

# Maine Water Environment NEWS



November 2016 • Fall

A Publication of the Maine Water Environment Association

1-800-452-8786

## Past Presidents meet in Portland

Over the 50 year history of the Maine Water Environment Association/ Maine Waste Water Control Association, we have had 43 presidents – 40 if you discount the second terms served by Roger Gagne, Darold Wooley and Tom Wiley. The number may be smaller than you might guess because in the early days of our association, Presidents served two year terms, the last stalwart soul to shoulder the two term burden being Charlene Powell in 1981 and 1982. Of the many people that have served our association in this capacity, 25 were able to attend the luncheon at the Portland Regency on Milk Street in Portland's Old Port District. Scott Firmin (not a past president yet) addressed the group noting many of the accomplishments of our association over our 50 year history. Gilles St. Pierre won the "travelled longest distance to attend" prize, given that "Commodore Dick Bentzel" was not able to sail in for the event. Charlene Powell won the "served my term most years ago" prize edging out John Hart, Steve Broadbent and Tom Todd, a group of early '80s leaders. After a delicious lunch – really, the steak was very good – many of the past presidents rose to speak to what a great experience their participation in the Association has been for them. Another common theme was to note the passion with which people in our industry, and especially those that get involved with MEWEA and similar organizations, have for clean water and making the environment a better place. Many rose to remember the strides that have been made to clean up the waters of Maine – from our once smelly and foam choked rivers to harbors unfit for recreational boating, fishing, or much of any enjoyment. Other common thoughts turned to the future and how to get the next generation of operators involved in this wonderful story of accomplishment. Many rose to call out "the Gimp", Steve Broadbent for the time that he invited them to an association event – a conference or a golf tournament or even a social time after a day of training. Reaching out to people we know in the industry and helping them to be involved is something each of us can do to keep our association strong and our water environment clean. Mike Grove noted how thankful he remains for the rank and file operators and maintenance staff that get out in all kinds of weather at all times of the day and night to keep systems functioning. The event seemed

to be enjoyed by all in attendance, special thanks are due to Mary Waring, Matt Timberlake and Scott Firmin for arranging the event and tracking down the past presidents. It takes us all to do the job, and we remain thankful to those who have served over the years!



## 2016 Officers

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Scott Firmin  
Portland Water District

### First Vice President

Matt Timberlake  
Ted Berry Company

### Second Vice President

Paula Drouin  
LAWPCA

### Immediate Past President

Tom Connolly  
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### Secretary/Treasurer

Al Jellison  
Dedham, ME (retired)

### NEWEA State Director

Mac Richardson  
LAWPCA

\*For a complete Board Listing, please visit the MEWEA website at:

[www.mewea.org](http://www.mewea.org)

## Upcoming Executive Committee Meeting Dates:

Nov 18 Monthly Meeting/  
Budget Workshop • Maine  
Municipal Association

Jan. 20  
Maine Municipal Association

# Remembering Doctor Dave

By Tim Haskell



As a new legislative session is about to begin I can't help but think about how much I'll miss Dave Anderson and his calm insightful way of looking at all legislation.

I'd met Dave at training sessions held at the Portland Water District and at Fall Conferences. David treated everyone as if they were family, always welcoming and eager to hear about your involvement in the wastewater industry and about you – not wanting to just talk about himself. As I came to find out (and suspected from our first meeting) David was passionate about this industry and our association. He was proud to be a part of protecting the waters of the State of Maine and our environment as a whole. In the halls of the legislature in Augusta and as Chair of the Government Affairs Committee, Dave was a leader and a strong advocate for our industry and operators. He made it all look easy and everywhere he went, he greeted senators, representatives, other lobbyists, and especially the “first timers” to the hearing rooms, with the same warm enthusiasm and smile. If you've never been to the State House, it's really the hallways outside the hearing rooms where the real work takes place. This was where David was most at home and he made it look effortless as he “held court” hearing the latest issue or proposal.

I was one of those “first timers”, when in late 2013 I was asked if I wanted to attend a MEWEA Executive Committee meeting to hear more about what was happening in Augusta. David spent some time telling me about what he did and said there were a couple of things coming up and he could use a little help covering some hearings. He made it sound so simple, and looking at that smile and sparkling eyes, how could I say anything but, “Sure I'll help”. So, one of the first bills I ever worked on was the Dig Safe Law which was, to say the least, a marathon. Being the humble person that he was, David didn't mention that there would be times like these. He left out the part about how you could spend countless hours waiting for a hearing that would never come, or

how you need to know 10-12 members of 6-8 different committees and especially the clerks and legal analysts for each committee. He also conveniently neglected to mention the part about multiple hearings on the same day, at the same time, in different buildings - and just because the schedule is posted it doesn't mean that's the order the bills will be heard. There are a couple hundred other things that are important, but David made it all look easy. If you're watching me write this Dave, I know you're smiling, with that ever-present grin. Well played. I'm glad you always had my back.

When David and I started working together he'd had a run of health issues that prevented him from participating as much as he would have liked. Every time we spoke or e-mailed each other I could tell he was disappointed that he couldn't be at the state House right along with us. He always wanted to hear the details on which legislator said what and who was presenting testimony from where. Dave was the star quarterback on injured reserve, helping me and others through the legislative process. By now you have some idea how excited Dave was about Government Affairs. We knew David was feeling better and wanted to get back at it when he addressed an e-mail, “Hello Government Affairs Junkies.” He may have been on injured reserve, but he was still calling in plays from the sidelines. I was honored and sad at the same time when in late October 2014, David announced to the Executive Committee that he and I would be co-chairs of the Government Affairs Committee. I was honored that he had taken me under his wing, shared his experience with me, and that he was comfortable with me assisting even more, but I was also sad since I could tell he wanted to participate more but knew he had to pass his torch on to someone else. This really came home to me when he closed one e-mail saying he was leaving things, “in your more than capable hands.”

Throughout 2015, we would run what was happening by Dave and his input was always on point and helpful. He was always there for me too, when I was feeling frustrated with whatever was going on. He would share stories with me and give me the pep talk (even though I didn't realize that's what he was doing), and I couldn't help but be re-energized by the prescrip-

tion Dr. Dave had just provided. Dave had an infectious enthusiasm.

David L. Anderson passed away suddenly on June 29, 2016 at 71 years of age. His career included 22 years with the Portland Water District and many years teaching Chemistry at Westbrook College (now UNE). He served as MEWEA President in 2007 and actively served our association in many ways beyond his Government Affairs duties. Dave was truly a gentleman in every sense. He was caring, kind, giving, and eager to help anyone and everyone. My grandmother would have called him a “gentle soul”. I'd like to end now by quoting Tom Wiley from his remembrance words at Dave's service, “Thank you to David's Family for sharing him with us. Thank you, David, for being part of our lives. You were a great mentor, but even a greater friend.”



## Member Resources

By Paula Drouin, New Media Chair, LAWPCA

Earlier this year MEWEA started the “Maine Water Professionals Discussion Forum” on Facebook, which allows people to communicate directly with other water professionals throughout the state. Questions get asked and answered, and sometimes items get sold. It has become a great way for members to connect. Another new way to get information is the member's only section of the MEWEA website, where users can see convention presentations, laboratory SOPs, and more. If you haven't already, visit [mewea.org/](http://mewea.org/) members to sign up. Both of these are valuable communication resources that we hope many of you take advantage of.

# ON MY SOAPBOX:

## What's Around The Next Bend Of The River?

By Mac Richardson, Newsletter Editor

**Note: The opinions, positions, and views expressed in any "On My Soapbox" feature are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions, positions or views of the Maine Water Environment Association.**

If you are reading this, I have to presume that you are pretty familiar with the amazing improvement that has come to the waters of the United States in the last 40 or 50 years. The horror stories of the past are just that in the past. The Androscoggin River no longer belches putrid paint peeling fumes, the Cuyahoga no longer catches fire, and dead fish no longer regularly populate the Charles, the Connecticut or countless other New England Rivers.

I was giving some thought to these facts as I was floating down the length of the Presumpscot recently. For the first half of the trip, one could be excused if they wondered if they had just been transported to the Allagash (talk about a lovely river! But I digress). The river banks appeared wild and the water was clear as a bell. Below Mallison Falls the river banks seem just as wild but the nature of the water is greatly changed – instead of clear the water is turbid. The friend I was canoeing with wanted to know why. Although the Maine River Guide published by the Appalachian Mountain Club suggests the change is a result of discharges from sewage treatment plants, clearly this is not the case as there are no additional sewage treatment discharges (outside of the tiny RSU 14 school outfall on the Pleasant River quite a few miles upstream) until after Sacarappa Falls another 10 or so miles downstream. So what is the reason for the change? I have to say that two factors stand out: muddy, erodible stream banks and runoff sometimes polluted from trash and litter or carry-

ing sediment from ditches and neglected drainage ways. Both of these are non-point issues that will require a change in thinking and a new approach if we are to make further improvements in our rivers (and lakes).

As a first step, maybe we should try and help curb the litter that seems to plague the intersection of our waters and roads, parking lots and trails. While I fail to understand why a whole lot of people seem to think that it is harder to carry an empty beverage container out than it is to carry a full one in, a few well-placed trash cans maintained by local clubs, towns and non-profits might help a lot. Second, we need to get serious about slowing down that nuisance water we remove from our streets and parking lots. How often did I see the end of a culvert punctuated by a mini canyon caused by eroding water? How many lawns, fairways, and ball fields are fertilized only with an eye to how green the grass is and not to how green the stream is? The time is now for action on those pesky, diverse sources of pollution generally considered to be non-point source pollution. I am not suggesting that those of us maintaining treatment plants and responsible for the old "end of pipe" can relax. What I am suggesting is that we need to help focus some energy on a whole new out of sight and out of mind spot – the water's edge. How many people have no idea what the river near them looks like, how beautiful it really is, or what the access point looks like? Does your treatment plant provide access to the River you discharge into? If not, could you, should you,

provide that access? In general our waters are exceptionally pretty, life renewing spots to be cherished. While a little piece of me fights to keep the secret to myself, I realize that increasing the relationship between our citizens and our rivers has enormous potential to improve both. This point is rarely more clear than when paddling in the "after hours paddle" event on the Androscoggin River in Lewiston/Auburn. With near universal acclaim and wonder, participants remarked on how clean the river and the surroundings are. Yet relatively few people venture on to the river on any given day. Is it possible that part of jobs as water quality professionals needs to be introducing the public to what our waters have to offer? Once people see what they have been missing, perhaps they will more willingly pack that beer can out with them and to support stream bank erosion control measures. At a minimum, check it out, you will be glad you did!



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# Helping with Hurricane Recovery 2016

By Phyllis Rand (Mac Richardson), GAUD

Phyllis Rand, Water Quality Coordinator for the Greater Augusta Utility District and 1995 MEWEA (then MWWCA) President, is also an American Red Cross Disaster Services Volunteer. On October 12, 2016, the Red Cross deployed Phyllis to the Red Cross's Disaster Relief Operation in North Carolina, a state hard-hit by flooding from Hurricane Matthew. The impact of the storm was greatest in Haiti, Cuba and the Bahamas, but because of its duration, in which nearly a dozen inches of rain fell, the hurricane greatly impacted the Southeastern United States. The storm made landfall about 50 miles southeast of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina on October 8, 2016, as a Category 2 hurricane. The long-lived hurricane was the first Atlantic Storm to become a Category 5 hurricane since Floyd in 2007. Forty-nine people died as a result of the storm in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. Primarily as a result of flooding (new all-time record flood levels were recorded on the Waccamaw and Little Pee in South Carolina and the Dee, Lumber, Neuse, and Tar Rivers in North Carolina), portions of Interstate 95 were closed for more than a week. The overall cost of the damage caused by the storm has been estimated at around \$8 billion. After her return to Maine, we were able to ask Phyllis a few questions about her experience. Her comments are based on her personal experience and are not officially endorsed by the American Red Cross:



Phyllis Rand volunteering in North Carolina

How did you get involved in this relief effort?

**The Red Cross established three large Disaster Relief Operation (DRO) Districts in North Carolina. Staff Recruitment Requests were simultaneously sent to Red Cross Chapters across the country. The Red Cross requested Government Liaison Supervisors for deployment to our Sandhills Chapter in North Carolina (Bladen, Cumberland, Harnett, Hoke, Moore, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, and Scotland Counties). My hometown is in the Sandhills Chapter, and I also knew there was a large Native American tribe (the Lumbee Tribe) in the region. Because I am a Red Cross Government and Tribal Liaison, I let my local Red Cross Chapter know that I was available for deployment.**

I believe you grew up in the Fayetteville area. Being one of the hardest hit areas, was it shocking to see places you remember that were terribly impacted as a result of the flooding?

**My old neighborhood was not badly impacted, but homes owned by former classmates were turned into islands. Seeing their videos, and photos of their living rooms, where everything was submerged under water was shocking and distressing.**

What was an average day like? What did you spend most of your time on?

**Unlike the past national Disaster Relief Operations I've responded to (Alabama Tornadoes in April 2011, Hurricane Sandy**

**in November 2012) where I was sent into the field, this time I was the Government Liaison Leader for all of District 3. I was stationed at our DRO Headquarters at Fort Bragg, NC.**

**A normal day began at 7:30 am when I met with my small team of Government Liaisons. While enthusiastic about their deployments, these were their first assignments as Government Liaisons. Knowing this, my meetings began with updating them on the status of the DRO, the tasks they were to perform that day while interacting with government agencies, and making sure they had what they needed to successfully perform those tasks (eg., rental vehicle, laptop computer).**

**I participated in daily 8:00 District Leadership Team Meetings and 11 am Statewide Government Liaison Leadership Team conference calls, but most of my time was spent fielding phone calls from State and Tribal Government officials, and communicating with my Red Cross superiors. This necessitated my keeping track of the activities going on in our shelters, knowing the routes of our mobile feeding trucks and the locations of our "fixed-feeding" sites, receiving intel from my Government Liaisons and other field personnel for decision-making purposes, and addressing problems that cropped up along the way. My days began at 7:30 am and ended at 8:30 pm. My deployment lasted two weeks, which is a standard deployment.**

Is there a particular image or event that sticks in your mind about the experience?

**Yes. This was the first time I used my role as a Red Cross Tribal Liaison on a DRO.**

**I landed right in the middle of some serious communications challenges between the Lumbee Tribe and the Red Cross. Several days into my deployment, I spent two hours on the phone with "Tina," a particularly irate tribeswoman. The conversation ended up being eye-opening for both of us: She explained that the way we ran our shelters was interpreted unfavorably by her tribe based on their culture, and I explained that we must run our shelters according to Red Cross Sheltering and Food Safety Standards. Both points-of-view were valid, and we both saw how each side had tunnel vision based on their respective cultures. Tina accepted my invitation to come to Fort Bragg and share information about her tribe's culture with our leaders, and she carried back our point-of-view to members of her tribe.**

Are there lessons learned from the experience that you would like to pass on?

**The Red Cross relies on its disaster relief workers—employees and volunteers alike—to fulfill its mission as the world's largest humanitarian organization. Serving as a leader on this DRO gave me the opportunity to clearly see how much faith the Red Cross has in me, a volunteer. Knowing that I have been given that level**

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## Helping with Hurricane Recovery 2016 cont'd

of trust makes me work even harder, and I like to think that I, in turn, am making the Red Cross a better organization.

Did you have expenses that you did not get reimbursed for?

The Red Cross covered my travel, food and lodging expenses.

Because I am a volunteer, I don't get paid to respond to disasters. I've met many disaster responders who take leave without pay in order to respond when the call goes out; I use vacation time. A few days after I returned to Maine this time, I learned my employer is developing a policy that may mean I won't have to use my vacation time in the future.

How can people get involved in this type of effort – possibly for future natural disasters?

They can go online at [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) and choose the "Volunteer" tab at the top of the webpage.

Is the Red Cross a governmental organization funded by Congress?

The Red Cross is a non-governmental organization funded by donations. There have been a few rare occasions when the Red Cross asked Congress for emergency funding due to unprecedented, extremely large Disaster Relief Operations.

Why did you join the Red Cross?

In 2008, when I finished my term serving as an officer of the New England Water Environment Association, I began looking for another non-profit organization to join. There were hundreds to choose from! When I mentioned this to my mother, she told me about a time when my military family needed help after moving to Fort Campbell, Kentucky. My father was serving in Vietnam at the time. My mother tried getting help from various military aid organizations, but nobody would help us—until she contacted the Red Cross. When she told me that story, the deal was sealed. I am now gladly repaying the favor the Red Cross gave my family 40 years ago. 🌊

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# MEWEA Celebrates 50 years at Annual conference

By Mac Richardson, Newsletter Editor

MEWEA's 50th anniversary celebration and annual conference kicked off on September 14 with the annual golf tournament at the beautiful and challenging Sugarloaf links. While the weather was a bit damp and dreary the enthusiasm shown by the golfers was anything but. The Convention rolled on Thursday with six "mega tech sessions", this was the first year utilizing the three hour format, and input is still welcome – please send along any suggestions to our hard working convention chair, Stacy Thompson at the Saco Water Resource Recovery Facility. During lunch on Thursday numerous awards were presented (please see list and pictures in this newsletter) after which Mark Holt, Howard Carter, Travis Peaslee and Brad Moore shared a look back to their experience in the wastewater treatment profession. Following the afternoon round of tech sessions and vendor time, a party was held on the "Sugarloaf Beach" (the patio adjacent to the Maine Lodge Building) where attendees enjoyed corn hole games, a giant jingo game (thanks to Howard Carter) some malt beverages and warming by the fire pit.

Friday continued the events with additional tech sessions, vendor time and networking. The executive committee thanks all who attended the event, MMA staff and countless volunteers, and our vendors. An additional shout out is due for Flygt Products and the Ted Berry Company for their additional sponsorship.

## Awardees in no particular order:

2016 Charles Perry Award: Philip Tucker from Sanford Sewer District.

2016 David Anderson Laboratory Excellence Award: Peter Rush from Portland Water District.

2016 Young Professionals Award: Dan Munsey from Brunswick Sewer District. The committee also presented a scholarship to Nolin Robbins from the Brunswick Sewer District.

2016 Roger Gagne Award for Long Term Service to the Association: Jeff McBurnie from Casella Organics.

2016 Life Membership: Scott Firmin acknowledged John Hart as a Lifetime member.

Establishment of the Alfred Jellison Lifetime Achievement Award: Scott Firmin presented a plaque to Al Jellison, as the Association renamed the Lifetime Achievement Award in his honor.

Alfred Jellison Lifetime Achievement Award(2 awards) : Vivian Matkivich, Darold Wooley

Maine DEP Certificates of Achievement: Alan Hitchcock of the Caribou Utilities District.

Brian Kavanah also presented the MEWEA membership with an acknowledgement of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary from DEP Commissioner Paul Mercer.

2016 President's Service Award: Stacy Thompson, Saco Water Resource Recovery Facility.

JETCC Awards: Leann Hanson presented the following JETCC Awards:

Lee Agger Award: Jack Berry, Ted Berry Co.

Founder's Award: Ronald White, Kennebec Sanitary District

Past Service Award: Darold Wooley, recently retired from Lincoln Sanitary District



Peter Rush accepts the David Anderson award for laboratory excellence from President Scott Firmin.



Stacy Thompson enjoys a moment with Scott Firmin over the President's service award.

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# MEWEA Celebrates 50 years at Annual conference.....



Phillip Tucker receives the Charles Perry Award for collection systems from Dave Beauchamp.



Ron White from KSTD accepts the founder's award from Leeann Hanson.



Jack Berry with Ted Berry Co President Matt Timberlake.



Always young at heart, Scott Firmin presents the young professionals award to Dan Munsey.



"Uncle Al" receiving thanks for his many years of tireless service to MWWCA and MEWEA from President Scott Firmin.



Darold Wooley accepts the past service award from Leeann Hanson.



Jeff McBurnie and Scott Firmin having a chuckle over the Roger Gagne award.



Tim, Dan and Travis from the Sanford Sewer District ask Dave Beauchamp "no, really what's the prize for second place?"

# My experience as an operator exchange participant in Maine

By Rian Savage, Univ of CT WWTF

Being part of the operator exchange program and traveling to Maine was a great experience. I have been an operator for 7.5 years and worked the whole time at the University of Connecticut's 3 MGD extended air oxidation ditch plant. Traveling to another state and meeting other operators and seeing some of the processes that are used was interesting.



Connecticut Exchange Operator, Rian Savage tours the new Oxford treatment plant with Rob Polys and Rob Dunbar

A few of the highlights to my trip as an operator exchange participant follow: Sanford's WWTP had not discharged to the Mousam River since Mid-July and they were able to hold their treated effluent in a series of lagoon ponds totaling nearly 400 acres. This was because the Mousam River had too little flow to accept the flow from the WWTP. Sanford also has the area's most frequently visited birding area with over 230 species of birds spotted on the plant grounds. Another thing that

I found interesting was the LAWPCA compost facility. Set on over 118 acres, it uses a bio reactor, an underground filter of wood chips, to handle its odors. The sludge/sawdust mixture was turned with what looked like oversized rototiller tines, which moved up and down long bins. The dried compost produced a very mixed earthy smelling end result.

I enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the operator exchange. I would recommend any operator that has the chance in this opportunity to defiantly take part in it. The Maine operators and managers were great!

Thank you for this great opportunity,

Rian Savage

UConn WPCF-Operator III

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# MEWEA E-Mail Database

All current members of MEWEA should receive periodic e-mails, which may include the most recent newsletter, conference and training announcements, or regulatory updates. If you haven't received any e-mails from the organization recently, you may wish to update your information in the distribution list by sending your current e-mail address to Joan Kiszely at [jkiszely@memun.org](mailto:jkiszely@memun.org). Don't miss out on the exciting networking and educational opportunities MEWEA provides!



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

*(Full schedule will be available soon on the MEWEA website: [www.mewea.org](http://www.mewea.org))*

Jan. 22-25	Sun.-Wed.	NEWEA Spring Conference	Copley Place, Boston
Feb. 7 & 8	Tue.-Wed.	MWUA Joint Conference	Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland
March 9	Thur. (7-9:00 a.m.)	Legislative Breakfast	Senator Inn, Augusta
March 20-22	Mon.-Wed.	Washington D. C. Fly-In	Washington, D. C.
March 24	Fri.	Ski Day with NHWPCA	Mount Attitash
March 30	Thur.	Maine Water Conference	Augusta Civic Center
April 14	Fri. (7:30 a.m.)	MEWEA Spring Conference	Ramada Inn, Lewiston
April 22	Sat.	Urban Runoff	Deering High School, Portland
April 26-27	Wed.-Thur.	North Country Convention	Presque Isle
May	TBD	Maine Children's Water Festival	University of Maine, Orono



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# Maine Water Environment **NEWS**

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