



APWA-NC President’s Message: 2012 = Anticipation



Greetings and welcome to 2012! As I sit here and write the first in a series of Presidential messages, I reflect on my history in APWA-NC for inspiration and motivation to lead this distinguished chapter through the coming year. I have been fortunate to have employers who have encouraged and supported my involvement in APWA-NC over the years. My first experience with APWA-NC was attending an Administrative

Management Division (AMD) Annual Conference. This was way back in 1997 when it was held at the Chetola Resort in Blowing Rock. Mark Combs was the Division President at the time and he was like a shark circling fresh bait. By the end of the conference I had a free APWA shirt (won as a door prize) and a position on the AMD Board of Directors! I thought to myself, “What have I gotten myself into?” It must have been a pretty good gig because I continued to serve as a Director on the AMD Board for several years before being elected as the Division President. It was this early nurturing by the people that I met along the way that inspired me...people who were dedicated to their communities with an unending commitment to public service AND APWA-NC. They are the legends of APWA-NC that have provided great leadership and friendship over the years. Many of them are the ones who threw me the keys and said “Get in and drive!” I am so grateful for this opportunity to lead this organization and work with such a great group of people who volunteer their time to help make this North Carolina Chapter the best in the land!

So here I sit behind the wheel looking out over the hood at the year ahead. Keith Pugh, who so brilliantly and passionately lead this organization through 2011 would say, “Leave something better than the way you found it.” As your President, I will strive to carry on the rich traditions of this chapter while seeking ways to make great even greater. Among my objectives to attain such lofty goals are:

- ◆ Shorten the Executive Board Meetings,
- ◆ Extract useful and relevant information from the Membership Survey results and add value to our membership,
- ◆ Define the roles and responsibilities of our Executive Board positions in written format, and
- ◆ Expand the reach of our community and environmental projects to areas beyond High Point.

Fortunately for me (and you), I will not pursue these goals alone. There is a group of remarkable people who selflessly give so much of their time, energy and resources to make our Chapter better. These fine folks serve in a multitude of ways from our Executive Board, to technical divisions, to committees. I am amazed by the work that they do and the effort and contributions they make to this chapter. It is an honor to serve alongside them and I know we can accomplish great things together!

There are still opportunities to get involved. We are always looking for individuals with the heart and passion to serve on committees. All of our committee members work very hard to provide you numerous opportunities to learn and grow, network with peers, and celebrate public works. As always, APWA-NC will strive to meet your professional goals by offering economical educational and networking opportunities. We will also promote public awareness and outreach to attract new members.

Speaking of education, I have some exciting news to share! APWA has established the Donald C. Stone Center for Leadership Excellence in Public Works! Using the tag line *Positioning Public Works Professionals for the 21st Century*, the DCS Center is a progressive system of career paths for professional development and credentialing. For the first time in the history of APWA, a comprehensive education and credentialing system is in place for all skill levels within public works. You can read more about the DCS Center here: <http://www.apwa.net/donald-c-stone>

Also, did you know that Charlotte, North Carolina will be hosting the APWA 2013 North American Snow Conference? They say it doesn’t snow down south but we’ll be playing host to over 1500 snow-fighters from across the country. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer and help show off our southern hospitality! Please contact me for more information. I’ll close for now by saying that the I am excited by the thoughts of what we can accomplish in 2012.

INSIDE	
<i>National Public Works Week</i>	2
<i>Awards Committee Update</i>	3
<i>Retiree’s Corner</i>	4
<i>Equipment Services Division</i>	5
<i>Solid Waste</i>	6
<i>Technology Division</i>	6
<i>NC Sustainability</i>	7
<i>APWA Officers</i>	9

National Public Works Week

By Magda Holloway

National Public Works Weeks (NPWW) is a time to celebrate the tens of thousands of men and women in North America who provide and maintain the infrastructure and services collectively known as public works. This year it is scheduled for May 20-26, 2012. This was originally instituted as a public education campaign by the American Public Works Association (APWA) in 1960, NPWW calls attention to the importance of public works in community life. The Week seeks to enhance the prestige of the often-unsung heroes of our society—the professionals who serve the public good every day with quiet dedication.

APWA encourages public works agencies and professionals to take the opportunity to make their stories known in their communities. Over the years the observances have taken many forms, including parades, displays of public works equipment, high school essay contests, open houses, programs for civic organizations and media events. The occasion is marked each year with scores of resolutions and proclamations from mayors and governors, as well. Some special highlights of NPWW include a United States Senate resolution affirming the first National Public Works Week in 1960, letters of acknowledgment from Presidents Dwight Eisenhower and Lyndon Johnson, and a Presidential Proclamation signed by John F. Kennedy in 1962. We have submitted a formal request to the Governor to proclaim May 20-16 as National Public Works Week. We hope you will do the same within your own municipalities. If you need examples, we will have some on the website that you can review.

We're compiling information about what other municipalities in NC have done to celebrate during this week. Any information you could provide would greatly be appreciated. We hope this information can be helpful in planning your National Public Works Week. Please forward information of what you have done in the past to celebrate NPWW to Magda Holloway (magda.holloway@sanfordnc.net) at your earliest convenience. Thanks in advance for your help!



Travis McDonald received the Public Works Employee of the Year award at the Town of Garner National Public Work Week Luncheon. Travis received a reserved parking space, a plaque, free work pass for our July 4th event, a fishing pass, lunch on the Town Manager, and Council recognition.

The trophies on the table are for the Town of Garner "Roadeo" winners in five events - Backhoe Basketball, Trailer Backing, Riding Mower Maneuvering, Blower Ball, and Nail Driving.



The city of Sanford displays equipment to employees and children at elementary schools.



Pictured above are "lots of orange shirts" at luncheon in City of Asheville.

Awards Committee Update

By Keith Pugh

National Awards:

The APWA-NC Awards Committee is pleased to announce the submission of five nomination packages endorsed by the chapter for National Awards. The nominations include:

- ◆ Top 10 Public Works Leaders of the Year - Mr. Dan Mikkleson, City Engineer, City of Salisbury
- ◆ Top 10 Public Works Leaders of the Year - Mr. Matthew Jordan, Chief Executive Officer, Cape Fear Public Utility Authority
- ◆ Professional Manager of the Year - Fleet Services - Mr. Travis Brown, City of Raleigh
- ◆ Professional Manager of the Year - Solid Waste - Mr. Kermit Williamson, City of Asheboro
- ◆ Project of the Year, Structures \$5M to \$25M - Transit Operations Facility, City of Raleigh

Congratulations to the nominees! Each of them are certainly worthy and deserving of recognition within their respective category. As a Chapter, we are fortunate to have high quality people and projects to submit for national recognition. We are extremely proud of each nominee.

Chapter Awards:

Spring is in the air and it's time to celebrate! If you or someone you know has done outstanding work during 2011, the Awards Committee would like to know about it. The Chapter's Awards Program was established to recognize outstanding individuals, groups, programs and projects representing the very best in public works profession. With budget issues all around us, I can't think of a better way to motivate and keep your employees engaged than to recognize them for their efforts. The North Carolina Chapter is looking for nominations for five chapter awards. *Nominations are due by April 13, 2012*

Awards NOT Requiring APWA Membership

- ◆ Robert S. Hopson Leadership Service Award (management staff)
- ◆ H. W. Keuffner Award (front line staff and/or front line supervisors)
- ◆ Jean Seals Award (non-member whose contributions aid the success of the chapter)

Awards Requiring APWA Membership

- ◆ Samuel A. Greeley Local Government Service Award (long term public service)
- ◆ New Category - Robert E. Linkner Private Sector Service Award (long term private sector service)

*Appreciation is a free gift that you can give to anyone you encounter -
it is completely your choice.*

-- Barbara Glanz

The North Carolina Chapter Awards are open for nominations and all documentation is available on the Chapter website (<http://northcarolina.apwa.net/c/awardscommittee/>). If you have questions concerning one of the Chapter awards or you are interested in serving on the Awards Committee, feel free to contact me at keith.pugh@highpointnc.gov or 336 883-3197 for additional information.



RETIREE'S CORNER

by Stewart Sykes

With the new year well underway, we want to look at what has been happening at the N.C. State Treasurer's office and any news regarding the Local Government Employees Retirement System (LGERS).

The first Associational Roundtable meeting held in a year took place January 12th. Steve Toole, Retirement Systems Director, opened the meeting, indicating these meetings would be held a week or so before each of the quarterly Retirement System's Board of Trustees meetings in the future. This was good news for those who represent employee associations and need to stay abreast of the ever changing issues the Retirement System is challenged with.

Mr. Toole also announced that association representatives would be given the opportunity to speak at the January 19th Board of Trustees meeting. APWA-NC did not make a presentation for two reasons. (1) With one week's notice, this writer was unable to create a suitable presentation, obtain approval by our Executive Board and then the League of Municipalities. (2) Following the annual actuarial report presentation at the October 20th Board of Trustees meeting, the Board voted to reduce the Employer Contribution Rate by 0.14 percent (6.88% to 6.74%) in lieu of considering a COLA for retirees. This was primarily because local governments did not increase salaries as rapidly as projected in lieu of undistributed gains for a COLA being available from investment returns. Based on the above, the need to speak to our concern regarding the lack of a Cost of Living Adjustment while inflation has increased 7.2% from 2009 - 2011 was moot. (Have your food and gas costs gone up in the last three years?) If efforts to chip away at

the foundation of our retirement program continue, we will keep you informed.

As indicated in the Winter edition of the newsletter, the National Institute on Retirement Security's report clearly indicates 2 very important points that other State and Local entities have already learned. 1) Defined Benefit retirement plans (like we have now) are more cost efficient over Defined Contribution plans due to higher returns and longevity risk pooling, and 2) Defined Contribution plans (most times where the employee must choose their investments, a 401(k) type plan) do not close funding shortfalls, and can actually increase employer costs. Again, we hope the DB/DC issue has been put to rest; however, again we must watch out for those who want to chip away at the current plan, thinking only of short term gains in lieu of long term results. As indicated in earlier articles, Local Government decision makers must realize that diminishing retirement security will have significant negative impacts on police officers, firefighters and other dedicated servants, especially in the future.

Regarding Legislative issues, the Retirement Division will be working on 2 issues that potentially impact Local Government employees. 1) A bill was introduced last year that would allow return of contributions with interest to non-vested members withdrawing from the retirement system. Final passage of this bill will be encouraged. 2) The Treasury Department has several long term goals. Issues to be addressed this session include changes that will improve the way it processes death and disability claims. In addition, the proposed legislation will include some proposals that will improve the department's ability to prevent and

detect fraud. Currently, there is a major initiative in the State Treasurer's office to address possible fraud, waste and abuse. Meetings began in October of last year and the team of staff members made recommendations to the Department's Steering Committee on December 20th in the form of an Invitation to bid. While this was approved, further work has resulted in the need to issue a Request for Proposals, which is to be finalized soon. The primary goal is to identify and implement processes that allow early detection and elimination of actual or potential situations of fraud and abuse. It's encouraging to learn the Department is handling issues like this while they help us with the "routine" issues of making sure we get a monthly check!

Lastly, the Department's actuary on retirement issues provided the Board of Trustees with Projections of Undistributed Gains and Required Base Contribution Rates at the January 19th Board of Trustees meeting. At that point, they did not have the end of year investment returns and had to assume a 2.5% annual gain. This is significant because in recent years a minimum return of 7.25% is set each year to keep the Retirement System "solvent". Based on the 2.5% return assumption there would be a need for additional increases in Base Contribution Rates peaking at 8.92% in the year 2018, and this assumes a zero COLA! As indicated in the Winter Newsletter article, delaying a vote on the undistributed gains until January, as documented in years past, would have been a wiser choice, but as we all know, "hindsight is always 20/20". Unfortunately, the actual end of year return was finalized at 2.12%.

Equipment Services Division

By Barry Neel

The Equipment Services Division held a Fleet Tour Event on January 18 in the new Facility for the Town of Mooresville.

The meeting, hosted by John Finn, Public Works Director and Robert Wayne, Fleet Manager for the Town, was a chance to have a tour of the new facility, from office space, storage space, meeting facilities to repair area. Robert then gave an overview of how the Fleet Department is set up and operates within the Town.

A BBQ lunch was served on site followed by a great question and answer session about the Town and how it functions. This was followed by an open discussion lead by Barry Neel, Past President on what can APWA-NC do for their members.

The next Fleet Tour is set for April 17 at the City of Winston Salem Fleet Department.



Solid Waste Division Report

Local government agencies and private companies continue to be challenged with the rising costs of providing health benefits for employees. Additionally, how do we balance that cost versus employee related medical conditions and the physical demands of providing solid waste collection. This could lead to absenteeism or poor performance which could lead to rising personnel and personal healthcare costs. The Solid Waste Division held its first workshop for 2012 on February 15th related to these challenges. The workshop was entitled "Wellness for Laborers- Healthy Minds and Bodies" and was held at Lake Mackintosh in Burlington, North Carolina. We had 50 participants ranging from High Point to Fayetteville. The guest speaker was Jenise Menshew, PA and Medical Services Supervisor for the City of Greensboro. Jenise selected and discussed topics that provided good information for employees to

share with other coworkers and family members. The topics presented were related to Stress Management and Nutrition.

During the Stress Management segment, workshop participants were presented information to determine whether or not they had Type A or Type B personalities. Those personality traits measured how well you handled stress. Assessment tests were given to measure life changing events and determined high, moderate and low risk stress levels. There were 43 "life events" that were assigned a point value ranging from 100 to 11. The death of a spouse was assigned the highest value and minor traffic violations ranked lowest. The second assessment measured the level of employee burnout concerning work related issues. Attendees were really amazed at their scores. The class participation was very

interactive and majority of the class asked stress related questions about financial, family and work performance issues.

The second topic focused on proper diet and nutrition. Participants were informed on the functions of the major food groups and how each food group impacts their bodies. The class received information on the use of proper food intake and assessing physical activity. This information is critical because of cities and towns who still perform some solid collection services with semi-automated and manual collection trucks.

Overall, it was a very successful workshop that was well received by the participants. Initial survey feedback was very positive. Our next workshop is scheduled for April 2012.

SAVE THE DATE

2012 Stormwater Management Division Conference
September 17-18, 2012
Crowne Plaza, Asheville, NC

Technology Division

By Brandon Inscore

Once again the Technology Division and the Administrative Management Division have joined forces to bring our members a worthwhile and exciting conference. This year's theme is "The Role of Public Works in Emergency Management". The Conference is scheduled for July 16-17, 2012 at the Sea Trail Golf Resort and Conference Center, Sunset Beach, NC. We encourage all of our members to attend this great opportunity to learn from the experiences of others. Conference Sponsorship opportunities are open and available for registration at this time. Please visit the chapter website for more detailed information.

In other news the Technology Division completed its first workshop to serve the GIS community. The Geographic Information System Professional (GISP) Certification Workshop was a great success. The workshop was held on December 2, 2011 at the Central Piedmont Community College - Geospatial Technology Training Center in Charlotte, NC. We had fifteen (15) attendees, of which only two (2) were APWA members.

We would like to thank the other Chapter Divisions for their continued support as we continue to grow and serve.

NC Sustainability

By Jo Anne Wiles

From the first meeting in July 2011, to the most recent teleconference in February 2012, the APWA-NC Sustainability Committee continues to realize its mission to better serve the chapter:

“The Sustainability Committee serves all divisions and members of APWA-NC to promote APWA’s goal of contributing to a higher and sustainable quality of life through education, communication and advocacy with the focus of planning for the future using the concept of people, prosperity, and planet.”

The most exciting news is the upcoming *free* webinar available to all APWA-NC members. On March 28th 1:00-2:00pm an interactive webinar titled ‘Sustainability in Public Works: Beyond Green’ will be available to all members. Mary Anderson, Director of Public Works, Highland Park, IL as well as APWA Center for Sustainability Chair, will lead us in our discussion. Please join us to begin to learn and discuss what it really means to be sustainable in public works. We will introduce the big picture of sustainability - beyond the buzz words - and discuss how to develop and lead with a sustainable viewpoint. The Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure will also be highlighted. All divisions, administrative management, building and grounds, equipment services, solid waste, stormwater management, streets, and technology are encouraged to attend. Webinar login details to follow; please watch for forthcoming emails as well as information on our website <http://northcarolina.apwa.net/c/sustainabilitycommittee/>.

The committee has made it a goal to be represented and engaged at all division conferences as well as the state conference. The development of relevant discussion and presentation topics is also high on the committee’s agenda. Most importantly, the Sustainability Committee continues to focus on the advantages and opportunities of sustainability within public works. A database of sustainable practices is being developed for use within the chapter and APWA-NC members are still encouraged to contribute their knowledge via the recently available sustainability survey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HZJNGHL>).

We are also looking to foster relationships with sustainable vendors; if companies would like their sustainable practices highlighted please contact Scott Whalen swhalen@wkdickson.com

APWA National Public Works Week May 20-26, 2012

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<http://www.apwa.net/discover/National-Public-Works-Week>

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Newsletter Submission Dates

By D. J. Señeres, Newsletter Chair

Please mark your calendars with the newsletter deadline of May 15, 2012 for the Summer issue.

Thanks for the past submissions from Division Presidents. Please remember to attach your article text and any supporting photographs. Include below the title of the article who the author of the article is and the organization he or she represents as shown below:

Article for Newsletter
By John Doe or Jane Doe, Name of Organization



The American Public Works Association is dedicated to education in the related areas of public works. We help our members, the public, and policy makers work together to provide the public works services needed to keep our communities operating smoothly and safely in concert with the latest environmental and public health standards. Through the national association and our 63 chapters in the US and Canada, we offer a comprehensive array of services to meet this educational mission.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Thanks to all who have contributed to APWA-NC News.
Please send your news to:

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