

# NEHA's 56th Annual Educational Conference

## A Special Section

**F**or the 56th consecutive year, NEHA offered the environmental health practitioner another quality educational opportunity at the association's annual conference. However, unlike any conference before it, this particular educational conference was both unique and unprecedented. It was the first-ever joint conference co-sponsored by both NEHA and the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. Happily, in many respects the conference exceeded even the most optimistic expectations.

The theme for this unique conference was "Networking, Together We Succeed". And networking truly became the code word and personality for this event right from the conference's first moments.

Conference evaluation forms asked the question, "What was the one aspect of the conference that you enjoyed the most?" Over and over again, evaluations have come back indicating that the opportunity to network was both a cherished and invaluable experience. If anything, these evaluations further evidence the awareness that professionals in both nations have that the

solution to environmental problems must involve cooperation, teamwork, and the sharing of knowledge and insights. And this is essentially what happened over the course of this remarkable conference.

The AEC also marks for NEHA the conclusion of one presidential term and the beginning of another. After completing an extraordinary year as NEHA's president, Leonard Rice passed the president's gavel to incoming president Chris Wiant. In looking back, Leonard reflected on how precious was the opportunity to meet and work with so many NEHA members, and further complimented the association's leadership for moving forward on such challenges as international involvement, streamlining NEHA's governing apparatus, and progressing in so many program areas, particularly credentialing. Incoming president Chris Wiant noted that he looked forward to a year of substantive involvement with the association's volunteers, its affiliates, and its elected leaders.

As always, one of the most popular events at the conference was NEHA's silent auction. This year, 29 affiliates, four sus-

taining members, six CIPHI branches and seven companies/organizations from Canada contributed keepsake items that immediately went up for auction to the conference attendees. The total proceeds from the auction topped \$4,000, with approximately \$3,000 of that amount earned by NEHA. Proceeds from the auction are used each year to help fund the expense of top notch conference speakers.

Attendees also had the opportunity to gather knowledge about the latest in technology, information, services and products from almost 70 different exhibitors. The association regards the exhibit event as being every bit as important to the educational advancement of the practitioner as the educational program itself. Our thanks go to all of our exhibitors who provided this tremendous service to conference attendees.

Jacobo Finkelman, director of the Pan American Health Organization's Center for Human Ecology and Health, delivered the conference's keynote address. His presentation addressed the relationship between the economy and the environment in particular developing nations in the western



hemisphere. His address was so stunning that at times you could literally hear the breathing of the rapt audience.

Finally, no NEHA conference is complete without the networking opportunities that are provided. Again this year, NEHA members had the chance to meet colleagues from around the nation and Canada in a variety of social events, not all of which were subject to the heavy rain that made the Richardson barbecue one gathering that will be remembered for years.

Beyond the general conference itself, NEHA also uses the opportunity of its annual gathering to conduct its yearly business meetings. The NEHA executive committee and board of directors meet at the AEC, as does each NEHA section, various NEHA committees, and the NEHA credentialing board. What follows is a report on the highlights of both NEHA's executive committee and board of directors meetings.

## Executive Committee

Listed below are significant items that were discussed and/or acted upon at the AEC executive committee meeting.

- It was reported that the association would offer a \$1,000 graduate scholarship (funded 50/50 by NEHA and the American Academy of Sanitarians) and \$1,200 and \$500 undergraduate scholarships at the AEC in Orlando.
- In connection with the dues increase, it was noted that interviews were underway to hire a full time advertising sales employee. This new position, which would function to increase advertising income in the journal to help support the increased number of journals that NEHA will publish each year, is expected to be filled in August.

*(top)*  
NEHA President Leonard Rice ended his term at the Winnipeg conference.

*(middle)*  
1992 Walter S. Mangold Award winner Dr. Amer M. El-Ahraf and daughter Hadeel await his introduction at the Presidents' Banquet.

*(bottom)*  
A young Scottish dancer proudly entertains NEHA and CIPHI members.

- It was also reported that the new C.E. quiz that appears in each journal has been well received by the membership and that it represented a good indication of how important it was that the association's products and services be in keeping with member needs and expectations.

- It was announced that Gary Coleman, environmental health coordinator for the Pike County Health Department in Kentucky, was selected as this year's ambassador for the NEHA/IEHO sabbatical exchange program.

- A memo of understanding between NEHA and Public Health International was approved by the executive committee. NEHA will now use PHI to place those NEHA members, who are interested in volunteer assignments, in third world countries.

- President Rice and President-Elect Wiant reported on their recent trip to Russia at which time they represented NEHA. They shared that in the new commonwealth of republics little in the way of structure exists that allows, for example, environmental professionals to network as they do in NEHA. As such, there was some discussion as to how NEHA might be of some service in helping environmental professionals in that nation establish an organization like NEHA.

- The executive committee completed its lengthy deliberation on NEHA's constitution and bylaws. This was a project that the executive committee had worked on for several years. With the needed revisions now clarified (the objective of which was to streamline and make more effective the governance of NEHA), the NEHA board would now be able to officially act on the executive committee's decisions.

- It was reported that a contract had been prepared and submitted to the Florida Environmental Health Association for consideration. The contract would govern the relationship between NEHA and FEHA with respect to the upcoming AEC in Orlando.

- It was also noted that a site inspection to Atlantic City was forthcoming. Atlantic City is being very seriously considered as a site for the NEHA 1995 AEC.

- The executive committee deliberated a white paper on the future of the NEHA

midyear conference. While no specific direction was given, the association is considering some combination of one midyear per year and a series of professional development seminars. The seminars, which could begin as early as the spring of 1993, are initially being designed around the idea of total quality management in the environmental health field. The seminars would be classroom type small attendance experiences with a very small but high quality faculty. Such seminars would be entirely in keeping with NEHA's mission to advance the professionals who practice in environmental health.

- A report on the registered hazardous substances professional and registered hazardous substances specialist seminars was given. It was noted that these seminars (held in Nevada) have been extremely successful. They have been well attended and have substantially helped those who have attended to pass the credentialing exams. (The exams are given on the last day of the seminar.)

It was also announced that if any NEHA affiliate, or for that matter any group within NEHA would like to have the RHSP seminar conducted in their area, they are simply to call Kip Lytle of the NEHA staff. Arrangements to bring one of these seminars to any part of the country can easily be worked out.

- No further developments were reported in connection with the possible sale of the *Journal of Environmental Health*. NEHA is looking at the possibility of some sort of partnership wherein NEHA would maintain total editorial control of the journal but would, through the resources of a potential buyer, be able to increase the visibility and subscriptions to the journal and in so doing the visibility and image of the environmental health profession.

- It was reported that further study of some means by which NEHA might increase its influence in Washington would be deferred until an update of NEHA's strategic plan was completed. The executive committee agreed that the strategic plan of the association needs to be the basis for defining how best to proceed with initiatives such as this.

- A retirement plan for the NEHA staff was authorized. The effective date of that

plan would be July 1, 1992.

- President Rice announced that NEHA's membership in IFEH was now finalized. A certificate of membership was presented to NEHA during the meeting.

- The executive committee completed another multi-year project by adopting at its meeting an updated and thorough Policy and Procedures Manual for the association. The manual serves to carry out, clarify and define many of the provisions of NEHA's constitution and bylaws.

- It was reported that work on NEHA's membership directory was being held up until funding for that directory could be assured. Advertising sales for the directory simply have not come in at the rate that had been projected based on a survey that was conducted last winter.

- The executive committee approved the details of a policy that would extend to retired professionals the opportunity to maintain their REHS/RS credential without a C.E. requirement. Details of the policy can be obtained from Kip Lytle of the NEHA staff.

- The executive committee gave approval for the staff to continue its work to determine if the association could develop a new credential for professionals involved in indoor air quality. It was indicated that NEHA might be interested in sponsoring such a credential if it could be developed at minimal cost to the association.

- A process for updating NEHA's strategic plan was developed. Essentially, it is the responsibility of NEHA's president-elect to oversee the strategic plan process. The executive committee also agreed that the association's strategic plan should be open to the directions identified in the blue ribbon report that was just submitted to NEHA on the future of environmental health.

- The executive committee agreed to accept and file the specially commissioned blue ribbon panel's report on the future of environmental health. The executive committee also made the commitment that once NEHA has had the opportunity to digest the report, it was incumbent upon the association to give the final report the widest possible dissemination and further to coordinate NEHA's very direction with what was called for in the report.

- The executive committee agreed that since the joint conference was now complete it was important that NEHA and CIPHI together explore other ways of working together. Suggestions ranged from an exchange of columns in each organization's journal to some form of dual membership. These options will be examined with the idea that in the near term, the policy bodies of both NEHA and CIPHI would have the opportunity to adopt measures that would further strengthen the ties and thus the networking opportunities between the members of the two associations.

- The executive committee agreed to defer, until such time that the blue ribbon report could be examined, any alteration to NEHA's mission statement. In principle, however, there was general agreement that NEHA's mission statement should be tailored to the advancement of "professionals in environmental health".

## Board of Directors

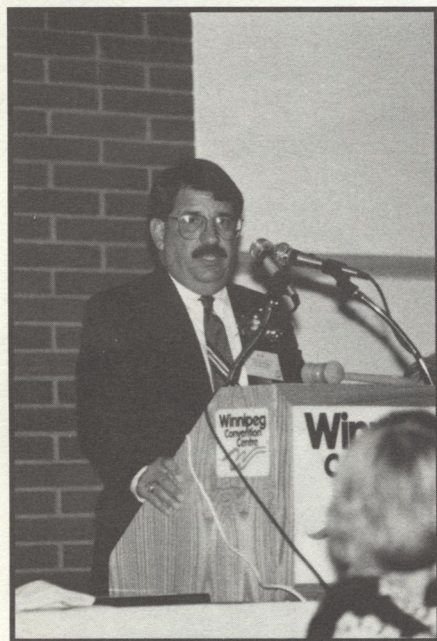
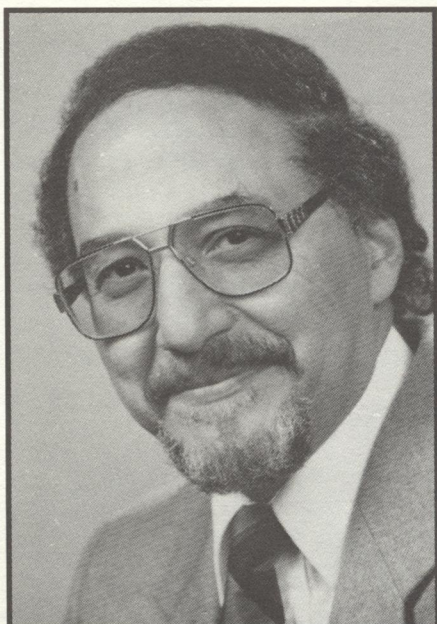
In addition to the executive committee meeting, the NEHA board of directors also met in Winnipeg. Highlights of that meeting, which was primarily informational, can be summarized as follows.

- Various update reports on association programs were provided to the board. Any member of the association can check with their affiliate president for a briefing summary.

- Guests from the Society of Public Health Inspectors in Singapore, the Institution of Environmental Health Officers in England, and the International Federation of Environmental Health greeted NEHA's board. These presentations served to further strengthen NEHA's ties with the international environmental health community. Such presentations in the past have led to direct involvement by both NEHA and its affiliates in activities with other nations' environmental professionals.

- A status report on NEHA's silent auction was provided. Each affiliate was also thanked for their participation in the auction, which each year helps to support NEHA's speaker fund that ensures that quality speakers address conference attendees.

- The special blue ribbon panel report on



the future of environmental health was distributed to every affiliate president.

- Each affiliate president was provided with the explanation of how NEHA's AEC site selection process works. It was also confirmed that NEHA's upcoming AECs were scheduled as 1993 Orlando, 1994 Ft. Worth, and 1996 Chicago. It was noted that Atlantic City is being considered for 1995 and that Chicago is being considered as the next joint NEHA/CIPHI annual conference.
- The mail ballot results from last spring were officially reported to the board. It was confirmed that Steve Tackitt had been elected as NEHA's second vice president; Phyllis Boucher as NEHA's region 9 vice president; Jim Schnackenberg as NEHA's region 6 vice president; and Bob Hutchison as NEHA's region 4 vice president.
- The nominations committee report was given to the board. It was noted that this year there were two highly qualified candidates who had submitted the appropriate papers to run for NEHA's second vice president position on next year's spring mail ballot. The two candidates are Bobby Baker from Iowa and Peter Thornton from Florida.
- Affiliate presidents had the opportunity to share with the association's leadership input on a variety of issues. Several suggestions were made in regard to the *Journal of Environmental Health* in particular.
- The board adopted the NEHA budget for FY93. The budget has a projected revenue of almost \$1.7 million.
- The board was briefed on NEHA's international activities including its rejoining of IFEH.
- After lengthy discussions and deliberation, the board approved a package of revisions to NEHA's constitution and by-laws. Both NEHA's board and executive

committee now stand behind a variety of changes in NEHA's governance documents that aim to establish a more effective operation of the association. In essence, the changes serve to involve affiliates and the grassroots NEHA members in the development of NEHA's strategic plan, extend the term of office for representatives to NEHA's new council of delegates (previously its board of directors) to two years, and clarify that NEHA's executive committee (which would become NEHA's board of directors) will now operate, in much more of a business sense, as a true board of directors.

These revisions will be presented to every NEHA member on the spring ballot for the membership's approval.

- A report on the restructuring of the student body within the association was presented to the board. In effect, the report proposes that NEHA make more of a commitment to student members and that more of NEHA's leadership, in particular NEHA's past presidents, get involved with future environmental health practitioners.
- Reports were also given to the board by the National Accreditation Council on Environmental Health Curricula, the Environmental Health Faculty Forum, and all of NEHA's section chairs.
- NEHA's credentialing board and C.E. committees also furnished the board with detailed reports.
- Affiliate presidents were encouraged to promote the sabbatical exchange program within their affiliates in order that more people might have the opportunity to be considered for the program. It was noted that for the first two years, not many applications had been received. It was stressed that the program itself was an exceptionally enriching experience for the person chosen.
- Affiliate presidents were also encouraged to give serious consideration to active members from within their organizations who could and should be running for NEHA offices.

In all, the board met on three separate occasions during the conference to be briefed on the myriad of programs that NEHA is undertaking and at this meeting give serious attention to the revisions that have been worked out in NEHA's constitution and bylaws.

(top)  
Mangold Award recipient Dr. Amer M. El-Ahraf.  
(middle)  
Robert Galvan, M.S., R.S., recipient of the 1992 Walter F. Snyder Award.  
(bottom)  
Dramatic performances were a highlight of the myriad activities in Winnipeg.

## Recognition of excellence

### Walter S. Mangold Award

The 1992 Walter S. Mangold Award was presented at the Presidents' Banquet—the closing event of the 1992 International Environmental Health Conference and Exhibit. Previous award winner Richard L. Roberts presented to **Dr. Amer M. El-Ahraf** the individual plaque signifying NEHA's highest honor. In addition, Dr. El-Ahraf's name was inscribed on the permanent Mangold Award plaque which will be displayed for the upcoming year at California State University-Dominguez Hills.

Amer El-Ahraf was 23 when he came to the United States from his native Egypt in 1963. He had already completed his studies for the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree at Cairo University, and enrolled at UCLA where he earned the Master of Public Health in 1965 and the Doctor of Public Health (with distinction) in 1971.

Those who know Amer El-Ahraf easily understand his choice of environmental health as his life's work. His concern for humankind and his compassion for individuals have come together in his personal and professional lives as an environmental health educator-practitioner whose activities over the past two decades create a record of leadership and accomplishment that is internationally recognized and acknowledged.

In 1970, Dr. El-Ahraf went to work in the Model Neighborhood Program of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services as an environmental counselor/environmental health specialist. After leaving Los Angeles County, Dr. El-Ahraf began his academic career at the University of California, Irvine, where he was appointed Assistant Professor of Social Ecology with responsibility for coordinating the instructional program in environmental quality and health. In 1973, he was recruited by California State University, San Bernardino to establish the Department of Health Science and Human Ecology, which he served as chair in 1984. Under his leadership, the department developed an innovative student internship program that emphasized both field study and applied research. The result of these efforts was the development of a broadly based and diverse

program in the Health Sciences and related areas that grew to hundreds of students by 1984, and which laid the foundation for transition to a freestanding School of Public Health.

Throughout his career, Dr. El-Ahraf has been active in numerous international, national, state and local professional organizations related to environmental health and education. He served as president of both the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) and the California Environmental Health Association (CEHA), as well as founding chairman of both the International Forum of Environmental Health Faculty and the National Forum of Environmental Health Faculty. He currently is active in more than 20 professional groups.

Dr. El-Ahraf has published and/or presented more than 90 papers at scientific and professional meetings, in addition to the publication of nearly 30 books and technical reports. He has made hundreds of public presentations, lectures and speeches along with his varied public and professional activities. Through his valuable contributions to the environmental health profession, he has done much to improve the quality of life for untold numbers of people throughout the world.

Dr. El-Ahraf is a pioneer and innovator in the education of environmental health professionals, has worked over his entire career in pursuit of improved standards and practices in the environmental health profession, and stands out in the field today as a dedicated professional who continues to make unique and lasting contributions to the field at local, state, national and international levels.

### Presidential Citations

Presidential citations were given at the awards luncheon by NEHA President Leonard Rice to Bobby Baker, Chris Wiant, Jon Kindschy, Dean Sargeant, Mike Dailey, John Barry, the Environmental Health Staff at Edisto Health District (South Carolina), and to the NEHA Staff. Each recipient was awarded this honor for exemplary efforts and valuable contributions to NEHA in the last year.

### Certificates of Merit

Each NEHA affiliate is encouraged to submit the name of a candidate who deserves recognition for work on behalf of the profession.

Certificates of Merit were awarded this year to the following individuals, listed by affiliate:

- Alabama — Travis Plunkett
- Alaska — Mr. Larry Montgomery
- Arizona — David Robbins, RS
- Arkansas — Robert "Bob" Kemp
- California — Richard Swenson, REHS
- Connecticut — Rita Barbieri, RS
- Illinois — Helen Gruber
- Industry Affiliate — Larry Eils
- Louisiana — James J. Balsamo, Jr.
- Massachusetts — George W. Young, Jr.
- Minnesota — Richard Holloway
- Nebraska — Patrick Lanphier
- Nevada — Darrell Rasner, RS, PE
- New Jersey — Vincent De Filippo
- New Mexico — Tom Burt
- North Carolina — Ms. Sylvia D. Daniel
- Ohio — Lois Upham, RS
- Uniformed Service — Lt. David J. Fitzpatrick
- Utah — Eugene Devenport
- Virginia — A. James English
- Wisconsin — Terry Brandenburg
- Wyoming — Dr. Bert Reinow

### Walter F. Snyder Award

The 1992 Walter F. Snyder Award, sponsored jointly by the National Environmental Health Association and NSF International, was presented to **Robert Galvan, M.S., R.S.**, at the 1992 International Environmental Health Conference joint Presidents' Banquet on Wednesday, July 15, 1992. In addition to Nina I. McClelland, NSF President and Chief Executive Officer, it was a special honor to have Mrs. Doris Snyder, wife of the late Walter Snyder, for whom this award is named, come to the podium to make this presentation.

Robert (Bob) Galvan was presented this award in recognition of respect by his peers and for outstanding accomplishments in the field of environmental health. He began his career in the City of Richardson in his home state of Texas. He was Reg-

istered Sanitarian, and then Director of Environmental Health there for nearly 24 years. During that time, he was active in many professional, academic and civic organizations, including NEHA as Regional Vice President, and for NSF International as a member of the Council of Public Health Consultants.

Galvan currently serves as Director of Environmental Health for the City of Plano, Texas. He continues to contribute to the advancement of the profession and to attaining environmental quality through his efforts. NEHA and NSF International are pleased to add this prestigious Walter F. Snyder Award to Galvan's lengthy list of well-deserved professional recognitions.

### Crumbine Award

The Foodservice and Packaging Institute recognizes the outstanding food protection program in the country each year at the NEHA Annual Awards Luncheon. This year, **Tom Douville** was present to accept the prestigious Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award on behalf of the **Boulder County (Colorado) Health Department**. As in past years, Charles Felix represented the institute and the Crumbine Jury in making the presentation of this award. Since 1954, this award has honored the memory of the public health pioneer who outlawed the common drinking cup in the state of Kansas, and eventually throughout the United States. It is fitting that Crumbine's substantive and symbolic act to eliminate a major source of disease transmission is remembered and recognized yearly.

### Food Industry Sanitarian

NEHA's Food Protection Section and Industry Affiliate jointly award a NEHA member the designation of Food Industry Sanitarian each year. To receive this honor, the professional must have made outstanding contributions to the field of food protection and sanitation. This year's recipient was **E. Michael Kasnia, R.S.**, Government Affairs and Food Safety Consultant for the Inflight Food Service Association (IFSA). On behalf of IFSA, Kasnia represents airline personnel and

caterers in passenger feeding. He logs over 100,000 miles a year trouble-shooting for his members, handling food safety inspections and epidemiological follow-through on food complaints, represents the airlines with governmental agencies and societies, and trains airline personnel in Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) procedure.

### Other Honors

Each year, past presidents of NEHA recognize an outstanding professional for long standing service and contributions to NEHA and to environmental health. Harry Grenawitzke presented the 1992 Past Presidents' Award to **Webster Young, Jr.** Young is well known and highly respected by his peers for his untiring efforts, his integrity, and his professionalism.

- The 1992 Journal Editor's Award was presented by *Journal of Environmental Health* Technical Editor Dr. Trenton Davis. **Dr. Raymond F. Dolle** was selected to receive this recognition for his outstanding contributions as founder and co-author of the journal's Technical Writer column. Dr. Dolle is associate professor of English at Indiana State University, Terre Haute.
- The 1992 Calvin Davis Wagner Award was given by the American Academy of Sanitarians to **Capt. Bruce Chelikowsky, R.S.**, Chief Sanitarian of the U.S. Public Health Service.
- This year's Student NEHA (SNEHA) Chapter of the Year Award was presented to **Ferris State University**, Big Rapids, Michigan. A panel of distinguished judges, including Larry Gales, Marsha Robbins and Bill Iannucci, selected the recipient based on a portfolio outlining projects and activities which benefitted the university and the community. Congratulations to Ferris State for this outstanding effort.
- **Gary Coleman**, from the Pike County (Kentucky) Health Department, was recognized as the second ambassador in the NEHA/IEHO (Institute of Environmental Health Officers) exchange program. This successful program, funded by NSF International, provides ambassadors an opportunity to observe and report first-hand on differences and similarities of environmental health efforts in the U.S. and the

U.K. This program also has provided an opportunity to provide important dialogue between these countries at a grassroots level.

Congratulations to all these leaders in the environmental profession. Their contributions are creating understanding of and solutions to environmental problems. These professionals truly are a part of the quiet revolution taking place in the environmental profession today. Join us at the 1993 Orlando Annual Educational Conference. You, too, are a part of this effort!

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### Sabbatical Exchange

The Screening Committee for the NEHA/IEHO Sabbatical Exchange program has announced that its selection for this year's ambassador is NEHA member **Gary Coleman** from Pike County, Kentucky. Gary will be NEHA's second ambassador, as he will follow up on the exceptional experience of Enrico Baroga — who was NEHA's inaugural ambassador for this unique program.

Gary currently works as the Environmental Health Coordinator for the Pike County Health Department. His responsibilities span just about the entire field of environmental health, including management.

He holds several professional certifications and is a member of several professional societies.

Gary traces his interest in environmental health back to a weekend class field trip that was conducted in the interest of preserving a bog area in West Virginia. From that class—which was in the political science discipline—Gary left his teaching career to join the Pike County Health Department, where he has worked for the last 23 years.

Gary has had two interruptions in his career. He took some time off to earn his master's degree in Community Development in 1971. And in 1981, he assisted the International Rescue Committee in Thailand. For six months he worked as the sanitation officer in various camps along the Laotian and Cambodian borders, which were used by up to 70,000 Khmer refugees.

When selected, Gary shared that he was proud to have the opportunity to represent environmental health as we know it in the U.S., and NEHA. He also said he looked forward to the chance to share our ways and techniques and also to learn. He noted we don't always have the time to reinvent the wheel: as such he said he looked forward to learning the English ways with a view to applying his new found knowledge back home.