

### **Resolutions for 1997**

If the subject were baseball instead of successfully-met New Year's resolutions, my batting average would lie in the neighborhood of 200...hardly enough to fetch a "high hard one." Dismal as my success rate may be, I can't be faulted for lack of ambition and this year I intend to make a huge comeback by mastering a subject that has bested me time and again...finances.

At the end of each year I am forced to admit that I understand as little about solid waste management finances as I do of my own. In both instances I am left with the same burning question: Where does the money go? This past year I included in many of my assignments to writers the admonition to "get cost data," and then "tie those costs to results." In the few instances in which I received substantive data, turning them into anything but the most tenuous conclusions was a task beyond my skills. There seemed always to be too many complicating factors to nail down the cause-and-effect relationship of money-in, garbage-out. Public awareness and education programs launched without the means or intention of measuring their success, for example, appeared with enough frequency to suggest that we run the real risk of becoming a country of over-educated under-achievers when it comes to trash.

The real problem, of course, lies in defining our role. If MSW management were only a matter of taking trash from one place to another and making it disappear from public notice, measuring success would be simple indeed...the system with the lowest cost per unit disposed sets the standard. While such quantifications are important, what lies in the hearts and minds of the public and elected officials sets the guidelines for financial reporting and hence for assessing success. MSW management is the most publicly visible, accessible and in many respects least understood of all environmental issues. Just when you think your principal responsibility lies in the area of "public health and safety," you find yourself in the midst of a tug-of-war between a variety of factions whose agenda often lie outside the boundaries of anything most of us would consider waste management. It's enough to make any reasonable person slink off and lick his wounds...but not I. This is the of the Year of the Rat, I am told, in recognition of which I intend to solve the riddle of MSW finances.

### **Harvey W. Gershman Joins Editorial Advisory Board**

MSW Management is pleased to announce the addition of Harvey W. Gershman, president of GBB, to its Editorial Advisory Board. He has been active in the solid waste management field as an adviser to government and industry for over 25 years. Mr. Gershman has managed market studies, cost and feasibility analyses, contracts development and negotiations, contractor procurements, and project financing activities for a broad range of recycling and solid waste management technologies and services. He has served as an expert witness for arbitration, legal proceedings, and permit hearings on solid waste flow control and economics related matter. He has been instrumental in designing and conducting training and technical assistance programs for such organizations as the National Center for Resource Recovery, US EPA, the US Department of Energy, and the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA). Mr. Gershman is the lead author and instructor for SWANA's training course entitled "Economics, Costs, and Full Cost Accounting for Integrated Solid Waste Management Systems." Mr. Gershman has been a member of the International Board of SWANA, the Board of Directors for the National Recycling Coalition, and The Council for Textiles Recycling, and currently serves as president of the Maryland Recyclers Coalition. In 1993, Mr. Gershman was awarded SWANA's Professional Achievement Award.

Early in his career, Mr. Gershman was involved primarily in the planning and development of materials recovery and fuel preparation projects. He was active in ASTM's E38 Resource Recovery Committee, serving as Chairman of the subcommittee that established specifications for use of waste glass in construction materials. He was also project manager for a Department of the Army project to establish guidelines for recycling at Army installations located in the US. He has been adviser to the US EPA in establishing their urban planning grant program for recycling and waste-to-energy projects. Mr. Gershman was formerly vice president of Gordian Associates, Inc. in Washington, DC, managing energy and environmental consulting. He led one of three technical assistance teams designated by EPA's Office of Solid Waste to provide a comprehensive range of technical, operational, financial, legal, and institutional services to municipalities in resource recovery and solid waste management.