

This is my last President's column as WAS President. At the business meeting in Montpellier, France at AQUA 2018 (August 25-29), Dr. Maria Celia Portella from Brazil took over the reins as President. Also, the following persons were elected as new members of the WAS Board: President-elect Dr. Jimmy Avery, Secretary Dr. Kathleen Hartman, and two new Directors, Dr. Noe Noe Lwin and Dr. Albert Tacon. Dr. Kathleen Hartman and Dr. Patricia Moraes-Valenti have ended their terms as Directors, as has Dr. Jennifer Cobcroft as Secretary and Dr. Juan Pablo Lazo as Past President. It has been my honor to serve with those who will be stepping down and with those who are coming on board. My term as past president will end in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA at Aquaculture 2019 (March 7-11) during our 50th anniversary. Plans for our 50th and LACC's 25th anniversaries are well underway. Stay tuned for more details.



the journey will continue beyond the formal approval, but if we all work together it will be the adventure of a lifetime.

If you haven't made it to France, then please consider attending Aquaculture 2019 in New Orleans for the WAS 50th anniversary; LAQUA18-Aquaculture for Peace in Bogotá, Colombia, October 23 - 26, 2018 for the LACC 25th anniversary; or the Asian Pacific 2019 in Chennai, India, June 19-22. It will be an exciting year. In New Orleans, I will be finishing my time with the WAS Board. In 2003, I served on the

Board as the USAS President and then rejoined the Board in 2006 as Director, then Treasurer and finally as President-elect. It has been my honor to serve WAS and USAS over the years and I have seen many new members come in over the years. My first WAS conference was in Puerto Rico in 1991, the same year my youngest son was born (he had open heart surgery upon return from that meeting). I have never regretted joining. I STRONGLY encourage each and every one of you to get engaged in WAS and make it the best professional society for aquaculture around the global. We need your help with our conferences, chapters and publications. GET INVOLVED! WAS and USAS will both be holding elections soon. Consider being nominated and then VOTE. I look forward to seeing you all in New Orleans to celebrate 50 vibrant years of service to global aquaculture. We hope to see some of the founding members there to help us remember and celebrate.

AQUA2018 was our joint meeting with the European Aquaculture Society (EAS). Montpellier, France is a beautiful coastal city along the Mediterranean Sea and we had great warm weather and ample opportunities to make new friends and be reunited with old friends. The WAS Board had a full plate on its agenda in its pre-conference meeting. A major consideration was the petition to form a new African Chapter, which has the support of many of our WAS members based in Africa along with NEPAD and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) in South Africa. Since the meeting in Cape Town in 2017, a steering committee has been working diligently with Dr. Kevan Main, WAS past president, to develop this petition and the accompanying documents. I wish to thank them all from the bottom of my heart!

One of the important benefits of your WAS membership continues to be that it comes with FREE online access to all issues of the Journal of the World Aquaculture Society (JWAS), including all back issues. JWAS is still in its re-invigoration phase. The new impact factor for JWAS for 2017 has increased from 1.105 to 1.338. This is a very positive achievement and the results of efforts to improve the quality of JWAS by our editor, Dr. Carole Engle, and the editorial board. Of course, we also thank all the authors who have contributed to this effort. It takes several years to see results from all the hard work and it is now paying off. *World Aquaculture* magazine is also available online and continues to excel in quality thanks to Dr. John Hargreaves and the editorial staff. I am proud of this service that is provided to our membership and encourage everyone to consider publishing in both.

Formation of an African Chapter has been a long-term goal of WAS and one of my personal goals and it has been many years in the making. I began my international career in Zaire (now DRC), Africa as a US Peace Corps fisheries volunteer and spent much of my early career working on aquaculture in Africa. In reviewing past board minutes from my time at WAS, the move to form an African Chapter goes back at least 11 years but I know others have talked about it for even longer. Dr. Michael New has had it on his agenda for a long time, as have others. There is much work to do and will now need a vote of approval by the WAS members with physical addresses in Africa. It is key that ALL of these members participate in the vote! If 2/3 of those voting approve, then final approval will come with approval of chapter bylaws by WAS Board. The destination has not yet arrived and

As I retire from my service to the WAS Board and its membership, I challenge each one of you to get engaged in WAS. This is YOUR society and its strength and success depends upon YOU!

— Bill Daniels, President

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