Writing this article seems a bit surreal as I am usually on the other end and reading the most recent copy of LakeLine. The past couple of weeks have been a whirlwind of activity from attending the annual NALMS conference in Saratoga Springs, NY, to jumping right into the Thanksgiving holiday. Now, I have the pleasure of writing my first “From the President” article. Before I begin with thoughts on this issue’s current theme, let me first introduce myself.

I started working as an intern at the Oklahoma Water Resources Board in 1999 while attending graduate classes. From the beginning, I have been part of the Lakes Monitoring program. I came on board at an exciting time when the agency created the Beneficial Use Monitoring Program where we are responsible for collecting water quality data and assessing each waterbody to determine if it is meeting its assigned use(s). As part of this program, we conduct quarterly monitoring of 130 lakes every five years. As we move into 2016, I will be beginning my 17th year at the Water Board, which hardly seems possible. Taking a line from my friend Reed Green, “do what you love, love what you do, and you’ll never work a day” – such true words and they definitely apply to me. It seems like yesterday that I was the new kid. Over the years, both the program and my role have changed. I have been managing the lakes program since 2002, and in addition to overseeing the day-to-day operations of the program, I participate in several state and federal working groups as well as work with interstate water compacts. There is always something new and my job is always challenging me to do more and learn more. These are just a few of the things that keep things exciting and fresh and motivate me to always look to the future. What once began as a summer job has become a great career. I’m very much a hometown person and feel fortunate to work in a field that allows me to do work that I’m passionate about. I don’t know many folks that have an opportunity to travel their home state on a weekly basis, visiting lakes and towns that most, unless you are from the immediate area, probably have never heard of. While I have no trouble admitting that sampling in the winter months is not a favorite of mine, I still treasure the moments that I can get away from my desk and out on the water. As a student and even now, I can’t think of a better job to have. It has provided me with many opportunities, one of them being my involvement with NALMS.

I began attending the NALMS Chicago meetings in the early 2000s shortly after I began working at the Water Board. These were the first professional lake conferences I had ever been to, and after attending that first meeting I was hooked. Each year, the annual NALMS conference brings great energy, excitement, and the opportunity to learn what is going on in the lake management arena through its diverse program topics on issues that face our lake resources. The opportunity to connect with friends made throughout the years and developing new ones is another reason I have always enjoyed attending the conferences. For those that know me well, I’m a fairly quiet person. Over the years, that has changed somewhat and some of that I contribute to the experiences I’ve had with NALMS. This was key for me in the beginning, it can be intimidating when you are young and new to be around so many folks that have years of experience and are so full of knowledge. Through the years, I have never met anyone that was too busy or wasn’t willing to share their experience with me or pass along something they learned along the way.

When I wanted to get more involved with NALMS someone said “Join a committee!” I took that advice and that’s where my journey really began. I started out on the membership committee, became more involved with our state affiliate, served as program chair hosting the annual symposium in 2010, and from there I joined the Board as the At-Large Director, served as the Region 6 Director, and fast forward to now serving as the NALMS President for 2015-2016. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve the organization in this capacity and look forward to the year ahead with a bit of nervousness and a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm.

Drought, the topic for this issue of LakeLine, is one that many of us have dealt with or are currently experiencing. In a time when there is so much demand on our water resources paired with an ever-changing climate, periods of extended drought are becoming more common. In Oklahoma, as in other states, our landscape is dominated by multipurpose reservoirs. Water supply, flood control, hydropower, and recreation are just a few of the ways these waterbodies serve... (continued on page 33)
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