For an Association to survive 50 years is remarkable. For an Association that combines the interests of Manufacturers, Suppliers and Dealers (to everyone’s satisfaction) to survive 50 years is even more remarkable. Reviewing PWQA Past Presidents, we find that Bob Moody, Bill Dodd, Bill Fritzsche, Al McCommon, Roy Russell III, William Dodd, Chris Layton, Jerry Dierolf and Pat Dalee went on to serve as President of WQA as well - and that Bill Dodd, Walt Casey, Bill Fritzsche, Glenn Layton, William Dodd, Pat Dalee and Chris Layton also were inducted into both the PWQA Hall of Fame and the WQA Hall of Fame for their service to the industry both locally and nationally.

In looking back over 50 years when our industry was in its adolescence it seems appropriate to recall those leaders, that we know of, who are no longer with us: Bob Moody, Bill Dodd, Virgil Stevens, Russ Biddinger, Walt Casey, Glenn Layton, Chip Langdon, Sid Adams, George Graham and Bill Wallace.

We also find it appropriate to recognize the spouses of our leaders for generously encouraging involvement and enduring time spent on our behalf. Sadly, we are aware of a fair number of them who have passed away including; Pat Dodd, Sally Hebert, Lee Burt, Sally Russell and Maureen Layton.

Lastly, recognition is needed for all who served as Board Members and Committee Participants through the years. As we celebrate 50 years, please take time to thank these individuals for their selfless service on our behalf.
The Association was formed in August 1957 at the Sheraton Palace Hotel in San Francisco by a group of service dealers attending a Water Conditioning Association International (WCAI) Convention. PWCA (Pacific Water Conditioning Association) was formed as a regional association, constituting District 10 of WCAI, the forerunner of today’s Water Quality Association (WQA). Elected to serve were Robert L. Moody, President; William D. Dodd, Vice President; Marino Pomares, Secretary-Treasurer and Richard E. Ellingwood, Thatcher Root, Lewis Evans, Virgil Stevens and George A. Griffinas Directors. It is interesting that the common goal being undertaken was proactive and successful; the establishment of a specific State Contractor’s License that would positively position the Industry with respectability, which continues to this day.

William D. Dodd became President at the young Association’s Convention in Bakersfield and his outgoing Convention was held in Carmel at the La Playa Hotel. Here, a Code of Ethics was adopted, once again, a proactive move to improve the industry’s perception by both government and the public. The Convention was also the first occasion that government representatives were invited to attend. Helen Nelson, the State Consumer Counsel, attended with a predetermined opinion of the Industry – yet by the end of the Convention, she had significantly changed her attitude regarding water quality improvement as a benefit to consumers.

Virgil Stevens was the 3rd President of the Association and the leader who brought members into compliance with the new C-55 Contractor’s License. He was the first President to invite members to Yosemite for his Convention.

Although the first three Presidents have passed away, they are not forgotten. Their early years of leadership have righteously earned them the distinction of “Pioneers.”

1961-62 found Trent Huls serving as President. The Convention, held at the Del Coronado Hotel, was the first to include a trade show. Emmett J. Culligan, widely considered the Father of the Water Conditioning Industry, was the keynote speaker. Trent, now retired, continued his support of the industry for many years. He was particularly influential in 1985 when he pointed out that Association bylaws allowed past presidents to introduce motions at board meetings. He thereby greatly influenced public relations efforts through five successive presidencies.

Russ Biddinger took the helm for the 62-63 fiscal year and at the annual Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada the very first golf tournament was held.

The first “Russell” to be called President was installed for the 63-64 fiscal year at the Convention in Lake Tahoe. Roy Jr. recalls, “Pollution problems were beginning to occur in a lot of areas and most of the leadership/representative activities revolved around those problems.” The Environmentalist Movement was building and the Association learned more about how to deal with problems, although solutions weren’t immediately forthcoming.
At this time PWCA represented more than just California; the first out-of-state President was Walt Casey from Las Vegas, Nevada. In his greeting to members at the annual Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, Walt said, “A great deal has happened to our industry since August, 1957 when PWCA was born. Since that time, we have made (this Association) the best means to protect, improve and expand this industry from which our livelihood is earned”. He went on to comment on governmental issues, including the California state sales tax on service and pending legislation that would give the consumer a rescission period to void a contract. Walt felt then that, “even a quick appraisal shows us that we are really just on the threshold of activity for the progress of our industry”. Walt passed away in December 2006.

The 1965-66 fiscal year brought us Bill Fritzsche. With his usual self-effacing manner, Bill writes of his recollections: “1: We began our Water Quality Education Committee to begin the fight against restrictive legislation in California, and 2: I taught Glenn Layton everything he knows.” We know from the archives that Bill accomplished a great deal during his tenure, including an extensive insurance survey and report. The 1966 Convention was held at the El Dorado Hotel in Sacramento in March and the golf tournament was established as a tradition during the annual meeting. Fritzsche has continued his involvement in industry activities throughout his active retirement. Following his service to PWCA, he served as President of the Water Quality Association and has been inducted into their Hall of Fame.

Glenn Layton succeeded Fritzsche for the 66-67 fiscal year. Layton saw that the industry was facing many legislatively restrictive problems and that they were increasing in their obstructive-ness to the service we offered the public. He continued the work of the Water Quality Education Committee begun during the Fritzsche administration. Glenn’s efforts kept legislative and administrative officials informed so they could recognize the significant contributions our industry made toward solving the general pollution problems in the country, as well as the conservation of natural resources. Glenn Layton and Bill Fritzsche were both inducted into the Water Quality Association and Pacific Water Quality Association Halls of Fame for their distinguished leadership. Layton passed away in December 1986.

Al McCommon, President in 1967-68, recalled that his year as President consisted of traveling throughout the State of California trying to help dealers who had called the office complaining that city councils were talking about outlawing softeners. He recalls that Livermore was the first city to actually outlaw softeners, and that the Association’s primary success in dealing with the municipalities was simply “delaying” the actions.

Bud Mohr, as President for fiscal year 1968-69, summarizes a very busy year. He recalls activity in the areas of Restrictive Ordinances, Employee Relations, Model Soliciting Ordinances, Insurance, Ethics -- and tools to identify association members to their communities.
President Bruce Riker, accomplished a rewriting of the C-55 license examination during his term of office in fiscal year 69-70. Bruce encouraged members to understand that through participation in association activities, the industry will find strength through numbers.

1970-71 was the year Bob Barker served as President. The Convention was held at the Sheraton Inn in San Diego and the annual directory includes a welcome to the members of PWCA from then-Governor Ronald Reagan. He commended our association for the work they did to create the C-55 study manual as an aid to taking the C-55 California Contractors’ License Test.

Joe “Chip” Langdon took over the reins for the 71-72 fiscal year. During his term there was considerable time spent interviewing people up and down the state for the position of Executive Secretary for the association. It was time to replace Rudy Thompson with someone more technically expert in our Industry. Bert Keilin was the man chosen. The Convention in Fresno was the first that utilized a theme – it is fitting that the first theme was “Upgrade Your Image”.

The 1972-73 fiscal year found John Burr serving as President. The Convention was held at the Del Monte Hyatt House in Monterey and the theme was “Put It All Together”. John recalls the development and eventual implementation of an installers’ certification examination license, the sharing of successful ideas through a dealers’ survey and plant operations committee, the successful retardation of restrictive legislation (at least temporarily) and a series of television and radio talk show appearances promoting the good in water treatment.

Mike Hebert was elected to the Presidency for the 1973-74 fiscal year. The theme of the Convention was “A Time To Grow Up” and it was held in Mazatlan, Mexico. There was a fire at the PWCA Office during his term. While Mike is no longer actively involved in the Association, he remains very active in the industry in Salinas. He has been a leader in saline brine issues in his marketplace.

The 1974-75 Convention was held at the Disneyland Hotel and the theme was “Industry Support is Self-Support”. Don Burt was the President and in his message to the membership, he said “This year, we continue the policy we started of aggressively resisting all government agencies who are trying to legislate against our industry, or in any way run us out of business”. This administration featured a couple of “firsts” it was the first Trade Show held since 1962 and the Board elected the first woman (Carolyn Fahnstock) to serve as a Director. Don is retired now and resides in San Jose.

Knox Williams was elected President for the 1975-76 fiscal year with a Convention held in Stateline, Nevada. The theme was “In Unity There is Strength.” Knox’s administration will be remembered for many things, not the least of which is the, “Knox and Bert Traveling Road Show”. Knox and Bert traveled throughout the State and held a total of eight dinner meetings so that members could become better informed about the program launched that year to stay the tide of restrictive legislation. An Industry
Defense Fund was established to begin a two-pronged approach covering the legal and political aspects of our problems that year. The association initiated legal action against the City of Riverside and the State of California, and politically, we had our Legislative Advocate, Chuck Olsen, busy in Sacramento educating the members of the Senate and Assembly on the merits of our industry. Now retired, Knox also served on the WQA Board of Directors and Board of Governors.

Sid Adams was elected President for the 1976-77 fiscal year and was the first non-dealer to become President of the Association. The theme for the Convention held at the Del Coronado Hotel was “21 – The Age of Responsibility”.

The incoming President for the 1977-78 year was Mike Layton. As he began his term of office the National Water Conditioning Association was reorganizing and significantly reducing their support of Regional Associations, including PWCA. This situation brought about considerable differences of opinion as to how to continue administering the affairs of PWCA. Recognizing there was a conflict of confidence within the Executive Committee, Mike resigned the office to enable the Association to function more smoothly. A number of years would go by before the National Association and the State/Regional Association would again find themselves united with a common purpose. Certainly, this year began a period in which officers and directors were called to invest more of their time and effort toward common goals.

The President-Elect, Roy Russell, III fulfilled the balance of Layton’s term and then served his own term for the 78-79 fiscal year. In his recollections, Russell says, “the period surrounding 1978 was characterized by a new tactic in the PWCA battle to stop the spread of ordinances that prohibit automatic softeners. We decided to try changing state law!” Several mileposts marked the progress down this new road. One of the most important was the PWCA-sponsored plan to get competing companies to agree on a program to make water softeners more salt-efficient. This program was finalized with the proposal for a new law (SB 2148) that would give cities the opportunity to try the PWCA Salt Efficiency Program as a substitute for the outright ban of automatic softeners. While SB 2148 did become law, it would be some time before the value of it was completely understood. Roy remains active in the Industry in San Jose, CA. He also went on to serve as President of WQA.

Hank Thomason served as President in 1979-80 and oversaw some significant changes in the operations of the Association. First of all, the name was changed from Pacific Water Conditioning Association to Pacific Water Quality Association. Secondly, a staff reorganization gave Carolyn Fahnestock the responsibility for the office administration and made Bert Keilin Technical Consultant.
1980-81 the Association was led by George Graham. He was the 3rd non-dealer President which firmly established that leadership would come from industry ranks other than just Dealers. Continuing to this day there have been Presidents from the Dealer ranks, Manufacturers, Suppliers and allied members. There is a continued effort for a balanced Board of Directors where Association Leadership is developed. The convention was held in Newport Beach and the theme was “PWQA” – 1981: Recipe for Success.

John Angel was the last President to serve the Association in its first quarter century of operation. He detailed initiatives in public relations and education in his message to the Industry. Collaboration with WQA in the public relations arena and a five-year strategic plan was developed. It was a quiet year where legislation against our industry was concerned, and the board initiated a plan to hold two meetings a year in opposite ends of the State to better inform members about association activities. John is retired and living in Cambria.

The Presidency of Roger Berube during fiscal year 1982-83 is best told in his own words in the message to the membership. “Confronted with a continuing economic slow-down in California, the Association embarked on a number of projects designed to keep our members better informed; projects like an Office Personnel Workshop, a Table-Top Trade Show, a Sales Tax Seminar, a Technical Service Workshop, an Accounts Receivable Help Workshop, Round-Table Discussion meetings, a Public Relations Workshop and an Industry meeting to determine how to fight off a new restrictive ordinance. Particularly significant was the successful effort to stop a restrictive ordinance in Firebaugh. Was SB 2148 working? Time would tell!

1983-84, Mark Felton was President of the Association and the Convention was held on the Queen Mary in Long Beach. The Association was in its 27th year and we had just elected a President who was 25 years old. Mark recalls being both humbled and excited. Government Affairs was relatively quiet during his term. This year marked the first North vs. South Athletic Contest, this year it was baseball. A Water Quality Profitability, Legal and Business Planning Workshop was held; outstanding speakers were invited to share insights on important topics that small business can struggle with. Mark went on to serve as the PWQA Regent to WQA for several years and also served on the WQA Board of Directors. He continues to be active in PWQA.

Gerry Dierolf was the 1984-85 President and embarked on a new strategy for PWQA that paid dividends in the years to follow. Gerry invited Jay Malinowski, who was the Public Affairs Director for the Metropolitan Water District at the time, to meet and explore a friendly relationship with the Association. This bold step proved valuable in lending credibility where we were concerned to this agency, which, through successive years, advocated on our behalf. During the Dierolf administration there was also the successful defeat of a proposed automatic softener banning ordinance in Cambria. Gerry moved to Florida, where he went on to serve as President of the Florida Water Quality Association. He has also served on the Board of Directors of WQA and as WQA President.
Bill Dodd, Jr. writes that 22 years ago, he was installed as President of PWQA in beautiful Lake Tahoe! “Past President Gerry Dierolf had handed over to me a Trade Association with a great staff, Carolyn Fahnestock and Mary Lou Harris; and a great Board of Directors - and together, we all had a goal of making PWQA strong in Governmental Relations and to bring to bear a strong Public Relations Focus. In dealing with the potential Cambria Ban, we were able to work with the Community Water District by agreeing that we would finance service calls so that member dealers were able to set efficiency levels as prescribed by SB 2148. Ted Sands took on this challenge and together with Culligan, Rayne and Ecodyne as financial partners, we were successful with this program. The mid-year meeting was held at the incredible Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite where the planning and strengthening of our Public Relations and Governmental Affairs programs were in full swing. We soon were facing a new bill introduced by Senator Daniel McCorquodale. The issue was false advertising of a water treatment device by any means.” And, eight days later, a bill was introduced by Senator Art Torres requiring the State Department of Health Services to adopt standards, by regulation, to establish reliable certification methods for POU products. In cooperation with WQA, Dodd and his administration worked very hard in Sacramento to make language changes acceptable to industry members. These laws continue in effect today. The Convention was held in Kauai, Hawaii. While Bill certainly raised the bar where meeting locations were held, he goes on to say it was the men and women working together to move the water industry forward in California he remembers most. He says that he enjoyed the wonderful friendships and appreciated the support of those closest to him in 1987, including (but by no means limited to) his Father, Bill Dodd, Sr., Mark Felton, Bill Ferguson, Chris Layton, Pat Dalee, Carolyn Fahnestock, Bill Fritz-sche, Don Mahlstedt, Doug Oberhamer, Roy Russell and Knox Williams. Bill went on to serve the WQA as President and was inducted into the WQA Hall of Fame in 2000.

1985-86 brought Bill Ferguson to the forefront as President. He mentions the brine discharge problems of today as being the same as those 40 years ago. A little like the movie “Ground Hog Day” he says! He recalls his year as President as proving value to members and the public. PWQA established a toll free hot line and enhanced the Public Relations program to address customer and member concerns. Press conferences were held throughout the State. He goes on to say that it is fortunate that history shows these events we dealt with created little apostasy with regards to our products from the consumer standpoint. He credits PWQA for actions and ongoing resourcefulness to both members and the public in the recognition of our products and services. Bill went on to serve on the WQA Board of Directors.

Dennis Gallifent shares a distinction with Roy Russell, III. They both served 18 - month terms in office as President. A change in the PWQA Organizational Year brought to Dennis the responsibility to extend his term. His Presidency in 1987-88 is recalled for member meetings at both ends of the State where he brought timely issues to the membership directly by inviting speakers to address their concerns. Prop 65 was one such subject. The Convention was held in San Diego and the theme was “Charting New Waters”. Dennis went on to serve on the WQA Board of Directors.
In 1988-89 fiscal year, Chris Layton served as President. As his term began, the Board of Directors faced a larger automatic softener ban threat than any they had previously experienced. The San Diego County Water Authority was pushing a water reclamation plan that would potentially ban automatic softeners throughout the County in select areas, notably those primed for future development. For the entire 12 months of his term, Layton interacted with the water authorities. Realizing early on that this major market development would have a far-reaching impact, he and Vice-President Pat Dalee diligently worked together. They developed a strategy that would unfold over the following three years that resulted in a lawsuit brought by PWQA and WQA to defend the contents of SB 2148 which had been passed back in 1980. The subsequent victory, some seven hard fought years later, brought about industry protection from future frivolous bans and reopened previously lost markets for new automatic softener sales. Continued good relations with the Metropolitan Water District were nurtured and found beneficial in this ongoing salinity issue. The Convention was held at the El Conquistador Resort in Tucson, Arizona and the theme was “A Quality Water Marketing Oasis”. Layton went on to serve as President of WQA and was inducted into the WQA Hall of Fame in 2000.

Pat Dalee, President 1989-90, picked up the baton and ran right from the start of his term, a very productive year for the Association. In addition to the ongoing salinity battle regarding automatic water softeners, there was also legislation aimed at industry drinking water products through SB 2334. Working hand-in-hand with WQA, we were successful in eliminating potentially harmful language from the bill. The resulting requirements for shut off valves and retrofits proved to be a responsible solution suggested by the Industry and beneficial to regions enduring periodic droughts. Most significant during Pat’s term was the continued relationship-building that took place between PWQA and WQA. Working closely with Pat Theisen at WQA, Dalee was able to firmly set the foundation for support that would evolve in the coming years. As his Presidential year came to a close, the WQA announced it had hired Carlyn Meyer to be the WQA Regional Manager. This proved to be very beneficial to the Association in the coming years. The Convention was held in Anaheim and themed “FOCUS ON TOMORROWLAND”. Pat went on to serve as a Director and President of WQA and was inducted into the WQA Hall of Fame in 2004.

For the 1990-91 fiscal year Chris Ising served as President. A continuing five-year drought brought both challenges and opportunities for the industry. Challenges in dealing with agencies wanting to discourage use of industry modalities of water treatment (claiming there was water waste opportunities) were met by addressing these charges positively, which resulted in a higher profile for the Association both with agencies and the public as well. Ongoing attention to pending legislation and continued efforts in San Diego County to eliminate the sale of automatic softeners led to a growing sense that potential legal action might be the appropriate way to mount a proactive defense of our future as an Industry. Chris’ Convention was held in Reno, Nevada and the theme was “PWQA PAYS OFF”. Chris continues to operate his Northern California business in Livermore and Stockton.

1991-92 President Mark Hoaglin’s Convention was held in Palm Springs at the Riviera Resort and the theme was “GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES”. The year was highlighted by ongoing motions in the lawsuit which had been filed by PWQA and WQA and a less than stellar economy. The Convention was notable for the quality of the
educational sessions and the keynote address by Senator Ruben Ayala who talked about the continued need for a water transportation system statewide.

Howard Connor picked served as President for fiscal year 1992-93. The Convention was held in Anaheim and the theme was “YESTERDAY...TODAY...TOMORROW: CALIFORNIA’S WATER WORLD”. Governmental affairs issues remained constant with all parties waiting to see the outcome of the ongoing lawsuits against the City of Escondido, City of Santa Maria and County of Santa Barbara. The drought was over, but it left issues such as standards for automatic water softeners for industry to deal with. Howard led the Board of Directors in determining how they would function administratively going forward with the planned retirement of Carolyn Fahnestock. Howard remains engaged in his Santa Cruz water treatment business today.

Fiscal year 1993-94 brought good news to the Association during Glenn Warner’s Presidency. The lawsuits in Escondido, Santa Maria and County of Santa Barbara were decided in our favor. An effort by the City of Los Angeles to ban automatic water softeners was negotiated successfully by PWQA and Carlyn Meyer, and the San Diego City Council also backed away from negative attention toward our Industry. Glenn spent considerable time attending to the administrative functions of PWQA and oversaw the hiring and training of Debbie Cosper as Executive Director. Glenn remains associated with South Bay Salt Works and slips in and out of Association activities from time to time.

Bill Livingston was President for the 1994-95 fiscal year, when the Convention was held again in Anaheim with a theme of “HATS OFF TO CONSUMERS”. Bill's year, overall, was engaged with continuing on the success and growth previously achieved. He spent a limited time with the industry in California and is no longer working in the water improvement field.

“THE WATER CARNIVAL EXTRAVAGANZA” Convention of 1995-96 was held in Anaheim at the conclusion of Dan Robey's term as President. Dan led the Board of Directors during a time of declining membership, which challenged the Association. Simultaneously, there was very little happening legislatively which allowed members the luxury of sharpening skills and furthering communication activities. A revamped quarterly newsletter was created, and a renewed foundation was put in place for public relations. Dan continues to operate his business in Northern California.

Major Avignon served as President during the fiscal year 1996-97 and the Convention was again held at the Riviera Resort in Palm Springs. The theme was “40 YEARS OF ROCK SOLID HITS”. Of significant importance during Major’s term was the California Appellate Court decision being upheld by the Supreme Court of California, upholding the victories in the lawsuits filed by PWQA and WQA against the City of Escondido, City of Santa Maria and County of Santa Barbara. Even more significant in this landmark decision was the fact that previously closed markets were reopened to the sale of automatic water softeners. The work done during the Roy Russell, III administration in 1978-79 and subsequent administrations had brought renewed life to a major element of our Industry’s sales arsenal. Continued declining membership created challenges both in the equitable distribution of necessary volunteer work and in declining financial resources. Major continues to operate his Southern California business.
1997-98 fiscal year President Fred Kuppers led the Association during an overall continued “light” period from a Governmental Affairs standpoint. Fred was the third-to-last President to come from the Dealer ranks, as consolidation within the industry was morphing smaller members into larger, corporately owned divisions. Fred is now retired.

The 1998-99 fiscal year presented another first for PWQA. The glass ceiling was broken with the election of Anne Marie Finn as President. Anne Marie’s background was in Public Relations and this is where she put her considerable talents as President. She had been actively involved as a Director prior to her election and continued her outreach emphasis during this period. She continues to operate her business in Escondido today.

Bill Wallace was elected President for the 1999-2000 fiscal year. Bill is the last Dealer Owner to serve the Association as President. While the consolidation situation had slowed, there remained fewer and fewer independent owner or franchise owner-dealers to step forward in leadership positions. Sadly, Bill passed away at a very young age.

Fiscal year 2000-2001 and Tracy Strahl led the Association as President. New legislative challenges kept Tracy busy during his term and have kept him busy ever since. Tracy has distinguished himself through his monitoring of Governmental Affairs for the benefit of the Association and the entire Industry ever since his term as President. SB2006 brought about challenges in that it returns to local agencies the ability to place bans against automatic softeners when certain criteria are met. Tracy has monitored this in the ensuing years. This was the overwhelming focus of his administration. Tracy continues to operate his business in San Diego. He has gone on to serve on the WQA Board of Directors, where he remains involved in Governmental Affairs.

Ron Ruef, 2001-02 President, writes that it was a challenging year for the Association. The Association faced decreasing finances as a result of the ongoing consolidation of many businesses. It was determined that the position of Executive Director would be eliminated. The Association office was moved to space made available by Nimbus Water Systems and Cyndi Pagliaro was retained as part time Administrative Assistant of Association activities. Ongoing legislative and public relations activities consumed a great deal of time in making agencies aware of the timeline and requirements of SB 2006. Ron remains actively involved in the Industry.

In fiscal year 2002-2003, Bob Denne served as President. He recalls that a majority of the time was spent on continuing salinity issues. AB334 had been introduced which further defined how agencies could go about banning water softeners. Grassroots activity by members throughout the State helped reduce the negative impact of this bill. In an effort to be more proactive, the Association resurrected and pushed a PAC Fund Drive. This effort continues to this day. Sacramento Lobbyist Kathy Rees pointed out the difficult challenge term limits had placed on legislative “memory,” which makes the aggressive marketing of our industry more necessary than ever before. The Convention was held in Tucson, Arizona again at the El Conquistador Resort where PWQA Leaders and Arizona WQA discussed the likelihood of salinity issues moving East. Bob continues in the Industry.
Tony Pagliaro served as President during the 2003-2004 fiscal year. During that time, Tony moved to Northern California where he purchased an Industry business. Tony held road show meetings throughout the State as a means of reaching out to members. A decision was made early in his administration to hire Kristi Pihl as the Executive Administrator of PWQA on a part-time basis. The office was moved to Performance Water in Buena Park, CA, where it remains today. The Convention was held in Pasadena; the theme was “PROTECTING OUR FUTURE TODAY”. Tony remains involved in the industry in Sonoma County.

Fiscal year 2004-2005 brought Mark Howlett to the Presidency. Mark was the first Dealer of a Corporate Dealer Division to serve in this capacity. His administrative and organizational skills were put to use. During this time the quarterly newsletters were established online; a new updated and refreshed PWQA website was introduced; the PR Committee was re-established; by-laws were updated; semi-annual Barbeque Roundups and Industry update meetings began; and interaction with agencies regarding the ongoing salinity issues continued. Significantly, work began with the Inland Empire Utilities Agency on an ongoing program that continues to enhance the perception of the Industry and Association. The Convention was held in Riverside at the Historic Mission Inn and themed “FULFILLING OUR MISSION, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.” Mark remains active on the PWQA Board.

Mike Mecca commented at the time of his address to the membership as he was elected to the position of President of PWQA for fiscal year 2005-2006 that he wanted his year to be quiet! It was not to be. Senator George Runner introduced a bill that if passed in its initial form would mandate the removal of existing automatic softeners in the Santa Clarita Valley. Mike led the Association effectively in negotiating language that, while not completely friendly, did put significant barriers in place prior to the ultimate removal of existing softeners. This huge effort was the predominant activity of his Presidency. Simultaneously, Legislative Days, the Barbeques, and Newsletters, all started in prior administrations, continued with noted improvement. The Convention was held on the Queen Mary in Long Beach for the second time. Mike remains active on the PWQA Board and in his business.

Finally, as the Association prepared to enter into its' 50th year of existence, Terry Heckman was installed as President for the 2006-2007 term. During the year, Terry and the Board of Directors dealt with an increase in salinity discharge issues and a number of community ordinances restricting the installation of self-regenerating water softeners. In addition California was entering into its' seventh year of drought which manifested a new concern … water restrictions. One of the primary objectives during his Presidency was membership growth and during the year over twenty new members were added to the membership roster. In addition to a successful membership drive, the year was filled with a number of special events and activities. Legislative Days, a new Legislative Lobbyist, Barbeque Round-ups, a Mid-year Board of Directors meeting and the grand finale… the celebration of PWQA’s Golden Anniversary.
To celebrate our Silver Anniversary 25 years ago, a Historical Overview of our Association from the perspective of the Past Presidents was written by Carolyn Fahnestock. Today, as we celebrate our 50th year, this retrospective recaptures the first 25 years and adds the last 25 as we look forward! A 50-year retrospective is a significant undertaking. Annual Directories and reports to the membership were reviewed. A solicitation for comments from former Presidents was made. While we focus here on the Presidents of years past, we feel it important to note that the ongoing work of each successive Board of Directors was responsible for the success of each administration. And, as importantly, there was significant credit due to the administrative and technical staff that has served throughout the last 50 years.

Association trivia for your amusement and possible interest ...

How many family dynasty administrations were there?

• Dodds (Bill and William)
• Russells (Roy Jr. and Roy III)
• Laytons (Glenn, Mike and Chris)
• Thomason/Robey (Hank and Dan)

Including this year’s Incoming President, Karen Smith, there have been 50 Presidents

• 34 Dealers
• three Salt Distributors
• three non-Californian Presidents
• two Women Presidents
• one President who has served as President of another State Association
• six (or more) Presidents who have been married more than once
• one President or more who went on to be elected to a representative position in the community he retired in
• six Presidents who either before, during or after their administration worked for Culligan Water as a Manager in their Company Owned Dealer Division