

A Damsel in Distress

By Scotty Boggs

I could hear the Ford PU cams roll about a quarter turn, then some electrical clicks. They would try again, obviously in vain, and the battery was flat. The truck parked next to me in the parking lot of the drugstore had darkened windows so I couldn't see who was inside. I walked to the back of my personal truck and looked under the lid to verify I had no cables. Without approaching the stranded driver, I headed back to the Plant. It's a short drive of perhaps five minutes but I had ample time to reflect. You know it is rare that you have an opportunity to truly help someone, to genuinely make a difference. I arrived at the Water Plant and drove to the maintenance shop to find and borrow the industrial grade jumper cables. Then I hurriedly drove back to the Drugstore to see if the person was still there, still in need.

The driver jumped out to greet me seeing I had pulled a little close and had some jumper cables. An attractive young lady in her late 20's was speaking on her cellphone to her father. She said, "I'll call you back Daddy, I think I have some help." I quickly identified myself as a



The late 18th century "Scuttlebutt," an early version of our current office water cooler, served sailors who were rationed two quarts of fresh water per day.



The USS Constitution

Public Water Utility Employee (to dispel any concerns of some perverted aging opportunist) and offered my assistance. It was accepted most graciously as the lady explained how she had been experiencing a most unusual and trying day. This last event had just about made her give up. I assessed the situation and conditions, connected the terminals correctly, and instructed her to try the engine. The motor spun instantly settling to a purring idle.

Over and over again the young lady profusely thanked me saying I really made her day by taking the time to help her. It felt really good, a true blessing. Not the actual gratitude, which was nice. Don't misunderstand, but the real blessing was that I knew I had helped someone that really needed it. I was there when it really counted with the ability to make a difference.

Your participation in the Southwest Section AWWA is exactly like that! You can make a difference and help where you are truly needed. That opportunity, to really count, is rare and truly enriching for those motivated enough to see the chance and act upon it.

I was very fortunate to attend my first ACE of the AWWA in Boston this year. What a wonderful experience. The Southwest Section actually won an award for membership retention and performance. I was honored to accept the award on behalf of the Membership and Staff of the Southwest Section. It was received at the "Leading for Growth: Volunteer Appreciation and Section Awards Celebration" at the Ace on June 10. This award was given for the highest percent of membership retention in Division III. We owe this

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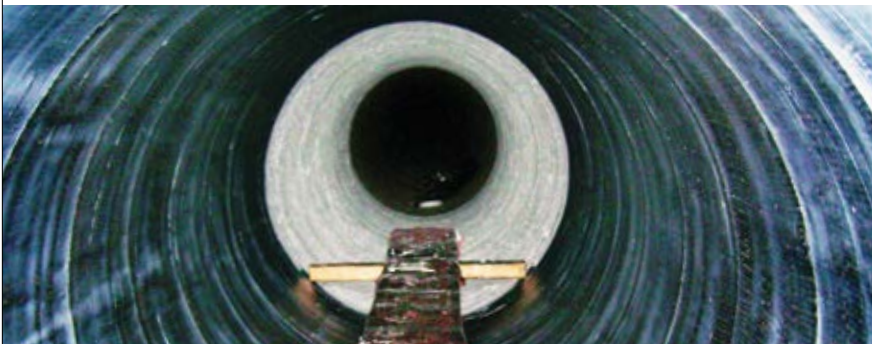
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totally to YOU. Our loyal members, who value being part of the world's oldest organization that is devoted to sharing and maintaining the highest level of knowledge and understanding of the most important natural resource on the planet.

The setting in Boston was perfect for the Annual Conference and Exposition. It is a very interesting and historic city so important to the founding and independence of our great nation. I was able to take some time to go on a tour or two taking advantage of the historic location. As I walked the deck of the USS Constitution, the world's oldest commissioned naval vessel afloat, first launched in 1797, I reflected on the idea of self-worth, a person's contributions. How many nameless and forgotten men had dutifully walked the deck of that famous ship? Long after they had passed on, the ship, and the freedom spirit, the responsibility of maintaining it, was remaining still. The time for expressing gratitude and thanks had passed for those men. What really mattered was that those servants had done their duty and collectively made a difference. I pray that they had the depth of understanding to know that they truly mattered, what they offered, the fact they served when they were really needed, was the true reward itself.

“What really mattered was that those servants had done their duty and collectively made a difference.”

We have a rare opportunity in our lives to share our knowledge, our skill, and our time, collectively as a group of individual water professionals in the AWWA. The opportunity is here, in our Southwest Section of the AWWA, to make a difference. The SW AWWA needs you, the members are the organization. See the chance and act upon it to truly receive the benefits of serving an organization that is important, and with your participation, will make the world a better place. Knowing that is a blessing indeed. Get involved today. ■