



Alaska Water Well Association
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AWWA NEWSLETTER

Welcome from the President:

I want to thank everyone who braved the icy roads and inclement weather to attend our first post-covid meeting of the Alaska Water Well Association. I feel we had a pretty good turn out with all things considered. It was good to see familiar and friendly faces that we were not able to see much of over the past couple of years. For many, including myself, things are starting to feel more normal, and I believe we're all ready to get on with life. I hope everyone and their families have pulled through the past couple of years with good health and as much prosperity as one can attain.

Travis Denevan – President

Recap of the Annual Alaska Water Well Association Convention

Thursday, February 17, 2022

Members and their associates were welcomed at the Lakefront at 7:30 with a breakfast treat and coffee. The menus had changed since our last gathering and this consisted of a fruit skewer and some muffins. We welcomed 37 people the first day, many of which needed the updated course certificate for the Municipality of Anchorage. The mood was welcoming as many of us did not have a chance to see anyone for quite some time.

Travis Denevan assisted Rick Kraxberger with the convention and was convened at 8:30. Kirby Donald of Baroid got us started with a presentation of the proper application of foam with our water during air drilling operations. The difference between a foam/water injection and differences with a stiff foam with polymer to assist in borehole cutting removal. As the foam content increases it is necessary to reduce the volume of air so as not to 'blow through' the foam column. There was a general discussion among members and Kirby with a question-and-answer segment where drillers could ask Kirby about drilling applications for specific projects.

The first drawing went to Cole Sullivan and was a pocket level.

Kevin, Tom, and Jake with the State DNR gave us an update on the new Welts program for the State of Alaska which will be entirely new from the previous version. The goal is to make well log submission easier and more efficient for drillers. The system is still in beta but should launch over the next month or so. Kevin took on the question of TWUA's and membership feels that most of the concerns have been addressed satisfactorily and will not require any additional engagement. DNR is responsible for dams, water management, water rights, and well logs.

Well logs can still be emailed to dnr.water.reports@alaska.gov.

There were some last-minute schedule changes that changed the Municipality recertification course and prompted me to get started on the membership meeting where we approved the changes that Wayne Westberg suggested and put forth for the Executive Board to handle the election of officers. Those minutes will be supplied in a different paper.

The next prize went to Larry Swihart of S&S Drilling and was a knife set.

Rebecca Carroll and Tim Ecklund offered the recertification course for well drillers and pump installers within the Municipality of Anchorage. Most of the information was like years past and Tim solicited new photos and suggestions from the group. They put particular emphasis on submitting well pump logs but were overall happy with how we're doing within the Muni.

Hal Ingalls won a pair of ice cleats

After lunch we wrapped up the membership meeting and closed it at 13:35

Jim Munter gave a presentation on practicable applications of our well logs. He presented several informative drawings on how the aquifers interact within the Anchorage bowl. It was an interesting presentation on the different strata throughout the area and some compelling theories on how groundwater moves within the area. There are 3 different confined aquifers within Anchorage with each having their own properties with certain areas that appear to commingle. The session offered an overview of how the information we provide is utilized not only in the Anchorage area but throughout the state.

Johnny Kay of Hefty Drilling won a 12" aluminum pipe wrench

The final presentation for Thursday was from Jennifer Athey with DNR talking about her collaborative effort to offer information on arsenic in drinking water wells and how it leaches from the ground. The State is working with the EPA on initiating a “Be Well Informed” water analysis tool where users can go for information regarding water contaminants and possible treatment solutions. She sent a video presentation with 3 documents outlining her initiative for using groundwater well logs and water analysis reports to compile information for the public.

Our final door prize was a grinder and Ron Pichler from Denali Drilling was the recipient.

This concluded our session for Thursday February 17th, 2022.

Friday February 18th, 2022

Bill O’Connell from ADEC brought us up to speed regarding the State’s response to PFAS that is currently found around fire training areas and airports where heavy fire suppression foam is required. The state has implemented a 70 PPB action limit where treatment for the contamination is required. The best treatment so far is carbon filters. Discussion involved disposal and repurposing of contaminated charcoal. Landfills are another source of PFAS leaching into groundwater and is considered a forever chemical compound. Airport fire services are required to test with the actual foam that would ordinarily be used in fighting fires, so PFAS alternatives are not available for use. Other treatment methods could be ion exchange and whole house osmosis filtration. Some contaminated areas may require a public use water system and water lines.

Dave Hoeffel with Frontier Supply won a first aid kit.

Our next presenter was David Traut from Minnesota and who is the traveling speaker with NGWA. David offered insight on employee retention in the drilling industry and how to get younger people involved. What gets someone interested to begin with? How do you train and keep them from leaving once they gain knowledge? David went into detail about a collaboration between National and OSU (Oklahoma State University) in assembling a “Drilling Basics” online course that will help people understand what’s involved in the drilling industry. The partnership is working toward a certification program on a variety of topics directly related to the water

well industry. NGWA also developed a kit called the “Awesome Aquifer” for educational purposes for schools to get kids interested in groundwater.

Paul Kron with Alaska Pump & Supply won a razor knife.

After David’s presentation we had an open group discussion where any topic was open for discussion. Hal Ingalls mentioned some proposed legislation looking into Worker’s Compensation. Many of us shared the effects the virus had on us individually and as an industry. We remain a much needed and important industry and essential to the public. All of us are glad to be back in person without restrictions and we’re looking forward to getting back to normal operations.

Johnny Kay won a bundle of yellow AIH gloves.

Neil Fried closed out our convention with an update on how we’re doing in the State. Essentially, we’re on the rebound but have quite a way to go and may not reach previous levels of growth for some time. Birth rates are down and we’re aging as a population, and we will continue to see growth in the medical sector. Construction didn’t take as bad of a hit in job losses, but material expenses soared which we all felt (and will continue to feel for some time). Gas and oil may come back a bit but not likely to its previous highs for the distant future. More men are leaving the workforce and women appear to be stepping in the gap. Overall, there are still a lot of unanswered questions about what the Covid policies have had on our economy and workforce but, as a state, we’re headed in a positive direction. Our population was stable if not increasing ever so slightly.

Arius with Valley Well won some wire strippers

After lunch we held the annual business meeting where we elected the new Executive Board to run the Association for the next 2 years. Travis Denevan will stay in the Executive Secretary position assisting with the transfer from Karen Henderson.

Cole Sullivan won a reflective jacket.

As an association we love, admire, and sincerely appreciate all that Karen has done and continues to do on our behalf. All of us recognize we would have a much different Association today without her involvement.

We would like to thank all the vendors that participated in the convention this year.

Vendors included:
Kirby Donald, Baroid
David Hoeffel, Frontier Supply Company
Mike Glad, Mitchell, Lewis & Staver Co.
Jeff Castleberry, North American Pipe & Steel
Richard Ross, DXP Precision Alaska Pump & Supply

When at all possible, please support manufacturers & suppliers that support the Alaska Water Well Association. The following vendors were not able to participate this year but are members of the association and welcome your support:

Greg Guisness, RJB Wholesale
Thanks to Greg & RJB for the gift card
Ernest Dumann, duAlaska
Steve Kaser, Forge Pacific
Joe Veches, Grundfos Pumps Corp.
Jason Chew, TMC
Chris Johnson, Techline

Upcoming Events

The Pacific Northwest GroundWater Expo will be in Portland, Oregon March 18-19, 2022. The Alaska Water Well Association gets a portion of the funds from the convention for each person from Alaska that attends. Hal Ingalls, Travis Denevan, and now David Hoeffel, are all on the Pacific Northwest Ground Water board. If you have questions about the upcoming Expo please contact one of them. You can register online at www.pnwgwa.org.

2022 NGWA Groundwater Week will be in Las Vegas, December 6th - 8th.

Other 2022 dates of interest are National Ground Water Awareness Week March 6-12th, World Water Day March 22nd, Earth Day April 22nd, Drinking Water Week May 1-7, and Protect Your Groundwater Day September 7th. There is good information on the internet about all these events, some promoted by NGWA. Teaming up with these dates gives you a good opportunity to contact your clients and remind them of the importance of good, clean water and how to keep their systems running properly.

MISSION STATEMENT

The objectives of this association shall be to assist, promote, encourage, and support the interests and welfare of the groundwater industry in all of its phases generally and in particular within Alaska; to foster, aid, and promote scientific education, standards, research, and techniques in order to improve methods of well construction and development, and to advance the science of groundwater hydrology; to promote harmony and cooperation between well contractors and governmental and scientific agencies relative to the proper development and protection of underground water supplies; to encourage cooperation of all interested groups relative to the improvement of drilling and pumping equipment; to encourage, serve, assist, and promote close cooperation with the National Ground Water Association, Inc.; to collect, analyze and disseminate information to the economy of Alaska and of the nation; and to advance generally the mutual interests of all those engaged in the groundwater industry, in their own and the public interest.

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Travis Denevan - Valley Well Drilling	907-746-4555
Vice President	Cole Sullivan - Sullivan Water Wells	907-688-2759
Secretary	Cara Shonsey - Dowl	907-865-1247
Treasurer	Brian Wille - Wheaton Water Wells	907-376-2041
Past President	Rick Kraxberger - Kraxberger Drilling	907-262-4720
Contractor Representative	Kris Westberg – M-W Drilling	907-345-4000
Manufacturer/Supplier Representative	David Hoeffel - Frontier Supply	907-374-3500
Technical Representative	Jim Munter - J.A. Munter Consulting	907-345-0165
Executive Secretary	Travis Denevan – Valley Well Drilling	907-746-4555
(Assistant where available)	Karen Henderson - Denali Drilling After retirement	907-562-2312 907-727-1170