

THE 2010 CONVENTION IN REVIEW - By Daina Grace, Executive Director

The 37th annual Texas Water Quality Association Convention & Exhibition was held July 7 – 10, 2010, at the Marriott at Champions Circle in Fort Worth, Texas. This year's convention had many new and exciting changes – I hope you were able to be there. For those who weren't, here is a brief review.

The events began on Wednesday with the Board of Directors' Meeting. As always the board members worked diligently to make TWQA the best Association it can be. This meeting was open to everyone and I am pleased to say that we had several guests who attended. We are always looking for new people because with new people come new opinions and new ideas. Thanks to all who attended!

The Marriott is located directly across from the Texas Motor Speedway so how on earth could we possibly be that close and not go to the speedway? 19 individuals sat through the pre-driving course and then took turns fulfilling one of the items on every race car driver's bucket list – DRIVING A REAL NASCAR RACE CAR! They took turns, each accomplishing whatever goal they had set for themselves, and when it was all said and done all returned safely to the pits. You didn't have to ask them if they had fun – all you had to do was look at their faces. 11 individuals actually drove while the other 8 individuals opted to ride in the passenger seat while being driven by a racer reaching speeds of 180 plus miles per hour. As far as I was concerned they were all much braver than I, since I watched from the pits.

While some members were playing speed racer others were gathered in President Perry Ratcliff's suite for good food, good fun and lots of hospitality. Of course once the race car drivers returned the stories flowed as quickly as the drinks! A special "thank you" goes out to Jo Grace for providing the bar and for her helper, Jennifer, for making great drinks. What a way to start out!

Thursday morning started early for 55 golfers who participated in the ever popular TWQA Golf Tournament. Except for a little heat, a lot of humidity and a few thunderstorms everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Following the event the golfers were treated to a nice lunch buffet.

Congratulations to this year's TWQA Golf Tournament winners:

1st place – Muennink, Densford, Williams & Sinks.

2nd place – Short, Seal, White & Brown

3rd place – Hellenbrand, Ford, O'Callaghan & Parks

Longest Drive – Robert Kersey Closest to the Pin: Drake London

Thursday evening's festivities began with a cocktail party which included the sounds of Sid Fly with a guest appearance from his son, Robert. What a treat to see how talent passes from father to son! The Awards Banquet followed and was hosted by Convention Committee Chairman and incoming President Alan Branson. Branson did a great job of making the event very special for the 150 individuals who attended. Special recognition was given to the past Presidents of TWQA in attendance as well as to the 2009 – 2010 TWQA Board members. These individuals give of their time and energies for the betterment of TWQA and we all owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

The evening continued with Kelly Parks, Membership Chairman, recognizing attending members as follows:

- 5 years: Dan Humphries Sales Company of Navasota, Texas
Priceless WaterCare of Bowie, Texas
- 10 years: Culligan of Corpus Christi, Texas
- 20 years: Quality Water Systems, Inc. of Conroe, Texas
- 25 years: Driessen Water 1, Inc. – Culligan of Austin, Texas
- 35 years: United Salt Corporation of Houston, Texas

Alan Branson presented the 2010 Supplier Awards. TWQA is most appreciative of all that the Suppliers do for our Association. Congratulations to the following:

Top Sponsorship Award: Pentair Water, PH Chemicals, United Salt Corporation
& WATTS Water Quality & Conditioning

Golden Service Award: Dan Humphries Sales Company, Pure & Gentle Soap,
United Salt Corporation & WATTS Water Quality & Conditioning

The final group of awards was the individual awards. These are very special as they are given to a member or members who have gone above and beyond on behalf of TWQA during the past year. Congratulations to all of this year's individual award recipients:

- Meritorious Service Award – John Blount & Ryan Lessing
- Woman of the Year – Kristi Stanford
- Man of the Year – Kurt Denson
- Sonny Cammack Award – Greg Gayler
- Gib Boerner Award – Jo Grace

The evening concluded with a Las Vegas style Casino Night where individuals could practice their gambling skills without loosing their hard earned money. What a way to end a great day!

Friday began with the business portion of the convention: the General Session/Annual Meeting. Committee Chairs reported on what their committees had done during the past 12 months. Overall TWQA did extremely well this year with the economy in the condition it was in. New officers were elected and the entire Board of Directors for the 2010 – 2011 year were presented to the membership. Board members are as follows:

- Immediate Past President – Perry Ratcliff
- President – Alan Branson
- President Elect – Bill McGraw
- Secretary – Kelly Parks
- Treasurer – Greg Gayler
- Board members – John Blount, Leon Chester, Kurt Denson, Ron Dobbs,
Richard Grace, Dan Humphries, Don McGhee, Bob Shelton,
Richard Wright
- Supplier Representative – Ryan Lessing

WQA President Robert Hague was the guest speaker for the General Session. Mr. Hague presented the results of the Battelle Study which WQA has been working on for a few years.

A special thank you goes out to WQA for all their hard work on this very important test.

This year's Exhibition was full to the rim with 45 Exhibitors. The time was changed to run from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. which allowed us to provide lunch on the show floor. As always with new things you have a few wrinkles and we found out real quick that when you have food you have servers! My apologies to all of you who did not get anything to eat. I promise you that we will have that problem resolved next year!

One other addition this year was the Technical Talk booth. We had 4 Exhibitors who took advantage of this opportunity to have one-on-one time with up to 30 individuals. The comments received were all positive so we will definitely do this again next year.

Friday night's Bar-B-Que by the pool became the Bar-b-que inside thanks to the thunderstorm which blew in. The evening was still a lot of fun thanks to good food, and great music by BUSTER JIGGS. Of course we can't forget to thank TURBIDEX for sponsoring the Margaritas and Beer for the evening. What more can you ask for?

The Basic Water Conditioning and Advanced Water Conditioning courses were both taught at the convention by Clark Benson of Engitech, Inc.. These courses were offered both for those interested in additional education and/or credit hours as well as those who need the courses to obtain their WTS license. We would like to thank TCEQ for coming to the facility on Saturday and offering the WTS exams to the 30 plus individuals who needed to take them.

As always there are many people who work hard to make the TWQA Convention the success that it is. I would like to thank all of the individuals who came and presented the sessions at the Convention. **Technical Session Speakers were:** Bill Loyd of Dow Water & Process, Marianne Metzner of National Testing Laboratories, Ltd., Ryan Lessing of WATTS Water Quality & Conditioning Products, and Roger Clemes of Waco Filters. **Business Session speakers were:** Craig Burrow of Web Directive and Harmon Hamman & Keith Pryde of Willis of Texas, Inc.

I would also like to thank all of the Exhibitors. We realize that times are tough right now and you have choices when it comes to if and when you exhibit. We truly appreciate all of your support – from the first time companies to those who have come so long they are honorary Texans! You are such a vital part of our Convention and our Association.

I must say an extra special thank you to the TWQA Board Members. These individuals work very hard all through the year on YOUR behalf but they are really called on during convention time. Be sure to take a minute and thank them for their efforts – they make my job much easier.

Lastly, I would like to say a special THANK YOU to my family for their support: my niece, Jenny, who helped with the bar at the President's Reception; my niece, Lisa, who was the young smiling face at the registration desk; my mother-in-law, Jo Grace, who is known and loved by all; and lastly to my husband Rick. He puts up with a lot during convention time and I really appreciate it.

This was the sixth year I have had the pleasure to put the TWQA Convention together and I continue to learn new things each and every year. Please feel free to always contact me with any ideas, suggestions or criticisms you may have. Remember – I cannot fix it if I don't know it is broke!

Mark your calendar for the 2011 TWQA Convention & Exhibition to be held at the EMBASSY SUITES in SAN MARCOS, TEXAS, JULY 13 – 16, 2011. I hope to see you there!