



IWA PIPELINE



SPRING 1996

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SANIBEL CHAMPAGNE



Regardless of the subject, taste is a very subjective matter. Based on discussions with our members, the same is definitely true for water. Some people (thankfully a small minority!) think our water tastes terrible. Most of them think it ranges from OK to great in the taste department. A few even think of it as "Sanibel Champagne."

For most people, great tasting water is defined as the water where their home is or where they grew up. On Sanibel, the taste of our water is primarily a function of four factors:

- **Temperature** - Our water is always 84°F as it leaves the ground in our wells and not much different at your faucet. If it's too warm for you, the solution is obvious ... refrigerate it.

- **Chlorine** - We are required to add chlorine as a disinfectant to ensure that our water is safe from disease-carrying bacteria. Chlorine does give the water a taste and odor, but most people don't find it to be objectionable at low levels ... and we keep the amount as low as is safe. Overnight refrigeration in an open container can reduce the chlorine taste and odor. You can also install an activated carbon filter to remove the chlorine.
- **Salt** - Our water only contains about 1/25th of an ounce of salt per gallon of water. This is well below the amount which is allowed by the regulations. It is also well below the taste threshold for most people. If you're not one of those people, you may want to install a home RO unit to reduce the salt taste even further.
- **Hardness** - Hardness is the amount of certain minerals (calcium and magnesium) in the water. To most people, the more hardness, the better the taste. Our RO water has only a moderate level of hardness. There is no practical way to increase hardness. And by the way, if you have a home water softener, you're making the salt level even higher and the hardness even lower. It'll make the taste worse!

So drink-up, and rest assured that our water is safe to drink. And some of us even like it as much as a good bottle of champagne (well ... almost as much anyway)!

AS THE WATER FLOWS

If you've been in our offices recently, you probably noticed the new television screen mounted on the wall behind the lobby counter. You also probably didn't recognize your favorite "soap" star on the screen, even if it was the right time of day. It probably looked like a lot of totally unintelligible engineering nonsense ... which it is, until you understand it. The screen is one of many in our SCADA system. SCADA stands for System Control And Data Acquisition. This computer-controlled system lets us monitor conditions throughout our water distribution and storage systems to alert us to problems as soon as they occur.

The system, which was developed in-house by our Senior Electronics Technician, John Leiter, helps us determine when leaks occur in our pipes and when our tanks are getting too full. John developed this system over the last few years and always seems to be improving it for us.

We've placed a "cheat sheet" on our lobby counter to help you understand the screen. Take a look the next time you stop in. You can see what the water pressure is in your neighborhood (or nearby). You can also see how much water we're making at the RO Plant and how much all of us are using. All the numbers are "real time," meaning they are constantly being updated. If the "cheat sheet" doesn't help, just ask any one of us to explain this new display to you.

THE UGLY DUCKLING

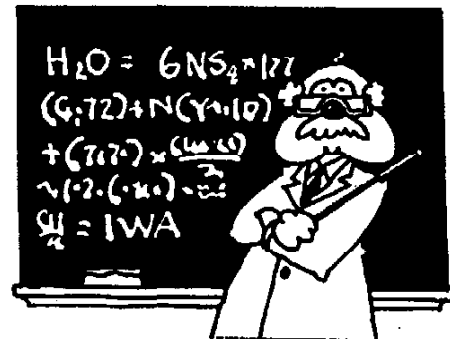
We've been getting comments from time to time concerning the appearance of the backflow prevention devices that are beginning to appear around the Islands, as required by our Backflow Prevention Program. This program, which is required by law, is designed to protect us all from contamination of our water supply by the backwards flow (backflow) of contaminated water from a member's home water system. This backflow can occur in a variety of ways,

including cross-connections from private irrigation wells and sprinkler systems.

Although the program is a good one, we admit that the backflow prevention devices would never win a beauty contest. But there are ways to make them a little less visually objectionable. First, work with your plumber when he installs the device to choose a location that is best from a visual standpoint, but still meets all installation requirements. Second, consider painting the device to blend in with the surroundings. Third, consider some landscaping to hide the device, but be sure to allow enough room to maintain it.

The next time you're at our offices, let us show you the device we've installed. It's no "beauty," but it doesn't look all that bad either!

QUIZ



1. The only way to reach an IWA employee is to dial our main number, 472-1502, and ask to be connected to the person with whom you want to speak.

A. True B. False

2. How deep are IWA's water mains buried?

A. 6" B. 12" C. 18" D. 30"

3. How many quarts of oil will be required for one oil change in the diesel engine powering IWA's new generator? (Hint - a typical car engine requires 5 quarts.)

A. 15 quarts B. 45 quarts C. 185 quarts
D. 370 quarts

LOWER RATES

No, not lower water rates (we did that in 1994), lower electricity rates for IWA.

Last Fall, we were informed by the Lee County Electric Co-op that the rates we pay for our electricity would be significantly increased on January 1, 1996. Since we spend nearly \$500,000 each year for electricity, we were concerned that this could result in a significant increase in the costs to produce water. The increase would have amounted to around \$46,000 per year.

We worked with the Co-op to see what we could do to bring the rates back down. They told us about a plan they call "curtailable rates," which means that you agree to reduce your electricity use when they ask you to, during high usage periods like cold mornings and hot afternoons. We tried it on our own for a couple of months and found that we could live with the number of required reductions. We just shut down the RO Plant for the required time period and used the water stored in our tanks.

On January 1, 1996, we switched to the "curtailable rates" program. It appears that we will save nearly \$70,000 per year, dropping our electricity bill below last year by over \$20,000, assuming we sell the same amount of water in 1996.

This is just another example of many steps that we have taken, and continue to take, to keep our water rates as low as possible.

1996 ANNUAL MEETING

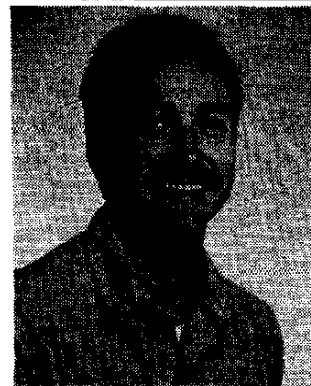
The 1996 Annual Meeting will be held on April 8 at 10 a.m. in our offices at 3651 Sanibel-Captiva Road. Materials relating to this meeting are enclosed with this Newsletter. **PLEASE** return your proxy to us!

This year, we can't offer to show you any *new* office facilities, but if you missed last year's "event," we'll be happy to show you around the offices and/or the reverse osmosis treatment plant after the meeting. And even if

you came last year and had the "grand tour," we'll show you our new electric generator installation. It's impressive! We'll also have the customary coffee and donuts before the meeting begins. Mark your calendars. We're hoping for a big turn-out again this year!

The Nominating Committee met on January 18 to select candidates for the two vacancies on the Board. Mr. Robert J. Wigley, currently Board President, has been re-nominated for a third and last term. Mr. Harley R. Derleth, currently Board Vice President/Treasurer, has been re-nominated for a second term. A brief resume of both candidates is enclosed on a separate sheet.

MEET BOB WOODS

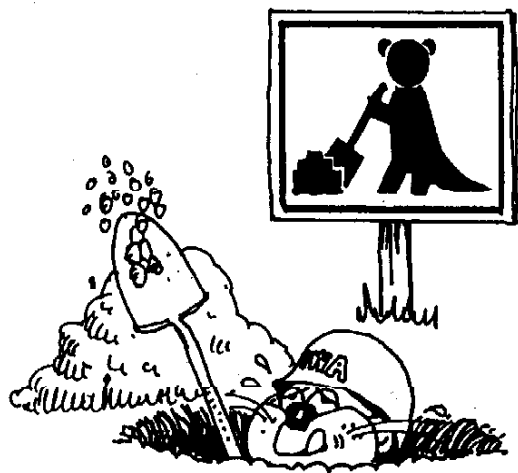


Bob Woods joined us as a Plant Operator Trainee in May of 1995. As a trainee, he's learning the ropes in the Reverse Osmosis Plant, where he is involved in all aspects of operations, including maintenance, laboratory tests of water quality and whatever else needs doing. He is currently enrolled in formal training courses several evenings a week, in preparation for taking the tests necessary to become a licensed operator later this summer.

Before joining IWA, Bob worked for seven years in retail management and one year in construction. Bob and his wife Brandi reside in Cape Coral. When he's not working at IWA, he enjoys hockey and water skiing.

Bob says he likes working at IWA because everyone works together as a team. He says his motto is, "Just do it!" And he certainly has, in his 10 months at IWA!

PROJECT UPDATE



IWA continues to work on a lot of capital improvement projects to improve the quality of service we provide to our members.

Construction on the new emergency generator continues at a good pace. The support structure is complete and the 1.2 million watt generator and 8,000 gallon fuel tank are in place. This project will greatly improve the reliability of our water supply during an extended power failure, such as after a hurricane. All the equipment is being installed well above the flood level, and it is designed for winds in excess of 150 miles per hour. We hope to have the installation complete before the Annual Meeting. Be sure to take a look at it after the meeting!

In January we began installation of a new 16" water main on Casa Ybel Road, running from Middle Gulf Drive to Tarpon Bay Road. This major new pipe will replace a section of old, undersized 12" pipe that has been prone to breakage numerous times over the years. The new pipe is made of heavy-duty PVC (plastic) and should be maintenance-free for many years. When complete, this installation will improve water flow and pressures on the east end of Sanibel.

Construction is underway to add a spare pump at the pump station in South Seas Plantation on Captiva. This project will improve the reliability of this critical facility that provides the water flow necessary for fire

protection on the island. With two propane-driven pumps, this flow will still be available if one pump is down for maintenance or repairs, even in the event of a power failure.

At our storage tank site just north of the City Park on Periwinkle Way, we have begun construction of a new pump station to replace the 30-year-old one on Center Street. Similar to the Captiva station, this station will contain two new propane-driven pumps to provide water to our members, even in the event of a power failure. This station is extremely vital to the operation of our distribution system. It boosts pressure on the east end of Sanibel during periods of high usage. It also may be the source of all our water, if we ever have a major failure at the RO Plant and have to import water from Pine Island via the interconnect line under the Bay to our neighbors on that island.

Actually, the interconnect line to Pine Island is another interesting story itself! We reported in an earlier copy of the *Pipeline* that we had found and repaired the leak in this pipe and were preparing to place it back in service after over 10 years of no use. Well, before long we found yet another leak and we have now repaired it as well. The pipe is now leak-free, and we are cleaning it by running foam rubber "pigs" through it from the Sanibel end to remove any debris from the repair work.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. B. All IWA employees can be reached directly by dialing 472-2113 and then entering the correct extension number. Ask for it the next time you speak to one of us.

2. D. Our water mains are buried 30" deep to protect them from damage ... no, not from frost, but from construction and road signs.

3. D. The engine requires 370 quarts of motor oil and produces around 1,600 horsepower. Needless to say, we'll be recycling the used oil!