

# NEHA's 2002 Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition Minneapolis, Minnesota

Kristin Benn  
Tim Towey



*Dr. Arthur Liang, director of the Food Safety Office at the Centers for Disease Control, and Bill Alexander of Versar, Inc., enjoy the liveliness of the AEC.*

## **Introduction**

The 66th NEHA Annual Educational Conference (AEC) was a great success. It was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, from June 30 to July 3, 2002, returning to NEHA Region 4 (Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) for the first time in 30 years.

As a result of the events of September 11, 2001—and the anthrax-laced letters that followed—attendees were particularly aware of their roles as potential responders to a terrorist event. From the keynote address to the

attendance numbers at the counter-bioterrorism sessions to the stirring video at the president's banquet, it was clear that terrorism preparedness was on the minds of attendees as never before. One attendee commented that the "entire bioterrorism section was excellent!"

Despite the gravity of the subject on which so many attendees were focussing, an atmosphere of enthusiasm pervaded the proceedings. People were energized and eager to learn—and not just about terrorism preparedness. The sessions on food safety,

indoor air quality, onsite wastewater systems, and other topics also attracted large audiences. Feedback on the conference was some of the best that NEHA has ever received: "I feel like I got to meet and talk with the cream-of-the-crop in environmental health across this country," said one attendee.

## **Opening Ceremony and Keynote Address**

The opening ceremony and keynote address were well attended. There was much excitement at the prospect of hearing Dr. Mike Olsterholm—particularly in front of his hometown crowd.

The opening ceremony started with presentation of the colors by the U.S. Marines Support Squad #471. NEHA President-Elect Jim Dingman gave a brief invocation, and President Laura Studevart welcomed everyone to the conference. She then extended a special welcome to the international environmental health practitioners, which included visitors from Israel, Great Britain, New Zealand, Iceland, Brazil, and Canada. She also recognized new NEHA members and first-time conference attendees, expressing a hope that they would catch "NEHA Fever" as she did some 20 years ago after attending her first AEC.

Special guest Pat Bloomgren, director of environmental health for the Minnesota Department of Health, welcomed the AEC to her state. The history of Minnesota has

been intertwined with the history of public health and the environment, she said. She noted the particular importance of water in both histories.

Ms. Bloomgren also discussed changes in the field of environmental health, both in Minnesota and nationwide. New challenges include communicating across language and cultural barriers. As an example from Minnesota, Bloomgren noted that in the small town of Worthington, some 50 dialects are spoken. She also remarked on the need for greater vigilance and greater cooperation with outside partners as environmental health professionals take on responsibilities in terrorism preparedness.

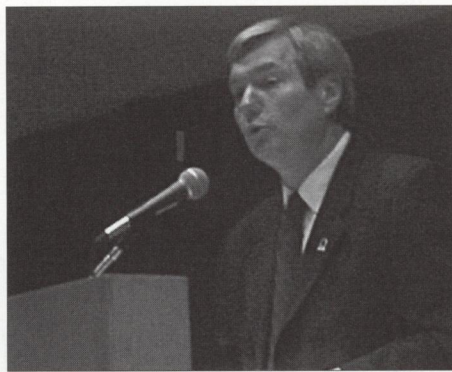
Despite these new challenges, Bloomgren concluded, the traditional role of the sanitarian continues to be important. She recounted a story that had recently made the news in Minnesota. The incident involved a cleanup of dead turkeys and illustrated the need for education of the type that an environmental health specialist can provide: Apparently, following the cleanup, volunteers were given the option of washing their hands with running water or washing them in a community bucket. All the volunteers who chose the community bucket contracted *Campylobacter* infections.

Following the special welcome, President Studeviant presented the NEHA awards for the year. For complete descriptions of this year's award winners, please see page 26.

President Studeviant then introduced the 2002 keynote speaker, Dr. Michael Olsterholm. Dr. Olsterholm is one of the nation's leading experts on infectious diseases and bioterrorism. Recently, he has been a leader in detailing the growing concern regarding the use of biological agents as weapons against civilian populations. Olsterholm has provided a comprehensive and pointed review of America's current state of preparedness for a bioterrorism attack in his recently released book, *Living Terrors*.

Dr. Olsterholm began his address with Yogi Berra's famous saying: "Déjà vu all over again" to describe his visit to the NEHA AEC. Twenty-seven years ago to the month, he revealed, he had been elected vice president of the Student Environmental Health Association. He said NEHA was the first association he belonged to, and it has remained near and dear to his heart.

Olsterholm let the audience know early that he intended to issue some challenges during the course of his presentation. He also made it clear that those challenges should



Keynote speaker Dr. Michael Olsterholm, author of *Living Terrors*.

make people uncomfortable. Before making anyone uncomfortable, however, he shared an amusing anecdote illustrating some of the unglamorous duties that he has performed in his career and that may be typical of those performed by environmental health professionals: A colleague, after reviewing some achievements of Osterholm's career said to him, "You did all that work with tampons, then moved on to stool, and now skunks; I don't know if your career is on the way up or the way down."

Olsterholm quickly moved on to more serious matters, saying that now is the most important time in his career. We should not, he suggested, have been surprised by the attacks of September 11, 2001, nor should we be surprised by the next attack. Whether by al-Qaeda or another group, Dr. Olsterholm is certain that the United States will be attacked again.

The next attack potentially could be much worse. The anthrax letters of last fall were an indicator of the kind of disaster the nation could face. Five people were killed as a result of those letters, and 22 became ill. With a more effective dispersal mechanism, the effects could have been devastating. Olsterholm described the anthrax letters as having used an extremely powerful bullet with a bad gun.

Dr. Olsterholm also noted how the face of terrorism is changing. Even just one year ago, profilers in Israel would never have considered women as potential terrorists. Now they have a long list of women whom they consider threats.

Despite the difficulty of the times, Dr. Olsterholm pointed out some positive developments—particularly in how the federal government has responded to these new threats. First, he complimented Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson,



President Jim Dingman and Immediate Past President Laura Studeviant.

saying he has never known a secretary so committed to local health departments.

Second, he lauded the government for moving \$1 billion to states in a period of just 90 days to assist with counterterrorism efforts.

Third, the government is on schedule to create over 300 million small pox vaccines by the end of the year. Olsterholm emphasized how important this step is, reminding the audience that small pox has taken some 500 million lives throughout history, and that it could come back. He considers the eradication of small pox to be one of the great achievements of the last century.

Finally, Olsterholm commended the creation of the Department of Homeland Security to bring much needed coordination to government agencies.

Then began the portion of the presentation designed to make audience members feel uncomfortable. Olsterholm identified several problems he sees in the field of environmental health and challenged those present to address these difficult issues.

He started by stating that environmental health lacks a single, strong voice to represent it. The result is a lack of coordination among the various agencies involved in environmental health, as well as a lack of representation at important policy-making meetings. He noted that he has been at too many meetings where environmental health was not at the table.

Olsterholm also challenged public-health schools to improve their training of environmental professionals. He feels that these institutions have become too concerned with research and have lost touch with practicing environmental health professionals.

Next, Olsterholm described some of the challenges to be faced by environmental health professionals in their role as first

responders. One of the first challenges, he stated, is to eliminate the term "weapons of mass destruction." He believes that lumping radiological, chemical, and biological threats together is counter-productive; the response to each of those events is very different. Particularly in the case of a biological attack, the medical and public-health community would have to be considered first responders. Olsterholm pointed out that several types of possible terrorist attacks would necessitate a response from the environmental health community. An attack on the food supply is of particular concern, because of its potential to wreak havoc even without inflicting mortalities. Also of concern is the possibility of an attack that could shut down a water supply for a long period of time. In addition, air supplies are at great risk, Olsterholm suggested, with air intakes for many large buildings easily accessible.

Olsterholm again challenged the leaders in the environmental health field: There is a need, he said, to provide a better definition for the term "environmental health" and to define who its practitioners are. Even to him, he said, it is not clear what exactly environmental health encompasses, let alone to congressman and senators.

He called for an overhaul of health department organization as well. A team of people managing one region would be more effective, he believes, than the current system of more than 4,000 different health departments operating nationwide. Each of those 4,000 departments is vying for federal dollars, which spreads funding very thin.

In his final remarks, Olsterholm noted that he is issuing these challenges because his heart is with the profession. He called for "rabble-rousers" to speak up, and he suggested that greater critical thinking from within is necessary to ensure that this organization continues to be consequential.

NEHA Executive Director Nelson Fabian thanked Olsterholm for his words. He noted that NEHA understood the importance of providing a greater voice for environmental health, and recently has had a seat at the table in the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) effort to revitalize environmental health infrastructure and in a recent discussion with Secretary Tommy Thompson. Mr. Fabian also commended Olsterholm for donating his honorarium to provide scholarships for environmental health students to attend the conference.

## Sponsors and Partners of NEHA's 2002 AEC and Exhibition

The organizations listed below supported NEHA's 2002 AEC and Exhibition as sponsors and partners, making many valuable aspects of the conference possible. NEHA wishes to thank its financial sponsors for their generous contributions and also thanks its partners for their support.

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#### **Tier II (\$15,000-\$30,000)**

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#### **Tier IV (\$2,000- \$5,000)**

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry - Division of Toxicology  
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Mars Air Doors

#### **Tier V (\$500-\$2,000)**

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National Drinking Water Clearinghouse  
National Registry of Food Safety Professionals  
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#### **Other Sponsors**

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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Minnesota Environmental Health Association  
National Center for Environmental Health  
National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators  
National Environmental Training Association  
University of Minnesota, Department of Environmental Health and Safety  
US Food and Drug Administration

## Awards and Honors

NEHA is proud to recognize the many deserving recipients of the awards presented at the AEC awards ceremony and at the President's Banquet. The main awards ceremony was held immediately prior to the keynote presentation, so that recipients could be duly applauded for their accomplishments, and the two most prestigious awards were presented at the President's Banquet.

### Walter S. Mangold Award

A very deserving Harry Grenawitzke was the recipient of the Walter S. Mangold Award, NEHA's highest honor. Please see the accompanying story on page 28, which details Harry's accomplishments in the field of environmental health and highlights his years of service to the profession.

### Walter F. Snyder Award

This year the Snyder Award was proudly given to Gayle J. Smith. NEHA and NSF International jointly bestow this special recognition upon deserving recipients. Please see the story detailing Gayle J. Smith's career achievements on page 29.

### Certificates of Merit

Each year, all of the NEHA affiliates are invited to choose one of their members to be nationally recognized for outstanding contributions to the environmental health profession. Each honoree is presented with a Certificate of Merit that is forwarded to the affiliate president so that recipients can be recognized at affiliate meetings as well. This year's winners are listed in the sidebar on the right.

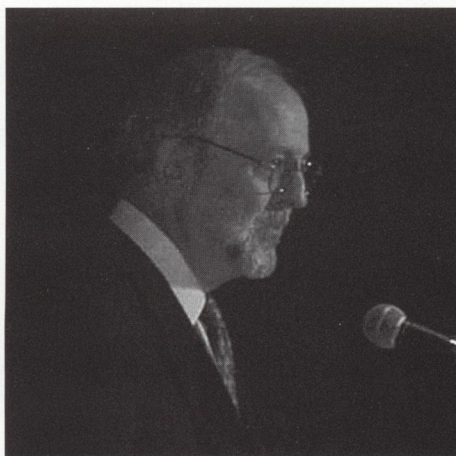
### Davis Calvin Wagner Award

This year's Davis Calvin Wagner Award went to Dr. Welford Roberts. The award is sponsored and presented by the American Academy of Sanitarians (AAS); it recognizes exemplary achievement in the environmental health field.

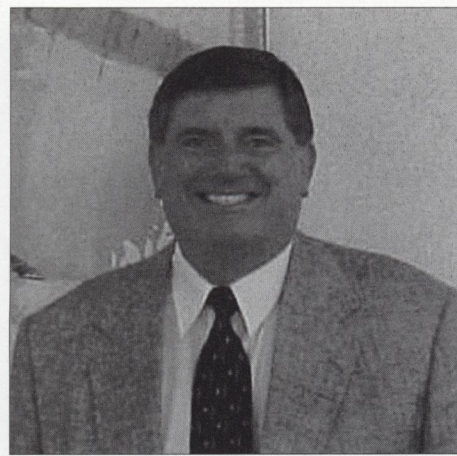
### A. Harry Bliss Editors' Award

The A. Harry Bliss Award is presented annually to a NEHA member who has made an outstanding contribution to the editorial content of the *Journal of Environmental Health*. Dr. A. Harry Bliss was editor of the *Journal* in 1969, the year the award was first presented. When he retired, the award was named after him to honor his 40 years of involvement in the production of the *Journal*.

This year's recipient is Vince Sikora. From 1979 to 1985, Mr. Sikora was the author of a



Leonard Rice, former NEHA president and recipient of the 1996 Mangold Award, presented Harry Grenawitzke with the 2002 Mangold Award.



Harry Grenawitzke, recipient of the 2002 Mangold Award.

## Certificates of Merit

Each affiliate may select one of its members for a national Certificate of Merit, which recognizes exemplary contributions to the profession of environmental health. Award recipients are announced at the awards program, and certificates signed by the NEHA president and executive director are forwarded to affiliate presidents so presentations can be made at affiliate meetings.

*Alabama*

*Arizona*

*California*

*Connecticut*

*Illinois*

*Jamaica*

*Massachusetts*

*Michigan*

*New Jersey*

*South Carolina*

*Uniformed Services*

*Wisconsin*

*Wyoming*

**Terry Nappier**

**Dan Smith**

**Mel Knight**

**Maureen Whelan**

**Toni Corona**

**Norbert Campbell**

**Michael Moore**

**Ron Holben 2001**

**Ron Grimes 2002**

**J. Douglas Park 2002**

**Mark G. Robson, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

**Kaye C. Sanders**

**Capt. James R. Beddard, MSC, USN, REHS**

**Dr. Robert Nelson**

**George Lasen**

very popular *Journal* column, Law for Environmentalists. He returned to the *Journal* one year ago with a monthly column called Legal Briefs. The column is well read and appreciated by many NEHA members, serving a need that readers have been expressing for years. Last September, Mr. Sikora had a stroke and was hospitalized for nearly a month.

Amazingly, three days after leaving the hospital, he submitted another Legal Briefs column!

### Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award

Every year, NEHA and 10 co-sponsors present the Crumbine Award in recognition of excellence and continual improvement in a

local-level food protection program. The award is named in honor of Samuel J. Crumbine, a pioneer public-health officer who helped invent the fly swatter and pass laws in the state of Kansas banning public spitting and common drinking cups—steps that helped reduce and control the spread of communicable diseases.

This year, the jury was faced with the difficult decision not to present the award. No one program, it was felt, stood out as meeting or exceeding the four key criteria required of a Crumbine Award winner. The jury concluded that the integrity of the award would be better served if no recipient were chosen this year. The decision is not without precedent. This is the third time the award has not been given in its 47-year history—the first two times were in 1975 and 1995.

#### **Past Presidents Award**

Each year the Past Presidents group, comprising former NEHA presidents, recognizes a NEHA member for outstanding achievement. This year's recipient is Chuck Tressor of the University of Washington.

#### **NEHA/AAS Scholarship Awards**

NEHA and the American Academy of Sanitarians sponsor the Scholarship Program and annually award one \$2,000 graduate scholarship and three \$1,000 undergraduate scholarships. Scott LeRoy of Southern Connecticut State University received the graduate scholarship. The undergraduate scholarships were awarded to Mariano Mandler of California State University—Fresno; Stacy Sunio of Ferris State University; and Stephanie Speed also of Ferris State University.

#### **Student Research Presentations**

Thanks to a generous donation from CDC's National Center for Environmental Health, five students and their sponsors had the opportunity to present their research at this year's AEC. Each student who participated received a plaque and up to \$1,000 to cover travel and related expenses. Research was presented by Scott Bowden of Eastern Kentucky University, Dennis Hawley of Indiana University, Angelo Marisco of Western Carolina University, Sarah Snyder of Old Dominion University, and Leanna Struzziery of Missouri Southern State College.

#### **Past President's Pin**

A past president's pin and plaque were presented to outgoing president Laura Studevant in recognition of her year of service to NEHA.

#### **Presidential Citations**

These awards are given to individuals or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to NEHA during the president's term of office. The Chadwick House Group, George Nakamura, Mary Myszk, Rich Gabriel, Harry Grenawitzke, Toni Roland, Diane Evans, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson all were recipients of presidential citations.

#### **Educational Activities**

At the heart of every AEC is the educational program offered to attendees. Great effort is made to ensure that educational sessions are current, relevant, and thought provoking, and this year's program was no exception. With the diversity of topics covered in the offerings, there was something to interest everyone. Subjects included drinking-water quality, emerging pathogens, environmental health management, food safety and protection, indoor air quality, onsite wastewater systems, swimming pools and recreational waters, research in environmental health, hazardous materials and waste, institutional environmental health, vector control and zoonotic diseases, and chemical and bioterrorism preparedness.

With the events of September 11, 2001, and the anthrax incidents, it is not surprising that the Chemical and Bioterrorism Preparedness educational track was well received and attended with great urgency. It was apparent from the diverse range of discussions held that this subject crosses all boundaries and that, no matter the specialty, environmental health professionals are in the forefront of recognizing a possible chemical or biological attack. Many leaders in the chemical and bioterrorism preparedness arena were on hand to present all aspects of possible threats and responses. RADM Robert C. Williams, Assistant Surgeon General, explained how the Environmental Assessment Working Group was established in the aftermath of the World Trade Center collapse to provide coordination and communication among the various entities involved and the public, and to provide support for New York City government agencies. Other highlights included educational sessions held by representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, CDC, and the

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to present their perspectives on terrorism response activities. The message of chemical and biological terrorism preparedness was reiterated by speakers in many subject areas and was an underlying theme in the conference educational program.

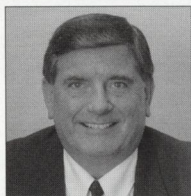
Learning opportunities were not limited to classroom-style presentations. Two off-site educational tours gave attendees first-hand experience with onsite wastewater systems (OSWSs) and a facility that turns solid waste into energy. The solid-waste tour was conducted at the Covanta Hennepin Energy Resource Company, and the OSWS Tour included three onsite systems in the Stillwater, Minnesota, area. Numerous workshops were offered, including Creative Training for Trainers and Food Safety Train-the-Trainer. Focus groups were held for various subspecialties of environmental health and provided participants with the opportunity to voice their needs and opinions on significant professional issues. Finally, attendees were exposed to undergraduate and graduate student research projects through research and poster presentations.

NEHA would like to extend a warm thank you to this year's Technical Section Chairs, who were instrumental in developing a valuable educational experience for the 2002 AEC attendees:

- Air/Land—Timothy Varney, Ph.D., and Alicia Enriquez;
- Counter-Bioterrorism—Barry Moore, R.E.H.S.;
- Environmental Health Management—Holly Coleman, R.S.;
- Emerging Pathogens/Vector Control/Zoonotic Diseases—Welford Roberts, Ph.D., R.E.H.S.;
- Drinking Water/Water Pollution—Thomas H. Hatfield, Dr.P.H., R.E.H.S.;
- Environmental Health Research—Darryl B. Barnett, Dr.P.H., R.S., D.A.A.S.;
- Food Protection—George Nakamura, R.E.H.S.;
- Hazardous and Toxic substances—John Stewart, R.E.H.S.;
- Institutional Environmental Health—Merritt M. Lake;
- General Environmental Health—Owen Seiver, Ph.D.;
- Injury Prevention/Occupational Health—Richard F. Collins, B.S., M.S.E., R.E.H.S.; and
- Onsite Wastewater—Tony Smithson, R.E.H.S.

## 2002 Mangold Award Recipient

*Harry E. Grenawitzke, R.S., M.P.H., D.A.A.S.*



The National Environmental Health Association is proud to present the 2002 Walter S. Mangold Award, its highest honor, to Harry E. Grenawitzke, R.S., M.P.H., D.A.A.S.

Harry has contributed more than 32 years of dedicated service to the environmental and public health profession. As a widely recognized and respected leader in the field of environmental health, he has devoted his life to the advancement of the profession through his involvement in both public and private sectors. In addition, Harry has been a tremendous inspiration and mentor to a number of successful environmental health professionals. In the words of James P. Schnackenberg, R.S., M.A., deputy health officer at the Barry-Eaton District Health Department,

In countless ways Harry has reached out to innumerable people to encourage, to mentor, to support, and to assist them as they came to the environmental health profession. In turn, many of these folks are now actively promoting environmental health in the same spirit Harry used to encourage their commitment to the profession.

In his present position as vice president of regulatory affairs and regional services at NSF International, he has been at the forefront of raising the sanitarian to a worldwide status. Harry now presides over more than 5,000 annual audits supporting NSF product certification services. As secretary of NSF's Council of Public Health Consultants, Harry ensures that NSF programs and services are consistent with the NSF mission and the challenges meeting the public health professional. According to Michael Farnsworth, western regional manager at NSF,

Through the standard development process, an activity predicated solely upon the ability to build consensus among diverse stakeholders, he has excelled in building a solid bridge between the diverse regulatory community and private manufacturing and user sectors. This talent and strength has significantly improved understanding between all parties—federal, state, and local regulators, both national and international manufacturers, and users.

Harry's 12 years with NSF were preceded by 21 years as a sanitarian and director of environmental health for the Berrien and Monroe county health departments in Michigan. As director of environmental health at Monroe County, Harry used a community wide approach to develop emergency plans and a new sanitary code for the county. Robert Powitz, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.S. of R.W. Powitz & Associates wrote,

Harry stands out as decidedly one of the most determined, devoted and brightest in his chosen vocation. He has excelled, in what most of us try at best to master: combining environmental health with an exemplary administrative career.

Harry has been active in both state and national associations, holding all offices and working on numerous committees—always with the thought of promoting the environmental health profession. Harry's long involvement and active role in NEHA began as chairman of the Environmental Management Section in 1982. In 1983, Harry was elected as

NEHA's Region 6 vice president and served for three years. Thereafter, he was elected as second vice president and served as president from 1989-1990. Harry's organizational leadership extends beyond NEHA to the Michigan Environmental Health Association (MEHA), Michigan Public Health Association, Michigan Association of Local Environmental Health Administrators, Michigan Association of Local Emergency Planning Committees and the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. As a member of MEHA, Harry was recognized as the recipient of the Larue L. Miller Sanitarian of the Year Award in 1998. Harry is also one of seven individuals from the state of Michigan who have been credentialed as a diplomat in the American Academy of Sanitarians.

Throughout his life, Harry has been helping to advance education within the environmental health profession. As one of the initial members of the NEHA Executive Committee that formed the NEHA/AAS Scholarship Committee, he helped create NEHA's highly successful scholarship program that has provided support for many environmental health students over the years. In addition, he helped design and implement the NEHA/CIEH sabbatical program.

Harry continues to serve as an important role model to students in the formative stages of their careers. Currently he is an adjunct lecturer at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Under Harry's leadership at NSF, he has increased programs focused on providing education to public health professionals across the U.S. His department provides in excess of 500 public health agency visits and makes 100 presentations per year on timely public health issues. According to Ginger Gist, Ph.D., D.A.A.S., past president of NEHA and chief of the exposure and disease registry at ATSDR,

Harry gave unstintingly of his time, his effort, his voice of support on the NEHA Board of Directors, and his advice . . . always in support of the upcoming generation of environmental health professionals. He was constantly looking for ways to get people involved in both the association and the profession, whether by mentoring or leading or simply providing an excellent example of what a true professional in environmental health should strive to be.

Throughout his career, Harry has demonstrated unwavering dedication and excellence as an environmental health professional. As expressed by George A. Kupfer, executive liaison at Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL) and recipient of the 2001 Mangold Award,

Harry is an innovative professional who has sought, proposed and implemented methods to improve our profession and to better serve the public and the environmental and safety needs of the public. Adding Harry's name to the list of recipients of this prestigious award will not only give Harry a very deserved honor, but also will provide credence and honor to the award.

NEHA is very proud to present the 2002 Walter S. Mangold award to such a deserving candidate as Harry E. Grenawitzke.

## 2002 Walter F. Snyder Award Recipient

*Gayle J. Smith*



"Water, water everywhere ne any drop to drink," wrote Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Water, water everywhere, safe drinking water for all," could well be the motto of the recipient of the 2002 Walter F. Snyder Award, Gayle J. Smith. For 31 of his 35 professional years, Mr. Smith focused his energy

on improving public health by addressing drinking-water needs.

A farm boy born and raised in Idaho Falls, Idaho, Smith attended Ricks College receiving an associate's degree in mathematics. In 1967, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Utah State University and began his professional career as a highway design engineer with the Washington State Highway Department, Wenatchee, Washington. He expanded his highway engineering skills to urban master planning with Futrell, Inc., Vancouver, Washington, introducing him to wastewater and drinking-water treatment.

In February 1971, Smith returned to Utah accepting an environmental engineering position at the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Water Quality. He took this opportunity to complete his studies for a Masters of Environmental/Engineering at Utah State University. In 1978, he was promoted to director, Bureau of Public Water Supplies, Division of Drinking Water. In this role, he persistently challenged the 'system,' laying the groundwork to make this division an efficient, effective regulatory agency. Smith played a major role in securing passage of Utah's Safe Drinking Water Act and obtaining Primacy delegation for the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act in Utah in 1979 and 1980, respectively.

An expert negotiator, Smith formed partnerships between public and private agencies. These partnerships allowed the pooling of resources both in expertise and materials for finding solutions to environmental problems. A colleague supports this view stating, "There never seemed to be an organization that Gayle did not befriend, see a role for, and effectively use to help in solving Utah's local problems." He continues, "...other directors seemed to fear giving up turf ... Gayle viewed and treated locals as full partners in assisting him in this important work."

Overcoming the local versus state barrier, he helped found the Rural Water Association of Utah, which now works "hand-in-glove" with Utah's Division of Drinking Water. He established a coalition of support for legislation to require certification of public water systems operators. Initial efforts failed, but persistence paid off, and just one year later in 1984, Smith was successful in rallying support and, with his House floor assistance, the bill passed.

A colleague wrote, "Gayle never flinched in defending the need for adequate resources for the drinking-water program and in educating policy makers about the public health risks associated with weak drinking-water programs. The result has been that the Division of Drinking Water survived tough times, and many policy makers have slowly come to understand the importance of the program."

During an April 1984 meeting of the National Conference of State Sanitary Engineers, Smith met with key drinking-water administrators on national issues critical to the drinking-water industry. It was apparent that state issues were not adequately represented at the national level. Smith took the lead and the group proceeded to explore how states, through cooperative

efforts, could further their interests at the national level. The outcome was the formation of the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA). Serving as vice president (1985-1986) and president (1986-1987) he provided leadership during its formative years. Today, the association is a key player in promoting and resolving national drinking-water issues which impact federal drinking-water legislation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency appointed Smith as chairman of its National Drinking Water Advisory Council in 1986. Smith served in this capacity for three years. As chairman of this 15-member council, Smith's attention was focused on sensible national drinking-water rules that could also be implemented by small water systems.

Also on the national level, Smith orchestrated a nationwide comment campaign on EPA's Lead/Copper Rule proposal resulting in modification to the rule. He also facilitated the nation's comments on EPA's proposed Volatile Organic Chemical Rules, which nationally legitimized the "vulnerability" concept.

Mr. Smith is a very active member of the NSF Council of Public Health Consultants, chairs the NSF International Joint Committee on Drinking Water Additives (serving consecutive terms on both the Council and Joint Committee since 1991); and, holds the record of the longest tenure on an NSF Technical Committee. He called upon all his skills as negotiator and mediator to obtain consensus of manufacturers, regulatory officials at federal, state and local levels, and users, including water utilities and trade associations, to help develop the first U.S. national standards for drinking-water additives. A fellow committeeman recognized this effort, stating, "The Committee respects his unbiased handling of contentious issues and solicitation of all viewpoints."

In 1991, Utah legislature changed the structure of its environmental programs. Mr. Smith was appointed director, Division of Drinking Water, and assigned to administer Utah's public drinking-water program and its multi-million dollar annual budget, and served in this capacity until 1993.

Smith currently serves as manager of Permits and Compliance with the Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Water Quality, developing and implementing programs to permit discharge of wastewater to waters of the State (and the U.S.) in Utah. This includes municipal and industrial wastewater and emergency-spill response.

Smith's dedication has brought him well-earned recognition. His awards include: Friend of Rural Water, National Rural Water Association (NRWA); George Warren Fuller Award, AWWA; Outstanding Service to Rural Water Systems, Utah Rural Water Association; and, the Environmental Leadership Award, NSF International.

Mr. Smith and his wife of 37 years, Ellen, are well known and active in Salt Lake City where they have raised six children and one foster child.

Mr. Smith is admired and respected by his colleagues; he is a mentor to many practicing health professionals. For his achievements in attaining a quality environment and improving public health, NSF International and the National Environmental Health Association take great pleasure in awarding to Gayle J. Smith the 2002 Walter F. Snyder Award.

"Water, water everywhere..." - safe water for all.

## 2002 AEC Exhibitors

**A** Academy of Certified Hazardous Materials Managers  
 Access Business Group, LLC  
 Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc.  
 Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry  
 Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Division of Toxicology  
 American Academy of Sanitarians  
 American Engineering Corporation  
 American Food Safety Institute  
 American Manufacturing Company, Inc.  
 Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs

**B** Big Dipper-Thermaco  
 BioLab, Inc.  
 Bio-Microbics, Inc.  
 Bord na Mona

**C** CDC, Division of Adolescent and School Health  
 CDC, National Center for Environmental Health  
 CDC, Public Response Service  
 Chemical and Biological Information Analysis Center  
 Clayton Group Services  
 Clearstream Wastewater Systems, Inc.  
 Cooper Instrument Corporation/Atkins TempTec, Inc.  
 Cromaglass Corporation

**D** Decade Software Company  
 Decagon Devices, Inc.  
 Delta Environmental Products, Inc.

**E** Ecolab, Inc.  
 Edlund Company  
 Eljen Corporation  
 Emerald Data Processing Services  
 EMSL Analytical, Inc.  
 Environmental Health Perspectives  
 ESRI  
 EZ Flow

**F** FoodHandler, Inc.

**G** Geoflow, Inc.  
 Glo Germ Company

**H** HealthSpace Integrated Solutions, Ltd.  
 Hobart Corporation

**I** Indian Health Service  
 Infectious Awareables  
 INFICON  
 Infiltrator Systems, Inc.  
 Intertek Testing Services

**J** J.T. Eaton & Company, Inc.  
 Johnson Diversified Products, Inc.

**K** Kairak, Inc.  
 KatchAll Technology Group (KTG), Inc.  
 KatchAll/San Jamar  
 KD Engineering  
 Kenkut Products, Inc.  
 Knight Treatment Systems

**L** Lumalier

**M** MesoSystems Technology, Inc.  
 MicroSepTec  
 Minnesota Environmental Health Association  
 Minnesota Valley Testing Labs, Inc.

**N** National Association of County and City Health Officials  
 National Association of Local Boards of Health  
 National Disaster Medical System  
 National Drinking Water Clearinghouse  
 National Environmental Training Association, Inc.  
 National Library of Medicine  
 National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association  
 National Registry of Food Safety Professionals  
 National Restaurant Association (NRA) Educational Foundation

National Swimming Pool Foundation  
 National Testing Laboratories, Ltd.  
 NEHA Training, LLC  
 Netafim USA  
 NITON Corporation  
 NoMound® Onsite Systems  
 Norback, Ley & Associates, LLC  
 NSF International

**O** Orkin Pest Control

**P** Pace Analytical Services  
 Pleasant Park Associates  
 Portable Sanitation Association International  
 Premier Tech Environment, Ltd.  
 Procura

**R** Raytek Corporation  
 RMD Instruments, LLC

**S** Shat-R-Shield, Inc.  
 SJE-Rhombus  
 Sneezeguard Solutions, Inc.  
 Steritech Group, Inc.

**T** TrainingOnline.com  
 Tuf-Tite, Inc.

**U** Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.  
 University of Findlay, The  
 University of Minnesota, School of Public Health  
 US Navy Recruiting Command  
 USA CHPPM  
 USEPA, c/o Eastern Research Group  
 USEPA, Indoor Environments Division  
 USEPA, Office of Wastewater Management  
 USEPA, Office of Water

**W** Webbstarr Technologies, Inc.  
 WERC  
 Worldstone, Inc.

**X** Xerxes Corporation





Julie Muñoz, business development and operations manager for NEHA Training LLC, discusses NEHA Training's involvement in the certification of Food Safety Training Professionals.

### Learning Through Exhibits

Attendees had the unique opportunity to learn about products and services in the environmental health and protection field and meet with over 100 vendors and manufacturers at the NEHA Exhibition. Many were impressed with the quality of the exhibition, and there were many comments on the large variety of products represented. The exhibitors also were pleased, and more than one exhibitor commented on what a pleasure it was to talk with such an "informed group of people."

One of the highlights of this year's exhibition was a new event—the "Handwashing for Life" Team Rally. This event, sponsored by the Handwashing Leadership Forum, was a huge success. Everyone got into the spirit, and the competition was fierce. Fifty-three contestants battled for the exclusive honor of having the cleanest hands at the conference. Three contestants registered perfect scores: Brian Commons of the U.S. Army; Mary Myszka, NEHA Region IV vice president; and Jennifer Hampton of Tacoma, Washington. An additional highlight was a challenge "wash-off" between the FDA and CDC. The intense scrubbing of FDA's Wendy Fanaselle versus that of CDC's Vince Radke attracted many spectators, who joined in the fun. Anthony Aiken, NEHA immediate past president, and Nelson Fabian, NEHA executive director, were on hand to present the winners with a handsome plaque in recognition of their superior handwashing abilities.

Another event that added to the excitement in the exhibit hall was the door prize draw-

ings. After visiting a certain number of exhibitors, attendees were entered into a drawing for prizes that included a digital camera, a five-disc DVD and CD player, and a waterproof global-positioning-system unit. Congratulations go to the door prize winners: Joyce Hedlin from Marshall, Minnesota; Kevin Breen from Madison, New Jersey; and Dennis Hawley from Kittanning, Pennsylvania. NEHA also would like to thank the exhibitors who helped contribute to this event, including Edlund; Hobart Corporation; Lumalier; MesoSystems Technology, Inc.; Pleasant Park Associates; Shat-R-Shield, Inc.; and the University of Findlay.

### Networking and Social Events

Events that encourage members to get together to exchange stories and opportunities are a valuable aspect of the conference. The idea is to make it easy for members to interact in a casual manner and create both professional and personal relationships—relationships that sometimes last a lifetime. While the NEHA staff organizes a number of social events as functions of the conference, informal and spontaneous networking opportunities abound throughout the proceedings. NEHA strongly encourages attendees to be alert and receptive to these opportunities as they arise—and to create opportunities for themselves. Who knows where an impromptu discussion with an experienced peer could lead!

### Icebreaker Party

The icebreaker party is the traditional kick-off event of the conference. This year, the state affiliates of Region 4 sponsored the party. Attendees enjoyed food and music, as well as the opportunity to visit with old and new friends.

### UL-Sponsored St. Croix River Cruise

Underwriters Laboratories (UL) sponsored a river cruise on the St. Croix River. Attendees were clamoring for tickets to this sold-out event. Those who ordered their tickets well in advance enjoyed dinner while floating on the beautiful St. Croix.

### Networking Luncheon

Always a popular event, the networking luncheon allows participants to enjoy a meal and discuss environmental health issues. Tables were designated for discussions of a particular subject in environmental health.

Participants were then free to choose whatever subject they wished, and to sit at an appropriate table.

### Silent Auction

The annual silent auction at the AEC is more than a chance to shop for a good deal while contributing to the conference educational fund—it's also a once-a-year opportunity to outbid your friends, compete for a desired prize, and enjoy the agony of defeat and the thrill of the win.

One of the more coveted prizes at this year's silent auction was a "Johnny" talking soap dispenser that brought in much more money than it was worth and kept auction-goers smiling each time they played with it. The determined-to-have-it top bidder, at \$50, was Vince Radke, who kept careful watch over the toy donated by exhibitor Jim Mann of the "Handwashing for Life" Team Rally booth. For a \$155 contribution, Chris Reimas took home the popular handmade knife donated by the Montana affiliate. Adding a touch of "swelegance" to the auction were three pairs of pearl and tanzanite earrings from Taylor Technologies. The earrings brought in a combined total of \$360 from three bidders.

One side effect of last year's tragic September 11 events was that the National Capital Area Affiliate, which usually donates a flag that has flown over the U.S. capitol, had difficulty obtaining one because so many people were in line for flags. Fortunately, the affiliate persevered, and Old Glory was again a popular auction item. Al Brunwasser made the winning bid, \$64, for the flag. Other popular patriotic items at the auction included a crocheted American-flag afghan donated by the Alabama affiliate, which Rick Walraven won for \$120, and an Olympic USA sweat-shirt donated by Hedgehog Environmental Services and won by Kevin Miscka for \$60.

There was spirited bidding for Team America golf balls, chocolate-covered macadamia nuts, and coffee donated by the Hawaii affiliate, as well as for a three-in-one DVD/VCR/CD player donated by Kairak, Inc; a beautiful Tiffany-style waterlilies lamp donated by the Minnesota affiliate; a rare-birds binocular kit that included binoculars and a bird-watching guidebook donated by the National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators (NCLEHA), and a striking Pendleton wool blanket donated by the Oregon affiliate. Also drawing considerable interest were food

items, environmental health training tools, registration to numerous conferences, and a rafting trip. The highest bid paid at the auction was \$685, which bought registration and four nights' stay at the Reno Hilton for the AEC 2003.

Topping last year's proceeds by nearly \$1,000, the Minneapolis silent auction can be considered a roaring success. Thanks to all the donators and bidders, more than \$5,000 will be deposited in a speakers' fund to help defray the costs of speakers at next year's AEC. So start looking now for that special item to donate that will raise the bar next year in Reno!

### Golf Tournament

The 15th Annual NEHA Golf Tournament was held on June 28th at the Grand National Golf Course in Hinckley, Minnesota. Special thanks are extended to the Minnesota affiliate for hosting and managing the tournament. In particular, NEHA recognizes Steve Olson for organizing and running the event. The most exciting moment of the tournament came when Dale Hagata of the Hawaii Department of Health made a hole-in-one! Way to go Dale! Congratulations to the first-, second- and third-place teams for their fantastic performances on the course!

- First-place team:
  - Steve Asay—Kairak Innovation, Inc.;
  - Grant Carson—Fargo Cass Public Health, North Dakota;
  - Doug Paquette—US Food Service Contract Design; and
  - Miles Schacher—Fargo Cass Public Health, North Dakota.
- Second-place team:
  - Gary Callin—Strategic/Palm Brothers Division;
  - Jerry Camera—Hollander Company;
  - Russ Olson—Stevens-Lee Company; and
  - Jim Palm—Strategic/Palm Brothers Division.
- Third-place team:
  - Richard Daugherty—DuPage County Health Department, Illinois;
  - Dick Holloway—City of Bloomington Environmental Health, Minnesota;
  - Terence Sutphin—Arkansas Department of Health; and
  - Peter Thornton—Volusia County Public Health, Florida.



*Team America at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual NEHA Golf Tournament: Bob Galvin, Steve Jenkins, Steve Tackitt, and Harry Grenawitzke.*

### President's Banquet

The president's banquet, a semiformal occasion of dinner and celebration, is the final networking and social event at each AEC. The official transfer of NEHA's presidency takes place here, and the Mangold and Snyder awards are presented. This year, the banquet hall was packed. Events got under way with a stirring video reviewing the past year in environmental health and reminding attendees of the importance of their work in light of the terrorist attacks.

Dennis Mangino, of NSF International, introduced the 2002 Snyder Award winner, Gayle J. Smith. Mr. Smith graciously accepted the award and gave particular thanks to his wife for her hard work in raising their seven children. He also challenged state regulators to set and enforce appropriate regulations in environmental health so that federal agencies are not forced to intervene.

Leonard Rice, the most senior member of the Mangold Award Committee, presented Harry Grenawitzke with the 2002 Walter S. Mangold award, NEHA's highest honor. In his presentation of the award, Mr. Rice noted that many people would have liked the opportunity to present this award because Mr. Grenawitzke has touched the lives and careers of so many people in the field of environmental health. Rice also shared a story about the time when he and Grenawitzke

served as regional vice presidents on the NEHA board. At a board meeting one spring, they made a bet on who could sign up the most new members in their respective regions. Rice worked hard that year to sign up new members, and his region finished with the second most new members of the 10 regions—second only to Grenawitzke's region. Hard work, persistence, and competitive fire, Rice concluded, are what helped to make Grenawitzke's career in environmental health such a remarkable one.

Grenawitzke accepted the award and gave particular acknowledgement to his wife and son, who were present in the audience. He finished the story Rice had started. Apparently, their bet was for a case of beer, and Rice paid up about two hours before Grenawitzke was scheduled to fly out of Colorado Springs. Rice made the payment in bottles, so that Grenawitzke would be unable to carry his reward onto the plane.

Grenawitzke concluded, like Mike Olsterholm and Gayle Smith, by issuing a challenge. He asked audience members to become more active in their professional association. People in the field of environmental health, he said, should not consider their careers just a 40-hour-a-week commitment.

President Laura Studevart gave a farewell speech. She reminisced on an amazing year



Region 8 Vice President Larry Yates, MEHA Immediate Past President Sharon Smith, and current MEHA President Victoria Cook, enjoy the AEC banquet.



NEHA's Board of Directors meets at the AEC.

and extended thanks to many people for their help. Passing the gavel to incoming president James Dingman, she instructed him to "hang on to it."

President Dingman expressed great optimism about the coming year. He mentioned some NEHA projects for the year, including the completion of a research project on environmental health credentialing and education and the creation of a full-time education manager position. Dingman also delineated some of his objectives as president: clarifying the role of specialty credentials and encouraging the adoption of a universally accepted term for environmental health professionals. He concluded by thanking several people for their support and guidance, including Harry Grenawitzke and George Kupfer, the

most recent Mangold Award recipients. Dingman reserved his biggest thanks for his wife, Cheryl.

The evening closed with a magic/comedy show. Last year's Mangold Award recipient, George Kupfer, made a triumphant return to the stage. This year, instead of accepting an award, he was fitted with a decorative headpiece and instructed to vigorously spin an eggbeater in the direction of a fellow audience member. Jim Dingman started his year as NEHA President with a bang by having his tie cut into many pieces and then by having one of his 20-dollar bills transformed into a one-dollar bill.

## Association Business

### Board of Directors Meeting

Once again, the Board of Directors meeting had a full agenda and addressed many items of association business:

- It was reported that Ron Grimes, of Oakland County, Michigan, had won the election for second vice president and that Brian Collins, of Plano, Texas, had won the Region 5 vice-presidential election.
- It was reported that the Minneapolis AEC was slightly larger than last year's AEC in Atlanta. This was characterized as a positive development since, on average, attendance at the conferences of other associations was down 10 to 15 percent from last year.
- The board approved a new policy designed to combine the resources of NEHA Technical Section chairs and NEHA staff for the purpose of developing stronger AEC educational programs.
- The board discussed an appropriate way for NEHA to maintain strong participation in the Council of Linkages.
- The executive director explained that long-standing differences NEHA has had with the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) were essentially cleared up as a result of a meeting between IFEH and NEHA leaders at the San Diego, California, IFEH Congress meeting in May.
- The board explored how NEHA might best proceed with its Certified Food Safety Professional (C.F.S.P.) credential given that the Conference for Food Protection (CFP) had recently voted to support this credential for local environmental health personnel involved in food protection.
- The board held a lengthy discussion on the relationship between the Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (R.E.H.S./R.S.) credential and NEHA specialty credentials, in particular the C.F.S.P. A subcommittee of the board was created to look at ways of strengthening each credential while maintaining the R.E.H.S./R.S. as the premier credential in environmental health.
- The board began a process to determine what credential testing agency should be NEHA's credentialing partner.
- The board approved a request for proposals that will be used in hiring an investigative journalist to write a story on how the environmental health profession responded to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The Chadwick House in England

contributed the \$20,000 funding for this project to NEHA.

- It was reported that necessary steps have been taken to change the NEHA fiscal year from July 1–June 30 to October 1–September 30.
- It was reported that the Endowment Foundation stood at a balance of \$5,926.11.
- Plans were discussed for recognizing Endowment Foundation contributors in the *Journal of Environmental Health*.
- The executive director reported that NEHA grant and contract work is approaching one million dollars in funding and that promising developments for more meaningful work with CDC are in the offing.
- The board approved a new Code of Ethics for NEHA members.
- The board discussed ways in which NEHA might be helpful in revitalizing an affiliate in the state of New York.
- The board agreed to support the holding of congressional hearings on U.S. EPA's new Clear Skies initiative.

#### Council of Delegates Meeting

The NEHA Council of Delegates comprises the NEHA Board of Directors and all the presidents of NEHA affiliates. Highlights of this year's annual meeting are as follows:

- It was reported to affiliate presidents that this year's silent auction had earnings of over \$5,000. These earnings are used to support the AEC speaker fund. The affiliates were thanked for their contributions.
- It was reported that the Michigan affiliate had donated \$1,000 to the Endowment Foundation and that Illinois had pledged to donate \$1,200 over the next three years.
- Rick Collins was presented to the Council of Delegates as the only candidate for next year's second-vice-president election.
- Retiring Region 3 vice president Tony Bennett was recognized for his years of service to the organization.
- The Yankee Conference was recognized as the longest-running regional conference within the NEHA family.
- A presentation was made by NEHA Training LLC. The presentation emphasized that NEHA was expanding its role in food protection training and education and that NEHA members now have the opportunity to become trainers with the program. Detailed information is available from the Denver office.



Region 1 Vice President Richard Gabriel, First Vice President Jim Balsamo, President Jim Dingman, and Executive Director Nelson Fabian, listen to comments from NEHA members during the General Assembly.

- The council voted to support taking proposed changes to NEHA's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws to the membership next spring for a member vote of approval or disapproval.
- The council voted to approve a NEHA Fiscal Year 2003 budget of \$2,362,000.
- The council was presented with summary results from this year's AEC focus group meetings. These extensive presentations explored many sides of the issue of a name change for the R.E.H.S./R.S. credential.
- The council conducted an instructive discussion on the relationship between the R.E.H.S./R.S. and the C.F.S.P. credentials.

#### General Assembly

NEHA President Laura Studevart called the General Assembly to order and introduced Region 4 Vice President Mary Myszka. Mary Myszka welcomed the audience to Minneapolis and thanked the Minnesota affiliate for helping with the AEC. President Studevart encouraged all members to become involved in the association and highlighted some of NEHA's accomplishments of the past year. She was "happy to report" that

- NEHA Training LLC, a joint venture of NEHA and the Chadwick House Group Limited, has been launched successfully and is involved in the certification of Food Safety Training Professionals;
- NEHA has expanded the content of its interactive Web site, <[www.neha.org](http://www.neha.org)>;
- NEHA continues to maintain strong relationships and partnerships with a wide assortment of federal agencies;

- the Endowment Foundation is established and is accepting contributions;
- the Association Research Center (ARC) has successfully conducted and published a nationwide salary survey;
- the *Journal of Environmental Health* continues to grow and provide useful information to environmental health professionals;
- the office at the association headquarters in Denver, Colorado has been expanded; and
- the membership of NEHA has been steadily increasing.

President Studevart introduced Larry Yates, who spoke about the Endowment Foundation, chaired by Harry Grenawitzke. The purpose of the Endowment Foundation is to enable NEHA to do more for the profession than the annual budget might allow. Mr. Yates encouraged all the affiliates to top Michigan's donation of \$1,000, or at least to contribute what they can.

The floor was opened to nominations for the seat of second vice president; none were received. President Studevart announced that Ron Grimes had run unopposed for second vice president and therefore had become the newest member of the Board of Directors. She also reported that Anthony Bennett has successfully completed his term as Region 3 vice president and that Brian Collins will now be taking over as Region 3 vice president.

The floor was opened to comments from the audience:

- Randy Johnson, president of the Uniformed Services Affiliate, informed the



Region 6 Vice President Mike Phillips, Region 8 Vice President Larry Yates, and Region 9 Vice President Pat Maloney at the General Assembly.



Rear Admiral Robert C. Williams, Assistant Surgeon General and Chief Engineer of the U.S. Public Health Service.

audience of his intent to develop a Web site dedicated to the Uniformed Services Affiliate. He noted that the Web site will help the cohesiveness of an affiliate with a very diverse membership.

- Michele Samarya-Timm expressed concern that NEHA's AEC coincides with the conferences of other associations. She also proposed that the General Assembly be held immediately before the Keynote Address, to draw more participation from the membership. Finally, she extended an invitation to the Board of Directors to attend the New Jersey Affiliate meetings.
- Nelson Fabian, NEHA executive director, commented on the issue of conflicting conferences. NEHA tries to remain consistent in holding the AEC at the end of June, he noted, and also tries to schedule the conference when the best pricing for attendees can be obtained. It is nearly impossible, he said, to hold the conference when no other organization is having one, and the goal is to try to make the AEC as accessible as possible. He added that the challenge of addressing the many variables involved in planning an AEC make the process that much more exciting.
- Tom Baker, Nebraska Affiliate President, announced plans for a Regional Conference being held Omaha, Nebraska, in October 2002 at the Regency Marriott.

- Dick Pantages encouraged affiliates to submit the name of at least one person for an award each year. He stated that awards are an easy way to recognize the contributions that individuals make to an organization.
  - Mike Phillips encouraged all members affiliated with universities to encourage students to apply for the NEHA Scholarships. The quality of the students receiving the scholarships is excellent. He also encouraged members to contribute to the Endowment Foundation, noting that contributions can be made at varying levels.
- President Studevart then recognized the section chairs for their valuable service and the NEHA staff, asking the audience to let them know how much they are appreciated. Nelson Fabian spoke of the many cutbacks that are occurring in the environmental health field and thanked those in attendance at the AEC for being committed to the profession. He praised the planners of regional conferences; the quality of the conferences was improving, he said, and they should "keep up the good work." President Studevart closed the General Assembly by encouraging everyone to take part in the organization and to run for election to the Board of Directors.

## Conclusion

NEHA hopes the information presented in this special report is informative to attendees and non-attendees alike. The report is designed both to recap highlights for those who were able to attend and to allow those who were unable to attend to enjoy some of the AEC offerings.

Providing education is one of NEHA's best tools for achieving its mission of advancing the environmental health and protection professional. As preparations get under way for next year's AEC in Reno, Nevada, we are hopeful that even more of you will be able to take advantage of the educational opportunities the conference offers. In the words of one of this year's conference attendees, "Go for it and attend! This is a great educational and networking opportunity!"

Each year, NEHA staff return from the AEC motivated and challenged to respond to your feedback so that the following year's conference will be even better. With 66 AECs now under our belt, we know that constant changes in the environmental health profession are a given and that by conducting careful research into what those changes are, we can always find ways to improve the conference. We hope to see you in Reno! 🐾



# NEHA's 2002 Annual educational conference and exhibition Minneapolis, Minnesota

