



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

John O'Connell, III | NYRWA President

It has been a busy September, both personally and professionally. I, along with my fellow NYRWA Board Members, attended the National Rural Water Association Conference on September 5 - 11, 2019, in Nashville, TN. During that time, I had the honor of participating in several meetings with USDA and USEPA officials, including a discussion with USEPA Administrator, Andrew Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler is the first EPA Administrator to attend a NRWA Conference and address this Association. The NRWA Executive Board also had a breakfast meeting with Mr. Wheeler, and we were able to stress how important the EPA funded Training and Technical Assistance Program is to our membership and what our needs would be to move forward in the future. The Administrator seemed to understand and we also stressed the need for our funding in the future. Having Mr. Wheeler attend and address our conference with over 2100 in attendance, is the result of so many people doing their part to make the voice of Rural America heard at the Federal Government level. The staff of the NRWA who work diligently in Washington, DC, to have your voice heard, the NRWA Board of Directors who stay focused on national funding while representing each state, and each of our members who have written letters are all to be commended for their efforts, and it is you who have brought NRWA to this level. Thank you all for a job well done and for continuing to make Rural America's message be heard! At our NRWA Annual Meeting, all officers will remain seated, Kent Watson from Texas as President; Dave Baird from Delaware as Executive VP; myself as VP; Glen Womack from Louisiana as Secretary; and Philip Combs from Tennessee as Treasurer.

Next I was off to the Arkansas Rural Water Association conference from September 13 - 17, 2019. They had a great conference also with over 1,100 attendees. I had the privilege to address their membership at their Annual Meeting, and brought up some other highlights that happened at the National Conference. I'm glad to be home until December when I will be flying to Texas for our Executive Board Meeting to end the 2019 year.

Please remember our Association is here to represent you. If you have been helped by the NYRWA, please send a letter of appreciation so we can take this to Congress with us in February when we meet with your representatives to address the importance of our funding. Also I am happy to let you know our

Apprenticeship Program is up and running. If your system could benefit from this program, please give the office a call.

I hope everyone's ready for winter...talk to you soon. 💧💧

