

2013 Chairman's Address

Stephen Benjamin, Chairman
North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Thank you Kurt, good morning everyone and thank you for being here. It is a privilege and honor to have been selected to serve as your Chairman for the coming year. I will be brief as I am about all that stands between you and your trip home.

First of all I would like to thank all of those that have served on our committees, subcommittees, sectors and task groups this past year, both at the conference and regional levels. It is your time and dedication to the issues that come before us that make the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) successful. I would also like to thank my staff for the effort they must put in while I'm fulfilling my duties, first as Chairman-elect and now Chairman of NCWM. Finally, I would like to thank my family for being supportive of this opportunity.

Speaking of family, we recently went on a family vacation to the Shenandoah Valley area of Virginia, about a five hour drive from our home. As usual, after about 30 minutes on the road, my six year daughter old asked the question "Are we there yet daddy?" Being a patient and loving father I took a deep breath and went with my second response, "Not yet sweetheart."

This scene was repeated a number of times during the drive, but I also had time to think, well aware that I had to deliver this speech just a few weeks later. Certainly a lot has gone on over the years in the NCWM, but I asked myself "Are we there yet?" In considering this I don't know there is a final destination for our organization, but there have definitely been milestones on the journey forward. Some of these milestones have been significant to this organization, such as the transition of NTEP management from NIST, OWM to the conference and more recently the transition from Management Solutions to our own executive director and staff. Many other milestones are in the form of proposals that come before us, some of them involving a great deal of time and sometimes spirited discussion.

You've all heard the cliché, "it's not about the destination, but the journey." As an organization we have a goal, "That equity may prevail," that is the journey we are on. We proceed along this path as new technologies are developed for devices, new fuels are introduced, new products are marketed and even old products in new packaging. In short, the world of weights and measures is constantly changing and we must move forward to address these needs through our proposal process.

We have worked these past few years on moving the NCWM forward as an organization as well. How can we do better in promoting what we do and improve at how we do it? At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I think the biggest step recently was the management change we made in 2007. This action provided us a dedicated staff focused on the business of the conference. It also allowed for funds to pursue projects such as website improvements, online applications and registrations, web posting of training material and the online position forum. We continued on this path forward as we implemented the Verified Conformity Assessment Program (VCAP), the Professional Certification Program and the formation of the Packaging and Labeling Subcommittee, which held their first face to face meeting this past Sunday.

With this in mind, my theme this coming year is "On the Path to Tomorrow." I encourage the continued development of projects such as the "tool kit" for weights and measures programs which will put facts, contacts and materials to support their programs at their fingertips. The Professional Certification Program and VCAP continue to grow and reach more people. The Board of Directors continues to look at ways to increase services to the members in order to make membership meaningful. The key to moving forward is simply your involvement. Many of you may equate involvement with serving on an NCWM standing committee, but I say even participating at a regional level or a task group or even replying to a question on a list server is a step on the path. We are working together and sharing our knowledge to move forward.

To this end I make the following appointments for the coming year:

Laws and Regulations Committee:

- Louis Sakin, Towns of Hopkinton/Northbridge, Massachusetts, five year term

Specifications and Tolerances Committee:

- Edward Seidler, Town of Framingham, Massachusetts, five year term

Professional Development Committee:

- Stacy Carlsen, Marin County , California five year term

Nominating Committee:

- Committee Chair, Kurt Floren, Los Angeles County, California
- Judy Cardin, Wisconsin
- Thomas Geiler, Barnstable Regulatory Services, Massachusetts
- Joe Gomez, New Mexico
- Maxwell Gray, Florida
- Randy Jennings, Tennessee
- Tim Tyson, Kansas

Credentials Committee:

- To Be Announced Later

Presiding Officers:

- Jack Walsh, Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts
- John Albert, Missouri
- SWMA, TBD
- WWMA, TBD

Parliamentarian:

- Lou Straub, Fairbanks Scales, Inc.

Chaplain:

- Stephen Langford, Cardinal Scale Manufacturing Co.

Sergeants-At-Arms:

I will be working with our members from Kentucky to designate Sergeants-At-Arms for our 2013 Annual Meeting.

I look forward to seeing you all in Charleston, SC for the Interim Meeting in January and have a safe trip home.

Thank you.