any immediate family members that have or do serve in the military. I do, however, have a cousin who has served in the Army. Thank you to all of those who have served to protect our freedom.

**WHAT DO YOU FEEL MAKES AMERICA GREAT?**

That’s a tough question to really answer. For me it’s where I am from, it’s where I grew up, it’s home. I think America is the greatest country there is. I believe the diversity, not only in our population, but also our vast choices and options in just about everything. We are definitely facing a lot of social issues today, but I feel that our passion in changing and bettering our country as a whole is what makes America great!

**HOW OLD WOULD YOU BE IF YOU DIDN’T KNOW HOW OLD YOU WERE?**

If I were basing this on maturity I would say 16. If I were to base this off on what decade I wish I lived in I would say I'd be in my late 30s or 40s. I wish I was able to live in the 1970s, I just think that time in our nation was great. There were a lot of changes going on that formed the nation we live in today.

**IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET A MESSAGE ACROSS TO A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE, WHAT WOULD THAT MESSAGE BE?**

With a lot of the social issues we are dealing with today, I think my message would be “acceptance, tolerance, unity, respect and humility.” I think we have gotten so far removed from some of the core qualities that make humanity great. Modern communication has made it easier to get caught up in materialistic desires.

**IF YOU COULD BE ANY OTHER PERSON (OTHER THAN YOURSELF) DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO BE?**

This was a difficult question to answer. I honestly don't think I would want to be anyone else but myself. However, I would like to possibly relive my life with the ability to take what I have
learned over the years back with me. Probably bring an idea back from the future!

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST HURDLE THE WATER INDUSTRY FACES TODAY?
I believe one of the biggest hurdles the water industry is facing at the moment is the mass amount of retiring workforce and a lack of young eager professionals to replace them. To add to the issue, many municipalities are allowing employees to retire and aren’t filling their positions - forcing a department to do more with less.

WHY ARE YOU AN ISAWWA MEMBER?
I am an AWWA member because I believe in volunteering and the benefits that being a part of the association provides. I would not have been as successful as I have been without the making use of the benefits that AWWA has provided me. I have not only met some great people but learned how to be a much better professional and a better person. I have learned a lot from fellow AWWA members and have been given the tools needed to make an impact in the industry.

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WATERCON 2018
FIRST-TIME EXPERIENCE
By Zach Ruemelin

I have been in the water industry for about five years now and have always wanted to attend WATERCON. I finally got the opportunity to attend WATERCON 2018, but I didn’t fully know what to expect. Once I arrived at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield I think my jaw hit the floor and my eyes were wide open. This conference is like water on steroids, or better yet the Olympics for water. WATERCON covers everything from water treatment, wastewater treatment, distribution, collection systems, and so much more!

The most important things I took away from the conference were the networking opportunities and all the great people I met who are trying to further the water industry as a whole. People were friendly, outgoing, and ready to share their life experiences in the water industry. Anything from troubleshooting operational issues, plant expansion plans, new and innovative treatment techniques, and advice on how to move up the ranks. I was blown away how people went above and beyond to offer advice and help further my career in the water industry!

The technical training sessions were excellent and they offered a wide variety of sessions to maintain well-rounded operators. I enjoyed being able to plan out my days and pick the specific...
training sessions that I wanted to focus on. It can get a little hectic running from class to class with no breaks in between. However, you can choose to get a snack, get some fresh air, or check out the vendors whenever you want throughout the day. I would suggest setting time apart for training sessions, networking, checking out the vendors and all the cutting-edge products, and some breaks to clear your head. At first, I was primarily focused on attending as many training sessions as I could, but then I started to realize there was so much more to take away from the conference. The key is to manage your time and balance out all of the great opportunities to further your career.

I attended the training session titled “Career Development for Young Professionals,” which left a profound impact on me! Kyle Saunders and Wayne Pratt were excellent presenters and opened my eyes to what the water industry has to offer. They presented a wide variety of hands-on activities, group discussions, quizzes to define your strengths and weaknesses, and overall how to further your career. This was also where I was introduced to the Young Professionals Committee, which is offered through the ISAWWA. I decided to join the Young Professionals Committee to network, work with like-minded people, help mentor future water operators, and the youth outreach program to help bring young professionals into the water industry. The water industry as a whole is facing a serious problem in which there are more people retiring than there are coming into the industry. We need to find new and innovative ways to encourage young professionals to start a career in water.

Last but not least, the water operator competitions were a riot! Meter Madness, Hydrant Hysteria, and the tapping competition were incredible to watch. It was amazing to see how fast these operators could perform these tasks and how they have mastered their craft. Not to mention the teams coming out to music, smoke machines, and a light show! For a minute it felt like you were in Vegas! Overall, WATERCON 2018 was a great time and really opened my eyes to what the water industry can offer. I hope to make it back next year and I would highly recommend it to anyone who hasn’t attended it yet. I would just like to thank everyone from the ISAWWA who helped put this conference together! You guys are really making a difference in the water industry and I hope to see this conference offered many years from now!
THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

By Lauren M. Schuld

To many YPs, work-life balance can seem unattainable. While it’s important to focus on your career, many underestimate the importance of the time spent outside of work. Hobbies outside of work can boost creativity and confidence, relieve stress, and improve physical and mental wellbeing.

Exercise has been proven to reduce stress and anxiety, boost energy and confidence, and improve fitness. Whether it’s running, practicing yoga, biking, or hiking, having a hobby that gets you moving will improve your physical and mental health. Making your health a priority can positively impact all areas of your life.

Team sports have all the benefits of solo exercise, plus they improve collaboration and communication skills. Joining a sports team is also a great way to connect with like-minded people and make new friends!

VOLUNTEERING

Few things are more rewarding that giving your time to a worthy charitable organization. Volunteer opportunities are everywhere, from walking dogs, to river cleanups, mentoring youth, or building homes for the underprivileged. Just pick a cause that means a lot to you and get involved!

COOKING

When you’re tired or stressed it might be tempting to order lunch (and dinner) on Seamless but all that takeout can take a toll, on your body and on your bank account. Try out a few simple, healthy meals to improve your cooking skills and fall in love with the process.

SELF-CARE

Despite the indulgent name, self-care is crucial for your physical and mental wellbeing. Self-care can be as simple as taking a five-minute break from work to meditate or eating lunch outside. Taking regular breaks is shown to reduce stress levels and increase productivity.
WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?
As a kid I wanted to be a writer, but found I enjoyed reading stories far more than having to write them, and soon realized that I actually didn't like writing much at all – ironic given how much writing I do in my present career! For a brief time, I even wanted to be a marine biologist (mostly just interested in getting to work with and study the dolphins and whales at Sea World…). But again, I quickly found that I didn't care much for the subject matter – too much memorization needed for all of those biology classes in school! Eventually, I recognized my affinity for math and passion for the outdoors and water and the environment, which led me to want to become a civil engineer focusing on water.

WHERE IS YOUR FAMILY FROM?
My dad was born in the Atlanta, Georgia area, but moved with his family to the Chicago area early on. My mom was born and raised in the Chicago area and, like me, has lived in Illinois her entire life, including her years attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – a tradition which I continued (I-L-L-I).

WHAT IS YOUR HERITAGE BACKGROUND?
My dad’s family has roots in Ireland, but he’ll be the first to say his family’s heritage was more firmly rooted in the Southern U.S. than anywhere else. Both of my mom’s parents were from Luxembourg, which, if you’re not familiar, can be found using a magnifying glass and looking on the map in between France, Belgium, and Germany. My folks and I are members of the Luxembourg Brotherhood of America, which is a cultural and social organization consisting of native Luxembourgers and those of Luxembourg descent, many of whom live in the Chicago area. If you’re interested in learning more about Luxembourg, all you need to do is visit Belgium… Belgium, Wisconsin, that is, which is just under an hour north of Milwaukee and home to the Luxembourg American Cultural Center and Museum.

DID ANY OF YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS SERVE IN A BRANCH OF THE MILITARY?
My dad served in the United States Army, which he is very proud of and for which I am very proud of him and proud to be his son.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL MAKES AMERICA GREAT?
In America, there is so much to see and do right in our own backyard! There are also many different and great people that you can meet from every region of the country or even traveling here from other parts of the world. Case in point, I recently got back from an Alaskan cruise, which I’ll talk about more later on in this spotlight.

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS
I just want to start by saying how honored I was to learn I’d been chosen to be the Young Professional (YP) of the Month and be featured in this issue of Splash! I’ll also preface this by noting that as I’m writing this, I’ve just returned from a two-week vacation and am working on getting caught up at work and back into a normal routine, and am probably still a little jetlagged, so apologies if this article seems like a bit of a whirlwind!

First, a little bit of background about me. I’m originally from Buffalo Grove, IL, and currently live in St. Charles, IL. As a kid, I was an avid bookworm (still have most of those old Star Wars novels on the bookshelf!) and thankfully still have time to work my way through a book every now and then, although these days I am a confirmed cinephile and spend much of my free time watching movies – all kinds of movies from the silent age (“How can you watch those? They don’t even talk!”) to the latest blockbusters, and across all genres. I’ve caused more than a few eye rolls with my incessant movie quoting and references.

I am also an Eagle Scout, and all the weekends and summer trips spent at Boy Scout camp with my folks and friends are some of my fondest memories, and what drove my passion for the outdoors and ultimately steered me into my current career. I attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where I studied Civil Engineering with a primary concentration in Environmental Engineering and a secondary concentration in Hydraulic Engineering/Hydrology, and from which I earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Civil Engineering in 2011. While at U of I, I was very involved with several student organizations, in particular Engineering Council, volunteered over several school breaks through Alternative Spring Break, and was tremendously honored to be chosen as one of the recipients of the Knights of St. Patrick award my senior year (Why was St. Patrick an engineer? Visit http://ksp.ec.uiuc.edu to find out!).

After a few years of trying my hands working at a small manufacturing company, I transitioned to my present role in the Environmental Group at Engineering Enterprises, Inc. (EEI) in Sugar Grove, IL, where I have been for the past four and a half years (time flies when you’re having fun!) and am currently a Senior Project Engineer I.

More recently, I earned my P.E. License late this past summer, and I also got married this past fall to my beautiful wife, Lauren (on Back to the Future Day, October 21 – not that it was planned that way, merely an observation on my part... I wasn’t kidding about the movie obsession), whom I met a little over four years ago (we actually both went to the same high school, but didn’t connect until after college – kind of hard to meet in a high school with an average class size of 1,000+ students!). As I mentioned, we just got back from vacation, and we are currently in the process of searching for a house to move into from our current townhouse – all in all, a pretty busy year with many big changes!

I also thought I’d briefly talk about a day in the life of a YP, though quite honestly, most every day is different, and I’m certain that every YP’s day is different from that of every other YP. As a consulting engineer, each day is spent working on various planning, design, and construction related tasks for all of the projects for our clients. Everything including design calculations, construction plan and specification preparation, water system modeling and analysis, and report preparation – it’s all fair game for what I may be working on during certain days.

What I especially enjoy is the variety of projects we get to work on in our group: water and wastewater treatment facility design and optimization, water works system modeling and analysis, well construction and rehabilitation, and the list goes on. The work we do also provides ample opportunities to learn and to try to incorporate details picked up from various projects and experiences to become a better engineer. It’s challenging, but in every meeting with clients or every time on a construction site, I’m always striving to listen not just what the clients or contractors are saying, but how they say it or how they construct it, in addition to focusing on the project and tasks at hand, to be able to improve future designs or analyses and
interactions with existing and future clients. There are constant chances to work to apply and fine-tune both the ‘big picture’ and ‘detail-oriented’ skills I’ve managed to pick up over the years in each of these settings, and that’s generally my goal each day, no matter what the work I’m doing or the setting.

Finally, I thought I’d wrap things up here by writing briefly about my vacation I mentioned earlier, as it is fresh in my mind. My wife and I just got back from an Alaskan cruise, which was our delayed honeymoon after getting married this past October (by which time cruise season is pretty much over in Alaska until it starts back up again in May – I guess the colder temperature is too tough of a sell to fill an entire cruise ship!). It was quite an experience for both of us, as neither of us had ever been to Alaska, and it was my first time on a cruise ship – thankfully, neither of us got seasick (all those years on rollercoasters and those spinning amusement park rides paid off!).

In a word, our trip was incredible. We sailed south from Whittier, AK (just southeast of Anchorage) to Vancouver. Our trip included port stops along the Alaska panhandle in Skagway, Juneau, and Ketchikan, and the weather was great – most days were clear and sunny, which itself is uncommon (we’d never thought about this, but the weather along the Alaska panhandle is comparable to Seattle in terms of the number of rain days they typically experience each year). While some days were pretty frigid, most of the days were in the 50s, 60s, even 70s on two of the days (most people on ship were dressed in long sleeves or even a couple of layers, but based on their clothing that is apparently like beach weather for many of the locals).

We also spent a few days before getting on the ship in Alaska touring around in Fairbanks, AK, as well as Denali National Park – again, many beautiful sights, including a few moose (and also several whales the day we went whale-watching!). To tie in with ISAWWA here, one thing that struck me is the number of residents who have to get water delivered (or pick it up themselves in their own truck with a water tank). Those residents in so-called dry houses – houses not connected to a municipal water system – often have no choice but to purchase water and get it delivered because the permafrost often limits the ability to drill a well. The cost of water for those folks is therefore significantly higher – in some towns the local high schools or fitness centers will sell monthly passes for folks to come in at certain times just to use the shower facilities! A good highlight on the value of the water we have available in our own communities here in Illinois. In general, the cost of living is much higher in Alaska, because most food and goods have to be shipped in – as a metric, it’s not uncommon for the average price for a gallon of milk to be in the $6–7 range.

If you have the time and it is within your budget, I would definitely recommend fitting in an Alaskan cruise if you have not had the opportunity! Furthermore, I (and most of the locals we talked to on our trip) would recommend the same general schedule we had, with the Alaskan land excursions first and the cruise ship second, sailing southbound, in part because it’s nice to be able to relax on the ship and not have to think about all of the scheduling for the land excursions, but also because it was much less intolerable for us having one four-hour flight back to Chicago from Vancouver at the end of our trip, as opposed to the two four-hour flights back-to-back we took to fly out to Alaska at the start – especially considering you don’t have the excitement of the trip to look forward to and get you through the long day of travel!
RESUMÉ, JOB HUNTING,
AND INTERVIEW TIPS

By Meredith E. McDonagh

How do I get someone to notice me? Will I make a good first impression? What do I say? Am I going to be late? How do I find this building? Is my outfit okay?

These are examples of just a few of the questions that might run through your head before a big job interview. The whole job search process can be very stressful and cause a great deal of headache. Searching job search engines, submitting applications, resumes, having phone interviews, in-person interviews, deciding what to wear – there are numerous aspects of this process from start to finish. It can also vary based on the positions being applied for, the companies and businesses being applied to, the locations of these companies and businesses, and the people at these companies and businesses. In order to help make the job search process go as smoothly as possible, I have compiled the following tips in regards to resumes, job hunting, and job interviews. These tips are based on my personal experience and do not guarantee that each and every one will work or result in successfully obtaining a job, however, I hope that they will assist you as best as they possibly can and help you to obtain the ultimate goal: your dream job.

Next up, the resume. I cannot stress enough how important it is to proofread your resume and application and make sure that it is free of spelling and grammatical errors. The first thing a potential employer usually sees is your resume. It is from this paper that a potential employer gauges your experience and surmises if you could be a good fit on their team. If you hand in a document that is full of errors, the individual handling the resumes might eliminate you right off the bat. I also suggest keeping your resume as up-to-date and as truthful as possible. You want to make sure you have your education and previous work experience listed out so you can show off your qualifications for the position being applied for. I have also noticed that the interviewers at in-person job interviews typically bring a copy of your resume for reference. You don’t want them to miss out on any great past experience and qualifications that make you a great candidate.

So you found a position you were interested in, applied, and submitted your resume to the potential employer. Suddenly you receive a phone call. It is a representative from the Human Resource Department at the company you recently applied to! After an introduction he or she begins to ask you a couple of questions, maybe about the position, and gives a bit more of a job description or information at the company. He or she asks when you are available to come in for an interview – you have now scored an in-person job interview.

Before your interview, I recommend researching a little bit about the company and having one or two questions ready about that company. When the person interviewing asks if you have any questions, you can whip these out. Asking questions about the position and company shows that you are genuinely interested in each and can help you stand out. It is also imperative to dress professionally. Clothing is the first thing people notice and you want to make a nice first impression. I would not recommend wearing jeans for a job interview. Do your best to be on time for your interview. Do NOT be late. If you absolutely must be late, make a courtesy phone call letting the company know. At the start of the interview, make eye contact, give firm handshakes, smile, and answer all questions asked honestly and to the best of your ability. Oftentimes there may be follow-up interviews as it could take more than one to go through candidates. Your job is kind of like an investment to both you and the company so you both want to make the best choices possible.

So there you have it. While job searching can be tedious, it also opens up amazing opportunities and helps you grow professionally. You meet new people, learn new things, and advance your career. I wish you the best of luck in your journey and hope you obtain that dream job. You never know unless you try!
NEW ISAWWA MENTORING PROGRAM

By Hanting Wang

Have you had a rewarding career in the water industry and are looking to share your knowledge and experiences with those who are earlier on in their careers? Or are you new to the water industry and are looking for someone to ask questions and learn from? If you said yes to either (or both) of those questions, then the new ISAWWA Mentoring Program is perfect for you!

WHO: Any and all ISAWWA members.

WHAT: The mission of the ISAWWA Mentoring Program is to promote personal and professional growth by cultivating a supportive environment in which to share knowledge, experience, and advice with water professionals in all aspects and levels of water to the benefit of the water industry as a whole.

TWO TYPES OF MENTORING WILL BE OFFERED

1. TRADITIONAL ONE-ON-ONE: long-term relationship between one mentor and one mentee, where the focus is on developing the mentee’s career and supporting the mentee’s individual growth and maturity.

2. COACHING: short-term relationship between one mentor and one or more mentees, where the focus is on the mentee learning to complete a specific task.

WHY: Mentoring has numerous benefits, including both hard skills and soft skills.

For a mentor, these can include reinforcing one’s own knowledge, enhancing communication and leadership skills, creating a legacy, advancing one’s own career and resume.

For a mentee, these can include receiving an insider’s perspective on how to navigate the water industry and a career in the water industry, growing one’s professional network, learning how to set and achieve goals, building communication skills, and learning how to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Through mentoring, new relationships and friendships can foster, enhancing the water industry overall!
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The Illinois Junior Academy of Sciences’ State Science Fair moved to Bradley University at Decatur on a beautiful spring day on Saturday, April 27. The Science Fair committee judged 43 middle and high school student presentations with a focus on issues important to the water industry. This year, we selected ten outstanding projects, one from high school and nine from middle school. A total of $1,250 was awarded to the 12 winning students. These extraordinary students and their projects are:

- Saanvi Chelikani – Heavy Metals in Water: It’s Not Just a Band
- Madison Prasun – What is the Quality of Drinking Water Locally?
- Gerald Osterhaus and Pranav Swaminathan – Using Solar Radiation to Desalinate Seawater
- Jenna Spangler and Ilese Rodeffer – Testing Water: CO
- David Sherrod – Creating an Affordable Water Filter
- Roshni Arun – Bio Purification of Household Waste Waters
- Samarth Puthanmadhom – Effect of Disinfection Agents on Bacterial Concentration in Water
- Rebecca Thomas – Nanosilver-Coated Water Filter as an Economical and Safe Method to Create Access to Safe Drinking Water
- Maaria Firdaus – A Solution to Water Pollution
- Abril Hunter – Bio-sand Filters as a Method for Pollution Remediation

The judges awarded the prizes based on each project’s merit and the presenter’s enthusiasm for water. Saanvi Chelikani, Madison Prasun, Gerald Osterhaus, Pranav Swaminathan, Jenna Spangler, and Ilese Rodeffer each received a $25 Amazon gift card and each project received $50. David Sherrod and Roshni Arun each received a $25 Amazon gift card and $100. Samarth Puthanmadhom, Rebecca Thomas, Maaria Firdaus, and Abril Hunter each received $150. Along with the cash award, each student was invited to present their project at WATERCON. Eleven of our project winners have expressed interest in presenting their projects. Please join me in watching Saanvi, Madison, Gerald, Pranav, Ilese, David, Roshni, Samarth, Rebecca, Maaria, and Abril present their amazing projects and encourage their continued interest in the water industry!

ISAWWA’s involvement in the science fair would not be possible without our dedicated judges and committee members! I would like to give a big thanks to the 2018 judges: Linda Henry; Mike Henry; Lauretta Doellman; Richard Flaar; David Said; Staci Said; Elisa Bonkowski; Jim Bonkowski; Michael Colby; Ray Ames; and Barry Klepp.

The 2019 science fair will be at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and will take place in May 2019 with the judges meeting at 8:15 am on the day of the science fair. The judging goes until noon and we will be glad to buy your lunch at a local restaurant. Judges are drawn from ISAWWA members but family and friends are invited to participate as well. No science background or prequalifications are needed for the judges. If you are interested in promoting the water industry through youth outreach and learning about innovative new ideas in water treatment, please send an email to elizabeth.doellman@amwater.com and you will be included on the mailing list for the 2019 science fair judges. If you would like to join the Science Fair Committee and help organize and provide input about improvements to the Science Fair process, please email elizabeth.doellman@amwater.com and we will include you on the invitation for the August meeting.
The 5th annual ISAWWA Water For People golf outing was held on May 24. We had 98 golfers come out this year. The weather was warm, the drinks were cold, and fun was had by all. Between the game holes, the 50/50 raffle, and event proceeds, we were able to raise $5,260 for Water For People. This money will be used to provide safe drinking water and sanitation for those who do not have access to it. It’s hard to believe that a day spent golfing could produce such positive results... but it does.

This outing was made possible by the generous contributions and efforts of our sponsors and volunteers, without which this event would not be the big success that it is. Each year these companies graciously provide hole sponsorships, and we are truly fortunate to have so many willing volunteers. I would like to thank Mark Siefert of Crest Hill who once again did an excellent job organizing this event, and all of the other volunteers as well. You know who you are, and your efforts are truly appreciated. If you would like to get involved in next years’ outing, as a sponsor or volunteer, please let us know and we’ll make it happen. Have a nice summer! ☀️
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Congratulations 2018 Award Winners!

W e would like to congratulate everyone who received an award at the 2018 Annual ISAWWA Conference. We appreciate the dedication, service, and loyalty you have demonstrated to the water industry and to AWWA.

Keep your eyes and ears open for possible candidates for the upcoming year’s awards. It’s never too early to nominate one of your colleagues.

The 2018 award winners are listed below.

George Warren Fuller Award – distinguished service to the water supply field in commemoration of the sound engineering skill, brilliant diplomatic talent, and the constructive leadership which characterized the life of George Warren Fuller.

Mike Ramsey – Village of Westmont

Water Professional of the Year Award – presented to a professional in the water industry (engineer, lab analyst, designer, representative, educator, etc.) who has demonstrated dedication and has motivated others to pursue a career in the water industry.

Robin Doescher – Village of Glenview

The Robert T. Sasman Volunteer Appreciation Award – recognizes Section members who have demonstrated outstanding service in helping the Illinois Section AWWA achieve their goals.

Elisa Bonkowski – Baxter & Woodman

Operator’s Meritorious Service Award – presented in recognition of special performance working in the capacity of shift supervisors or superintendents. Special performance must be recognized in one or more of the following areas: continuous compliance with public health standards in finished water; consistent and outstanding contribution to plant maintenance thereby prolonging the useful lives of equipment; development of new and/or modified equipment or significant process modifications to provide for a more efficient or effective treatment; special efforts in the training of treatment plant operators; special acts not directly related to water treatment, but which demonstrate dedication to the public beyond the normal operating responsibilities; or consistent and outstanding contribution to operation and/or maintenance of distribution lines, pump stations, and/or reservoirs.

Robert Madura – CLCJAWA

John Lechner Award of Excellence – an individual award of excellence to recognize a Section Manufacturers/Associates Council member who has demonstrated exemplary service to the drinking water community and to AWWA’s mission and goals.

Michelle Harrod – Midwest Water Group

Clifford E. Fore Award – presented to Section members who provide public service above and beyond the job duties required of them in the waterworks field. Recognition of a contribution to advance the state-of-the-art in the waterworks industry (such as a new invention – either equipment or process innovation, the publishing of books or educational materials).

Ted Meckes – CWLP

Y.P. Excellence Award – recognizes the outstanding YP of each year based on participation, outreach, and giving more than required to improve the committee or the water profession.

Andrew Dow – Donohue & Associates

E.D.U.C.A.T.E. Award – Educating the Drinking water Utility Commendation Award for Training Excellence. This award is presented by the Education Committee and recognizes an individual who has contributed valuable and significant volunteer time and effort in the field of educating the drinking water community.

- In-Person Seminar 2017: Brent Studnicka – Strand Associates
- In-Person Seminar 2017: Kyla Jacobsen
- Webinar 2017: Brian Jack – Village of Lombard
- Committee Commendation Award: Sewer Collection Committee

Water Saver Award – recognizes public and private utilities in Illinois that are currently developing or implementing water efficiency projects such as water efficiency master plans, renewable water policies and practices, watershed protection, community outreach, water loss reduction, conservation and public education.

City of Highland Park

Safe Water Scholarship Awards – multiple scholarships worth $500 to $1,000 each are available for students in the following programs:

- Adult Continuing Education (full- or part-time)
- College Undergraduate (full-time)
- Technical School (full-time)
- Enrichment Program (high school)

William Boyer, IAWA – $2,000
Quarter Century Service Award – 25 years of service to the industry:
• Kris Hatfield, City of Bettendorf
• Walter Willing, City of Highland Park
• Kimberly Scott, IAWA

Silver Water Drop – recognizes those individual members who have provided valuable service and support for AWWA programs and goals through their long-standing Association membership (25 years):
• Thomas Butler
• Eric Chapman
• Larry Coloni
• Mark Crosby
• Ronald Erickson
• John Fisher
• Brian Johnson
• David Koch
• Chuck Lehmann
• William Lorenz
• Stanley McClain

Life Member – recognizes those individual members who have provided valuable service and support for AWWA programs and goals through their long-standing Association membership (30 years + 65 years of age):
• Anthony Cuzzzone
• Carl Fisher
• Buford Heller
• John Holstrom
• Donald Jensen
• Federico Maisch
• Robert Nelson
• Steve Pitman
• Stefan Saller
• Glen Sunderlage

Gold Water Drop – recognizes those individual members who have provided valuable service and support for AWWA programs and goals through their long-standing Association membership (50 years):
• Buzz Haviland
• Franklin Lewis

Partnership for Safe Water 15-Year Director Award:
• Village of Wilmette, 5-Year Presidents Award
• Village of Wilmette, 10-Year Directors Award
• Granite City, 15-Year Directors Award

100-Year Club Award – public water supplies that have served Illinois residents for 100 years:
City of Burnham
City of South Beloit

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The competitions at WATERCON this year were as always very exciting to watch. They started out on Monday night with the Top Ops contest. The City of Elgin Aquitards will again represent Illinois at ACE this year in Las Vegas. Five teams in all competed to try to overthrow the champs. Good Luck in Vegas!

This year, Wednesday night competitions had a new format with Meter Madness, Hydrant Hysteria, and Water Main Tapping competing all on the same night. Meter Madness kicked off the night with a very competitive contest with Edward Chang from Chicago versus Brian Burton from the City of Des Plaines in the finals. Brian edged out a win over Ed with a winning time of 46.84 seconds. That was just the start of Brian’s night.

Hydrant Hysteria competition was next and it came down three very fast teams (Des Plaines, Wauconda, and Lake in the Hills). The team from Des Plaines (Brian Burton and Tony LeVerde) reigned supreme with a very fast time of 1:32.65. For the very first time in Hydrant Hysteria history we had two women’s teams compete (City of Chicago and Village of Westmont). Village of Westmont narrowly beat City of Chicago with a time of 2:36.04. Good Luck to Tony and Brian in Vegas.

The final event of the night was a highly contested event on the men’s side where the Village of Arlington Heights Four Horsemen won for the fifth year in row over the very competitive City of Elmhurst team. Arlington Heights’ winning time was 1:30.28. On the women’s side the Arlington Heights Cranky Bits ran a very fast 2:54.94, which will make them a very hard team to beat in Vegas. Good luck to both Arlington Heights teams in Vegas.

If you are interested in competing in one of these exciting competitions at WATERCON next year or just want to find out more information, please contact Michael Ramsey at (630) 981-6289 or email at mramsey@westmont.il.gov.
The Illinois Section of AWWA held its annual WATERCON Conference in Springfield on March 19 through 22. Again this year, the Meter Madness Competition was the highlight of the event. With a new earlier start time, the Meter Madness Competitors were the sole focus of the entire audience. Nine competitors from across the state competed against one another for the chance of a lifetime – an all-expense-paid trip to America’s playground, Las Vegas, Nevada to attend the AWWA 2018 ACE Conference.

It all started with introductions and the crowd recognizing last year’s champion, Peter Cajigas from Franklin Park. All nine competitors felt the electricity in the air as the preliminary rounds took place. Each competitor is given two rounds to rebuild a water meter from scratch and only their best time counts. Only seconds separated the top four competitors from the rest of the field, but we had to pick four. Brian Burton from the City of Des Plaines, Peter Cajigas from the Village of Franklin Park, Ed Chang from Stone Dental, and Luis Hernandez from the Village of Franklin Park made the semi-finals.

The semi-finals lived up to the hype. All four competitors raced against the clock as the best two times advanced to the finals. Again, only seconds separated the competitors. But in the end, Brian Burton and Ed Chang would advance to the finals. It is hard to explain on paper the excitement that was in the air at approximately 4:30 pm on March 21 in Springfield as the final two competitors approached the table. It just felt warmer for a second. I believed the lights flickered. Everyone was standing ready for the finals to begin.

READY, SET, GO! The finals began. Both competitors were focused, hands shaking, sweat dripping from their brow. The finals started out even. Brian would pull ahead then Ed would come back. Back and forth, you could cut the tension with a knife. Suddenly Brian made his move. He took the lead and never looked back. He became the winner by with a time of only 46 seconds. Ed competed hard and held his head up high as he finished with a time of only 54 seconds. What a great event during a great evening of competitions.

I would like to thank all the competitors who participated in Meter Madness as well as all the competitors for all the competitions. The time commitment these individuals put in deserves our respect. So, a BIG thank you again for all the competitors for your time and efforts. Second, I need to say thank you to all the sponsors and volunteers that make the Meter Madness competition a success. Without your help none of this would be possible. Contestants, volunteers, and sponsors – give yourselves a big round of applause and get ready for next year.
During WATERCON 2018 in Springfield on March 20, 2018, five utilities competed in the 24th Annual Water Taste Contest to hold the title of the best water produced in the State of Illinois.

Among the competitors were Aqua America – Kankakee Plant, last year’s WATERCON winner; City of Paris, winner of the 15 County Water Supply Operators Association water taste contest; Village of Park Forest, winner of the South Suburban Water Works Association water taste contest; City of Moline, winner of the District 1 water taste contest, and City of Aurora, winner of the Kane County Water Association water taste contest.

A drinking water sample, produced by each of the five contestants, was submitted and evaluated by a panel of local celebrity judges on water clarity, odor, and taste.

Once the scores were tallied, City of Moline Water Division was awarded best water produced in the State of Illinois! City of Moline was eligible to compete in this year’s ACE 18 annual AWWA water taste contest in Las Vegas, NV for the best water produced in North America, and defend its title next year at the WATERCON 2019 Annual Water Taste Contest. Jennifer Barlas, Water Taste Contest Committee Chair, made the presentation of the award certificate and mug to Tony Loete, Utilities General Manager, and Dave Owens, Water Plant Manager, on May 8, 2018 at their Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting.

Sincere thanks are extended to the contestants, and our judges: Robyn Doesher, Secretary-Treasurer; Brian Jack, District 2C Trustee; Kim Lukas, District 3 Trustee; Joe Alvin, District 4 Trustee, and special guest, Mitch Kannenberg, Vice-President, AWWA.

Only utilities that produce water and are winners of local water association contests are eligible to compete in the WATERCON’s Water Taste Contest, therefore, if you are a water association looking to host a competition and have your winner participate in next year’s WATERCON 2019 Water Taste Contest, contact Jennifer Barlas at (630) 607-1505.
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I n the 1920s and ‘30s, sewer and water was brought into the Chicago suburbs. One town finally outlawed outhouses and cesspools in 1936. Houses at the time only had wash basins and toilets with showers and dishwashers in the distant future, with grey water being dumped outside. With minimal flows the upstream terminal legs of sewers had solid deposition problems. To clear the deposition, towns would periodically dump a wagon tank of water in the line or [don’t tell the EPA] have a water service trickling into a counter-weighted dump trough to keep the sewer flushed. (About 20 years ago while replacing a sewer in the northwest suburbs, an inspector reported tearing out a device which sounded like a flush box.) When flushing didn’t work and before power flushers and vectors, the sewer would be manually cleaned.

A manual rodding device consisting of 1.5”x1.5”x2’ (approx. 50 pcs.) wood rods joined with knuckle couplings with a spike/shovel head is shown on the attached photos. (At WATERCON several years ago a foreman told of using this device.) This antique device is looking for a home to preserve it and use it for exhibition/education. Contact Joe at jvret66@gmail.com.

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Engineers Without Borders USA (EWB-USA) harnesses the skills of engineers to tackle the challenges that keep the world’s most vulnerable people from living healthy, productive lives. While the International Community Program and Engineering Service Corps program carry out our mission in countries across the globe, our Community Engineering Corps (CECorps) program is building a better world right here in the United States.

Since 2014, CECorps has connected more than 75 project teams to underserved communities seeking to advance local infrastructure solutions. With a variety of project types, CECorps offers a convenient and sustainable way for EWB-USA chapters and members to give back in their own backyards.

The EWB-USA New Orleans Professional Chapter has been an active participant in the CECorps since the beginning. The chapter was introduced to CECorps during the program’s pilot phase, when they supported projects in the midwest and the Navajo Nation. As CECorps transitioned from pilot phase to a formal EWB-USA program, the EWB-USA New Orleans Professional Chapter was one of the first chapters on board, seizing the opportunity to give back to their community while equipped with the support and resources of a national organization.

In 2015, the chapter started its first CECorps project, Greenline. The project, which is now complete, transformed a formerly undeveloped greenbelt in the Hollygrove neighborhood, home to 4,000 residents, into a community attraction that includes public park space, stormwater management systems, community gardens and urban farms. Greenline was only the beginning. The EWB-USA New Orleans Professional Chapter has completed two more projects and has three in progress. These projects range from surveying for a local park to providing engineering support for the development of a tiny home community for people experiencing homelessness.

So, why does the EWB-USA New Orleans Professional Chapter choose to focus on their local community? There’s a few reasons.

While chapter members are eager to use their engineering skills for good, as professionals they often cannot meet the time commitments needed for an international program. Additionally, local projects allow members to regularly witness the impact of their work.

“The great thing about local projects is that you can see the result of what you have accomplished,” explains chapter vice president and project mentor Claire Bourseleth. “It’s the little things like walking through the neighborhood and seeing people excited about the project.”

For the EWB-USA New Orleans Professional Chapter, CECorps has transformed the way they approach engineering change. Think global, act local and you, too, can build a better world in your own backyard!

If your chapter is looking to get involved in your own backyard or you’re a community wanting to learn more about the services provided by Community Engineering Corps, check out the CECorps website! (www.communityengineeringcorps.org)
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Working at night on pipe repairs is always more difficult than during the day. Workers are usually tired having already worked a full day and visibility is greatly reduced due to shadows, darkness and poor lighting at the work site. Throw in drivers who are also tired and perhaps driving faster than usual due to reduced traffic, and you have the makings of a high-risk situation. Your employees are your most valuable asset, so every precaution should be taken to make sure they come home safely every day. Here are six things to ensure your night time workers are safe, and get the job done effectively.
Keeping Workers Safe During Night-Time Repairs

1. MOVE CAREFULLY AND DELIBERATELY ON THE WORK SITE
Many times, workers will want to get the job done quickly and skip some steps. This is understandable but it’s important to remind them to slow down, and work more cautiously than they do during the day. Even if they are very familiar with performing certain repairs, dark areas and shadows can hinder their perception of risk.

Planning and communication become crucial during night time operations.

Before the job starts, supervisors should have a brief meeting to ensure all team members understand what will take place at the work site, what their role is, and where they will be located throughout the night. Plan your work and work your plan!

Make sure everything is done with a focus on safety. This includes wearing reflective clothing in accordance with the law, and using a trench box or shoring to ensure that the trench doesn’t collapse while workers are inside. There are many who never use a trench box because it gets in the way of some repairs. At night, the use of trench boxes and shoring is even more critical. Make trench boxes a normal part of every excavation, and never put speed ahead of safety.

2. HAVE THE RIGHT REPAIR PRODUCTS ON HAND FOR EVERY POSSIBILITY
Always make sure that you have repair products on hand for every situation. There is nothing worse than not having the right parts during an emergency repair. Poor planning results in the job taking longer to complete, delays in returning water service to normal, and disgruntled customers.

Krausz designs and manufactures a variety of repair couplings that are quick and easy to install, and are extremely useful for night conditions. The HYMAX VERSA coupling can attach to two pipes of differing diameters and materials which comes in handy when the exact material of the pipe or its diameter are not known in advance.

The coupling also features top-facing bolts which are simple to tighten, and drastically cut installers’ repair time. The product has a stab-on design and does not need to be disassembled – there is nothing more aggravating for an operator than losing a bolt in a water-filled ditch at night. Another unique feature is its MAG dry anti-galling process that prevents galling, enables repeated bolt tightening and eliminates the need to grease the bolts, preventing dust and dirt build-up.

3. KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON THE CREW
Supervisors need to keep a close eye on workers who will be tired from working a full day and prone to making mistakes. Supervisors should patrol their work area to see how workers are doing, and offer food and drink on a regular basis. Flaggers in particular should be checked as they play a critical role in making sure night time operations are safe.

Crews want to make the repair and then get some rest before having to get up and do it all over again. A lack of rest or sleep accumulates over time. It’s important that crews are not run down to the point where they become exhausted and unable to perform. Provide them with the proper tools and repair parts to get the job done.
4. KEEP THE WORK AREA LIT AND CLEAR
In the interests of saving time, sometimes workers will use the lights of the backhoe to do this job without auxiliary lighting and a generator. These lights will not supply enough illumination for the work site and compromise safety.

Use floodlights to illuminate any equipment crossings, and other areas where crew members will be working. Flaggers in particular should be well lit to ensure their own safety, and the safety of the work zone. If drivers can't see the flagger, his or her ability to slow down, divert or stop traffic is hindered.

Floodlights can also blind drivers entering a work zone. Once lights are set, a worker should drive through the area to observe the lights’ positioning and make adjustments as necessary. The use of self-righting work lights are a great way to provide light without causing it to shine in motorists’ eyes. Keep the work area also clear of obstacles, tools, and equipment.

The use of rotating or flashing amber lights on service vehicles is necessary and required by law in most states, however, these lights can be their own hazard. They can be very bright and blind drivers who are traveling the roadways and prevent safe driving. Where ever possible, direct these lights so drivers can see properly as they drive through and ensure worker safety.

5. MANAGE TRAFFIC
If possible, close the roadway where the repairs are taking place and direct traffic away. If you can’t close the roadway, place warning signs or lights in a way that will give motorists more time to react and slow down before reaching the work area. Ensure that your signs are clean and have good reflectivity.

Make the work zone as large as possible to give employees more time, with roadsides and to keep them safe. After the repair is completed and the roadway re-opened, do several drive-throughs to make sure that the road is clear and the road repair is safe for the public’s use.

6. NOTIFY THE PUBLIC
Make every effort to contact law enforcement, fire and rescue services, emergency dispatch centers and the general public about the night time operation. Notify the above organizations, and local radio and television stations, in advance by sending a concise email and following up by phone. Include information about where the repair is taking place, why it’s happening and any roads that will be closed off. These agencies and media outlets will appreciate the information, and keep the community aware of the repair.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Doug Riseden is the Technical Support Manager for Krausz USA, the makers of HYMAX, and has worked in the public utility field for over 20 years. His extensive experience with water and wastewater repairs and operations includes working for municipalities and private contractors, and providing water services to the NATO-led security mission in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

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