

Message From the President

Submitted by Florence Braunius
NYRWA President



As we start the summer season let me first thank all who attended the 26th Annual Technical Conference in Saratoga Springs in May. It is always good to see the familiar faces each year and to meet the first time attendees. I want to congratulate the staff on their efforts to provide the quality program that we were able to experience. Congratulations to Pat Scalera for completing 25 years with our organization, and for the role she has played in seeing that New York Rural Water Association has reached this level of success. Each staff member contributes to the success of this organization, and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank each of you for your contribution.

Just as important as the recognition of those who have been with us for multiple years, is the fact that we have gained new staff positions and we welcome Morris Coolidge and Jamie Herman as State Circuit Riders. These are new positions funded through New York State Department of Health. John Hraska has been on the road as our Tribal Circuit Rider, and I hope you will all have the opportunity to meet Keith Herbert, our Training Specialist.

We have seen changes in the Board of Directors as well. You have probably noticed that Steve Freeman did not write this article. Steve has done an outstanding job as President, but felt it was time to step aside. As I begin as President, I know I will be consulting frequently with our past presidents, Steve Freeman and Jerry Barron. Other changes see Matt Thorp as Vice President, Steve Freeman as Secretary/Treasurer, and Brian Romeiser has been elected to fill the position formerly held by Chet Canary from Mt. Morris. It has been a pleasure to get to know Chet and we appreciate his contributions to the Board over the years. John O'Connell, with two years left on his term, is representing New York State as our delegate to National Rural Water Board of Directors. Claude Sykes and John Fiedler still remain as active board members, and we look forward to working together throughout the year.

One facet of being a member of the Board of Directors is the participation in National Rural Water's "Annual Rally Week" in Washington, D.C. This event is held in April and each State Organization is asked to send representatives to Washington, D.C. Appointments are scheduled with the Congress and US Senators from each Rural Water Association. During our visit, we have appointments on Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday. Yearly, we average 25 congressional appointments, and during

our visit, we ask for continued financial support for the rural water programs across the country. It is important that our representatives realize that the money that is endorsed for these programs does come right back to their home districts. Any time your system had help from a circuit rider, attended a training session, or had assistance with a well head protection plan or source water plan, it was all as a result of Federal monies being allocated for these programs. I have to admit, I am rather envious of the states with just one member in the House of Representatives. The delegations meet with two Senators from their home states and one Congressman and are then free to visit the attractions in Washington, D.C. The New York delegation covers the 25 appointments, spread over five buildings, and our feet are weary when we are done. I would encourage every Board Member to be a part of this, at least once, during their respective term.

In closing, I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer. ♠

CONGRESSMAN WALSH THANKED

This past April, 2005, while the NY Rural Water Association Board of Directors were in Washington, DC for the annual Rally, they stopped by Congressman Jim Walsh's office to present him with a plaque to recognize his continuous support of the NY Rural Water Association and Rural Water Programs across the Nation.

The Board of Directors expressed our sincere thanks to Congressman Walsh for his efforts providing resources to help rural water systems achieve their goals of providing safe, quality drinking water to our communities.

