

There is no 'I' in Teamwork!

It is a pleasure to write this first introduction for myself as the newest member of the Kansas Rural Water Association team. I am Eric Davolt and I am ready to help.

I have filled a position vacated by Bob Kirby when he chose to return to employment with the city of Baxter Springs earlier this year. Bob was a valuable asset to the water and wastewater systems of the area; he also served KRWA well as I recall his work with the city of Columbus where I previously had worked. Bob will be missed, not only by the KRWA organization, but also by the many cities and rural water districts he helped over the years. Everyone at KRWA wishes Bob the best of luck with his new position. We know

Bob will serve Baxter Springs with the same dedication and hard work he has served KRWA member systems with while covering the southeast Kansas area.



*Eric Davolt
Tech Assistant*

Southeast Kansas roots

Now, a little more about who I am. I was born and raised in Columbus, Kan. where I live today and am presently in the process of building a new home on land that belonged to my grandparents. I have one brother, Staff Sergeant Aron Davolt, who is currently serving in the United States Army, based out of Fort Riley near Junction City, Kan. He is currently stationed in Iraq and is on his

third tour of duty, fighting in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is expected home in December. I would like to ask everyone to remember to keep all members of the United States armed services in thoughts and prayers as the military struggles with these difficult missions.

Education and professional background

I graduated from Columbus Unified High School in 1996. While in high school, I participated in football and wrestling and was a member of the Future Farmers of America. After graduation, I attended Northeastern Oklahoma A & M for two years where I studied agricultural education. I then

transferred to Kansas State University in Manhattan where I studied agricultural education and animal science. During my summer breaks I returned home to work at various jobs for the city of Columbus. I am an avid outdoorsman, love hunting and fishing – and my garden would go a long way towards feeding several families.

crews involved in the repair and maintenance of the city's water and wastewater systems. During this time I also began training as a water and wastewater system operator. In February of 2003 I attained status as a Class I Wastewater Operator and was subsequently promoted to the position of wastewater operator for the city. In May of 2003 I successfully passed the Class III Water Operator certification and was promoted to City of Columbus Water/Wastewater Operator and Public Works Foreman. My duties in that position included many of the same challenges that face operators throughout the state today. I was responsible for operating and maintaining the

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In 2001, I accepted full time employment with the city of Columbus. I began my career there spending a year as a general laborer, where I worked on city

city's water plant, maintaining the distribution system, and preparing the numerous reports filed throughout the year. In 2006, I attained Class III Wastewater Operator status; shortly thereafter I received my Class IV Water Operator certification.

I continued in the foreman position with the city of Columbus until April of 2008 when I was offered a position as Technical Assistant with KRWA. On April 23, I became the newest member of the KRWA team. Since

Informed decision-makers make better decisions

was intrigued that KRWA's annual conference in March used the theme "There is no 'I' in Teamwork!" Many of the conference sessions focused on the need to have system staff (operators, managers, administrators) work as and be part of each community's 'team'. The other big part of the 'team' is the city council or RWD board of directors.

City council members and RWD board members are generally comprised of people who serve as unpaid volunteers. As a result too few of them attend training sessions for information. Often, they are hard to reach. Water system operators on the other hand, are usually paid positions and they are generally paid to attend training. The city council members and RWD board members likely have full-time jobs, making it even more of a challenge for them to attend a training session. But, KRWA offers a special board training program. It's called KanCap and is truly a unique program— and KRWA and KDHE will bring that training to your system for evening sessions. Getting several neighboring systems together would provide good training and a great opportunity to discuss issues with others.

I want to encourage board and council members to attend the annual KRWA conference and other training sessions. There are several management and finance related sessions coming up. These Asset Management sessions will be held on the dates and at the locations listed in the box at the right.

Training operators is a commendable goal to help small systems with their technical issues. However, it's the board or council members who make the decisions to set policies and to approve purchases. Board and council members need to have the best information possible to make the best decisions possible.

Dates and Locations

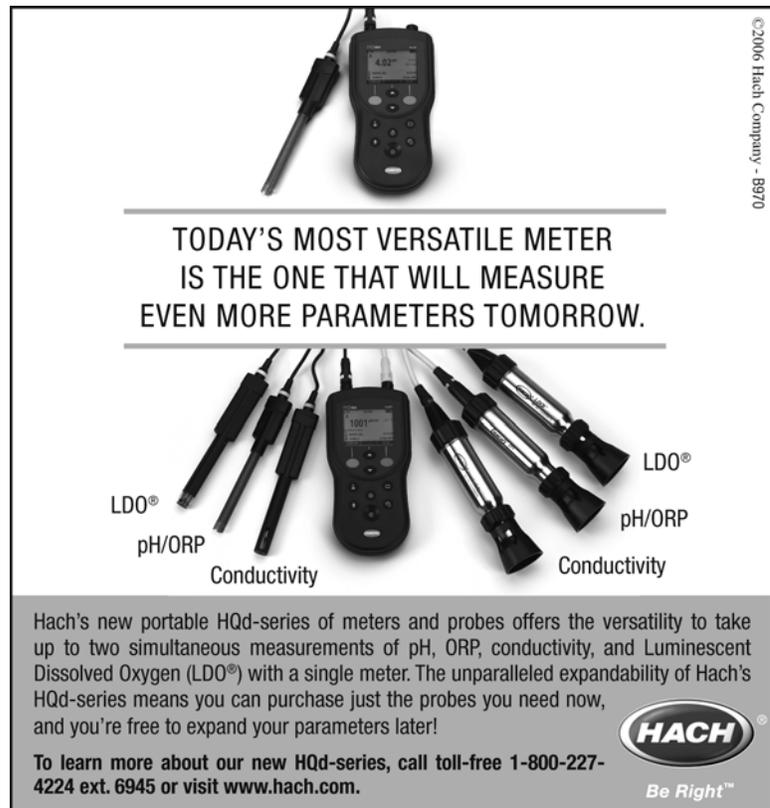
- Wednesday, July 16 at the Best Western North, Wichita, Kan.
- Thursday, July 17: Holiday Park Hotel, Chanute, Kan.
- Wednesday, July 23: Holiday Inn, Salina, Kan.
- Thursday, July 24: Holiday Inn, Topeka, Kan.

There's a bonus: Water operators who attend will receive credit towards certification.

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I look forward to meeting and working with water systems in southeast Kansas. I want to suggest that any system personnel having questions or need any of any kind of assistance to contact KRWA at 785/336-3760. Call me directly at 620/762-6266. I can also be reached through my e-mail at eric@krwa.net.

Whether it is about water loss and leak detection or just needing to go over some technical issues, I will be glad to come to the system and provide assistance. Having literally "been down in the ditch," I appreciate the problems that cities and RWDs often have. I look forward to being of assistance and am pleased to be a member of the KRWA team.



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