



## PERSPECTIVE

John Farewell | State Circuit Rider

Country music singer Kenny Rogers once sang a song called "The Greatest." The song goes on to tell a story of a little boy who heads to his back yard with his ball and bat. Once there he looks at the ball and says, "I am the greatest player of them all." He then throws the ball in the air and takes a swing only to watch the ball fall to the ground at his feet for strike one. Undeterred, he picks up the ball and once again says, "I am the greatest player of them all." He throws the ball in the air, swings and again the ball falls to the ground at his feet for strike two. He reaches down, picks up the ball, adjusts his hat, sets his feet and with a confidence second to none says, "I AM THE GREATEST PLAYER OF THEM ALL." The ball goes up and for a brief moment he can hear the roar of the crowd as he rounds third heading for home with the winning run. Sadly, the only sound he hears is the thud of the ball as it hits the ground at his feet for strike three. The little boy hears his mom call him for dinner. As he's heading back to the house with ball and bat in hand, a big smile comes across his face. He looks at the ball and says, "I really am the greatest player of them all, I had no idea that I could pitch like that."

As a water operator for a small water system in central New York for 15 years, I found that one of the most difficult parts of the job was keeping the right perspective. As a crew of one, trying to hold both ends of the 2 by 4 was a seemingly impossible task. Keeping up with the work load, regulations and everything else that came my way, was a bit daunting. Three things seem to constantly plague me. They are:

1. There never seems to be enough time
2. There never seems to be enough money
3. There never seems to be enough help

Let's start with #1, Time. Good time management skills are essential. If you're a list person like me, write down the tasks you would like to accomplish and prioritize them. Don't be overwhelmed, just start at the top and one by one work through your list. Delegate some of your tasks. You don't have to do it all yourself. One of the greatest compliments you could give one of your co-workers is your confidence in their abilities.

#2, Money. Ok you've heard it before, sustainability. Still got that list, keep writing. I hope at the top of your list you have written to attend a training class on sustainability. We offer them here at NYRWA. Don't wait until things become an emergency, make a plan. That's all I'll say on that for now.

#3, Help. It was the year 1999 when I first started in the water industry. I quickly learned of an organization called New York Rural Water Association. I often called on them for help. Whether it was to locate a line, a leak or just to seek advice, they were always there. (Thanks Doug) Now as a new State Circuit Rider, I would like to extend to you, the reader, that same helping hand.

Below is a partial list of some of the services we offer here at NYRWA:

### WATER

- Valve and Line Location
- Leak Detection
- Source Water/Ground Water Protection Programs
- Annual Water Quality Reports
- Vulnerability Assessments and Emergency Response Plans
- Rate Studies
- Backflow Testing

### WASTEWATER

- Microscopic Examination
- Treatment Plant Troubleshooting
- Laboratory Assistance
- Smoke Testing
- Sewer Televising
- Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Response Plan

### GENERAL AREAS

- Personnel Conducting Surveys
- Assistance in Evaluation of Systems
- Establishing Operation and Maintenance Programs
- Regulation Updates
- Board Member Training
- Mapping Services

If that little boy ever makes it to the pitcher's mound, I hope he takes a moment to turn around and realize that he has a whole team backing him up. You too, the operator, have a team backing you up. Our Mission Statement says, "The New York Rural Water Association is dedicated to the improvement and development of public systems and privately owned water systems." Together, with the right perspective, help us to help you provide to your communities "Quality on Tap." 💧💧💧