

## National Petroleum Energy Credit News Spring 2015

### Message from our Current President



Mike Swillo—NPECA President  
2014-2015

It's hard to believe the first quarter of 2015 is over. I was in New England earlier this year with -9 degrees and -26 wind chill.

I know many of you experienced similar record

breaking weather as well. Thankfully, the warm weather of New Orleans is just around the corner. Our annual conference is a wonderful time to renew friendships, enjoy networking and above all, take the learnings from the NPECA conference and make a difference in the workplace. It is a dynamic time in our industry, with lower crude prices, further downsizing and difficult economic conditions. The conference encourages us to exchange ideas and discuss relevant industry issues, whether in the credit area or emerging technologies and trends. Hopefully each of our companies realizes the value and benefit of your participation in our organization, and we can make a difference in the workplace.

The 78th Annual Conference is rapidly approaching and will be held at the Loews Hotel and Conference Center on April 18-21. I would like to thank the many volunteers who are giving their time so generously to ensure our conference is a success. All of the committee members spend countless hours of their own time in organizing this event. A special thanks to Dennis Moon who stepped up and accepted the Program Chair position when our first VP vacated the seat to pursue other career opportunities. Dennis' commitment, knowledge and leadership are greatly appreciated by the entire board. I also want to thank the many sponsors who make this event possible. It is one of the few organizations where sponsors, not only generously support the conference, but also contribute their time

and energy to help the committees find speakers and subject matter experts.

I also want to thank our Executive Directors Mike Brittain and Francie Dix, for their dedication and hard work throughout the year to drive continuous improvement for the organization and deliver an exciting conference. They are a fantastic team making sure every aspect of the conference is managed and executed in a professional and enjoyable manner.

Finally, I want to thank all of our membership for the honor of serving as your 2014-2015 President. This organization is remarkable. We have faced some difficult challenges the past twelve months, however, the Board of Directors and many members have risen to the challenge to ensure our 2015 conference is relevant to our needs and worked persistently to ensure New Orleans is an exceptional conference.

This is an organization that cares about their membership, works collaboratively to make certain NPECA continues to deliver value and educational expertise within our industry. I encourage each member (new and seasoned) to seek ways that you can become more involved and volunteer to make the NPECA conference an even greater event.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at [mike.swillo@shell.com](mailto:mike.swillo@shell.com). I look forward to seeing you all in New Orleans.

Regards,  
Mike Swillo

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# 78th Conference Coming Up

By Neil Jones

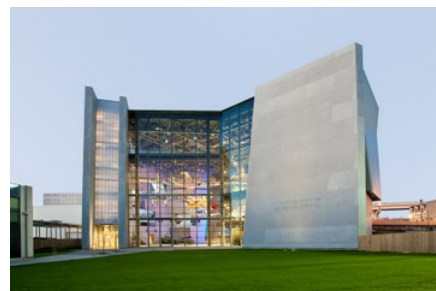
The countdown to the 78th annual NPECA conference has begun. April will be here before we know it and along with April comes the NPECA conference in New Orleans, LA. All the committees have been hard at work organizing the event. Let's not forget Mike Brittain and Francie Dix, who through their hard work and diligence have kept everything on track. If you're receiving this newsletter we truly hope to see you in New Orleans.

This year's conference will be held at the Loews New Orleans Hotel which was recently voted "Top 50 Large City Hotels in the U.S. & Canada" by Travel + Leisure magazine. For your relaxation, the property has a heated lap pool, whirlpool and dry sauna, as well as the Balance Spa.



Bueller...Bueller, don't be Ferris. Don't play hooky. Be sure to attend the many educational break-out sessions provided by the conference. The agenda is noted on pages 5-6, which will allow you to plan your time at the conference. The Program committee has spent much time formulating the topics for discussion. If you don't see something that is of particular interest to you make sure and provide input for next year's educational sessions.

While education is the corner stone of NPECA there is also plenty of time scheduled for fun and networking. The New Member Reception starts at 5pm on Saturday and will be immediately followed by the general Welcome Reception "Welcome to New Orleans". This will be an opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new NPECA members. The grand finale for the evening will take us to the WWII National Museum. This is an incredible opportunity to visit this world class museum in a private party setting. Sunday will start bright and early with the annual golfing event. We'll be playing at the Bayou Barriere Golf Club which is a short bus ride from the hotel. I've heard that the fairways are forgiving but locating the greens will be a bit difficult. They're a little on the small side. There will be an alternative event planned for those who prefer learning about the culinary delights of New Orleans. Wear your walking shoes to this event. Monday morning provides spouses/guests of attendees the chance to hit the town on a "Secrets of New Orleans" tour. Monday evening will provide another chance to network at the President's Reception followed by dinner and entertainment by The Victory Belles. You can wrap up the evening with a visit to the Hospitality Suite to enjoy a nightcap and one last time to network.



As you already know, there is a plethora of things to do and sights to see in New Orleans.

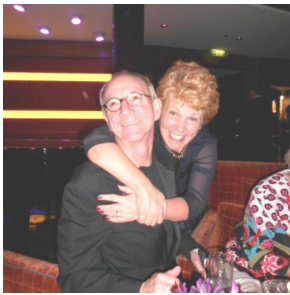
Here are just a few, soak up the scenery of the historic French Quarter, tour the elegant Garden District and enjoy the colorful characters of Frenchmen Street. For the supernatural side you can take in the Voodoo Museum or take a guided ghost or vampire tour through taverns, alleyways, and cemeteries. If shopping is more your style, stroll through The Outlet Collection Riverwalk New Orleans located on the river adjacent to the convention center.

Plan to get in a few days early or stay a few days extra to enjoy all the city has to offer. Find out more online at <http://www.neworleansonline.com/>

Hope to see you there.

# 78th Conference Coming UP

## 78th Annual Conference from the Executive Director's Perspective



### NOLA with a Fitbit!

When I say from the Executive Director's Perspective, I mean from both Francie Dix and me, (Mike Brittain). And when I say Fitbit I am referring to the step-counting device we both go everywhere with. And, when I say step-counting, I mean conversion to "miles" and all the other things it keeps track of.

On one of our early 'discovery' trips to the Crescent City we had opportunities to see the city from the streets. We made it a point to walk everywhere. From our downtown conference hotel location we were able to explore many areas of the city by just walking downtown, French Quarter, Warehouse District, the River Walk, the new mall on the river, Mardi Gras World, The National WWII Museum, numerous places to eat and many, many shops with bargains galore. Specialty shops abound in the city. I even found a men's clothing store that actually carries my size.

I'm not writing to promote any establishment or shop because to do so would limit any reader of this piece to what "else" they can find on their own without hardly even trying. Chicory Coffee, Beignets, Diners for burgers, Fine dining for your favorites, oysters-on-the-half-shell, (bloody Mary's), seafood, NOT seafood, (bloody Mary's), shopping, (bloody Mary's). Well . . . you're starting to get the point.

One afternoon we walked to the trolley stand and rode the St. Charles Street trolley out about 30 blocks into the Garden District where we exited and walked over to Magazine Street. I'd never been to this particular area and what a treat we found there. Tremendously quaint neighborhood, lots of different places to eat all sorts of different food if you're not into, or want something else besides etouffee, gumbo and the nicely rich fare so identified with New Orleans. And shopping. We were so enamored with the area that we insisted on its inclusion in the D&B Spouses Tour this year.

All-in-all, in the four days we were in New Orleans last summer we walked between 17,000 and 23,000 steps per day. With my 28 inch stride that comes to between 7 and 11 miles per day. And Francie was with me every step of the way. Now the key point here is; I felt safe with every step, I never wandered off into any area where I felt the least bit uncomfortable and, if I felt I was too far away from the hotel to walk back, I hailed a taxi, a pedi-cab, a trolley or a horse-drawn carriage – and let's not forget UBER. (I just downloaded the app on my phone).



The main difference from last summer to our upcoming conference is that Francie and I will be putting that many steps on our Fitbits IN and AROUND the Loews Hotel.

So, to keep your step-counting device happy, be sure you pack a pair of very comfortable walking shoes to explore every nook and cranny of this 'on-the-move' city.

Mike Brittain & Francie Dix, Executive Directors, Welcome YOU to New Orleans April 18-21, 2015!

# 78th Conference Agenda

## Saturday 4/18/2015

11:00 AM	5:00 PM	Conference Registration Desk - Open
2:00 PM	4:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting (closed meeting)
5:00 PM	6:00 PM	New Member Reception
6:00 PM	7:00 PM	Welcome Reception
7:00 PM	9:00 PM	National WWI Museum

## Sunday 4/19/2015

11:00 AM	3:00 PM	Conference Registration Desk - Open
7:00 AM	2:00 PM	19 <sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament--Bayou Barriere
8:00 AM	12:00 PM	Alternate Event – The Culinary Secrets of New Orleans
3:00 PM	4:30 PM	Counterparty Credit Risk Management and Credit Scoring Modeling
3:00 PM	5:00 PM	Card Brands Forum
5:00 PM	???	Open Free Time/On Your Own

## Monday 4/20/2015

6:00 AM	8:30 AM	Late Registration
7:00 AM	8:00 AM	Breakfast Buffet
8:00 AM	9:00 AM	Opening Ceremony & General Session
8:30 AM	2:00 PM	Spouse's Tour -- Secrets of New Orleans
9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Keynote Address: Economic Outlook (S&P & Platts)
10:00 AM	10:30 AM	Refreshment Break
10:30 AM	11:30 AM	Keynote Address: Energy Burrito
11:30 AM	11:45 AM	NPECA Announcements
12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Past President's Lunch
12:50 PM	1:10 PM	Q&A Leadership and Volunteers
1:15 PM	2:45 PM	Financial Analysis Part I
		Letters of Credit

General	Networking
Retail	Commercial

# 78th Conference Agenda

## Monday 4/20/2015

1:30 PM	2:30 PM	Retail Credit -- EMV		
2:45 PM	3:15 PM	Refreshment Break		
2:45 PM	3:45 PM	Retail Credit -- US Secret Service		
3:15 PM	4:45 PM	Bankruptcy Basics	Best Practices Panel	
4:00 PM	5:30 PM	Board of Directors Meeting (closed meeting)		
4:00 PM	5:00 PM	Mobile Commerce & Emerging Technologies		
5:00 PM	5:45 PM	Retail Meet & Greet--General Pump Security Products		
6:00 PM	7:00 PM	President's Reception		
7:00 PM	9:30 PM	President's Banquet (Hosted by MasterCard)		
8:30 PM	9:30 PM	After Dinner Entertainment -- "Victory Belles"		
9:30 PM	11:30 PM	Hospitality Suite (Hosted by D&B)		

## Tuesday 4/21/2015

7:00 AM	8:00 AM	Continental Breakfast		
7:00 AM	8:00 AM	Past President's Breakfast (Private function)		
8:00 AM	9:00 AM	Legislative/Regulatory Update		
8:00 AM	9:00 AM	Putting First Things First		
9:15 AM	10:30 AM	Asphalt Suppliers, Protect and Collect		
9:15 AM	10:30 AM	PCI 3.0 What Every Petroleum Merchant Needs to Know		
9:15 AM	10:30 AM	Bankruptcy Update	Financial Analysis Part II	
9:30 AM	10:00 AM	Refreshment Break		
10:00 AM	11:30 AM	Data Security in the Payments Space		
10:40 AM	11:15 AM	Insurance & Bonds	The Legal Process of Collections	Unaudited Financial Analysis
11:30 AM	1:00 PM	Installation Lunch (Prizes)		
1:00 PM	2:00 PM	Card Brand Merchants (Closed Meeting Session)		
2:00 PM		Conference Adjourns--Thank You for Your Attendance		

General	Networking
Retail	Commercial

## 78th Conference Sponsors

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Without our conference sponsors, it would not be possible to keep our expenses at an affordable level to all of our members. We appreciate all of our sponsors and recognize their commitment to NPECA.

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### Conference Sponsors:

ABC Amega  
Allegro Development  
American Express  
Bank of America Merchant Services  
Citi Cards  
**Discover Network**  
**Dun & Bradstreet**  
ExxonMobil Chemical  
General Credit Forms  
**Heartland Payment Systems**  
**MasterCard**  
NACS  
One Source Risk Management  
Rapid Ratings  
Schneider Electric  
**Visa**  
WEX  
Williams & Williams

### Meet & Greet Vendor Hosts:

Flint Loc  
InstaKey  
CompX  
NovaVision

# Scholarships Program

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By Craig Sperry

Did you know that the NPECA provides five scholarships, four \$1,000 scholarships and the \$1,500 Jerry Dean Memorial Scholarship, to dependents of an active Regular or Honorary NPECA member? The deadline for applying for these scholarships was Friday, March 20th. To be eligible, the member must have:

- Maintained their membership in the NPECA a minimum of one year prior to the candidates' application.
- Candidates must be accepted or enrolled in an accredited college and carry at least 12 hours of college credit each semester. Those pursuing a post graduate degree are also eligible.
- Scholarship applicants must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher.
- A member may have multiple dependents apply and each may be awarded scholarships.

Additional rules and details can be found in the scholarship application.

Please contact Craig Sperry, Education Committee Chairperson at [craig.sperry@valero.com](mailto:craig.sperry@valero.com) with any questions.

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Interesting figures about the scholarship program:

2005 -2014	
Number of Individual Recipients	Total Amount Awarded
32	\$ 54,000.00

# Membership Update

By Pam Green

Hello everyone! Hard to believe another year has come and gone and it's almost time for the NPECA's annual conference being held at the Lowes New Orleans Hotel, April 18th – 21st! I want to thank each of you for continuing to be ambassadors for our wonderful organization and sharing with your colleagues all of the great benefits that are offered. The NPECA truly values your membership as we continue to strive to provide you with the educational and networking opportunities that you have come to expect. This year is no different as the Program Committee has been very busy putting together another wonderful program for this year's conference.

As I'm sure you are all well aware, annual dues remained at a very reasonable \$175 for this year. Please continue to encourage others to renew or join NPECA, either as a Regular Member (a company directly involved in the petroleum industry) or as an Associate Member (a company that provides credit support services to those directly involved in the petroleum industry). Remember, when you recruit a new member, both you and your new recruit will be eligible to win one of the following prizes that will be awarded during the Monday morning general session:

New Member Prize – \$100 ; Recruiter Prize - \$100

The New Member Prize will be awarded, by draw, to a new Regular or Associate NPECA Member for 2015, provided they have paid their annual dues prior to the beginning of the conference. The Recruiter Prize will also be awarded, by draw, to a member that has recruited a new Regular or Associate NPECA Member for 2015 prior to the beginning of the conference. Be sure the new members you recruit include your name in the 'Referred By' section of the membership application. Membership applications can be found on our web site at [www.NPECA.org](http://www.NPECA.org). The more new members you recruit, the more chances you have to win one hundred dollars! You do not need to be present to win.

Hope to see you all in New Orleans!

Pam Green  
NPECA Membership Committee

Membership Data							
<i>Period</i>	<i>Regular Members</i>	<i>Honorary Members</i>	<i>Associate Members</i>	<i>Total Members</i>	<i>Regular Member Firms</i>	<i>Associate Member Firms</i>	<i>Total Member Firms</i>
2013-2014	216	57	118	391	95	45	140
2014-2015	196	50	107	353	98	49	147



# Member Firms Represented

## Regular Membership Firms

3-D Financial Services  
7-Eleven, Inc.  
Aloha Petroleum, LTD  
Alon Brands  
Alon USA, LP  
Angus Energy  
Big West Oil, LLC  
Boyett Petroleum  
BP Americas BSC/EOR FUC  
BP Products North America  
Bridger, LLC  
Carter Energy Corporation  
Casey's General Stores, Inc.  
CenterPoint Energy, Inc.  
Chevron Natural Gas  
Chevron Products Co.  
Chevron USA  
CHS, Inc.  
CITGO Petroleum Corporation  
Coffeyville Resources, LLC  
Concord Energy LLC  
Coulson Oil Company, Inc.  
Cross Oil Refining & Marketing  
Cumberland Gulf Group  
CVR Energy, Inc./Coffeyville Resources  
Delek Refining LTD  
EchoSat, Inc.  
Eni Trading and Shipping  
ExxonMobil Corporation  
ExxonMobil Chemical  
Fauser Energy Resources  
Flint Hills Resources, LP  
George E. Warren Corporation  
Growmark, Inc.  
Gulf Oil LP  
Hartland Fuel Products, LLC  
Hess Corporation  
High Sierra Energy, LP  
Holiday Companies  
HollyFrontier Corporation  
Hunt Refining Company  
HWRT Oil Company  
Indigo Energy Partners, LLC  
Inergy Propane LLC  
IPC (USA), Inc.  
Koch-Glitsch, L.P.  
Kroger  
Kum & Go  
Kwik Trip, Inc.  
Lansing Ethanol Services, LLC  
Love's Corporation/Travel Stops  
Macquarie Energy North America  
Mansfield Oil Company  
Marathon Oil  
Marathon Petroleum Company LP

Martin Energy Services, LLC  
Mieco, Inc.  
Murex N. A. Ltd.  
Murphy Oil Corporation  
Murphy Oil USA, Inc.  
Musket Corporation  
NCRA  
Nexen Marketing  
NuStar Energy, LP  
PBF Energy, LLC  
Phillips 66 Company  
Plains Marketing, LP  
Plains Midstream Canada  
PMI Comercia International  
Poma Holdings Company  
Pro Petroleum, Inc.  
Rip Griffin Truck Service Center  
Quarles Petroleum  
QuikTrip Corporation  
RaceTrac Petroleum, Inc.  
Ricochet Fuels  
Robinson Oil Corporation  
SC Fuels  
Sheetz, Inc.  
Shell Oil Products US  
Shell Trading US Company  
Sinclair Oil Corporation  
Spectra Energy Corporation  
Speedway LLC  
Statoil North America, Inc.  
Suncor Energy (USA) Inc.  
Sunoco, LP  
Tauber Companies  
Tesoro Companies, Inc.  
Tesoro Corporation  
The Jankovich Company  
The Kroger Company  
The Pantry, Inc.  
Thorntons Inc.  
Tower Energy Group  
TransMontaigne Product Services Inc.  
Truman Arnold Companies  
U.S. Venture  
US Oil Trading LLC  
Valero Energy Corporation  
Wawa, Inc.  
Western Petroleum Company  
Western Refining, Inc.  
World Fuel Services, Inc.

## Associate Membership Firms

ABC-Amega, Inc.  
Accertify  
ACI Worldwide  
Allegro Development  
Alon Brands

American Collection Services,  
American Express  
Ansonia Credit Data  
Bank of America Merchant Services  
Chase Paymentech  
Citi Cards/Retail Services  
Client Services, Inc.  
Comps Security Products  
CreditRiskMonitor  
Discover Financial Services  
Discover Network  
Dun & Bradstreet  
Energycredit-Temenos  
Euler Hermes UMA  
First Data Merchant Services  
Fleet One, LLC  
General Credit Forms, Inc.  
Hall Estill  
Heartland Payment Systems  
International Energy Insurance B  
International Risk Consultants  
J P Morgan Chase Bank, NA  
MasterCard International  
Morgan Financial Group  
NACM Heartland Unit  
NACS  
National Payment Card  
One Source Risk Management  
P97 Networks  
Paragon Consulting Corporation  
PaulCwalina Consulting LLC  
PCATS  
Pepper Hamilton, LLP  
Pilot—Flying J  
Rapid Ratings International  
Ricochet Fuel Distributors, Inc.  
Royal Performance Group  
TD Securities  
Schneider Electric (Telvent DTN)  
Tom Randolph Consulting  
U. S. Bank Voyager Fleet Systems  
Verifone  
Visa, Inc.  
Visa USA, Inc.  
Voyager Fleet Systems  
W. Capra Consulting Group  
Wells & Cuellar PC  
WEX, Inc.  
Williams & Williams  
Worldpay

## 2015 New Members (As of 4/1/2015)

<b>Company</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>
3-D Financial Services	Davilla	Derek	McCloud	OK
ABC-Amega, Inc.	Gagliardi	Robert	Buffalo	NY
Angus Energy - Finance	Fried	James	Simsbury	CT
Ansonia Credit Data	Castillo	Bonnie	Olympia	WA
Bank of America Merchant Services	Baker-Miller	Michelle	Murfreesboro	TN
Bank of America Merchant Services	Hoskins	Karen	Sherwood	AR
CenterPoint Energy, Inc	Mumin	Shahidah	Houston	TX
CenterPoint Energy, Inc	Solano	Maria	Houston	TX
CenterPoint Energy, Inc	Roca	Armando	Houston	TX
Chevron	Porras	Gabriel Andre's	San Ramon	CA
Chevron	Rantz	Kathleen	San Ramon	CA
Coffeyville Resources, LLC	Gil	Maria	Sugar Land	TX
CompX Security Products	Springgate	Larry	Mauldin	SC
Cross Oil Refining & Marketing	Joiner	Linda	El Dorado	AR
Discover Financial Services	Portka	Raelyn	Riverwoods	IL
EchoSat, Inc	Wimsett	Thomas	Lexington	KY
Flint Hills Resources, LP	Schroeder	Jared	Wichita	KS
Growmark, Inc	Brandt	Catrina	Bloomington	IL
Heartland Payment Systems	Levin	Alan	Palm Harbor	FL
Holly Frontier	Payne	Brad	Dallas	TX
International Risk Consultants	Braddock	Tony	Houston	TX
Kroger	Burningham	Jeanie	Salt Lake City	UT
Kum & Go	Blackwell	Tammy	West Des Moines	IA
Marathon Oil	Harris	Charles	Houston	TX
Marathon Petroleum Company, LP	Myers	Denice	Findlay	OH
Martin Energy Services, LLC	McPherson	John	Houston	TX
MasterCard International	Madden	Michael		
Murphy Oil USA, Inc.	Clay	Kristi	El Dorado	AR
MurphyUSA	McKoin	Amy	El Dorado	AR

## 2015 New Members (As of 4/1/2015)

<b>Company</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>
P97 Networks, Inc.	Frieden	Donald	HOUSTON	TX
Phillips 66 Company	Cunningham	Chad	Bartlesville	OK
Pilot--Flying J	Steger	David		
QuikTrip Corporation	Martin	Teresa	Tulsa	OK
RaceTrac Petroleum, Inc	Grubbs	Tyler	Atlanta	GA
Ricochet Fuel Distributors, Inc.	Blevins-Mize	Theresa		
Royal Performance Group	Cooper	Sam	Lisle	IL
Sheetz, Inc.	Pielmeier	Randy	Altoona	PA
Sheetz, Inc.	Ober	Carl	Claysburg	PA
Shell Oil Products US	Tiernan	Darin	Houston	TX
Spectra Energy Corp	Cole	Burton	Houston	TX
Sunoco LP	Hand	Brian	Lester	PA
Tesoro	McCord	Sean	San Antonio	TX
US Bank	Stults	Gregory	Houston	TX
Valero Energy Corporation	Davenport	Craig	San Antonio	TX
Valero Energy Corporation	Gonzalez	Claudia	San Antonio	TX
Verifone	Munson	Dave		
VISA	Lawrence	Danine	Foster City	CA
VISA	Wuichet	Dave	San Francisco	CA
Visa USA, Inc.	Burlingame	Craig	Washington	DC
W. Capra Consulting Group	Chan	Susan	Chicago	IL
Wawa Inc.	Kasher	Terri	Media	PA
Western Petroleum Company	Sanchez	David	Plymouth	MN
World Fuel Services, Inc.	Jackson	Kevin	Miami	FL

# 2014-2015 Officers, Directors and Committees

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CenterPoint Energy

**3rd Vice President:**  
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Murphy Oil

**Secretary:**  
Terry Faber  
Growmark, Inc.

**Treasurer:**  
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Big West Oil

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

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Francie Dix

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Virginia Flores  
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2012-2015

Carole Williams  
QuikTrip  
2012-2015

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2013-2016

Kelly Adams  
Sinclair Oil  
2014-2017

Mike Davino  
Past President  
Mansfield Oil  
2014-2015

## COMMITTEES

### ADVISORY, NOMINATING & ELECTIONS

**Chairperson:**  
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John Maxey  
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Agata Kaufman  
Neil Jones

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Mary Minor  
Mark Ogan

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Laura Roussel  
Mark Ogan  
Neil Jones

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Rhonda Buras

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Gina Tombrella  
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Julian Edgar  
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Renia Coleman  
Rick Steckroth  
Steve Myers  
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Crystal Fish  
George Thagard  
Keith Bryant  
Laura Roussel  
Mark Ogan  
Renia Coleman  
Scott Thomas  
Sonja Rideout  
Terry Faber

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**Mary Minor**  
Cristine Llacar

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Jeff Raimondi  
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Laura Wallace  
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Pam Green  
Paul Grolemond  
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Randy Wiggins  
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Terry Faber  
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## RESOLUTIONS

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Mary Minor  
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Peter Guidi  
Roger Kagy  
Scott Thomas

# Networking

By Delia White

As you make plans to attend the 78<sup>th</sup> NPECA conference, think about getting the most of your conference experience by effective networking. Make it a goal to be more intentional about your professional networking and brush up on some essential networking skills. Like any other activity, networking requires active participation, determination and willingness to put your-self out there.

The number of resource available to help us improve our networking skills are endless and entire seminars and books are devoted to this subject. However, it is important to keep in mind that networking is about people and relationships with people. It requires that we develop people skills and also etiquette skills. It is all about making connections that may help you grow in your professional career. Networking is building and sustaining relationships.

Professional networking requires:

1. Overcoming obstacles—make a quick assessment of the personality traits (introvert vs extrovert) of those around you. Being aware of their personality traits may help you to be gracious to those around that appear shy or introverted. It also requires dismissing any negative perspective (sales pitch views) from the very beginning.
2. Develop a positive perspective and good mental flexibility about networking. By dismissing any misconceived ideas about encountering rejection is easier to engage with people you do not know.
3. Making a good impression
  - \* A good first impression is important for building a valuable partnership and to help improve your self-confidence. It takes 30 seconds for people to form a first impression.
  - \* Be positive. This requires avoiding being judgmental and also being aware of your body language tendencies. You may reach out to someone but your body might send an unfriendly signal.
  - \* Do research. If there is someone you want to meet, find ahead of time who is attending in order to identify potential contacts
  - \* Dress appropriately—presentation is important—business casual—neutral colors—clean.
  - \* Position yourself to meet people. Volunteering for registration may provide an opportunity to get to know other members. Sign up for a committee, get involved.
  - \* Communicate with Care—be careful when you speak to someone. Introduce yourself carefully, repeat their name and avoid a formal pitch into the conversation. Wait for the right opportunity
4. Value: Make an investment by considering the mutual benefit of reaching out to someone new.
5. Be strategic
  - \* Think ahead of time about your networking opportunities
  - \* Arrive on time, relax, have a positive attitude and make a goal to meet someone new.

After you consider the activities outlined above, try these simple ways to effective networking:

- \* Introduce yourself to someone you do not know
- \* Ask their name, listen to the name carefully and then repeat their name
- \* Use their name during the conversation.
- \* Use their name again when you depart.
- \* Acknowledge your new contacts during the conference by repeating their name

In addition, consider increasing your professional network during the upcoming conference by inviting your new and existing NPECA contacts to connect via LinkedIn. Remember to have your business cards with you at all times as you never know when a professional network opportunity may arise.

## Honorary Membership Requests

The following individuals have requested honorary member status and their application will be considered by the NPECA Board of Directors in the next few weeks.

**Mark Macha:** Mark now works for Tri-State Generation & Transmission in Denver, CO. He served NPECA as follows:

- Member of NPECA since 2004. Attending his first conference in San Diego, CA, in 2005.
- Technology Committee member since 2007 and served as Chair from 2010 until 2012.
- Bulletin Committee member since 2009, and served as Chair from 2009 until 2013.
- Board Member 2010 – 2012.
- Third Vice President 2012 - 2013
- Second Vice President 2013 - 2014
- First Vice President 2014

**Steve Phoehler:** Steve retired on July 1, 2014 after 40 years with Marathon. He served on the Board of Directors and was an active participant in many committees.

**Glen Taylor:** President of General Credit Forms (GCF) retired December 31, 2014. Glen was a member and a strong supporter of NPECA for over 19 years. The New Orleans conference will be the first conference he will miss in all of those 19 years. While active with NPECA, Glen bought and brought prizes for the golf tournament, assisted at the tournament, was always available onsite to assist in any way he could. His company, GCF, provided financial support and gifts and prizes, electronic gadgetry and many other special prizes year-after-year. Glen will continue as Chairman of the Board of GCF and promised us he'll see us in 2016 at the conference in Austin. Glen continues his support of NPECA in 2015 with a sponsor donation but it won't be the same without Glen there distributing the best thingamajigs to give away.

We want to keep in touch with all our members. NPECA encourages each member to log in to the NPECA website and make certain your member profile information is accurate. If you do not have a User ID or do not remember it, please e-mail us at [ContactUs@NPECA.org](mailto:ContactUs@NPECA.org). Please use the subject heading "Login Assistance Requested".

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