

# VAPGA Celebrates 75 Years Sand, Sun, and Lots of Fun in Virginia Beach



VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

**JULY** 13, 2021

VAPGA members, their families, and guests came together July 11–13 at the Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront in sunny Virginia Beach for the 2021 Summer Meeting! After a long run of successful meetings at the Hilton Virginia Beach, the Marriott provided a change of pace and proved to be a great venue for the event. This year's meeting attracted 84 Marketer and Supplier attendees from 54 different organizations!

The event kicked off on Sunday with a Captain's Choice golf tournament at Heron Ridge Golf Club. While the weather may have been hot, the drinks were cold — special thanks are due to Jill Vargo and Doug Fohl for running the oncourse beverage service, and the Supplier Committee, who sponsored the beverages at the course. We had 28 golfers, and congratulations goes to the winning team of Trent Johnson, Renee Johnson, Randy Doyle, and Zach Eisenman! Our generous hole sponsors raised \$2,250 for the Young Gassers Scholarship Fund.

Monday morning was a full slate of committee meetings, with each committee having an opportunity to discuss their work over the previous months, preview upcoming initiatives, and solicit input from committee members and

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# President'sMessage



It is a distinct honor and pleasure to reach out to all of you vith my first President's Message!

Kudos and thanks to our outgoing President, Nicole Sullivan! Assuming this role is no easy task at the best of times but Nicole has done a sterling job given that she took over in the midst of a global pandemic as well

as a Commonwealth legislative and executive group who are clearly not friends of our industry.

To all of those who are taking on new roles within our Association, may I also say thank you and welcome. All volunteer organizations are only as good as their leadership team and I feel very confident that our future is in good hands with this strong group. To those who are stepping down, thank you for your service and selflessness – all of our positions are time consuming and require sacrifice.

Some of the key initiatives that I intend to work on are as follows:

- 1. **Government Affairs.** Our industry is under attack and we have to fight back. We have to acquire or sharpen our skills regarding how and when we interact with our legislators local and otherwise. While it might not be an activity that we excel at or look forward to, we simply have to engage more with our elected and appointed officials.
- 2. **Workforce Development.** It is imperative that we continue the good work that Trent Johnson and Randy Doyle have begun so that we continue to make inroads in this important area.
- 3. **Membership Categories and Dues.** You may already be aware that I have formed an Ad Hoc Committee to tackle this "can of worms". As our membership categories currently stand, they are inaccurate and confusing. While a previous decision to simply duplicate the NPGA guidelines seemed expedient, it has left us with a confusing system that needs correction. My plan is to have a new template for the Board

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Ihank You



The VAPGA Board and Staff would like to extend a huge thank you to Nicole Sullivan for her leadership as President over the past year. It was a year unlike any other, and Nicole's vision, commitment, and dedication to the association was key in helping us to adapt and thrive.

Cheers, Madam President!

### Get to Know Colin Wood-Bradley

# How long have you been in the propane industry?

I was fortunate enough to have been offered a position with Suburban Propane in 2008. That lead to a Regional Vice President position at Inergy, then back to Suburban Propane before joining Tarantin Industries in 2018.

# How did you end up in the propane industry?

That was God taking care of me for sure. Long story worthy of a cocktail or two but suffice to say that the Lord had a great plan for me and having an Engineering Degree is always helpful.

#### Do you have a mentor? If so, what's a lesson they've taught you that you'd want to pass on to others?

I am honored and blessed to have Tom Krupa as my mentor in this industry as well as someone who has become a dear friend and fellow member of our Saturday Morning Prayer Group. As far as lessons learned, bless others and keep learning.

#### What aspect of volunteering for VAPGA do you find most rewarding?

Giving back to our industry. Trying to make the most of my God-given talents.

# What are your hobbies/favorite activities outside of work?

God, family, travel, and golf. Having God in my life and my wife at my side brings me great joy. I am blessed with a great extended family and always enjoy my time with them. Golf, in its purest form, is the best sport and character builder that I know of.

#### > President's Message, continued from page 3

to review in the Fall so that we can ultimately put this to the full membership group as soon as possible. Please note that our goal is to keep our dues at current levels wherever possible. This is not meant to hurt any group financially.

4. Social Media. I am also planning on exploring ways that we can expand our presence on as many social media platforms as possible. Some of our target audience regarding education and awareness are the younger members of our communities and we have to reach out to them where they currently spend a good deal of their time – on social media. If anyone has some ideas that they believe would help or some expertise that they would like to share – please let us know; we would welcome your assistance.

On a lighter note, as some of you are aware, I am originally from the "Great Land Down Under" (aka Australia) and I try to remain a good ambassador. In light of that, I am going to put a personal touch on my time as President and, as such, I will be making available in the Suppliers Suite at least one bottle of red and one bottle of white wine from Australia at each of the meetings that I will be presiding over. I trust that many of you will have a chance to enjoy them. And, yes, I may even bring some Vegemite for those brave souls willing to give it a try!

Thank you all and God Bless,

Colin Wood Bradley President

#### 2021 Rebates



an application and pre-approval numbers.

# REGISTRATION OPENS SOON! FALL MEETING October 10–12, 2021 The Virginian, Lynchburg, VA



Join us in beautiful Lynchburg, VA on October 10-12 at the historic Virginian Hotel for the Virginia Propane Gas Association's 2021 Fall Meeting! We have a great event planned, including a golf tournament, industry updates, and networking/ meal events with clients and colleagues!

Ensuring the wellbeing of our attendees is of paramount importance and a shared responsibility. VAPGA and our host, the Virginian Hotel, will be implementing a variety of protocols and practices, consistent with federal, state, and local COVID guidelines and requirements at the time of the event. Together with our attendees, we can make this event a safe, enjoyable, and rewarding experience for all.

The Virginian Hotel COVID Protocols & Practices

- The Virginian Hotel Group Rate is \$159 + tax per night.
- Day self-parking is complimentary, overnight self-parking is \$10, valet parking is \$10.
- Make a reservation online or call 434-329-3200. If you call, be sure to state that you are with the "Virginia Propane Gas Association" or "VAPGA" room block to qualify for the group rate. Rate cannot be changed later if you fail to do so.

Learn more here: www.vapga.org/fall-meeting

#### > Summer Meeting, continued from page 1

the membership at-large. Thanks to all the committee chairs and committee members for their hard work. Once the committee meetings wrapped up, attendees had a free afternoon to enjoy the beach, pool, or play some more golf.

Tuesday morning began with the Executive Director's Report, and an NPGA Update from current NPGA Chair and Berquist CFO, Bob Barry. We extend our gratitude to Bob for making the trip down to Virginia to experience VAPGA firsthand! Following Bob was a presentation on cybersecurity and digital threats from Terry Reece of Sera-Brynn—a global cyber security firm based in Chesapeake, VA.

Up next were Trent Johnson and John Phillips, who did a live demonstration of how to conduct a legislative visit. Thanks to Trent and our favorite mock-Senator, Senator Phillips, for playing along. VAPGA lobbyist, Mike O'Connor, gave his update on the state of energy policy and the General Assembly, and previewed the upcoming Governor's race. Dennis Cruise presented on safety and training, and NPGA State Director Brian Atwood reported on his work with NPGA since the last meeting in April. The final speaker of the morning was V.E.T.S. Co-Founder, Jesse Lord, who provided a progress report on the ongoing Vets2Techs program. Following the morning's speakers was the VAPGA Annual Membership meeting, during which the new slate of officers and board members was presented to and approved by the membership. Additionally, a bylaw amendment was approved by the membership which helped to clarify voting eligibility and procedures. At the culmination of the Annual Membership meeting, President Colin Wood-Bradley took to the stage and addressed the association for the first time as President.

Following a break for lunch, the VAPGA and VPREF Board of Directors met for their summer board meetings, capping off a productive two days of association business. Tuesday evening is when the real fun began, starting off with a cocktail reception on a picturesque terrace overlooking the ocean. Then came the 75th Anniversary Celebration Dinner Banquet & Awards Presentation, truly a night to be remembered. Many thanks to everyone who attended, including the nine Past Presidents who were in attendance, each of whom received a bottle of celebratory champagne. Trent Johnson was honored with the 2021 President's Award, and **Randy Doyle** was awarded the VAPGA Safety & Education Award. New VAPGA President Colin Wood-Bradley presented outgoing President Nicole Sullivan with the traditional wooden bobtail and thanked her for her service and dedication to the organization. Last but not

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# **UpcomingEvents**



VAPGA SPRING MEETING April 3–5, 2022 Boar's Head Resort Charlottesville, VA



VAPGA SUMMER MEETING July 10–13, 2022 Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront Virginia Beach, VA



UNITED IN MEETING TODAY'S CHALLENGES:

# THE PROMISE OF

OCTOBER 18-20, 2021 GEORGIA WORLD CONGRESS CENTER, ATLANTA, GA



### NPGA's Expo Registration and Housing are Now Open Save Up to \$300 With Early Bird Rates!

Register today to join your industry colleagues at the **73rd Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo** – and save up to \$300 with early-bird rates!

The Expo, which will be held October 18-20 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, will bring together marketers and suppliers from across the United States and beyond. Visit the **Expo website** for event details, including information about the special guests featured during the keynote and prayer breakfast. **Register Now!** Early Bird registration rates expire October 8.

EventSphere is NPGA's official housing partner for the 2021 NPGA Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo. Book your hotel now! <u>Click here</u> to see hotel information and prices, plus a link to EventSphere's booking site.

For more information, visit the NPGA website.

# **Tell Us Your Story!**

Do you have any company news to share? Big anniversaries? Success stories? Philanthropic events? We'd like to know! Please send your news to Zach Eisenman, Executive Director, at zach@eameetings.com. Your news may be published in future newsletters.

#### > Summer Meeting, continued from page 5

least, **Nicole Sullivan** awarded **Doug Fohl** with the highly sought after (and tongue-in-cheek) "Work from Home Award." Congrats to all of our award winners!

There was also a pirate sighting at the Banquet! A band of pirates, led by Captain **Bill Woodward**, invaded the dinner in search of "The Caribbean Queen, Lady Nicole". The pirates included: "Dead-Eye **Dennis Cruise**", "Cutthroat **Trent Johnson**", "Gunpowder **Meghan Kulinski**", "Mad Dog **Zach Eisenman**", and a host of recruits of all ages. After Captain Bill was strung up, the banquet continued with a rocking performance by an '80s cover band, The Deloreans. Attendees danced the night away and fun was had by all.

Many thanks to all attendees, volunteers, and hotel staff who made the event a success. I'd also like to recognize the 14 companies who showed their support for VAPGA by contributing to the organization as a 75th Anniversary Supporter. Their financial contributions went a long way in helping us make the 75th Anniversary Celebration a special event. Those companies are: **A&B Propane**, **Anderson Propane Service, Inc., Augusta Petroleum Cooperative, Bergquist, Inc., Blossman Gas, Kiros Energy Marketing, Marshall Excelsior Company, NGL Supply** 

### **Welcome New Members!**

DCC Propane LLC (Marketer) Paducah, KY Will Rudich

**PriMedia, Inc.** (Supplier) Garden City, NY Liz Hill

**Thomas Brothers Oil & Propane** (Marketer) Blackstone, VA Dave Seppelt

#### Terminals, Otodata, Puryear Tank Lines, Quality Steel Corp., Tarantin Industries, VA Petroleum & Convenience Marketers Association, and Valley Energy.

We hope you will join us for our Fall Meeting at The Virginian Hotel in Lynchburg October 10-12! See you then.

Each Eisenman **Executive Director** 



# |YoungGassers

Congratulations to our 2021 Young Gassers Scholarship winners. Our four recipients this year demonstrated excellence in the classroom and in their community, and VAPGA is proud to support their academic endeavors with a \$1,500 scholarship.

Click on the award winner's name to view a short video.



#### <u>Caroline Cook</u>

Hometown: Martinsville, VA Freshman Attending James Madison University



#### Rebecca Carlson Hometown: Missouri City, TX

Freshman Attending Clemson University



**Logan Pasley** (no video submitted) Hometown: Penhook, VA Junior Attending Roanoke College



#### Trevor Riddle Hometown: South Boston, VA Freshman Attending VA Tech

### Congratulations to our 2021 Award Winners

President's Award Trent Johnson Bergquist

Safety & Education Award Randy Doyle Holtzman



## Introducing the 2021–2022 VAPGA Officers & Directors

### **OFFICERS**



**Colin Wood-Bradley** 

Tarantin Industries

Secretary

**Taylor Sutton** 

Tiger Fuel



President-Elect Meghan Kulinski Valley Energy



Treasurer Tony Hogue Anderson Propane

NAPGA State Dir

**Brian Atrwood** 

Parker Oil Company



Director to Exec Comm Tripp Greene Woodfin



Immediate Past President Nicole Sullivan Anderson Propane

### DIRECTORS

Tim Carlson Centennial Energy

Tripp Greene Woodfin

Hayley Karicofe AmeriGas

Tom Krupa NGL Supply

Joe Pennesi Davenport Energy

> Supplier Representative Trent McKenzie Woodgate Petroleum

John Phillips Phillips Energy

**Stephanie Richards** *Elite Power and Energy* 

Chuck Tunnell

Scott Turner Sharp Energy

# New 'Energy for Everyone' Brand Highlights Propane's Unique Environmental Advantages

Seven years into promoting propane's value as clean and American made, a fresh industry brand identity has been launched to reflect the values that align it with heightened environmental concerns among consumers.

In 2014, after a historically challenging winter choked supply, triggered price spikes, and planted doubt about the reliability of propane, the industry responded by refreshing its identity to the PROPANE Clean American Energy<sup>®</sup> brand.

Complete with patriotic red, white and blue eagle logo, the brand reflected the fact that the United States was well on its way to becoming the world's leading producer and exporter of propane and made more than enough to meet domestic demand. It also reinforced the idea that clean propane could help Americans meet their emissions reduction goals, stem climate change, and keep air, water, and soil clean for generations to come.

As today's worldwide quest for clean energy mounts, the movement to electrify everything threatens the viability of our industry.

Municipalities nationwide are banning traditional fossil fuels in homes and commercial buildings in response to global warming. Billions of private and public dollars are



being pledged to electrify school buses, forklifts, electric vehicles, homes, and supporting infrastructure.

"The need to establish propane's role in a low-carbon future has never been more critical. Propane must increase its voice in the national energy conversation and assert its commitment to reducing emissions as well as to energy equity to remain a viable energy option," explains Erin Hatcher, Senior Vice President of Communications and Marketing for the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC).

"To do that, we need to change how we tell propane's story through our brand identity and accompanying messages."

A new brand, PROPANE Energy for Everyone<sup>™</sup>, launched July 1. It reflects two pillars for delivering propane's messages in a unified voice:

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# **Make a PAC Donation Today!**

The mission of VAPGA's PAC is to distribute contributions to candidates for the state legislature who, by their acts, demonstrate support of the propane industry and the private enterprise system. Your donations help VAPGA gain visibility and leverage access to promote our industry. Now more than ever, we need your support

to combat the electrification and fuel ban efforts which threaten our industry. Please consider making a donation to the PAC today.

If you'd like to make an investment in the future of Virginia's propane industry, contact **Zach Eisenman**, Executive Director, at <u>zach@eameetings.com</u>, or **John Phillips**, VPAC Committee Chair, at <u>jphillips@peifuels.com</u>.

In addition to PAC donations, please let us know if you would be interested in hosting and/or meeting with a legislator this fall.



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> Energy for Everyone, continued from page 10

# The new messaging will help tell propane's story of energy affordability and its role in reducing carbon emissions now and in the future. It also will make your customers feel even better about their energy choice.

- Access to clean, affordable and renewable energy like propane ensures equity on the path to zero emissions.
- Clean and renewable energy like propane accelerates decarbonization.

"We need our brand identity to reflect the values that propane has always delivered but never promoted – the growing consumer preference for energy that is environmentally responsible, widely available, and affordable for all," Hatcher emphasized. "PROPANE Energy for Everyone<sup>™</sup> does just that."

Elements of the brand identity, including the logo, the tag line, and colors, emphasize propane's environmental benefits rather than its American source.

Hatcher said the new messages and identity resonated well among existing and prospective consumers in propane country as well as B2B audiences tested over the last several months. Those B2B audiences include construction professionals, fleet managers, agriculture producers and environmental thought leaders.

A second round of testing confirmed the new identity makes our audiences more interested in using propane or learning more about propane.

"The new messaging will help tell propane's story of energy affordability and its role in reducing carbon emissions now and in the future. It also will make your customers feel even better about their energy choice," she said.

To introduce and help industry professionals understand the strategy behind the rebrand and how to leverage available assets, a four-part webinar series is available online under the Propane Providers tab on propane.com.

PERC also has created explainer videos, one-page summaries and a host of materials available to download from <u>propane.com</u>. PERC marketing programs began reflecting new identity on August 1.

Additionally, PERC has made available to state associations \$2 million in matching funds for local media purchases that support its national environmental messaging campaign.

For more information, visit propane.com/energyforeveryone.

### 2021–2022 VAPGA Leadership

#### **OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT Colin Wood-Bradley, Tarantin Industries

PRESIDENT-ELECT Meghan Kulinski, Valley Energy

TREASURER Tony Hogue, Anderson Propane

SECRETARY Taylor Sutton, Tiger Fuel

DIRECTOR TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Tripp Greene, Woodfin

NAPGA STATE DIRECTOR Brian Atwood, Parker Oil Company

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT Nicole Sullivan, Anderson Propane

#### DIRECTORS

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SUPPLIER REPRESENTATIVE Trent McKenzie, Woodgate Petroleum

#### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS Elizabeth McCormick, Phillips Energy elizabeth@peifuels.com

MARKET DEVELOPMENT Hayley Karicofe, AmeriGas hayley.karicofe@amerigas.com

SAFETY & EDUCATION Trent Johnson, Bergquist, Inc. trent.johnson@bergquistinc.com

MEMBERSHIP Rita Pecilunas, Otodata rpecilunas@otodatatankmonitors.com

> YOUNG GASSERS Jamison Walker, Blossman Gas jrwalker@blossmangas.com

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c) 5 psi gauge for testing set and lockup pressure in 2 psi regulators d) 35" WC gauge for use in second-stage regulator leak testing The hose assembly has an inlet swivel connection for attachment to the pressure tap valve. The outlet connection is a high pressure (300 psi) industrial quick disconnect coupling for attachment to any of the included gauges.



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#### **Newsletter Editor**

Zach Eisenman, Executive Director zach@eameetings.com

#### **Design & Advertising** Lorraine Meade, Communications Manager lorraine@eameetings.com

### VAPGA CETP Training We Want To Hear From You!

For the foreseeable future, in-person training programs will continue to be on an individual company basis. While we work toward resuming a more "normal" CETP training schedule, we encourage members to reach out to the Education & Safety Committee and Dennis Cruise to make them aware of your needs. Please take a moment to advise the committee of all specific training or safety programs that will deliver the most value to you this year. If you would be willing to host a VAPGA training at your company, please let us know that as well.

> Trent Johnson trent.johnson@bergquistinc.com

Dennis Cruise (434) 841-1636 or propanetrainingservices@gmail.com





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