

THE FOUNDERS AWARD

This award was established by the American Institute of Hydrology (AIH) in 1990 to honor three founders of AIH, Sandor C. Csallany, Roman Kanivetsky, and Alexander Zaporozec, for their initiative and vision in forming the Institute. The Award, consisting of an engraved plaque, will be given periodically at the discretion of the AIH Executive Board to an AIH member for outstanding, long, and dedicated service to the Institute. The first Founders Award was presented at the 10th Anniversary Meeting of the American Institute of Hydrology in Orlando on November 4, 1991.

Citation

It is indeed a great honor for me, and also a great pleasure, to present to you, in the name of AIH founders and on behalf of the Executive Board, the first recipient of the AIH Founders Award, Ralph C. Heath. Shortly after the Executive Board made the decision to present the first Founders Award to Ralph, I commented to my wife that, although I had never given a citation, this was one I would really love to give. The reason is simple: there is hardly anybody in AIH who better embodies two basic predicaments, the standards of excellence and professionalism, that AIH promotes and the devotion to AIH principles and goals, than Ralph Heath.

Ralph's entry into AIH was inconspicuous and unassuming as most of his actions are. He applied just to find out what this new institute is all about, not expecting any privileges for himself. But we were not going to let him in that easy. Ralph was the first person I approached 10 years ago to recruit for the AIH Board of Registration. The first try didn't work -- he was "too busy with finishing two major publications to do a good job." The second try, after several months, was successful. He was just about to retire from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and his two publications were off to the press. So he accepted my invitation to serve on the AIH Board of Registration, became its first Chairman, and the rest is history.

Little did he know what was waiting for him - as a matter of fact neither did I when I told him that his work load would not be that great, just several applications per month. That was true for the first few months of his office. But then the floodgate blew wide open and applications began pouring in at a rate of dozens per day. However, the experience of being Chairman during this "hard-labor" time did not discourage him, and after stepping down as Chairman, he agreed to stay on the Board.

Ralph provided a needed service when the work load of the Board was at the highest, and he has continued to provide an outstanding service ever since. He developed an efficient evaluation system and molded the Board of Registration into a strong body. Under his leadership, the Board established a firm commitment to maintaining the high standards for certification.

Ralph became a strong believer in the AIH mission since the very beginning and became a relentless promoter of AIH ideals and goals. His membership in other societies and association with the leaders of these societies helped also at the outset when the establishment of AIH was met with reservations of other organizations and some individuals.

Ralph spent his entire professional career with the U.S. Geological Survey. In 1948, he started in Florida under the direction of H.H. Cooper. In 1955 he transferred to New York, first as a geologist in charge of the upstate New York ground water program, later as district geologist of New York and southern New

England, and finally as the first chief of the newly created New York district. In 1967, he returned to his home state of North Carolina as district chief, a position he held until his appointment of staff hydrologist at the USGS headquarters in 1981.

In 1982 he retired from the USGS, but not from the profession. He has kept himself busy consulting and teaching ever since -- although I suspect that the first couple of years after the retirement were much taken up by the work for AIH.

Ralph has exercised a strong personal devotion to the advancement of the competence of young hydrogeologists in many ways. During his tenure as district chief, he trained a good many hydrogeologists through one-on-one association. After his retirement, he has contributed to the advancement of a number of hydrogeologists by teaching as an adjunct professor at the North Carolina State University and several other universities, and through his widely used textbooks "Introduction to Ground Water Hydrology" (which he co-authored with Frank Trainer) and "Basic Ground Water Hydrology," which is one of the best texts for practicing hydrogeologists.

In 1981, Ralph received the Meritorious Service Award from the Interior Department. In 1986, he was selected by the National Water Well Association to present one of the first Distinguished Seminars in Ground Water Science; and was presented the Award for Distinguished Service in Hydrogeology by the Hydrogeology Division of the Geological Society of America. He was selected as the Fourth Annual Darcy Lecturer for 1989-1990.

Ralph Heath's contributions to hydrogeology in the United States are familiar to many hydrogeologists throughout the country, but those of us fortunate to be associated with him and to be his friends admire and cherish more than anything else the human qualities of his warm and generous character. By spending time with him, you not only gain professionally but also personally. And we must not forget the main source of his strength and happiness -- his lovely wife, Martha. They are always there to share, the good times and also the difficult times.

When I was trying to prepare this citation -- knowing that it would be difficult to give justice to all Ralph's contributions to AIH -- I remembered his favorite expression with which he was trying to cheer us up after some especially long and tiring Executive Board meetings: "You know guys, they are going to build you a monument for your hard work." Ralph, I am sorry, we are not going to build you a monument -- although you certainly deserve it -- but we are going to do the next best thing, to present you the first AIH Founders Award. The growth and development of AIH would not be possible without the deep beliefs in AIH mission and commitment of people like Ralph who are willing to give 100 percent of themselves to this goal.

Nothing makes me more happy than to be able to give this citation. Ralph, we have shared the dreams of building a successful organization and you helped make these dreams come true. Thank you very much!

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to present to you the first recipient of the AIH Founders Award, Ralph Carry Heath.

Alexander Zaporozec
General Secretary AIH

Response

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Since retiring from the U.S. Geological Survey about 10 years ago, I have received several awards from professional societies for contributions to ground-water hydrology. To be so recognized in this way by my peers is, to me, a great honor. However, to be the recipient of the first Founders Award of the American Institute of Hydrology is a very special honor, and one that I shall display with great pride.

I first learned of the American Institute of Hydrology in November 1981 when my friend Jerry Meyer sent me a copy of the application for membership that had been received in the Reston office of the USGS. Jerry attached one of his usual cryptic notes -- quote "What do you think?"

I applied for membership in June 1982 and was informed in December that I met the requirements. Meanwhile, I received a call from Alex Zaporozec asking if I would be willing to serve as the first Chairman of the Board of Registration. After Alex assured me that my duties as Chairman would leave plenty of time for me to complete my last projects for the USGS and also enjoy the life of a retiree, I reluctantly agreed to accept the appointment. How little did I know!

I attended the first meeting of the Executive Committee in Madison, Wisconsin, in April 1983 where I met, for the first time, Sandor Csallany, Alex, and Roman Kanivetsky -- the three people who founded the Institute and the individuals who are appropriately honored by the Founders Award.

Shortly after the Madison meeting, the Board of Registration began to review the flood of applications that were being received. "Flood" is the correct word because applications were being received at a rate of about 100 per month during the middle of 1983. Clearly, the ten members of the Board could not cope in a timely manner with this deluge of applications. At the Executive Committee meeting in Minneapolis-St. Paul in August 1983, it was decided to form a Task Force to aid in review of applications. This turned out to be an excellent move.

As some of you may recall, the summer of 1983 was also the time when some members of other professional organizations began to react to the establishment of the AIH. These reactions can be stated in the form of questions.

The first was - "Do we need an organization that is concerned with evaluating the professional qualifications of hydrologist?" The obvious answer, of those who asked the question, was NO. Attempts were, in fact, made to get organizations such as the Geological Society of America, to oppose establishment of the AIH on the grounds that it was not needed.

The second question was - "Why should the American Institute of Hydrology be the certifying organization?" This question prompted the National Water Well Association to schedule "The Great Debate" at its annual meeting in St. Louis in the fall of 1983 -- at which I represented the AIH. Unfortunately, I could not convince Jay Lehr that it would be counterproductive to start a competing certification program. Jay, as some of you may remember, is not a good listener.

And, finally, the third question, which was - "Who are these people who are trying to start the AIH anyway?" The answer to this question was obvious because by then many of the world's most

distinguished hydrologists showed their support for the Institute by applying for membership. These included Peter Wolf, who is with us tonight from London; Ray Linsley, who was the first Senior Vice President; C.V. Theis; Leo Beard; Ray Nace; Harold E. Thomas; Abel Wolman; and many, many others that time will not permit me to mention.

The important point to note here is that these famous people, through the simple act of applying for membership in the American Institute of Hydrology, were saying to their colleagues, and to others who would claim to be hydrologists, that hydrologists should begin to be concerned about qualifications and the ethics of professional practice. The American Institute of Hydrology was an idea whose "time had come."

I learned long ago not to name specific individuals for outstanding service because of the very real danger of missing people whose service was equally or even more outstanding. However, I must tell you that our early success in processing applications in a timely manner was due to the organizational skills of Roman Kanivetsky, Alex Zaporozec, and Helen Klose and to the truly-dedicated service of several of the original Board members, including Jerry Moore, Ken Brooks, and Pete Hawkins. There were, of course, many others, including Jack Sharp, of the Univ. of Texas and Leon Hyatt, of the Bureau of Reclamation, who served on the Task Force.

I must confess, however, that my memory of those early days is not perfect because, contrary to what Alex told me, during the two years I was Chairman of the Board of Registration I carefully reviewed more than 600 applications, plus the comments on the same applications that had been prepared by other reviewers, and prepared written recommendations to the Executive Committee. As you might imagine, I did not do much else those two years.

To conclude my remarks, I want to go back to the third question that I discussed a minute ago. That is, "Who are those people who are trying to start the AIH?" That question always reminded me of the Lone Ranger programs that ended with the question "Who was that masked man, anyway?" I will tell you tonight that there was not one but three masked men. These are the men who have, for the last ten years, devoted their lives and nearly every minute of their free time to establishing this Institute.

They are the ones who will be honored each time the FOUNDERS AWARD is presented. They are the people who will rightfully be remembered as long as there is an American Institute of Hydrology. Their names are: SANDOR CSALLANY, ALEX ZAPOROZEC, and ROMAN KANIVETSKY.

It has been a special privilege and honor for me to know and to work with these individuals for the last ten years. I cannot imagine anyone being more dedicated to a worthwhile cause. Knowing the time that these men have dedicated to the Institute for the last ten years, I am frankly surprised that they are still married and still have the same jobs they had ten years ago. Hydrologists, both in America and in the remainder of the world owe them, their wives, and their employers a debt of gratitude that they can never repay. Because of my unbounded admiration for these individuals, receiving an award that recognizes their contributions to the American Institute of Hydrology is a high honor and one that I will always cherish.

Thank you for selecting me as the recipient of the first Founders Award.

Ralph C. Heath