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Have you registered yet? Don't miss out on CWEA's biggest event of the year. Sign up NOW!

An illustration of three whales swimming in a deep blue kelp forest. Sunlight rays filter down from the surface, illuminating the scene. A large, glowing, wireframe globe is positioned in the upper center of the image, partially obscured by the kelp. The whales are depicted in various orientations, swimming towards the viewer.

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LABS February Training Event with LA Wrecking Crew *By Wendy Wert*

On February 24, 2010 the Los Angeles Basin Section (LABS) of the California Water Environment Association (CWEA) hosted an operations challenge demonstration at the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD) Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in Carson. The featured Operations Challenge team for the event was the LACSD Wrecking Crew. Steve Johnson, the CWEA Operations Challenge Conference Chair and Team Coach, provided a brief overview of the Operations Challenge event and introduced the Wrecking Crew. Team members include: Paul Johnson (Team Captain), Jeff Valdes, Jesus Garibay, Mario Gomez, and Tom Jauregui. The Operations Challenge is an affable competition among wastewater treatment plant operators sponsored by CWEA and WEF each year at state and regional conferences. The Wrecking Crew placed 4th in the nation at the 2009 WEFTEC (Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference) event in Orlando, FL. Over the last several decades, the Wrecking Crew has won 6 national titles. The Wrecking Crew is currently gearing up for CWEA’s Annual Conference competition held in Sacramento this April.



(lt) Attendees Grace Chan, Ian Mackenzie, and Mike Selna at the JWPCP Biosolids Dewatering Maintenance Building; (ctr) The Wrecking Crew: Jeff Valdes, Tom Jauregui, Jesus Garibay, Mario Gomez, Paul Johnson; (rt) Steve Johnson, Coach.

The team provided an instructional and entertaining demonstration of the rigorous events. The competition is divided into four categories, which include: collection systems, laboratory, process control, maintenance and safety. Attendees found the event engaging and were impressed by the overall success of the Operator Challenge program. The program was established as a way to bring industry professionals from varying disciplines together in an interactive forum. Celebrating its 22nd year, the Operations Challenge has grown from an original 22-team event to its current two-division format, each team is judged on the best combination of precision, speed and safety. Winners are determined by a weighted point system for the events.



(lt and ctr) The Wrecking Crew: Jeff Valdes, Tom Jauregui, Jesus Garibay, Mario Gomez, Paul Johnson; (rt) Attendee gets a “hands on” team experience.

The events are designed to test the diverse skills required for the operation and maintenance of wastewater treatment facilities, their collection systems and laboratories, all vital to the protection of public health and the environment. Contenders are organized into two divisions and there are winners from each division for each event. In addition, a cumulative score for each team is assessed based on overall performance and the conference title is presented to the team with the highest score.



Following the demonstration attendees traveled to Alpine Village for an “Octoberfest” style celebration and an informative presentation by Debra Bogdanoff, current CWEA Southern Regional Committee Chair. Created in 1927, CWEA is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. Approximately 9,100 wastewater professionals are members of CWEA. Most of CWEA's members (about 80 percent) work for wastewater agencies. About 13 percent work for consulting engineering firms. And approximately 3 percent work for equipment manufacturers serving the wastewater industry. The key benefit of members is the opportunity for professional growth and recognition through CWEA's: training events (state, regional, local), awards program, publications, and operator certification program.

CWEA founded the Operator Certification Program in 1937 and administered it until turning it over to the State Water Resources Control Board in 1973 as a result of the Clean Water Act. CWEA remains active in the certification field and currently administers a complex set of 23 validated certifications for wastewater personnel in six specialties, which include: Collection System Maintenance, Wastewater Treatment Plant Maintenance, Laboratory Analysis, Biosolids Land Application Management, Environmental Compliance Inspection, Industrial Treatment Plant Operations

CWEA is governed by a volunteer 17-member board of directors at the state level. To provide local training and coordination CWEA supports 17 local sections, 10 in the CWEA's Northern Region and seven in the Southern Region. Each local section is governed by a volunteer board of directors and meets regularly to provide training, education, and information to members close to home and work.

Revenue for the entire organization is more than \$2 million. CWEA's operating budget at the state level is approximately \$1.4 million.



(lt) Mike Selna, Vicki Conway; (ctr) Dave Greenwood; (rt) Attendees enjoying some good times.

Water For People Fall Hike–A–Thon in Upper Newport Bay *By Rick Shpall*

On Saturday, December 5th, 2009, The Los Angeles and Orange County Chapters of Water For People (WFP) teamed up for a morning of exercise, education, and goodwill at the WFP Hike-A-Thon held at the scenic Upper Newport Bay. The successful charity event drew 55 hikers and raised \$3,200 donated by hikers, corporate sponsors and supporters.

Water For People combats water-related illness by helping communities in developing countries construct safe drinking water supplies and clean sanitation facilities, and through education outreach.

Upper Newport Bay is an estuary - a place where fresh and salt water meet and mix. It is one of only a few remaining estuaries in Southern California and is home to nearly 200 species of birds, including several endangered species, as well as numerous species of mammals, fish, and native plants. The bay is reminiscent of many of the ecologically rich venues where WFP carries out its life-saving mission.



WFP volunteers greeted hikers on the Back Bay Science Center patio and provided them with some pre-hike nourishment. An inspirational talk by Brook Yared highlighted his experience in Uganda assessing the water and sanitation needs of the local community. Brook stressed the gratitude that their hosts showed for the efforts made on their behalf.



The hikers donned blue balloons that symbolize the precious drops of clean drinking water that elude 2.1 billion people around the world. They then set out on the two trails mapped out for the hike totaling 3.6 miles. The WFP staff and volunteers are inspired by the enthusiastic support of the hikers and the knowledge that their financial contributions are used efficiently and effectively to improve the health and quality of life of the recipients of WFP programs in more than 10 countries.

Informative WFP placards and three quiz stations supplemented the picturesque hiking environment allowing participants to test their knowledge of water and sanitation issues. Colorful stickers were handed out for answering the challenge questions.

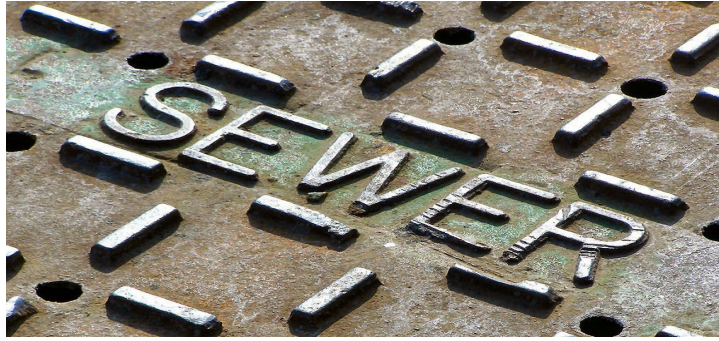
After the hike, many of the hikers visited the Back Bay Science Center which provides hands-on exhibits that teach about the estuarine ecology of Newport Bay, the marine ecology of the ocean, and the efforts to promote resource stewardship throughout the watershed.

The Hike-A-Thon was a perfect blend of scenic beauty, exercise (for people and pets), education, and compassion. If you would like to receive information about the next event and get involved with the WFP, please contact, Patrick Griffith of the Los Angeles Chapter at PGriffith@lacs.d.org or Rebecca Long of the Orange County Chapter at rebeccalong@gswater.com.

Rick Shpall is an engineering project manager at MWD and a volunteer with Water for People. Photos are courtesy of Alicia Muir and Reynaldo Reed.



JOIN LABS ON TUESDAY, APRIL 27



As the population grows, increasing demands for services, and as existing wastewater infrastructure ages, what is the future of wastewater management in LA County? Join LABS at Taix Restaurant as Vicki Conway, Manager of the Wastewater Management Department for the

Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, discusses what steps the Districts are taking in their collection system maintenance programs to meet these upcoming challenges.

Vicki Conway has over 25 years of professional experience in the engineering field, including 19 years in wastewater quality management, research, regulatory and legislative policy development and analysis, water recycling, groundwater replenishment, source control and pollution prevention, and sewerage systems operations. As the Manager of the Wastewater Management Department, she oversees the operation and maintenance of 11 wastewater treatment plants, 52 pumping plants and over 1,300 miles of trunk sewers with an annual budget of approximately \$220 million.

SOCIAL 6PM—DINNER 7PM

COST *(Please pay at door)*

Members:	\$30
Non-Members	\$35
Students & Retirees	\$15

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with one menu choice to

Pat McDaniel

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pmcdaniel@biocope.com

Or via phone at

(214) 244-8692

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Risotto au Portobello (vegetarian)



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CWEA Liaisons

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Southern CA Rep:	Debra Bogdanoff	(562) 908-4288 x-2734

SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

April 20 th ~ 23 rd	CWEA Annual Conference; Sacramento; www.cwea.org/conferences
April 27 th	LABS April Dinner Meeting; Los Angeles; pmcdaniel@biocope.com
April 28 th	WEF Webcast: Advances in Solids Reduction Processes At Wastewater Treatment Plant; www.wef.org/conferences/
May 18 th	CWEA SSMP Requirement 1: Developing Your Plan; Anaheim; www.cwea.org/conferences
May 22 nd	Water for People LA Hike-A- Thon; Malibu; pggriffith@lacsdsd.org
June 6 th ~ 9 th	CWEA/WEF Membrane Applications Specialty Conference; Anaheim; http://www.wef.org/Membrane/

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