

Digester

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Fall/Winter — 2023

Volume 62 No.2

Chairman's Message

Peter Petriccione, Chair

As I write this, 2023 is coming to a close and I hope that all of you are having a healthy and prosperous year. We have returned to normalcy and the Chapter was able to host its full slate of activities in 2023. I hope that everyone was able to find time to participate in some of the great events hosted by our Chapter this year. This issue of the digester highlights many of these events. Please take the time to read about them. We look forward to seeing you at a future event!

Once again, this past year's Poster Contest resulted in many amazing entries and every year it gets tougher and tougher to select the winning entries. In 2024, our Public Education Committee will be conducting its annual Poster Contest and also look to expand its outreach. Stay tuned for further details.

I am thrilled to announce that in 2023 the Chapter awarded three (3) academic scholarships for students currently enrolled or entering a qualified environmental college program. We will also be offering these scholarships in 2024. The application forms and additional information may be found on our website.

Our ability to offer scholarships and continue to host great events is due to the generosity of our sponsors. With 2024 right around the corner, requests for annual sponsorships will be sent out in the near future. Thank you in advance for your continued support of the chapter!

The Summer 2023 issue of Clearwaters focuses on PFAS. The EPA is close to establishing a nationwide standard that will greatly affect the water industry, so I encourage you to keep abreast of the latest developments along this front.

Events planned for 2024 include the following:

- ♦ February 5th-7th – NYWEA's 96th Annual Meeting – Technical Conference & Exhibition - NYC
- ♦ May – Spring Meeting, Golf Outing and Tour of Jones Beach Energy and Nature Center
- ♦ June- Clambake at Cedar Creek
- ♦ August – Fishing Trip and Canoe Trip
- ♦ September - Meet and Greet
- ♦ October - Technology Symposium
- ♦ December - Election Night Meeting

Please check out our website, Facebook and Instagram accounts for updates on all current and future events. Wishing everyone a healthy and prosperous 2024!

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Articles for the Digester

Articles for the Digester can be e-mailed in MS Word format to the Editor, Tim Conway at: conwaytp@cdmsmith.com

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Tom Immerso timmerso@aol.com Assistant Editor

GOOD TURNOUT FOR ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

By: Tom Immerso

NYWEA's Long Island Chapter held its Annual Spring Dinner Meeting on Wed., May 17th at the Watermill Restaurant in Smithtown. A crowd of some 56 professional and student attendees turned out to hear Suffolk County Deputy County Executive Peter Scully discuss the state of Suffolk County sewers and current projects. Since November, 2016, no less than 16 Suffolk County Sewer Studies addressing expansion have been proposed, aimed at appropriating some \$388M for sewer construction, but only four (4) plans have been approved for design via public referendum vote to date. This is discouraging in that a more proactive approach to sewerage would not only greatly reduce nitrogen in our waterways, but aid in rebuilding the wetlands that currently protect us from destructive storms such as Sandy, serving to improve coastal resiliency overall. The current plan is to slowly get more proposed plans off the shelf & into design, including two (2) key projects concerning Kings Park and Smithtown. The push will continue onward to expand sewerage within Suffolk County. Both Mr. Scully & Suffolk County Executive Steve Ballone remain committed to the cause.

Among the attendees was our very own Donna Grudier, now serving as NYWEA State President. She also spoke on the growth of the various Chapters, including the overall expansion of the Operations Challenge Program (near & dear to her, considering her operations background!). The remainder of the evening centered on a fine cocktail hour and dinner, followed by a large assortment of raffle prizes donated by our many generous sponsors, who we thank for their contributions. Among them were:

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TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

By Nick Bono

This Fall the Chapter hosted its annual Technology Transfer Symposium at the Radisson Hotel in Hauppauge. An unfortunate mishap with the venue forgetting to provide A/V equipment was narrowly averted when committee chair Nick Bono with the help of former Chapter Chair Chris Korzenko and former NYWEA president Bill Nylic scrambled and pieced together an A/V set-up with items found in hotel backroom storage areas and from personnel office inventory to ensure the event would go on without fail. The Chapter applauds the efforts of these individuals for their continued dedication and support to the organization.

Forty-one people attended the full-day seminar on Thursday, October 19th at the Radisson Hotel in Hauppauge. The attendees included thirteen (13) licensed wastewater operators, twenty-eight (28) NYS licensed professional engineers, and nine (9) presenters. A total of 5.5 hours of Operator Credits (RTC-23694.23) and 4.5 hours of Professional Engineer Continuing Education Credits (23TTS-01) were earned by the licensed attendees.

Nine presentations were offered, which focused on various technologies, trends and current projects being undertaken on the local level in the wastewater treatment, operations, and engineering industry. Breakfast and lunch provided several opportunities for interested attendees to network with the presenters and fellow colleagues.

Thanks go to the L.I. Chapter Technology Assessment Committee, which was comprised of Board members Nick Bono and Vinny Falkowski for their work in organizing the seminar, as well as the speakers. Many thanks go to this year's sponsors for making the event possible:

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YP & Operator's Committees

16th Annual Fluke Fishing Trip

by Mike O'Connor

The New York Water Environment Association Long Island Chapter's Young Professionals and Operators Committee held the 16th Annual Fluke Fishing Trip out of Captree State Park on September 14th, 2023, aboard the Yankee III charter boat. There was a compliment of 30 participants, and it was an amazing late summer day to fish with a perfect cool breeze over the Great South Bay. The crew was comprised of members from GA Fleet, Koester Associates, Town of Oyster Bay, Hazen & Sawyer, WASTE, Inc., Nassau County DPW, Suffolk County DPW, New York City DEP, and H2M Architects & Engineers. The boat stayed inside the bay this year (due to 6'+ ocean seas!), and fish were consistently caught throughout the whole trip. It was a competitive pool, but the prize catch was an ~ 4' fluke wrangled in by Roy Zimmerman from WASTE Inc. During the four-hour long trip, all kinds of fish were caught, including fluke, porgies, sea robins, sea bass, dogfish and even a blowfish! A lovely, orange-colored sunset behind the Fire Island Inlet Bridge capped off the great day. A special thanks to the following Gold Manhole Cover Sponsors for their support:

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The trip was a great success, as everyone aboard had a wonderful fishing experience. Pictured below is the crew enjoying their day on the water. Looking forward to catching again next summer!



NYWEA OPERATOR'S CHALLENGE



CONEY ISLAND AQUARIUM JV OUTING A HUGE SUCCESS!

By: Tom Immerso

Under threatening skies, the Long Island & Met Chapters spent the afternoon of Friday, June 16th at the newly renovated NY Aquarium at Coney Island for a look at the amazing exhibits, inclusive of a ‘behind-the-scenes’ tour of the operating mechanisms – pumping, filtration, disinfection, etc. Some 40 attendees were able to enjoy the Aquarium, which serves as home to over 8,000 species of animals, including sea otters, seals, walruses, penguins, sharks & many others. It is the oldest continually operating Aquarium in the US & serves as home to the NY Aquarium Conservation Program, which is dedicated to protecting & restoring threatened species & habitats.

Seeing as most of the outing involved indoor exhibits, an early downpour did not dampen our spirits – literally! After receiving a guided tour of many of the newer exhibits – post Sandy, which caused extensive flood damage to the Aquarium – including the interactive & immersive Ocean Wonders: Sharks, we were allowed to tour the ‘guts’ of the facility not typically open to the public, inclusive of the water quality lab & animal hospital, & see how the personnel keep these tanks – some as large as 600,000 gallons! – in pristine condition. Disinfection is in the form of UV or ozone usage, hypochlorite being too destructive on the animals & reef structures long-term. Finally, we were seated for the final Aquatheater show of the day at 5:00 PM. A light boxed meal was then given to all attendees to eat in the Aquarium’s lunchroom, after which private additional exhibit viewing was permitted until 6:30 PM (Aquarium closes at 6:00 PM.).

The trip culminated in an optional visit to either the Coney Island Boardwalk for a stroll – to either ride the famed Cyclone at Luna Park, grab a quick hot dog or 2 at Nathan’s, or visit the nearby noted Spumoni Gardens for some of the best pizza on Earth – let alone Coney Island! If you weren’t there, you should have been! A great time was had by all!





CLAMBAKE A HUGE SUCCESS AT NEW SITE

By: Tom Immerso

Following a late site change last year, the Annual Clambake returned to this new centralized location in full force on June 23, 2023 at Cedar Creek Park. The only thing that did not return was the beautiful weather, as threatening skies prevailed but luckily never materialized into showers for our 3-9 PM event. With its 2 kiosks & 2 large tents pitched by the Chapter, the site worked well for the approx. 110 attendees. And the adjacent playground worked out great for the kids that joined us. Games were kept to a minimum – only cornhole, actually – as the grounds were dampened by storms earlier in the day. Even so, attendees were satisfied with simply having some excellent food & drink while still catching up with familiar faces following 3 years of limited sociability!

In any event, a large turnout took part in the food extravaganza, once again provided courtesy of the Davenport Restaurant in Mineola. Everything from sausage & peppers, burgers, hot dogs, fried chicken, spare ribs & clams – chowder & on the half shell (of course!) – to corn on the cob, salad, multiple desserts & beverages (yes, including Coors & Blue Moon!) kept everyone well satiated & hydrated! Kiosks provided a sit-down area, along with the tents, for those that wanted to get off their feet for a while!

As usual, a bevy of raffle prizes were given away at evening's end, along with table prizes of a mostly alcoholic nature. Major raffle prizes included a Weber grill, Yeti insulators, Galaxy tablet, Apple iPad, Garmin smartwatch, Smart door lock, Ninja ice cream/gelato maker, Bose portable smart speaker, a charcuterie board, booze, & an assortment of \$50 gift cards from Amazon. A 50/50 raffle brought in \$2,000, & resulted in none other than long-time member/sponsor & Davenport Restaurant 'hook,' Maurice (Mo) Osman winning half the money pot! Congrats to him – both a full belly & a full pocket!

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the assistance of Mo & his 'Davenport connection' or Dick Crescenzo & his team (Tom Pfersching, John Mulligan, Matt Buynoch, Tom Mortensen & Chris Vella) that sets up & takes down the tents, games, etc. for us each year. Kudos & appreciation to all of them for continuing to make it happen for us! Without their services, there is no Clambake!!! (PS - We could use some YP's to step up & assist going forward!)

And last, but not least, let's not forget our many sponsors who help keep our events, such as the Clambake, funded & successful year after year! They are listed below... Many thanks to them, as always!

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JOINT WHALE WATCH TRIP A SUCCESS!

By: Tom Immerso

Under pristine skies & unseasonably warm (mid-70's!) October weather, a dozen intrepid whale watchers left port on Oct. 11th in search of the elusive mammals that have been migrating ever- closer



to our ever-warmer shores in recent years. The adventurous group from the LI & Met Chapters convened at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn to board the 95' *American Princess*, running up to 10 miles offshore in our quest to see the typically deep-water leviathans. Sea conditions were calm & pretty much perfect for sightings - & sightings we did! Drifting off the Rockaways, we came upon 2 - 30' humpback whales that breached & cavorted in the waters around the boat while feeding on huge schools of bunker! The Captain did a masterful job of keeping us drifting through these schools while avoiding disturbance of these magnificent sea creatures! Celia Ackerman, the Naturalist/Marine Biologist we had on board, narrated many interesting facts

while, with the aid of a 400mm zoom lens, took some fantastic pictures, some of which have been provided here. Oddly, no dolphins or seals were seen on this trip, whereas they had been on some of our past outings. The trip ran from 12 noon to 4 pm, with the relatively close shore access requiring less than an hours' time in getting to & from the viewing grounds. A panoramic view of Coney Island at all times was an added bonus to the cooperation of the playful whales. And, happily, no cases of 'mal de mer' (sea sickness) were reported!

Anyone thinking that whale watching in this area is a pipedream needs to reconsider... In fact, there were various instances this summer where boats, typically cargo freighters, unfortunately collided with whales. Early Fall offers excellent viewing from this area north to the Cape, as whales start to migrate to southern latitudes in pursuit of warmer waters. Although it will likely be a few years until we offer this trip again, anyone may go on one of these boat trips from May through October by contacting the *American Princess*. The fare is \$60 for a 4-hour excursion. They may be directly contacted at (718) 474-0593. Try it – you'll definitely like it!



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Suffolk AME members are proudly represented by our AME Executive Board: President Daniel C. Levler, Executive Vice President Thomas P. Moser, Treasurer AnaMaria Cucinello, Recording Secretary Christine A. Maher, and Vice Presidents Stanley J. Humin III, Nicholas P. K. De Bello, Ben Charamonte, and Christian W. Limbach.

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2023/2024 Long Island Chapter NYWEA Meeting and Event Schedule

December

- ♦ Election Night Meeting at the Fox Hollow in Woodbury – Wednesday, December 13th

January

- ♦ January Board Meeting to be held at The Davenport Restaurant in Mineola on Wed., Jan. 24th at 12 Noon

February

- ♦ February 5th-7th – NYWEA's 96th Annual Meeting – Technical Conference & Exhibition - NYC

May

- ♦ May – Spring Meeting, Golf Outing and Tour of Jones Beach Energy and Nature Center

June

- ♦ June 4-6 NYWEA Spring Meeting & Exhibition in Buffalo, NY.
- ♦ June 21st – Annual Clambake at Cedar Creek