

AWT 2009 Annual Convention and Exposition Recap

By Robert D. Lee, CWT

The 2009 Annual Convention & Exposition, which took place from August 26-29, 2009 at the Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa in Hollywood, Florida was a great success. Over 750 people took part in this exciting event.

Wednesday morning teed off with the Annual Golf Tournament, where golfers were in for the challenge of getting to play at a difficult course and in some hot weather! Steve Pescatore, with Houghton Chemical was up for the challenge. Steve got a hole in one! While he didn't win the \$10,000 prize (the hole in one wasn't on the winning hole), Steve does get bragging rights for at least one year.

Later that afternoon, attendees visited over 88 booths during the Opening Reception in the Exposition Hall. The Expo provided attendees with an excellent opportunity to discuss the latest technologies and applications with the industry's leading suppliers.

On Thursday morning, August 27, the Convention officially started with the Annual Membership Meeting, during which the audience learned of the many accomplishments AWT had in 2008 and 2009. In addition, the membership voted on the new AWT Bylaws, which can be found on the website. This was followed by an informative and entertaining presentation by David Nour, who explained to the audience the importance of relationship economics. Relationship Economics isn't about networking. It's about learning how to invest in people for an extraordinary return. It's about business problem solving, market differentiation and intercultural business relationships. The purpose, to engage and influence others, often without authority, is both an art and a science.

The mainstay of the Convention is always the quality presentations. Some of the highlights included a four-hour membrane system design seminar and a 2-hour sales seminar panel. There were also sessions on websites, developing low impact water treatment programs, water reuse, scale removal, and *legionella*. In addition there were presentations on biocides, water conservation, container rules, ion exchange, surety bonds and real estate. Finally, there was an information exchange on non-chemical treatment methods. All these sessions taught attendees how to increase production and offered insight into new technologies.

Attendees tried their luck on Friday evening during Casino Night at the Annual Reception and Awards Dinner. Competition was fierce to put together a great poker hand and be entered into a raffle for gift certificates. After an enjoyable meal, AWT honored AMSA, Inc., winner of the *Supplier of the Year* award and Jay Farmerie, CWT, winner of the *Ray Baum Memorial Water Technologist of the Year* award.

During the Convention, AWT raised over \$1,100 to go to the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation, a recognized world leader in cure-focused diabetes research, pioneering new cell-based therapies to restore insulin production.

Finally, I would like to give a special thanks to all of the Convention and Golf Tournament sponsors. Your dedication and commitment helped make the Convention a great success. And a big thank you is due to all of you who attended. There is nowhere else in the water treatment world where leaders in the industry come together to discuss the challenges we all face. It is these kinds of networking opportunities that make the Convention so valuable.

If you missed us in Hollywood, hopefully you can join us next year from October 20-23, 2010 when we will be at the Grand Sierra Resort & Casino in Reno, Nevada. We look forward to seeing you there!