

# Southern Weights & Measures Association

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75th Edition

SWMA Newsletter

October 1998

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## Jurisdictional News

### Alabama



Alabama Weights and Measures bid “Happy Retirement” to four of its employees during the months of July and August. They are (from left to right)

William Legg with 18 years of service was a Warehouse Examiner for the Gins and Warehouses Section.

Robert Gissendanner with 38 years of service was Chief Inspector for the Heavy Duty Section.

Terry Snow with 17 years of service was a Heavy Duty Weights and Measures Inspector assigned to the Weights and Measures Laboratory. He tested fuel terminals, fuel truck meters, and milk tanks, as well as, assisted in the laboratory.

Herman Terrell, Jr., with 25 years of service was a Heavy Duty Weights and Measures Inspector for Northeast Alabama.

These men will be greatly missed, but we wish them a long and happy retirement. We hope to begin immediately hiring people to work in the places vacated by these employees upon their retirement. ♣

### Arkansas

After completing a training course in Examination Procedures for Price Verification, our area Investigators participated in a Price Verification Survey requested by NIST. The survey, to determine scanner accuracy and pricing errors throughout the country, was conducted at Food Stores, Department Stores, Drug Stores, Mass Merchandiser Stores and other locations. Two separate inspections, which included a randomized selection of sale and non-sale items, were conducted at twenty stores. Results of the survey revealed 98-100% accuracy of scanners in our state. While not perfect, we were obviously pleased with the findings considering the lack of a formal enforcement program in this area. We now have a price verification inspection program in place that is an integral part of our overall weights and measures program.

Mike Hile, Director, and Bill Sullivant, Supervisor, attended the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) meeting in Portland, Maine. Mike was nominated to serve on the Board of Directors of the NCWM for a five-year term and will serve as conference chaplain for the coming year.

The Grain Moisture Meter field-testing Program is “knee-deep” in the Arkansas rice harvest. In addition to testing moisture meters at grain elevators, representative rice samples are being collected from various fields and elevators throughout the state. This diversified group of samples will be used as transfer standards in the field-testing program and for reciprocal tests with the Federal Grain Inspection Service. Arkansas is the largest producer of rice in the United States.

Effective August 24, 1998, Tim Chesser was promoted to the Laboratory Supervisor position previously held by Bill Sullivant. Tim will be responsible for the operation of the Weights and Measures Division which includes the Office of Investigation (Precision Testing and Special Testing Sections) and the Office of State Standards (Precision Measurement Laboratory and Grain Analysis and Research Laboratory). We congratulate Tim on his new assignment and know he is looking forward to his new challenge.

We are looking forward to the SWMA conference in Lafayette, Louisiana in October. President Ronald Harrell and his associates are putting together a great program. See you There! 🏠

## Georgia

In the Weights Lab, the workload remains much the same, no new projects, no interesting or unusual events have taken place, no new equipment other than a DICKEY-john GAC 2100 Grain Analysis Computer for the grain lab (received in July).

Looking to the future:

Before the end of the year we are expecting delivery of several new computers and software, also a new phone system, both of which will be very beneficial to the lab.

We received a note from Martin Coile, retired State Metrologist, all is well with the "Honey Do List" and the Grand Children. He wonders how he had time to work for the department when he had so much to do at home.

Assistant Commissioner Bill Truby and Division Director Jerry Flanders will be attending the Southern Weights and Measures Conference in Lafayette LA.

The lab has received the Lab information Management System software.

Hopefully, it will be installed within the next 30-60 days. It has been over a year since the lab has had an operational LIMS and we are really looking forward to having one again.

We are having a 1320 gallon prover removed from a trailer and mounted a diesel truck. The new set up will have its own pump off system. We plan to use this system to increase spot inspections of terminals in Georgia.

The lab has ordered 10, 25 and 50 gallon standards for use in prover calibration. Upon receipt they will be submitted to NIST for certification.

These standards will enable the lab to calibrate most provers, up to 1500 gallons, utilizing 15 or less transfers. 🏠

## Louisiana

As you know, we are hosting the Southern next month and our entire staff has been extremely busy making preparations. However, we have managed to continue training our employees on retail motor fuel inspections and price verifications, along with routine scale, package and taxi inspections.

We are receiving the last shipment of 11 seraphin slip on prover units from Pimberton Fabricators in New Jersey on 9/30/98 to complete our order of 44. We are extremely happy with these units and productivity and morale has increased dramatically. 🏠

## Maryland

- Chief Lou Straub and Program Manager Will Wothlie attended the 83rd National Conference on Weights and Measures held in Portland, Oregon, July 12-16, 1998.
- On June 30, 1998, the following Maryland Weights and Measures employees received Certificate of Service Awards for State Service from Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary, Dr. Henry A. Virts and Assistant Secretary Brad Powers. **20 year award:** Inspector Bill Hall; **15 year award:** Chief Lou Straub, Inspectors Lisa Griffith and Barbara Miller, Field Supervisors Don Mason and Ed Payne, and Head Office Secretary Sue Runge; **10 year award:** Inspectors John Barton, Harry Jones and Mark Lambert, NTEP Program Manager Andrea Buie-Branam, and Office Secretaries Joan Forsythe and Barbara Williams.
- NTEP Program Manager Andrea Buie-Branam attended the NTEP Weighing Sector and Belt Conveyor Scales Sector meeting in Sacramento, California during the week of October 5 - 7, 1998.
- Chief Lou Straub and Field Supervisor Ed Payne attended the ISWM/Potomac Division Scales on Saturday meeting on September 19, 1998 in Grantville, Pennsylvania.
- Metrology staff members Sean Roemer, Zenon Waclawiw, and Antonio Maceo attended the NIST Basic Metrology Course in Gaithersburg, MD during September 21 - 25 and September 28 - October 2, 1998.
- On September 8, 1998, Inspector Mike Frailer participated at a meeting of the Florida Forestry Association held in Panama City, Florida. Mike gave a presentation on Mulch Testing Procedures and discussed the changes in Handbook 133 pertaining to mulch and soils sold by volume. 🏠

## Mississippi

### CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION Braswell Promoted to Field Supervisor

Regulatory Services Inspector III, Connie Braswell was recently promoted to Field Supervisor. She fills the position which had become vacant at the retirement of Ralph Blake earlier this year. Prior to the promotion, Connie had served as one the Division's Inspector III's for two years and as a Field Supervisor and Administrative Assistant in the Petroleum Products Inspection Division for twelve years.

Marcus Buffington, a recent graduate of Mississippi State University, was hired as an Inspector Regulatory Services I. Marcus has undergone intensive on-the-job training and has been assigned the field position which became vacant upon Braswell's promotion.

The Division is fortunate to have both of these outstanding individuals on staff.

Consumer Protection Inspectors have been issued new 31 pound avoirdupois cylindrical weight test kits. The decision to replace all test kits was made following a comparison study of the time required to test scales with the kits containing five pound cylindrical weights and kits containing the flat two pound weights. Inspectors were able to reduce the time required for testing by almost 50%. The division is responsible for testing scales up to 125 pounds capacity. With the increasing responsibilities that are being placed upon our inspectors and the ever increasing number of scales being installed in grocery stores, time continues to become a more critical consideration.

### **WEIGHTS AND MEASURES DIVISION Prototype Test Conducted**

Division personnel assisted Larry Tuberville, Inspector, Weights and Measures Division, Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries with the prototype testing of a scale in Jackson, Mississippi recently. Mr. Tuberville is certified by NIST to perform prototype inspections. The test, which normally consists of an initial test followed by a second test after the scale has been in use for thirty days was complicated by a lightning strike which destroyed the systems electronics after the initial test. The system was repaired and the test was begun a second time and carried through without further incident. However, this unfortunate occurrence increased the cost of the test for the scale company.



Pictured, left to right at the test site, are Division Inspector Brent Bowman; Tuberville; Field Supervisor Timmy Welch and Division Director Rusty Robbins.

### **MS Weights and Measures Supports the Space Program.**

In a letter recently received by Commissioner Spell, Mr. Daniel Young of the John C. Stennis Space Center, Hancock County, MS said "our scale at Stennis is used to purchase (by weight) the propellant used in testing the Space Shuttle Main Engines (SSME). On average, we weigh approximately 390 trailers of

propellant per month. This equates to more than \$15.6 M in annual procurement. Elsewhere in the letter he stated, "On the day Mr. Iasigi calibrated our scales, I noted that he was using a new truck. This new truck employed a carriage containing all of the test weights which could be run along the length of the scale platform (ours is 90 feet long) to test the platform at the specified test points. This method proved to be much more efficient than the old method which required the unloading/loading of the weights at each point. With the new truck, Mr. Iasigi was able to calibrate our scale in about half the normal time, minimizing the impact to our weighing operations." And about our employees he said, "I have been the supervisor responsible for arranging the calibration of our scale for the past eleven years. In that time I have had much contact with Mr. Eldridge, Ms. Cyble Jones, Mr. Iasigi, and formerly with Mr. Bill Persons. On every occasion, without exception, I have found them all to be highly professional, friendly, cooperative, eager to help, courteous, and prompt."

The following picture was made during a recent test of the Stennis Space Center Scale which happened to coincide with a conference on the Space Centers research and work on precision farming which was attended by Commissioner Spell and several MDAC staff members. ☩



Left to Right: Daniel Young, Stennis Space Center; Female Employee of Stennis Space Center; Umesh Sanjanwala, Director, Information Technology; Courtney Scoggin, State FFA President; Commissioner Lester Spell; Russell Robbins, Director Weights and Measures Division; Rickey Gray, Special Counsel to the Commissioner; Sammy Lang, Field Supervisor, Weights and Measures Division; Jack Hode, Stennis Space Center; Lewis Guidon, Farmer.



## NORTH CAROLINA

We have retired the Russell Balance. The Mettler Toledo KG3000 is operational and we are already extremely impressed. On a 6000 pound weight cart we are seeing 0.04 pound repeatability and less than 0.02 pound at 2500 pound class F test weight load. The lab staff is using the average of three modified substitution weighings, with the weight cart rotated 180 degrees between the first and second weighings to account for weight distribution errors. It is then returned to the original



**Tal At The Computer**



**Reggie With Hoist**

orientation to check for drift. The standards are then returned to the scale for a final drift test. The cart error is calculated by averaging the first and third readings and then averaging this number with the second reading. At this point we are charging \$100 per cart with an additional hourly charge if we have to do something beyond normal adjustment.

The Russell Balance was the last mechanical balance in use at the laboratory. Because the KG3000 is working well at the 2500 pound level and the KC500-1 is working well for large weights 600 kg and below, we were able to move the Russell to

the front lobby as a display item. Assuming we can get it moved, we plan on displaying the Russell at the State Fair. Around Christmas, LF plans to decorate the Russell and stack gifts around the base.



**Russel Balance**

We have hired a new computer guru. Susan Myrick started the first of September. Already LF is trying to convert her into a metrologist. In the last Newsletter we reported that Van had taken a couple of months off to look after his new son. Well, he has decided to make it permanent and that means LF is again interviewing for another metrologist. The never ending hiring and training program goes on.

In early October we will start calibrating test measures around the state. This is a little earlier than in previous years. Within the first two weeks of October we will calibrate nearly 500 test measures. Because so many petroleum device technicians bring their test measures to the calibrations stops, we plan to add a demonstration on the proper way to test a dispenser and pour product from a test measure. We think some technicians have developed bad habits and are taking short cuts and per-

haps this is contributing to some of the calibration problems we are seeing in the field.

Sharon Denning, our Quality Control Manager, is attending three days of A2LA training in St. Louis. Between responding to inquiries about our quality control program and what we are doing to head off the year 2000 problem, we are spending a great deal of time providing documentation to other folks. We expect Sharon to whip our quality control program into proper shape so that those inquiries can be dealt with quickly and with a minimum of expense.

We were encouraged by Ray Kammer's remarks during the NCWM annual meeting in Portland, Oregon. At the same time, we were surprised and concerned that accreditation may not be provided through NVLAP. We feel that this approach will create several problems which should be considered by the NCWM leadership. The Metrology Subcommittee has presented NCWM Chairman Aves Thompson with the following information.

There will be significant delays. Mr. Kammer stated that accreditation will be funded through a NACLA approved accreditation agency. Based on current information from the NACLA web site, the organization is still at a formative stage and is not yet in a position to approve accreditation agencies. Waiting for a NACLA approved accreditation body will delay SLP accreditation indefinitely.

Opening accreditation to other accreditation agencies will not achieve the level of uniformity possible through NVLAP accreditation.

SLP labs will not know exactly what to expect. Each accreditation agency will interpret the guidelines differently and will have slightly different requirements.

Reciprocity may be questioned. For example, NVLAP does not recognize A2LA accreditation. Therefore, NVLAP accredited labs would not be able to accept work from A2LA accredited neighbors.

Any outside contract will have to be bid periodically with significant potential to change accreditors. This will negatively impact the continuity of the program. Also, there will be significant pressure to be low bid by cutting corners.

Accreditation by NVLAP would solve all of the concerns listed above. Therefore, we support a change in policy to fund SLP accreditation by NVLAP.

During this time of the year, tobacco farmers are selling their crops in auction warehouses. This year we are seeing a tremendous increase in the baling of tobacco. For the uninitiated, a bale of tobacco weighs around 750 pounds. The cured leaves are compressed into a bale, which is somewhat like a small bale of cotton. The buying companies seem to like this approach compared to handling tobacco loose leaf in a sheet. The bales are more of a package which results in much less weight loss. They are easier to handle and stack. We are very impressed

with the weight stability of the bales. Even after sitting in a hot, dry warehouse the bale weights have only dropped a couple of pounds. However, they do have a few drawbacks. Because they are so tightly compressed, it is very difficult for the buyer to know if the tobacco deep in the bale is too high in moisture content and temperature. To answer this question, one of the buying companies has converted a probe used to determine the moisture content of hay bales into a probe to measure the moisture content of tobacco bales. Temperature is also obtained via a probe inserted into the bale. Well, as you might expect, there were lots of questions about the accuracy of the probes. At the present time, the buying company is using the probes as screening devices. Readings beyond a certain number means the company will not bid on the tobacco. We have elected not to become too involved with the probes at this time because they are not being used to dock farmers on weight and grade like grain moisture meters are used. I suspect our position is subject to change in the near future.

Shortly after the NCWM Annual Meeting we gathered our retail weights and measures inspectors together for additional training on scale inspection, scanning inspection, and package inspection. We see uniformity of inspections as one of the most important elements in a good weights and measures program. There is no way to achieve the needed level of uniformity without occasionally reviewing how things must be done. Training is expensive but it is less expensive than having to redo inspections or having to take the time to explain to a company why something is acceptable in one part of the state but not in another.

## Tennessee

On June 21-23, we hosted the joint federal/state sponsored Instructor Training Class on Price verification. Individuals from approximately 21 jurisdictions attended the session along with representatives from FTC. Louise Jung and Tom Coleman did an excellent job in presenting the information. We participated in the FTC survey with our results being sent to Tom Coleman for inclusion in the nationwide results.

Marty Smith joined our staff as a Weights and Measures inspector 1 on August 4, 1998. Marty, who resides in Celina, TN, comes to us with a background in quality control.

Kentucky's new Metrologist, Michael Baker, spent several days in mid September in our laboratory with our Metrologist, Tom Smith. We are happy to cooperate with our counterparts in Kentucky in this and other weights and measures matters.

All cotton gin scale inspections have been completed for 1998 with fall livestock scale inspections currently being conducted. Tobacco warehouse scale inspections will be beginning shortly.

Tom Smith has been extremely busy the past several months working on control data and related documentation to be submitted to Georgia Harris at NIST. He has also calibrated all of our LPG and large volume provers along with his routine cali-



bration and tolerance testing of standards and preparation of grain samples for grain moisture meter inspections.

We have been working with a number of service companies regarding new requirements of the Serviceman Registration Act. One of the many changes to this Act is that licenses

Are valid for two (2) years from issuance date along with a late fee if they are not renewed in the specified time frame. We are also involved in implementing the model NTEP regulations in Tennessee.

Bob Williams is looking forward to attending the Southern Weights and Measured Association Meeting in Lafayette, LA in late October, as there are many important issues to be considered. We all know that Ronnie and his staff will have a very well prepared and organized program.

GO VOLS !!! 🇺🇸

## **53 rd Annual SWMA Conference**

### **Lafayette Hilton & Towers - Lafayette, Louisiana**

### **October 25 - 28, 1998**

#### **Saturday, October 24th**

10:00-5:00 **Registration & Information**  
Portico Foyer 4th Floor

#### **Sunday, October 25th**

7:30-12:00 **Golf Tournament**

10:00-5:00 **SWMA Registration**  
Portico Foyer 4th Floor

1:00-5:00 **Standing Committee Meetings**

Executive & Nominating Committee  
Elmwood Room 4th Floor

Administration & Public Affairs Committee  
Oaklawn Room 4th Floor

Laws & Regulations Committee  
Oak Alley Room 4th Floor

Specification & Tolerance Committee  
Ashland Room 4th Floor

To be Announced

**GPMA Meeting**  
Parlor of Presidential Suite  
Debbie Joines  
Wayne Division-Dresser, Inc.

6:30- 8:30 **PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor  
(Casual Dress)  
**Entertainment by:**  
Jeff Welch on the piano

#### **Monday, October 26th**

8:00-5:00 **SWMA Registration**  
Portico Foyer 4th Floor

8:00 **Continental Breakfast**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor

8:30-12:00 **General Session**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor  
**Max Gray, Presiding**  
State of Florida

**Specifications & Tolerance Committee**  
Richard W. (Will) Wotthlie, Chairman  
State of Maryland

10:00-10:30 **Break**

**Administration & Public Affairs Committee**  
Charles D. Carter, Chairman  
State of Oklahoma

12:00-1:30 **Lunch** (Open)

1:30-5:00 **General Session**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor

**Mike Hile, Presiding**  
State of Arkansas

**Laws & Regulations Committee**  
Karl H. Angell, Jr., Chairman  
State of West Virginia

**Executive & Nominating Committee**  
Carol P. Fulmer, Chairman  
State of South Carolina

3:00-3:30 **Coca-Cola Break**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor

3:30-4:30 **Customer Check Out Systems**  
Bob Johnson, Winn Dixie

4:45-12:00 **Casino Night**  
Bus ride to Marksville, Louisiana to Grand Casino Avoyelles for Dinner and to try out your luck at Louisiana Gambling.

**Tuesday, October 27th**

7:00-8:15 **NCWM & SMA, NTEP Breakfast**  
Salon C 4th Floor  
(By Invitation Only)

8:00-5:00 **SWMA Registration**  
Portico Foyer 4th Floor

8:00 **Continental Breakfast**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor

8:30 **Opening Ceremony**  
Salons A & B 4th Floor  
Ronald Harrell, President  
State of Louisiana

**Presentation of Colors**  
Major Randy Decote  
USL Army ROTC

**National Anthem**

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance**  
William "Bill" Lagemann  
State of Delaware

**Welcome to Louisiana**  
Commissioner Bob Odom  
Louisiana Department of Agriculture  
& Forestry

**Welcome to Lafayette**  
Bennie Soulier  
Director of Administrative Services

**Roll Call of States**  
N. David Smith, SWMA Secretary/Treasurer  
State of North Carolina

**Association Response**  
Steadman L. Hollis, President Elect  
State of Alabama

**Industry Response**  
Doug Carlton, Chairman  
Associate Membership Committee  
Micro Motion

8:30-10:30 **Report of the National Conference on Weights and Measures**  
Aves Thompson, Chairman NCWM  
State of Alaska

Wes Diggs, Chairman Elect NCWM  
State of Virginia

**Report of the Office of Weights and Measures**  
Gil Ugiansky

National Institute of Standards and  
Technology

10:30-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:00 **Director's Roundtable - All Members and Guests Welcome**  
Topic of Discussion: (To Be Announced)

12:00-1:30 **Lunch** (Open)

1:30-4:00 **Break-Out Meetings of All Standing Committees**  
(Standing committees will be meeting to prepare final reports.)

**Executive & Nominating Committee**  
Elmwood Room 4th Floor

**Administration & Public Affairs Committee**  
Oaklawn Room 4th Floor

**Laws & Regulations Committee**  
Oak Alley Room 4th Floor

**Specifications & Tolerance Committee**  
Ashland Room 4th Floor

1:30-2:30 **Industrial Presentation**  
Salon A & B 4th Floor  
Ric Peri  
National Air Transportation Association

5:30 **Depart by Bus for Dinner & Dancing at Acadian Village**

**Wednesday, October 28th**

Until 12:00 **Office/Headquarters Room**  
Rosedown Room 4th Floor

8:00-8:30 **Break**

8:30-12:00 **General Session**  
Salons B & C 4th Floor  
Bill Truby, Presiding  
State of Georgia

**Voting Session on Final Reports**

**Specification & Tolerance Committee**  
Richard Wotthlie, Chairman  
State of Maryland

**Administration & Public Affairs Committee**  
Charles Carter, Chairman  
State of Oklahoma

**Laws & Regulations Committee**  
Karl Angell, Jr., Chairman  
State of West Virginia

**Executive & Nominating Committee**

Carol Fulmer, Chairman  
State of South Carolina

10:00-10:30 **Break****Associate Membership Report**

Doug Carlton, Chairman  
Micro Motion

**SWMA Newsletter Report**

Bill Brasher, Editor

**Report of the Resolutions Committee**

Charles A. Burns, Jr., Chairman  
City of Birmingham, Alabama

12:00-1:30 **Lunch** (Open)12:00-1:30 **Board of Directors Luncheon**

Ashland Room 4th Floor

1:30-2:30 **General Session**

Salons B & C 4th Floor  
Ronald Harrell, SWMA President  
State of Louisiana

**Report of the Secretary/Treasurer**

N. David Smith, SWMA Secretary/ Treasurer  
State of North Carolina

**Report of the Auditing Committee**

Carlo Fulmer, Chairman  
State of South Carolina

**Report of the Nominating Committee**

Carol Fulmer, Chairman  
State of South Carolina

**Installation of New Officers**2:30 **SWMA Adjournment****SPOUSE AGENDA (Tentative)****Sunday, October 25th**6:30-8:30 **PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION**

Salons A & B 4th Floor  
(Casual Dress)

**Entertainment by:**

Jeff Welch on the piano

**Monday, October 26th**8:00 **Continental Breakfast with Spouse**9:00-3:00 **Tour**

Tabasco Factory, Rip Van Winkle Home  
& Garden with Lunch.

4:45-12:00 **Casino Night**

Bus ride to Marksville, Louisiana to Grand  
Casino Avoyelles for Dinner and try out  
your luck at Louisiana Gambling.

**Tuesday, October 27th**7:00-8:00 **Breakfast**8:30-12:00 **Opening Ceremony**12:00-1:00 **Lunch on your own**

1:30-3:30 **"Create Your Own Mask" and  
Storyteller - Christine Word**  
Vermillion Ballroom

5:30 **Depart by Bus for Dinner & Dancing  
at Acadian Village**

**Wednesday, October 28th**

8:30-10:30 **Juice, coffee, pastries for spouses only.**  
(Hospitality Suite, Presidential Suite  
15th floor)

2:30 **SWMA ADJOURNMENT** †**Maryland**

Joan Forsythe, Secretary for Program Manager Bob Eaves had open heart Surgery (Triple Bypass) on September 28, 1998. Joan experienced chest pains on September 23, 1998, and after numerous tests and examinations at the hospital, it was determined that surgery was required. Joan came through the operation with no problems and hopefully will return to work sometime during November 1998.

Those who attended the Handbook 133 Training School held at our facility will remember Joan as the pleasant lady who was in charge of the Luncheons. If you would like to send a card or note to Joan, send it to our office and we will forward it to Joan's home address.