

JOINT MEETING NEWS

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VOLUME 14, ISSUE 1
SPRING 2008



A newsletter of the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties, a wastewater treatment plant serving eleven member municipalities:

East Orange
Hillside
Irvington
Maplewood
Millburn
Newark
Roselle Park
South Orange
Summit
Union
West Orange

Also serving:

Elizabeth
Livingston
New Providence
Orange

2009 Joint Meeting Board of Directors

Officers
Anthony Terrezza,
Chairperson, Union
Kathleen M. Leventhal,
Vice Chair/Secretary, Maplewood
Ronald C. Rice,
Treasurer, Newark

Members

Sal M. Anderton, *West Orange*
Dave A. Bomgaars, *Summit*
Edward A. Brewer, Jr., *Hillside*
William C. Holt, *East Orange*
Lebby C. Jones, *Irvington*
Thomas C. McDermott, *Millburn*
Terriann Moore-Abrams, *South Orange*
Michael Yakubov, *Roselle Park*

Executive Director
Samuel T. McGhee

Stan Wojcik's Perfect Record

Stan Wojcik, shown above, with Executive Director Samuel T. McGhee, is a wastewater treatment operator who had a perfect attendance record for calendar year 2008. This means he had no absences for any reason and he was not late to work even for a minute. With the calendar year 2008, Stan has completed nine consecutive calendar years of perfect attendance with the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties. Stan has worked for Joint Meeting for 24 years. He is an operator in Joint Meeting's Sludge Handling Facility.

Joint Meeting recognizes employees with perfect attendance on a quarterly and an annual basis. Annual perfect attendance winners can select a gift from a catalog as a small token of Joint Meeting's appreciation. In addition, if an employee achieves perfect attendance status for three consecutive calendar years, he or she earns one additional personal day.

Stan has had a perfect attendance record every year of the new 21st century! It's an amazing achievement, which will be a hard record to break — with the exception of Stan.

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Employee News

Congratulations to **Adris Hariprasad**, Wastewater Operator in the Dewatering Facility, Team 5. He passed the state exam and obtained a low pressure black seal boiler license in March 2009 . . . Four long-term employees of the Joint Meeting retired in early 2009: Dan LoPiccolo, Ray Majewski, Dennis Skiper and John Skorupski. **Dan LoPiccolo** began with Joint Meeting as a Wastewater Operator in July 1981 and retired on February 1, 2009. In 1988, he moved into a Site Services Worker position where he worked until his retirement. In 2001, he was appointed Leadman in the Site Services Department. He also served as the shop steward for the various Teamster's locals over the years. He moved to Eastern Pennsylvania where he plans to work part-time and enjoy life in the country . . . **Ray Majewski** worked as a Wastewater Operator in the Dewatering Facility for 18 years before retiring on March 1, 2009. He plans to relax and enjoy his family . . . **Dennis Skiper** retired on April 1, 2009. Dennis began with Joint Meeting as a Wastewater Operator in 1977. In 1980, he became a sewer Maintenance inspector and worked in that capacity until the present. Dennis is looking forward to a life of hunting and fishing . . . Finally, **John Skorupski** retired on May 1, 2009. John started with Joint Meeting as a Wastewater Operator in February 1989. He spent his entire career with Joint Meeting as a Secondary Operator. Congratulations to all of our retirees and we wish them many years of health and happiness . . .

In other news, **Julio Cabrera**, Laboratory Technician, completed the requirements for a Master's Degree in Environmental Engineering Management in late 2008. Julio is an adjunct researcher at the group Hernando Devis Echandia in the University of Santiago de Cali, Colombia. He also advises undergraduates and graduate students in science and environmental science. Julio is publishing a new book set for a May 2009 release titled *Removing Siloxanes from Digester Gas*. Excellent work and he did it all in his "spare time" by computer!

A warm welcome to new Wastewater Operators **Harby Guerrero** and **Jairo Nunez**, who joined Joint Meeting in March 2009. Harby is a licensed and experienced Chemical Operator, who is a local Elizabeth resident. Jairo resides in Middlesex, NJ with his wife and son. He has many years of experience as a chemical operator and possesses a blue seal boiler license . . .

Congratulations to Dewatering Wastewater Operator **Maurice Clark**, who got married on March 14, 2009. Best wishes are extended to Maurice and his bride Tamika in their new life

together . . . **Ralph Madera**, Primary Facility Wastewater Treatment Operator, married in December 2008. Best wishes to Ralph and his new bride Michelle who reside in Toms River . . . Congratulations are extended to **Tony Wyczesany**, an electrician, who recently obtained his Electrical Contractor's License.



From left to right are Joint Meeting's new wastewater treatment operators, **Harby Guerrero** and **Jairo Nunez**, who were hired on March 9, 2009. They are replacing two retiring operators.



Retiring Operator **Ray Majewski**, second from left, is congratulated by, from left to right, **Mike Richardson**, Operations Supervisor; **Paul Cuttino**, Operations Supervisor; and **Alex Durand**, Operations Department Manager. Best wishes, Ray!

Cabrera Donates Hair to Locks of Love

Laboratory Technician **Julio Cabrera** donated locks of his hair to an organization called Locks of Love. This non-profit group was formed in 1997 by Madonna Coffman, a retired cardiac nurse from Florida. The charity serves financially disadvantaged children age 18 and under who suffer from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis. Most of the children suffer from an autoimmune disorder called alopecia areata, which causes the hair follicles to shut down.

Many of the children suffering from this type of hair loss also lose their eyelashes, eyebrows and all body hair. This hair loss is permanent and there is no known cause or cure. Other recipients have been victims of severe burns or have lost hair due to radiation to the brain stem as a treatment for cancer.

Julio Cabrera is shown in photos to the right, both before and after the donation of his hair to Locks of Love. Julio had to donate the minimum requirement of 12 inches of his hair to the organization.

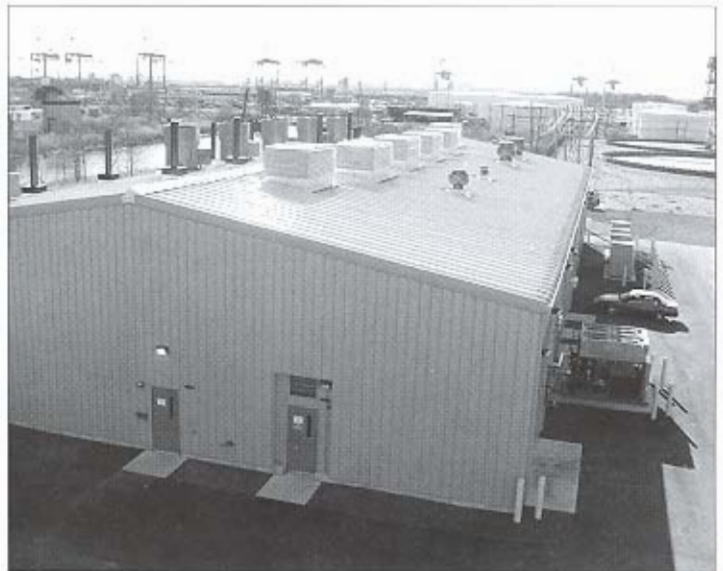
Through Julio's donation and others like him, the organization provides high quality hair prosthetics to children, which help the children regain a sense of self-confidence and normalcy to their lives.



Corentino and Paluch Garner Awards at NJWEA Conference

Vincent Corentino, JMEUC Collection System Supervisor, was recognized by the New Jersey Water Environment Association for his years of dedicated service to proactive collection system operation and maintenance by being inducted into the "Golden Manhole Society." This took place at The NJWEA's Annual Conference held in Atlantic City on May 13, 2009. Vinnie will mark 39 years with Joint Meeting on July 1, 2009.

The NJWEA also honored **Jim Paluch**, Assistant Superintendent/Collection System Operations for Joint Meeting. Jim received the "Certificate of Appreciation Program Committee Award" at the President's Awards Luncheon on May 14, 2009. The award honors Jim for his hard work helping to set up speakers and programs for the Collections' programs at the conference. Congratulations to Vinnie and Jim for their hard work and dedication.



Above is a view of the new Co-Generation Facility. The contractor, Northeast Remsco, along with subcontractors, vendors, CME and Joint Meeting staff are working together to complete all remaining work and training for operation by late June 2009.

2008 Annual Perfect Attendance Awards

Eight employees had perfect attendance records for the 2008 calendar year. The employees and their departments are:

Carlos Cabral, Sludge Handling, Team 4

George Garcia, Dewatering, Team 1

Craig Halloran, Operations Supervision

Marcelo Kofman, Collection System

Clyde Lauderdale, Boiler

Jim Paluch, Collection System

Manny Roman, Dewatering, Team 4

Stan Wojcik, Sludge Handling, Team 5

Stan Wojcik continues to amaze everyone with his ninth straight year of perfect attendance — a Joint Meeting record since these perfect attendance recognition awards began over 20 years ago.

In addition, Operations Team Supervisor Craig Halloran and Assistant Superintendent for Collection System Operations Jim Paluch both have achieved a perfect attendance record for their fifth consecutive year. Mr. Halloran and Mr. Paluch are well on their way toward reaching Stan Wojcik's record.

Winners are presented with a certificate of achievement and can select a gift from a wide array of gifts as a small token of Joint Meeting's appreciation for reaching a difficult goal.



Seen above on the left is Craig Halloran, Operations Supervisor, and Jim Paluch, Assistant Superintendent for Collection System Operations. They have achieved five consecutive years with perfect attendance. Keep up the great work!

Heminghaus Returns from Afghanistan

Master Sergeant **Don Heminghaus**, who is a Site Services Worker with Joint Meeting, returned from a tour of duty in Afghanistan in February 2009. He serves with the 514th Air Force Reserve Unit.

Don brought back the American flag that flew on his mission, which is seen framed below. The plaque reads:

"Let it be known that this American flag flown on a combat mission aboard an American C-131H aircraft provided support for Operation Enduring Freedom. The 455th Expeditionary Aero-Medical Evacuation flight proudly flew this flag for Joint Meeting over the country of Afghanistan."

Everyone at Joint Meeting is extremely proud of Don's courage and extends heartfelt thanks to Don for serving our country with honor and distinction.



Don Heminghaus is seen above in front of the plaque, which also contains a quote from Abraham Lincoln, 1863: "Above all else, cherish that most solemn pride which must be yours to be willing to lay so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

Retirement Planning

Employees who are thinking of retiring must plan ahead and not wait until the last minute. By waiting, you will not be guaranteed your desired retirement date. The New Jersey Division of Pensions advises employees that the process should begin at least six to eight months ahead of your planned retirement date. The first step is to complete a Request for Retirement Estimate. This estimate will give you a realistic picture of your projected income for all eight pension options. You can also access the Division of Pensions webpage and obtain a non-guaranteed estimate of your pension options.

The New Jersey Division of Pensions conducts pre-retirement seminars throughout the year. You can call (609) 777-2111 or check on the State of New Jersey Pension page online for dates and locations. By attending a seminar, you will hear from representatives from the New Jersey Pension Office. You will be able to ask questions and you get the benefit of hearing questions and answers from other attendees.

Four to six months before retirement, you should submit an Application for Retirement Allowance. This can only be done online through MBOS (Member Benefits Online System).

If you haven't done so already, you must send in copies of your birth certificate and that of your beneficiary also. If you are a veteran, you must furnish a copy of your military discharge (Form DD 214). If you are not sure, you can check on your annual personal benefits statement to see whether the pension office already has these documents. If not, you should contact Pat Rufolo in the Business Office. She will be able to assist you in submitting this documentation since they are mailed to separate state offices.

If you have 10 years or more of pension credit at retirement, you will receive life insurance at no cost in the amount of 18.75 percent of your salary. You do have the option to convert to a non-group life insurance policy if you apply within 31 days of your last date of work. In addition, if you are in the Supplemental Annuity Fund, you must contact (609) 633-2031 to discuss options for closing out the fund.

Three months prior to retirement, you will receive a packet of information regarding enrollment in the NJ State Health Benefits Program. If you are 65 or older, you should also be contacting your local Social Security office (three months prior to 65) to sign up for Medicare Part A (hospital) and Part B (doctors) coverage.

In addition, if you retire with a pension loan balance, you must decide whether to pay the loan off in its entirety or have the loan balance plus the interest deducted from your pension checks.

As you can see, there are numerous important decisions you have to make prior to retirement. By beginning the process at least six months in advance, you will have time to make important decisions about your pension options, beneficiary, life insurance, health insurance, Medicare, purchasing service credit, employment after retirement, taxation of retirement benefits and many other considerations.

You should also think about meeting one-on-one with a representative of the pension office in Trenton. In this way you can take the time to discuss all of your options and issues. You cannot make an appointment. This is a walk-in service only. The Division of Pensions Office is located at 50 West State Street, Trenton, NJ, one-half block east of the State House. Counselors are available Monday through Friday from 7:40 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The State of New Jersey Pension webpage is www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions. You can also contact the pension office by telephone at (609) 292-7524.

Remember, plan ahead. There are many issues to research and make decisions about prior to retirement. You will need the six months to satisfactorily complete the retirement process. Good luck.

Contacts for unionized employees

Teamster's Local 641
714 Rahway Avenue
Union, New Jersey 07083
908-686-8898

Teamster's Welfare Fund
(Dental, vision and prescription plans)
2185 Lemoine Avenue
Fort Lee, New Jersey 07024
1-800-365-0082

Holt and Yakubov Join Board of Directors

On January 15, 2009, the Joint Meeting Board of Directors welcomed **Hon. Councilman William C. Holt** of East Orange and **Hon. Councilman Michael Yakubov** of Roselle Park, who were appointed by their respective municipalities to serve on the Board of Directors of the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties effective January 1, 2009. Mr. Holt replaced Hon. Councilwoman Sharon Fields who served one term on the Joint Meeting Board. Mr. Yakubov took the seat of Hon. Ricky Badillo.

Also, at its January 15, 2009 monthly meeting, the Joint Meeting Board of Directors re-appointed its executive committee. **Hon. Anthony Terrezza** was selected to continue as the Chairperson; **Hon. Kathleen M. Leventhal** was re-appointed Vice Chairperson/Secretary; and **Hon. Ronald C. Rice** was selected as the Treasurer. Mr. Holt and Mr. Yakubov were both appointed to serve on the Board's Public Relations Committee for 2009. The Board also selected **Hon. Edward A. Brewer, Jr.** of Hillside to chair the Operations Committee.

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Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties

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FAX (908) 353-7925

Joint Meeting Administrative Staff

Executive Director
Samuel T. McGhee

*Deputy Executive
Director/Chief Engineer*
Ralph LaMendola, P.E.

Superintendent
Joseph Bonaccorso

Director of Admin. and Finance
Gary Restivo

Director of Human Resources
Richard Cirilione

Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator
Cathy Martinson

Sr. Project Manager
Stephen Dowhan

Purchasing Officer
Robert Sforza

Asst. Board Sec./Financial Asst.
Patricia Rufolo

*Asst. Superintendent
Operations/Maint.*
Jack Kennedy

*Asst. Superintendent
Collection System*
Jim Paluch

Operations Manager
Alex Durand

Safety Officer
Terry Cole-Kelly

Board Committees 2009

The Board of Directors committee assignments for the 1st half of 2009 are:

Operations Committee

Chair: Edward A. Brewer, Jr.
Sal M. Anderton
Ronald C. Rice
Michael Yakubov

Public Relations Committee

Chair: Terriann Moore-Abrams
William C. Holt
Thomas C. McDermott
Michael Yakubov

Finance & Budget Committee

Chair: Ronald C. Rice
Dave A. Bomgaars
Lebby C. Jones
Kathleen M. Leventhal

Personnel & Procurement Committee

Chair: Kathleen M. Leventhal
Dave A. Bomgaars
Lebby C. Jones
Ronald C. Rice

Upcoming Events

July 14 – 17, 2009. National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) 39th Annual Summer Conference, Milwaukee, WI. Topic is The New Regulatory Climate: Clean Water Agencies Prepare to Act.

October 17 – 21, 2009. Water Environment Federation (WEFTEC) 82nd Annual Conference and Exhibition, Orlando, FL.

November 17 – 20, 2009. 94th Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference at Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, NJ, with workshops for municipal officials.