

Staying Ahead of the Curve

Robert "RB" Boyle, IANY President



Robert "RB" Boyle

July was Smart Irrigation Month, an initiative launched by the national Irrigation Association in 2005.

"Smart" stands for Sustainable - Managed - Accountable - Responsible - Trusted irrigation. Its mission is to educate people about the importance of efficient water use. It also is intended to promote new technologies and irrigation

practices that can make irrigation much more efficient.

We are in the heat of the summer now and water-saving practices should continue to be the focus of our businesses. Educating and promoting the importance of water-use efficiency to our customers and our community are constructive goals, as there are many people who are not fully aware of the benefits of smart irrigation technology.

Saving time and money are vital influencers in people's everyday lives. As our clientele is becoming more technologically sophisticated, it is a good time to promote innovative smart-irrigation technologies, such as weather- and sensor-based controllers and flow meters.

Reports indicate that the smart irrigation market was estimated to be worth \$825 million in 2018 and expected to be worth over \$1.7 billion by 2023.

As our clients take advantage of smart-irrigation technologies, our companies will also become more efficient, allowing us to work smarter. This will create healthier landscapes while conserving more water and providing the opportunity for our customers to save money.

IANY'S 17th Annual Golf Outing is Set for Wednesday, Aug. 21

Complete golfer registration and sponsor sign-up information is on page 3.



Heads Up: Regional Irrigation Conference in the Works

Planning is underway for a three-day irrigation conference convened by the Connecticut Irrigation Contractors Association, the Irrigation Association of New England and the Irrigation Association of New York.

The joint event, "The Northeast Irrigation Expo & Conference," is scheduled for Monday through Wednesday, Feb. 24-26, 2020, at Foxwoods Resort & Casino, in Connecticut.

The conference will feature technical education sessions, opportunities to interact with tradeshow industry exhibitors and entertainment. The conference also will provide a unique opportunity to meet with peers from throughout the organizations' states, allowing the interchange of information critical to the irrigation industry.

Complete details will be provided as soon as available.

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17TH ANNUAL IRRIGATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK GOLF OUTING

Wednesday, August 21, 2019

THE VINEYARDS GOLF CLUB

9 Tyler Drive, Riverhead, New York
631-740-9300

Registration: 12:00 p.m.

Lunch: 12:30 p.m.

Shotgun Start: 1:00 p.m.

Reception Hour: 5:30 p.m.

Dinner: 6:30 p.m.

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Foursomes – \$900 Golf for four • Delicious lunch • Reception & buffet dinner • We play scramble, so bring your crew, your friends, family, your friends' families, everyone! You'll have fun, and help support IANY. Thank you.

Dinner Only – \$85 Can't make it to golf? No worries! Please join us for our reception and dinner after golf. We'd love to have you.

For Sponsors

Gold – \$2000 Golf for four • Two exclusive hole sponsorships with a deluxe hole sign and souvenir pin flag for each hole • One half-page ad in IANY's next newsletter • Recognition of your support in the newsletter.

Silver – \$1,000 Golf for two • One exclusive deluxe hole-sign sponsorship with a souvenir pin flag • one quarter-page ad in the next IANY newsletter • Recognition of your support in the newsletter.

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Hole Sponsor – \$300 Support your irrigation industry with a sponsorship sign at the tee. Also receive recognition in IANY's newsletter.

Golfer's Swag – \$500 This year, each golfer will receive IANY swag as a thank you for participating. We would be honored if you could help with your financial support. Not only will you receive recognition in the IANY newsletter, but you'll also have the opportunity to include your swag.

Reception Hour – \$500 After the round of golf, participants will be treated to some refreshing beverages and tasty *hors d'oeuvres*.

GOLFER REGISTRATION AND SPONSOR SIGN-UP ONLINE ONLY, BY AUGUST 15, PLEASE

<https://www.planmygolfevent.com/32996-IANY/>

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT EVENT CHAIRMAN GEORGE IANNACCONE

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Steve Stempler Joins IANY Board



Steve Stempler

Steven E. Stempler, CIC, principal of Five Towns Sprinkler Service, Inc., was elected to the IANY Board of Directors at last March's general meeting.

It almost seems as if Steve has had veins, arteries and irrigation lines running through his body since he was a kid.

During his childhood, prior to having a driver license, he pushed a shopping cart to neighbors' homes to work on their sprinkler systems. Throughout high school and college, Steve was involved in irrigation, always having a summer job for himself and a friend. He even had a couple of winter gigs relating to irrigation.

Steve subsequently incorporated his business in 1986. He considers the Five Towns area as his prime turf, hence the company name. Over the years, many things have changed in the vicinity, requiring him to expand to new areas and to provide new services.

Having been in irrigation since his youth, Steve is still young-at-heart. Thus, it's okay to call him "Stevie."



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IANY Winter 2019 Education Series at Radisson in Islandia

This year Bobby Winter reprised his role as education chairman. IANY invested in the national Irrigation Association Certified Irrigation Tech Course. This is a great course, and at some point, may become the basis for irrigation-contractor licensing in New York.

Rich Silverman joined Bobby to teach the IA Certified Irrigation Tech Class on March 13. There were 12 students, in this class ranging from helpers to guys with 30-plus years of experience in the business. Everyone walked away having learned something.



On March 14, Bobby taught a basic irrigation-design class on friction losses. Students ranged from new guys just starting out to those in business for over 30 years. More than 30 participants had the experience to know how many g.p.m. they could use on most installations, but didn't know exactly why. Now they learned exactly how many heads and nozzles they can use, and explain why to their customers.

Later that day, Mike Dwyer and George Iannaccone taught a class called Tweaking Irrigation Systems. Again, the class was very diverse with everyone walking away with something new. George gave an explanation on plant health; Mike on how to apply the water needed or not needed in most cases.

Next winter's classes will have a drip-irrigation class and irrigation-service tech class again. If there are any classes you would like to have, please let Bobby know and he'll see if it can be arranged.



IANY at the Atlantic/SiteOne Show

This year Atlantic Irrigation joined forces with SiteOne Landscape Supply to hold their annual Long Island Product Showcase at The Main Event in Farmingdale, N.Y. The showcase featured roughly 20 vendor reps who displayed various lines popular in the Green Industry today. Irrigation, landscape lighting, outdoor audio, drainage and brick-and-stone products were just some of the industry lines represented. The show drew about 130 industry professionals who enjoyed learning about new products, talking with IANY's team and acquiring tips and tricks.

Mike Dwyer and Bobby Winter "worked" the show for IANY.



2019 Irrigation Show: Save the Date

Mark your calendars, and plan to attend the 2019 Irrigation Show and Education Week at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The Show runs Dec. 4-5, and Education Week is Dec. 2-6.



Highlights will include:

- Latest irrigation products and technologies
- Experts answering irrigation questions
- Ideas to improve productivity and increase yields
- Keynote by former MLB pitcher Jim Abbott
- IA University courses to learn core skill sets
- Industry insight presentations on cutting-edge topics

Complete information is available at the show website, www.irrigationshow.org.

Employees: You Can't Live With Them – You Can't Live Without Them

by Lorraine Hart



Lorraine Hart

You can't live with them – you can't live without them. Although you may occasionally want to throw up your hands and fire everyone – or almost everyone – you suddenly realize that you really do need them. So maybe the question is do you really want to live without them? Let's take a minute to actually look at the pros and cons of your staff.

Are they as good as you? Most likely not, but remember there is a reason that you are the owner or manager or foreman. And if they were as good as you, what are the chances that they would be working for you? But, you say, why can't they be more competent, or do this task the way I want it done, or ...?

Do they usually get the job done with a minimum of mistakes? If so, consider yourself relatively fortunate. If not, why not? Are you constantly frustrated with your staff? If the answer is yes, what are you doing to fix it?

I sometimes hear complaints of "I'd be better off with no staff." If you really feel that way, just envision your day or week with no one to help you. It may feel good or even liberating for a day or two, but how long will that last?

I am often told that it is simply impossible to find or keep good staff, and yet I consistently see just the opposite. Assuming you really do want to *live with them* you will need to work out better methods of communication.

Part of the communication process entails understanding the other person's emotional tone, as is described by L. Ron Hubbard in his management writings. "The tone scale ... is a scale which shows the successive emotional tones a person can experience." Here, "tone" is meant the momentary or continuing emotional state of a person. Emotions such as fear, anger, grief, enthusiasm and others which people experience are shown on this graduated scale."

By simply communicating to employees at their levels, you will be able to better reach agreements. Agreements will not only create a better work environment, but they will also increase levels of productivity. Once you have better communication, you will find it easier to train your staff to do what you really want them to do. The result of this training will, of course, be even greater productivity.

Lorraine Hart, president of Ideal Consulting Services, can be reached at 516-382-0862 or lorraine@idealconsulting.net. Ideal Consulting is designer and host of IANY's website.

For more information on the Emotional Tone Scale, contact Lorraine or visit www.IdealConsulting.net

The Need for Education

by Mike Dwyer, CIC



Mike Dwyer

The Irrigation Association of New York was asked to help with an outreach program to the public and trade in cooperation with New York American Water. We started with a seminar to teach our trade the need for us as an industry to help conserve water.

The day began with Nassau County Executive Laura Curran talking about reducing the use of water. It was reinforced by Brian Schneider of Public Works, discussing his aggravation with driving to work on a rainy day and seeing lawn sprinklers running. Schneider's background training is as a hydrogeologist, one who studies the movement of water underground.

Last year Nassau County passed legislation requiring a Water Sense-labeled controller, rain sensor or moisture sensor on all irrigation systems. This past spring you, as a professional, were required to make sure that any system you turned on met these requirements.

I hope you tested all rain sensors and moisture sensors or updated customers to smart controllers. A smart controller is an easier water-saving device for most contractors and customers to understand. Customers usually save a minimum of 30 percent of water for the year. These devices, tied into weather stations, have the advantage of taking into account the actual rainfall amount and holding off irrigation for longer periods of time to allow the landscape to use the "free rain water." Smart controllers also change the length of runtimes as weather conditions change. Reducing overwatering eliminates waste, and creates a healthier landscape.

Most of our problems with sick plants, excluding clogged nozzles or blocked irrigation, are overwatering and drowning plants. Poor layout and bad installation design are leading culprits for waste.

Some other examples I have seen are full-sun and full-shade areas on the same zone; regular pop-up mists on with a rotor head zone; and shrub areas and grass areas on the same zone. These are common occurrences.

We as an industry need to change our ways. Bad habits cost our customers high water bills, and make us the evil business people. Water use by our industry needs to be

Continued on next page



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reduced. The aquifer is being drawn down faster than it can be replenished. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has required all water districts to reduce their pumpage by 15 percent. Irrigation is the largest user of water, so we are the first target for water-use reduction. This is a level at which we can live. A 15 percent reduction will equal the annual normal rainfall amount and create a balance between what we use and what is replaced. All new systems that use less water and upgrade existing systems over time will help maintain this balance. Water rates are going up. Become educated in using less water. Your customers will thank you and Long Island will stay lush and green.



I Want You...



No, not to join the Army but to join the IANY Board of Trustees.

These are challenging times for the irrigation industry, and the board is always looking for people with additional ideas to both help our businesses grow and to protect us from those who would eliminate us. We seek those who also care about protecting our precious water resources through responsibly and professionally installed irrigation systems.

Are you prepared to help support the cause? Contact IANY President Robert Boyle at rb@rbirrigation.net.

Brake Lights in the Distance

by Jeff Carowitz



Jeff Carowitz

You're driving along when you notice in the distance – up around that next curve – the flicker of brake lights going on and off. Traffic hasn't stopped, but clearly there's something happening.

What do you do? Accelerate?

Probably not. Slam on the brakes?

Not that either.

You do become more vigilant, looking for signs that you might need to correct. You've got plenty of time to act. If you pay attention, you're sure to make intelligent and safe decisions.

You know where I'm going with this analogy. After a 10-plus-year run of expansion in our industry, there are a few companies that have become too accustomed to cruise control. There's been plenty of time for fiddling with the radio. You can do that for a while, but eventually it gets risky if there's anything that might dart across the highway ahead.

When it comes to planning, some of my clients are naturally inclined towards vigilance; others are more full-speed-ahead.

For both types of clients, I'm recommending a "flexible-stance" strategy to be more nimble. My system helps companies be prepared to capture upside if the market motors forward, and to minimize downside if it decelerates. I want my clients to be ready to pivot toward continued success.

As part of planning for uncertainty, I encourage clients to be more strategic about what they're doing. Recognize that good times lull us into complacency. We stop challenging ourselves to do better. Here are a few things to think about when you're working on your 2020 plan.

Precisely focus on the right things. Stop wasting time and money on what doesn't deliver value. If the market tightens even slightly, you won't be able to afford waste.

Understand that every business initiative comes with two costs. The first costs are the obvious ones: the time, effort and hard costs of doing the project. The second cost is the potential missed opportunity. When you decide to pursue one thing, you're making a choice not to work on something else. Sometimes, it's what you ignore that hurts you.

I have one client who has a tough time with opportunity costs. His marketing team wants to spend time trying to

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make cutting-edge social media marketing work. They want to be the first to pioneer these new tools. But after three years, there's been little return on investment. He really needs to mail out (and follow up on!) contract renewals for the coming season. The opportunity cost of working on "what we think is cool and might work" keeps drowning out "keeping the clients we already have who pay us regularly." Opportunity cost is about choices. Make sure your team chooses the right things.

Diversify to lower risk. You know the saying about having all your eggs in one basket. Now is a good time to broaden the range of products or services that your company offers. You can appeal to a broader audience of customers. If one category sinks, another might make up for it.

When you're considering which new services to add, prioritize those that offer a stable revenue stream. For example, contractors should focus more on MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) instead of bid work. Growing into steady-Eddie categories is harder than following the overall market. You can't just say "I want to grow my service business," and expect the customers to show up. Start working on your plan now to capture those clients when your competitors are ignoring them.

Avoid linear planning. Forecasts that say "We'll sell the same amount as last year, plus 10 percent" need to be reexamined. Seldom does growth come in a steady, linear fashion, year-after-year. Examine the macro environment more closely to be sure it supports another year of gains. Many of the factors that have driven robust growth in our industry are now reversing direction or becoming long-in-the-tooth.

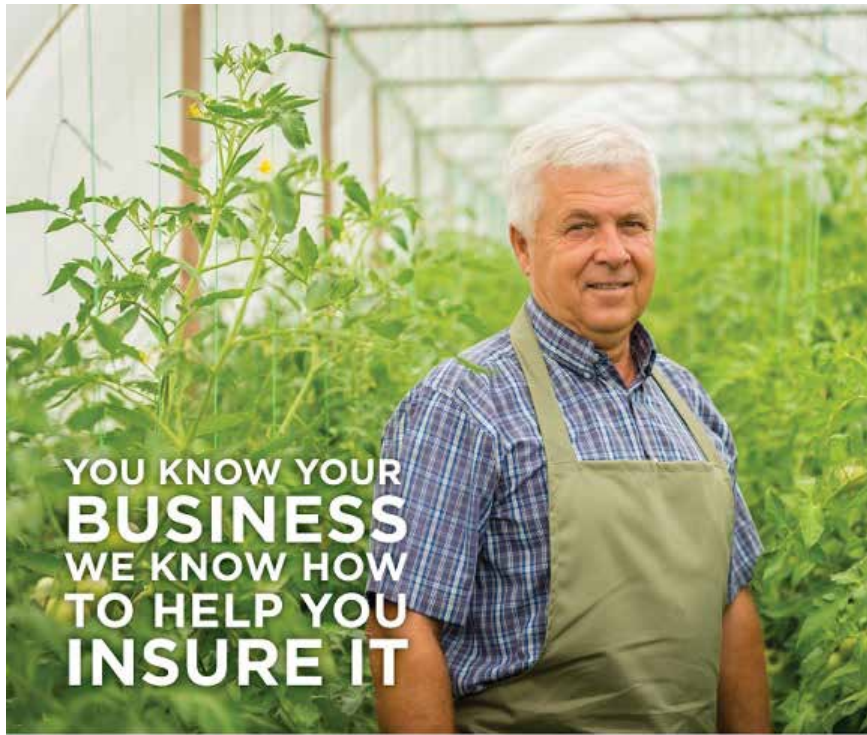
More importantly, if you want another 10 percent, you're going to need to do a lot differently and better. Be sure you can answer my usual question: "What will you do differently to grab that next piece of growth?"

Jeff Carowitz helps industry leaders make things happen. Get him engaged to make your strategy better. Email him at Jeff@StrategicForceMarketing.com



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IANY Outreach

by Mike Dwyer, CIC

Long Island water districts are under increased pressure to reduce demand and deliver a high-quality product. Turn on the local news or read a local paper, and you will see a headline about water quality or water rates. Long Island's legacies from manufacturing, farming and cesspools for sanitation have allowed contaminants to leach down to our sole source of drinking water – our aquifer.

We need to be proactive in how we use this product. Water districts are required to build new treatment systems. Treatment systems come not only with the initial cost of building, but continued expense of operating. These costs are passed along to their customers.

The newest contaminant is 1,4-dioxane. The State of New York is expected to set a limit on this soon. Any water district that is near the proposed limit would be required to start planning to build a treatment system. The estimated costs are between \$5 million to \$7 million each. Operating costs are expected to be significant as treatment systems require high electricity use and a chemical oxidizer.

I was asked to volunteer and participate in a project to help educate Long Islanders about our sole-source aquifer.

This was a project was funded by the Long Island Commission for Aquifer Protection (LICAP) which was formed by Nassau and Suffolk counties to make recommendations for aquifer protection. Other participants included members of the Long Island Water Conference, Green Industry, conservation groups and local government. Our goal was to produce a logo and online message to teach conservation and aquifer protection. We came up with "Our Water, Our Lives."



We met weekly for four weeks to get the project rolling, followed by a series of conference calls to fine-tune and make decisions until we launched the website, www.ourwaterourlives.com.



Additionally, I was part of an educational outreach program run by New York American Water. The purpose of my part of the class was to teach our trade about best practices. Topics covered were proper rain-sensor location and installation; sprinkler-head layouts; proper nozzle selection for rotor heads; cycle and soak; not watering across hardscape; and separation of shrub and lawn areas (hydro zones).



There were also three dates for the public to attend: March 19 in Lynbrook, March 21 in Glen Cove and April 3 in Merrick. Tables were set up for customers to come in and see water-saving products. New York American Water was introducing customers to the Rachio Smart Controller. The company purchased 2,000 controllers to sell to any high-water use customer for \$99. I contacted a few supply houses to see if they had any interest in showcasing the products our trade uses. Thanks to East Coast Sprinkler Supply and Atlantic Irrigation Specialties/ SiteOne Landscape Supply for helping. Even Netafim's Art Elmers stopped by at the Merrick show.





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