

Water Operations Specialist of the Year



By Circuit Rider Charlie Bowman

Left to Right: Donnie Bowen, Mayor Mark R. Frazer, Charlie Bowman

Field staff of MRWA wears many hats. We work closely with members all over the state of Maryland and take pride in what we do. We must be current with ever changing and new rules and regulations governing our water and wastewater facilities, provide technical assistance, leak detection, line location, training seminars/classes, showcase goods and services to help maximize operations at water and wastewater treatment facilities, help with disaster relief, just to name a few, and are always 'on call'!

I enjoy my job and am thankful I have one. One of the things I most enjoy as a Circuit Rider for Maryland is meeting and getting to know other people in the fields of water and wastewater across this great state, town management, and all affiliates.

Field staff of MRWA would like to say 'thank you' to all the hard working, dedicated men and woman and think all of you are deserving of recognition and a good ole back slap for a job well done every now and then. It is a pleasure to present awards each year at Maryland Rural Water Association's Annual Conference held in Ocean City, MD. We get to thank our members, provide training, show new and innovative products to help you in your facilities and give a handful of awards epitomizing the year's best in their fields. Hopefully, you will have a little fun in OC too,

enjoy some laughs, and get to know each other in the process.

This year, Donnie Bowen from the Town of North Beach was the recipient for Water Operations Specialist of the Year. Donnie started in the water and sewer field with WSSC in 1983 as a plant operator at a 15 MGD active sludge plant, one of the largest in that area. This is where he received his 5- A wastewater license and continued to work gaining experience in his field.

He met and married his wife in 1989, and shortly after had his first child. Wanting to spend more time with his family, Donnie started looking for a job that would allow him more time with his young family. In 1990 he applied with the Calvert County Water and Sewer department. He applied for a position at Chesapeake Beach WWTP and got the position as a 5- A operator. Coming from a plant of 35 plus operators to a water and wastewater department with just 12 operators covering the entire county, he worked his way up in the ranks and became Superintendent and operated the water systems that were located in the north end of the county.

During a plant upgrade in the 90's Donnie oversaw the construction on a daily basis at the Chesapeake Beach plant. He was instrumental in the startup and testing of all equipment involved with this upgrade.

Donnie told me that it was very rewarding to have worked on many of Calvert County's upgrades over the years.

In October 2007 he found his present job working for the Town of North Beach as Public Works Director.

North Beach is a small town in Calvert Co. and sits on the Chesapeake Bay's western shore. North Beach has a colorful past and was once a gambling mecca for "summer residents" that owned seasonal cottages. Folks traveled from Washington D.C. and Baltimore in the 1940's to enjoy North Beach. In the '60's and '70's, North Beach was frequented by motorcycle gangs.

Revitalization began in the 1980's and 1990's. Tropical Storm Isabel destroyed much of the waterfront in 2003 and since then has been rebuilt with multi-story homes and condos. Gone are the gambling establishments of yesteryear. Often referred to as 'The Jewel of the Chesapeake Bay', North Beach is now made up of primarily year round residents that take great civic pride in their town. Scenic and picturesque, North Beach has been voted 'Best Bay Town', and 'Best Bay Beach', and is now becoming a sought after destination for outdoor weddings down by the bay. You can even take the 'Polar Bear Plunge'!

Since he started his tenure at North Beach, he says the town has given him all

the tools for the job and also the budget. His work experience has allowed the town to do many projects in house without the use of outside contractors and has given other employees within the town opportunities along the way.

The town now has a web based monitoring system which allows the operators to see what's going on throughout the water and wastewater system from any location via cell phone or internet. This allows faster response time for Donnie's entire staff. Donnie states the town of North Beach has a flushing and water tank maintenance plan in place that has greatly reduced brown water complaints. North Beach also has a valve maintenance program. In 2008, the town was able to purchase a sewer jetting machine that has greatly reduced sewerage spills by performing routine jetting in problem areas. In 2011, the town built a new DPW building, and in 2014, North Beach hopes to upgrade the meter reading system. Donnie credits working for a Great Mayor and Town Council and having a great staff and says they have been instrumental at helping him achieve his goals in this stage of his career. He also said that he enjoys going to work each morning due in large part to these wonderful people.

On June 6, 2013 I had the opportunity of spending the day with Donnie and his staff seeing firsthand what he has achieved. I enjoyed my visit and was made to feel welcomed by Donnie, his staff, and his family, which brings me back to the 2013 Maryland Rural Water Association awards. I was honored to present 2013 Water Operations Specialist of the Year to Donnie Bowen from the Town of North Beach.

Great job Donnie! You are an asset to your community and friends. The staff at MRWA looks forward to working with you in the future.

Congratulations to all this year's award winners:

Water Operations Specialist of the Year
Donald Bowen, Town of North Beach (Calvert Co.)

Toasting the Tap Water Tasting Competition
Town of Lonaconing (Allegany Co.)

Water System of the Year
City of Aberdeen (Harford Co.)

Clerk of the Year
Stephanie Berkey, Town of Ridgely (Caroline Co.)

Decision Maker of the Year
Robert F. Stahl, Town of La Plata (Charles Co.)

Wastewater Operations Specialist of Year
James Baker, Garrett Co. Dept. of Utilities

Wastewater System of the Year
Town of Berlin (Worcester Co.)

Trainer of the Year
Rockacy and Associates, Inc.
Associate Member of the Year
LB Water Service, Inc.

Collection Operations Specialist of the Year
Josh Quesenbery, City of Aberdeen (Harford Co.)

Collection Operations Specialist of the Year
Don Schober - Cecil Co. DPW

Friends of Rural Water
Lucy Kimble, Town of Sudlersville
(Queen Anne's Co.)



Donnie Bowen Town Of North Beach

Custom Dewatering Solutions.



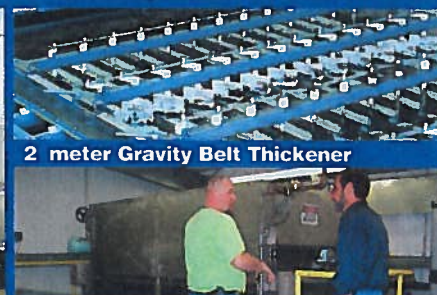
DSP Screw Press Model 3012, NY WWTP



3DP 1.5 m - operate as GBT or Belt Press



3.0 m Model 3DP - Floor level



2 meter Gravity Belt Thickener

4 x 10 Rotary Drum Thickener

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