

work has now been completed, and the results are as expected, and VERY impressive. See the picture below. The pump/turbine unit is the tall one on the left, and the new A Train pump is the puny one on the right.



This new pump/turbine piece of machinery cost us around \$115,000, but we anticipate that it will save us around \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year in electricity! As one measure of the savings, the amperage required to feed water to RO Train B used

to be around 120 amps. With the new pump/turbine, that electricity load dropped to under 50 amps. The principle of operation of this machinery is quite simple. The pump and turbine are installed on the same shaft, along with the 125 horsepower motor. As water passes through the turbine section, it helps pump water in the pump section, and unloads the motor, saving power. In the RO plant, our high pressure brine waste stream is passed through the turbine. Rather than waste the energy contained in that high pressure water flow, we are now recovering most of it in the turbine and saving electricity as a result.

We are very proud of this new installation, since we are not only reducing our electricity costs, but we are also conserving natural resources, in the form of the fuel which would have been needed to generate the power we are saving.

This summer, we are planning to replace 3 more high pressure pumps, each saving about the same as mentioned above for A Train, or \$8,500 each per year. Overall that makes an annual electricity savings of around \$50,000. Projects like this have helped make it possible for us to avoid a rate increase for the last 12 years.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAVE MONEY

Tired of mailing us your payment every month? Join many of your fellow Members and join our direct debit program. We will automatically debit your bank account each month, after you have had a chance to review your bill. You will save a stamp, envelope and aggravation. IWA will save the cost of opening your payment and inputting it into our computer, thereby keeping our costs and your water rates as low as possible. Call Karen on (239) 472-2113 (extension 111) to enroll.



IWA PIPELINE



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IT'S "THAT" TIME AGAIN

This year, IWA's Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, April 12, 2004 at 10 a.m. in our offices at 3651 Sanibel-Captiva Road. Materials relating to this meeting are enclosed with this Newsletter. **PLEASE** vote your proxy and return it to us as soon as possible.

The Nominating Committee met on January 20, 2004 to select candidates for the two vacancies on the Board of Directors this year. Andrew Schroder, currently Board Vice President/Treasurer, was nominated for his third and final two-year term. Robert Wigley, currently Board Vice President, was nominated to serve his first term, having previously served on the Board from 1992 to 1998. Brief resumes for both the nominees are enclosed on a separate sheet.

As has been the case at the last few Annual Meetings, we'll be happy to give everyone a tour of our facilities after the meeting is over. We will also have the customary coffee and doughnuts available before the meeting begins. So mark your calendars for April 12th and plan to attend. We'd like to see **YOU** at our Annual Meeting this year! All of our Members own a part of IWA, and this is your chance to participate in its operation.

THEY'RE BACK!!

The home water treatment peddlers are back on the islands again. It's the same old story, "let us test your water for free, and we'll tell you if you have a problem." This time, however, there is a twist to the pitch, they also offer to give you a free case of bottled water.

A couple of IWA employees who live on the island received postcards from this company offering to test their water. Our Chief Undercover Agent, Rich Calabrese (who doubles as our Engineering Manger when not on undercover assignment) in-

vited them to his home to see if his water was any good. The company representative arrived and performed a few tests, which included dumping unknown chemicals into samples of Rich's IWA water and into samples the representative brought with him, representing "their water." Amazingly, the test results indicated that IWA's water was high in hardness and total dissolved solids (TDS), thereby requiring installation of multiple home treatment units. The first of these claims, about high hardness, is laughably incorrect. Our water is classified "slightly hard", just above the minimum, or "soft" category. We struggle to add a little hardness to the water from our RO treatment plant to minimize its corrosiveness and to make it taste a little better. The second claim, about high TDS, is also incorrect. The maximum TDS level allowed is 500 parts per million (ppm). Our water typically runs under 400 ppm.

The company representative offered to sell Rich home treatment units valued at \$7,000, for the "bargain," one time price of \$6,000. The units consisted of a whole house carbon filter that never needs media replacement and a whole house water softener, plus an RO unit under the sink. A carbon filter will remove Chlorine, thereby possibly improving taste, but also removing bacteriological protection, possibly leading to health problems. The claim of permanent media is similar to a claim of a perpetual motion machine ... a physical impossibility. The softener recommendation is also potentially dangerous, health-wise. Water softeners remove the Calcium and Magnesium in the water and replace it with Sodium. IWA's water is already fairly high in Sodium (135-140 ppm, versus an allowable level of 160 ppm), since our water source is brackish, meaning moderately high in salt, or Sodium Chloride. Further increasing the Sodium level is not a good thing (to quote Martha), if you are fighting high blood pressure. The RO unit is a duplication of IWA's treatment process.

Bottom line ... home treatment units are some-

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The Island Water Association, Inc.

POSTAGE

where between unnecessary and dangerous, in addition to being very expensive. Call Rich on (239)-472-2113 (extension 129), if you have any questions. And just in case you were wondering, no, Rich never got his free case of bottled water!

If you want to read more about water quality and home treatment fraud, visit the following internet address on the Better Business Bureau's website <http://www.bbb.org/alerts/article.asp?ID=440>.

IT WASN'T US ... REALLY!!!

As this newsletter was being written, the City of Sanibel Utility Department was approaching completion of the portions of their new sewer system which required two sections of San-Cap Road to be torn-up in the east-bound lane. During this period we received quite a few phone calls from people about the condition of the road and other aspects of the situation. Many of them called after they saw our trucks parked in the construction area and assumed it was our project. However, in this case, all is not as it seems. Our employees were sometimes in the area to locate our underground facilities and to try and minimize the probability that they would get broken. We referred all callers to the City Utility Department, who were undoubtedly thankful for our helpfulness. Sometimes our construction projects result in legitimate "suggestions for improvement" from our Members, but this wasn't one of those times.

WATERING RESTRICTIONS & WATER CONSERVATION UPDATE

Although a fairly well-kept "secret" until recently, the South Florida Water Management District implemented new watering restrictions on June 12, 2003. These restrictions, which apply to both of our islands, are permanent; they will not be removed and reinstated, as has been the case in the past. The restrictions have some "interesting" exemptions, including "athletic play areas" (i.e.: golf courses) and agricultural irrigation. Both of these uses, while not overly significant on our islands, are huge users overall, and one can only speculate how/why they were granted exemptions from the restrictions. Also exempted, this time for good reason, is irrigation using gray, or reclaimed water, such as that provided to some IWA Members by the City of Sanibel Utility Department. Reclaimed water has to be used at the rate it is generated by the wastewater treatment facilities to avoid storage problems, and restrictions on its use therefore make no sense.

The new permanent restrictions are quite simple to remember and are very similar to those imposed in the past:

- No irrigation is permitted between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on any day of the week, and all day on Friday.
- Even-numbered address can water on Tuesday, and/or Thursday, and/or Sunday.
- Odd-numbered addresses can water on Monday, and/or Wednesday, and/or Saturday.

Enforcement of the new restrictions is to be by local law enforcement officials, who, according to the new rules, "shall respond to address-specific or location-specific violations ... upon request from the District."

Meanwhile, IWA's water conservation program, as discussed in several recent newsletters, is continuing. We have now completed over 80 free audits of irrigation systems for some of our high-use Members. We continue to find many inoperable rain sensors, broken sprinkler heads and just plain over-watering of landscapes. We are keeping track of the results of our audits, and the involved Members are saving a lot of water! If you think you are using too much water, give our conservation guru, Rich Calabrese, a call on (239)-472-2113 (extension 129). He will be happy to discuss your situation with you and/or to pay you a visit.

As part of our water conservation program, we also sell "Save Water, Wear Something Dirty" T shirts in our offices for the bargain price of only \$5.00. Stop in and buy one, (or more) if you want to help us spread the word. The T shirts have apparently become an item of "cool" designer clothing at the University of Miami, based on the following photo provided by Purchasing Coordinator, Patty Herrick, whose son, Dan, can be easily located in the photo (he's the only male!).



GOODBYE JERRY/LARRY/JACQUE WELCOME BEAU/JUSTIN/TAYLOR



Things are changing at IWA! In December, Distribution Technician, Jerry Voss, and Plant Operator, Larry Huber, resigned their positions at IWA for personal reasons. Information Services Supervisor Jacque Owens left for similar reasons in early February. Plant Operator Ted Brown decided to transfer to Distribution to fill Jerry's vacancy, and we hired two new Plant Operator Trainees, Taylor Musburger and Justin Richmond, and a new Information Services Coordinator, Beau Stanley.

Taylor joins us from Minnesota. He had worked for a number of years in the hospitality industry, in Florida, Minnesota and England. Taylor is living in Fort Myers, where he enjoys, sailing, roller blading, photography and scouting. He says he enjoys the work environment at IWA and the "lively cast of characters" he has for co-workers.

Justin hails from West Virginia, and had been working in the Fort Myers area for a few years repairing and maintaining computer printers. Justin lives in Cape Coral, where he enjoys computer games, paintball and sailing. He says his work in the RO plant is very interesting and he likes his "cool" co-workers.



Beau is from Tennessee, and had worked in various aspects of the computer field for a number of years before joining us. Beau also lives in Cape Coral, where he enjoys computer modifications, guitar/percussion and bowling. He says that he enjoys the opportunity to work with technology at IWA. He also says that he tries to live by the words, "If it doesn't fit, get a bigger hammer." We are trying to keep all heavy, blunt objects out of his reach when he works on our computers!

SAVE MONEY & AGGRAVATION!!

As our Members returned this season from their northern homes, we received a number of calls regarding plugged faucet strainers. Although it is difficult to be certain of the cause in every case, we believe that a significant number of the problems could have been avoided if the Members had turned-off (pulled the plug) their hot water tanks when they are up North. Leaving hot water tanks plugged-in during extended periods of no use not only wastes money on electricity, but it also can cause accelerated corrosion of the magnesium anode in the tank. This anode is installed to minimize corrosion of other tank metallic components by corroding itself. However, when the anode corrodes over months in a hot, stagnant tank, it can cause a corrosion product in the tank, which can subsequently plug faucet strainers.

So our suggestion is that all Members unplug their hot water tank when they are absent from their homes for more than a few days. In addition, in order to minimize the cost (and aggravation!) of potential water leaks during absences, we strongly suggest turning off the main water valve to the house, or at least the hot water system at the tank, if cold water must be maintained for some reason. As another option, we will turn off (and back on) the water at the meter once per year during extended Member absence, for the bargain price of \$0.00. Just give us a call 72 hours in advance if you want to take advantage of this free offer, which only applies during our normal working hours.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

In the previous issue of this newsletter, we reported on the installation of a new high pressure pump on RO Train A, which we anticipate will save us around \$8,500 per year in electricity costs. We also reported that we were installing a new combination high pressure pump/energy recovery turbine in place of our old spare high pressure pump. That