



IWA PIPELINE



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3651 Sanibel-Captiva Road Sanibel, FL 33957 • <http://www.islandwater.com>
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. • Phone: (941) 472-1502

PARDON OUR (CONTINUING) DUST!!



At IWA, we pride ourselves in keeping our facilities in top shape. By doing so, we ensure the maximum reliability of water supply to our Members. That is no small task, considering all the equipment in our reverse osmosis (RO) treatment plant, over 120 miles of buried pipelines, 16 vehicles and a myriad of office equipment. There are two related aspects of this matter. First, we put a lot of effort into preventative maintenance to prevent water outages before they happen. Second, we are continually engaged in projects to upgrade and/or replace the oldest/weakest parts of our facilities before they unexpectedly fail. Over the last 10 years, we have spent an average of around \$1.5 million every year on capital improvement projects. One example of such a project was the installation of more efficient RO membranes, which has resulted in a 45% reduction in the amount of electricity required to produce a gallon of water. That translates to a savings of over \$250,000 every year! Over the last 20 years, we have also upgraded over 43 miles of our underground pipelines, at a cost of nearly \$9M, resulting in reduced water leaks and main breaks. Despite all these expenditures, we have been able to keep our debt at a level well below that of most other utilities!

In 2003, we plan to continue with our capital

projects at about the same rate as in the past. Major projects planned for next year include the following:

1. **A new pipeline inside South Seas Resort, running from Captiva Drive almost to the main marina.** This new 8" diameter pipeline, which will be over 10,000 feet long, is required due to the age/condition of the existing pipeline and its location. The existing pipeline is 27 years old, and it is constructed of very thin-walled plastic pipe, which was the standard 27 years ago. In addition, over the years, the route of the pipeline has totally overgrown to the point where it is now in the middle of a mature mangrove forest/swamp. The pipeline has broken twice in the last few months, and we anticipate an increasing frequency of breaks in the future for the reasons noted above. The pipeline location in the mangroves makes repairs very difficult and expensive. We are working with South Seas Resort to obtain the necessary easements and to determine the locations of other existing underground utilities so that we can begin this project as soon as possible.
2. **A new piping network in the Gumbo Limbo subdivision on Sanibel.** In many ways, the driving forces for this project are similar to those for the South Seas project. The piping system in this subdivision is thin-walled plastic pipe which was installed by the developer many years ago. Over the years, we have been experiencing an increasing number of major main breaks in this system. In just the last year or so, we have had 7 breaks in a short 400 foot section of the pipe, resulting in multiple repairs in the yards of some of our Members. We have recently completed a replacement of that short, troublesome section. In 2003, we will replace/upgrade all the rest of the pipe in the subdivision with over 11,000 feet of

new 4, 6, and 8 inch pipe.

3. New high pressure pumps in the RO Plant.

These are the pumps which provide the pressure to make our RO treatment system work. Some of them have been in use for 24 years. Over that period of time, operating conditions have changed significantly and wear has taken a toll. As a result, the pumps aren't as efficient as they could be, meaning that they use more electricity than we would like. Next year, we plan to replace the five oldest pumps (out of 7 total) with new, more efficient models, and at the same time add a device to recover some of the energy in our brine waste stream before it is sent to our deep injection well. Preliminary indications are that we will recoup our investment in the new pumping equipment in just a few years, from electricity savings. That's a lot better than money in the bank making a couple of percent interest!

BON VOYAGE DICK & SHELLY!! WELCOME RICH!! CONGRATS JOE & TOM!!



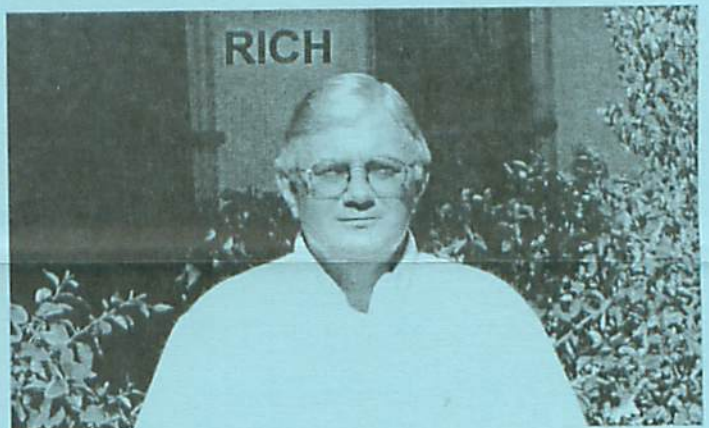
In early September, long time IWA employees, Dick Derowitsch and Shelly Storves, announced their intention to trade their nice comfortable, air-conditioned offices at IWA for space on a 37 foot catamaran sailboat by the name of Sandpiper, effective January 2nd, 2003. Dick, IWA's Engineering and Distribution Manager, will be retiring after over 25 years of service. Shelly, IWA's Engineering Supervisor (and Dick's wife), will be resigning her position after over 12 years of service. Needless to say, their departure will leave a big hole in our Engineering Department. Engineering Aide, Ron Leavitt, was all of a sudden feeling a bit lonely. Our Chief Engineer (and General Manager), Roger Blind, had visions of REALLY long work-days.

Dick has been a fixture at IWA for so long that he has filled 5 four-drawer filing cabinets with

documents covering nearly every aspect of our operations. He was instrumental in building the RO Plant and getting it up and running. He designed and oversaw construction of our well field. He was responsible for designing and installing all the underground piping upgrades described elsewhere in this newsletter. If you need to know anything about IWA, Dick has always been a good place to start. If he didn't know the answer himself, he would know where to get it.

Shelly has been with IWA for about half as long as Dick, but 12 years is still a long time! Shelly only has one two-drawer filing cabinet, but she has a computer hard drive with reams of data about our facilities. Shelly, who is a registered Professional Engineer (as well as a 100-ton Captain and a licensed Building Contractor!), has been responsible for documenting many of our facilities, obtaining permits for all our construction projects, and for modeling our distribution system so that we can select the right size pipes to install.

Dick and Shelly plan to sail off into the proverbial sunset, literally, and spend the next few years as "boat bums" aboard Sandpiper. Travel plans include the Caribbean, and hopefully a visit to the South Pacific and New Zealand. They will have a satellite phone on board so we can call and ask questions, assuming they can hear the phone ring over the sound of the wind in their sails. Everyone at IWA wishes them good luck and "Bon Voyage."



When Dick and Shelly announced they would be leaving us, after the initial panic wore off, we suddenly realized the difficult task ahead of us to find a replacement for them. The first step taken was to notify the IWA Board of Directors regarding this major personnel development. The first call was of course to the Board President, Rich Calabrese. Rich's surprising immediate response was, "Would you be interested in my filling the opening?" After discussing his background and our job requirements and discussing the matter with the other Board members, we concluded that

Rich would be the perfect fit for the position. He is a Registered Professional Engineer, with many years of utility-related experience and five years experience on the IWA Board. He has been a permanent resident of Sanibel since the early 1980's, and he really knows his way around. We quickly made him an offer to become our Engineering Manager, before he had time to change his mind. He accepted our offer and started work on October 31st, to begin a two month period of picking Dick and Shelly's brains, before they depart. IWA is really lucky to have found a replacement of Rich's caliber to replace Dick and Shelly!

Rich resides on Shell Basket Lane on Sanibel. He has two daughters, Grace and Lisa, and a fiancée, Debra Hale. He has been active in many Island organizations over the years, but perhaps his greatest claim to fame involves 20 years of making the tomato sauce and garlic bread at the annual Kiwanis spaghetti dinner. At home he enjoys gardening, bonsai, and most of all cooking, usually of the Italian version. As of the time this newsletter was being written, he said he was really enjoying being a more integral part of IWA, as a full-time employee. He says his much shorter commute and working with the rest of IWA's employees in a pleasant working environment is a real pleasure for him. We wish him a long and enjoyable career at IWA!



As if the departure of Dick and Shelly and arrival of Rich were not enough changes, we decided that two more were required to complete the organizational modifications.

We promoted Joe Scofield from Distribution Supervisor to Distribution Manager, where he will take over that portion of Dick's responsibilities. Joe, who has been with IWA for 13 years, worked as an operator in the RO Plant before transferring to Distribution Department several years ago. He holds the highest level of license, an "A," in both Plant Operations and Distribution.

Additionally, we have promoted Tom Cali from Senior Distribution Technician to Construction Coordinator, where he will report to Rich. Tom is the guy whom many of our Members meet when we are doing construction in their neighborhood. He coordinates the work of our contractors and makes sure things are built the way we design them (or the way he redesigns them to make them actually work!). Tom has been with IWA almost as long as Dick, having joined us 23 years ago. If we want to know where our underground pipes are located, we just ask Tom. He has the memory of an elephant!

WE'VE DONE IT AGAIN (& AGAIN & AGAIN)!

In the last edition of this newsletter, we announced that we had received an award from the South East Desalting Association for Outstanding Membrane Treatment Plant in the Southeastern United States.

Since that last newsletter was issued, IWA has been honored with three additional awards. We received safety awards from both the Florida Water and Pollution Control Operator's Association and the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association. At IWA, much of our work can be dangerous, so we take safety very seriously. Therefore, receiving these two awards means a lot to us. Our last accident was in November of 2000, when one of our employees got a bad case of poison ivy while trimming around our meter boxes. Hopefully we will never have a more serious accident! Finally, we also received the Florida Department of Environmental Protection South District Operations Excellence Award.

We are proud of receiving all these awards, and we hope that our Members see them as proof that their water utility is being well-run. Perhaps the thing which makes us most proud is the fact that we are able to earn these awards and run the utility the way it should be run, and at the same time keep our expenditures *under control* and our debt level low. Not many utilities can say that!!!!

PARDON OUR FLOODS!!

Elsewhere in this newsletter, we talked about pardoning our continuing construction dust. However, that is not the only "mess" we make while operating IWA. We also cause man-made "floods."

Our water distribution piping system is quite extensive for two such small islands, comprising over

122 miles of piping, ranging in diameter from 2 inches up to 16 inches. In the design of this system, we always try to "loop" the piping, for a couple of reasons. First, looping frequently makes it possible for us to minimize the number of people who lose service when a water main break occurs. We can close main valves and isolate the break, while still feeding water to most of our Members from just one direction, during repair activities. The second reason for "looping" the piping system is to avoid "dead legs." "Dead legs" occur at the end of one-way pipelines, like for instance on cul-de-sacs. The problem with "dead legs" is that water can become stagnant in them, especially during periods of low flow, like during the summer, when many of our Members are at their northern homes.

The solution to the "dead leg" stagnant water problem is to flush them periodically, which means to release some water from the end of pipe onto the ground. In some cases, we can utilize fire hydrants for this flushing operation. In other cases, we have installed what we call "blow-offs," which are just valved connections from the main, discharging to the ground. The problem is that we sometimes cause temporary minor flooding during these operations, due to the fact that our flat islands don't drain all that well. We have tried to locate the "blow-offs" to minimize flooding, but that isn't always possible.

We will do our best to notify Members in advance in the areas where we plan to operate the "blow-offs." If you haven't been so notified, and you notice a flood in your neighborhood, please call us as soon as possible, since it may be due to a water main break, and we obviously want to repair that as soon as possible.

If you have any questions on this matter, or if you just wonder whether there is a "blow-off" lo-

cated near your property, give our Distribution Manager, Joe Scofield, a call on 239-472-2113 (X115). If you do have a blow-off near your property, just look on the bright side of things. During droughts, you may occasionally get your lawn watered for free! Thanks!

100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

This is the 100th issue of the IWA Pipeline newsletter (Volume 25, Issue 4). You may want to keep your copy and frame it, suitable for hanging in a prominent place in your home (that's a joke!).

Back in the "old days," the Pipeline was written by an outside consultant, who also did all the artwork and layout by hand, using tape and glue. About 10 years ago, we moved the writing and layout aspects entirely in-house, using computer-based publishing software. After it is written, the newsletter is sent to a local print shop for reproduction and folding. It is then mailed to all IWA Members and other interested parties, once per quarter.

It always amazes us how many people comment on some aspect of the newsletter. Of course, the most popular articles always seem to be those which deal with our office mascot/cat, Lizzie, rather than something actually dealing with our operations. We're not sure whether that is because Lizzie is such an interesting topic, or if everything else is just so boring. Hopefully the other articles are also getting read, since the newsletter is our primary means of communicating with our Members on an ongoing basis.

We always welcome comments on our newsletter and suggestions for topics for future editions. Just give us a call at 239-472-1502, and ask for Roger.

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The Island Water Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 509
Sanibel, FL 33957