

# Message from the President

## 30 YEARS WITH NEW YORK RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

by Florence Braunius,  
NYRWA President



It is our 30th anniversary year! Our association began in 1979, and it has come through the good times and the bad. My predecessor on the Board from the Capital Region was Mr. Walt Vosburgh. Walt left me with a notebook of board meeting minutes, which date back to May 14, 1979. I will share some excerpts from those minutes and you can decide how some things change and some things stay the same.

The minutes state: *“Dr. M. Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm at the office of the Association. A concern of the members was the relationship between the AWWA, State Health Department and the Rural Water Association. Although each one of the three agencies have specific related goals, their program implementation is unique. It was recommended to clarify the goals of the NY Water Association and to reduce the possible duplication and overlap of program initiatives, a meeting be scheduled with representatives of AWWA and the NY State Health Department. It is essential that a good working relationship be established between these agencies”.*

I would say this concept is still intact today. This particular meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm after a dinner meeting at the Albany Motor Inn.

The next item that caught my eye in these minutes was a discussion on travel budgets. *“The going rate for motels will be paid and \$16.00 will be allowed for meals. Actual expenses include up to \$45.00 for lodging and meals and \$0.17 per mile plus tolls for transportation”.* With adjustments for inflation we are probably still on track here.

*“Mr. John Montgomery attended the first Annual Meeting in June of 1980 and reported that National Rural Water had 26 states as members”.* John is still with National Rural Water and works out of the Washington, DC office. We now have Rural Water Associations in all 50 states.

At the August 13, 1980 meeting: *“it was noted that NRWA qualifications for Circuit Rider were discussed. The Board agrees that a person who meets these qualifications would never work for the money that was offered”.* At that time Circuit Riders monies were split with the state of Maine and each state got \$18,600 for program expenses. By February 1981, NY received the full portion of Circuit Rider funds and Mr. George Flummer came on board as our first Circuit Rider. Our membership was up to 98

communities. 34 people attended the Annual Meeting in 1981.

At the November 5, 1980 meeting *“Meredith Thompson discussed the excellent job that Pat Jaworowski is doing as secretary/bookkeeper. She is diligent, interested, and has put the association on sound ground and in good standing with R.K. Johnson”.* We all agree here! Pat is still with us, and still doing an excellent job. Pat has learned from the ground up and is well respected by all in the industry. R. K. Johnson retired from National Rural Water and his son Rob Johnson is the current CEO.

As you can see, some things change and some stay the same. What has remained steadfast is the diligence of the New York Rural Water family to see this association continue to provide excellent service to its members. I extend my deepest gratitude to the people in 1979 who recognized this concept as an opportunity to meet the needs of rural communities in New York State. They contributed many hours of their time to see that this organization got off the ground and the people who filled their shoes over the years never lost sight of the original goals.

I encourage you all to attend our 30th Annual Meeting at our Technical Conference in Saratoga this year. It's an opportunity to say thank you to our staff and board members for remaining devoted to this association. See you in Saratoga! 💧

## Mark Your Calendars

2nd Annual Equipment Expo

September 17, 2009

Dutchess Co. Fairgrounds

Rhinebeck, NY