Inside this issue:

*LHSAA Game of the Week Review

*Safe Thoughts for the Heating Season

*President’s Message

......and more!

A Message from your President

Dear Friends,

Here we go again about to jump into another year already! Where does the time go? 2012 was not so good to the propane industry in regards to cooler weather, so I know we are all looking forward to a cold start for 2013! Don’t forget to educate your customers on safe practices on how to light their heaters.

The fall season was an exciting time for the Association as we were able to work the LHSAA Game of the Week football games each week. We contracted with the Commission and worked the tailgating events. What a wonderful way to get our industry some publicity and positive recognition. Randy Hayden and his staff did an excellent job in working them and promoting our industry for us! If you didn’t get to attend a game, you really missed out on some good times, especially some great cook-offs by our very own John Alario and Ira Cleveland…except Ira made chickenless jambalaya!

To update you, the Market Development rebate program is still available and going strong. It includes stoves, heaters, outdoor lights, water heaters, etc. We also have rebates for lawnmowers and conversions of gas appliances. For more information you can go to www.louisianapropane.com. Over the next month we will be reaching out to homes that do not have natural gas availability with direct mail postcards promoting the rebate program, so hopefully we will get some inquiries and possible new propane users from this!

I want to thank all of you who were able to attend our last board meeting in Alexandria. We had a good turnout and had a very nice Christmas dinner with Representative Stephen Ortego as our special guest. He has been a strong advocate for our industry and was a great help to us during the last legislative session. Please let him know that we are thankful for his hard work.

I’d like to say a special thank you to our Executive Director, Randy Hayden. He and his staff always go above and beyond to help our Association! I am so proud to know the gang at CCI and to call them my friends.

I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Jessica Bennett, 2012-2013 LPGA President
A Message from the Executive Director

Here at the LPGA world headquarters the staff is wrapping up year end activities and preparing for a great new year. Highlights from the past year include appearances at more than a dozen government and homebuilder trade shows along with participation as hosts for various high school championship events including 14 straight weeks hosting the Louisiana High School Athletic Association Football Game of the week pregame tailgate sponsorship on behalf of the Propane Dealers of Louisiana. In addition, the association hosted two separate marketer training sessions as well as personalized training that qualified for state continuing education credits. Be on the lookout for more training sessions under consideration for this Spring.

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Our Summer Convention also provided some history of its own as the association’s Board of Directors asked President Jessica Bennett to serve a second consecutive term—the first time in a dozen years (since John McManus) that a president has been voted to serve consecutive terms. Speaking of the McManus family, longtime friend and legend in the Louisiana Propane business, Lony Reed, was presented with the association’s most prestigious Charles M. Fuller Lifetime Achievement Award. The Reed family continues to be an integral part of the association with David Reed and John McManus both holding positions on various propane-related boards. In addition, the Summer Convention at the beautiful beaches of Orange Beach, AL., provided a memorable setting for the Chris Connally Memorial Golf Tournament, a fishing trip, glass blowing excursion and more! Again, be on the lookout for news of this year’s convention to be held at the Shreveport Convention Center in Shreveport, La.

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However, we as an industry have come a long way. New technologies and applications have made the industry young again. Propane is part of the plan instead of an afterthought. Whole communities are planned around propane. We can live “off the grid” with complete propane home solutions.

Automobile manufacturers are producing propane powered vehicles. Automobile conversion and OEM options are expanding at a steady pace. Propane has even improved the paintball industry. A typical propane paintball cylinder will net 50,000 shots versus 1000 shots with CO2. Who knew? The New Year looks promising and we have a lot good people in the industry. Propane hasn’t changed but the accessories are getting better and better.

Remember to Count Your Blessings and, As always—here’s to a cold, cold winter!

Don’t forget to follow us on Twitter @LAPropane and like us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/LAPropane!

Ralph Rooney
Suburban Gas Inc.
Past NPGA President

“We were confident that ThompsonGas would be able to provide a level of service and attention to detail commensurate with ours, and at the same time because of their size and corporate culture, would provide our employees and customers the security of a promising future, stability of supply, a broad mix of propane equipment, and a “down home” place to work and do business ... It provided us tremendous peace of mind.”

J. Randall Thompson
President &
Chief Executive Officer
301-432-3880
rthomp1@thompsongas.com

G. Jeffrey Kerns
Executive Vice President &
Chief Financial Officer
301-432-3882
jeff@thompsongas.com

WWW.THOMPSONGAS.COM
Safe Thoughts for the Heating Season

By John V. McCoy, Esq.

It goes without saying that the heating season is now getting into full swing. This is the time when propane marketers depend on to make or break their business. Last year was unusually warm and as a result it was a bad year for marketers. Let’s hope this year is better for business, i.e., colder.

This time of year we need to keep attention on being safe. A significant number of accidents that result in serious injury and property damage that put propane marketers at risk come from a small group of problems. If we understand those problems it is my belief that we can take proactive steps to avoid accidents before they happen.

For the twenty-five years that I have represented propane companies a constant is that many accidents are tied to out-of-gas situations and interruptions of service. There are great programs to deal with these situations by PERC as well as various state propane associations and propane companies. These programs include the need for a leak check at minimum. Some companies do more than this.

I want to focus on the documentation aspect of the process as it means a great deal in the event of a claim following one of these events.

When you encounter an OOG or interruption of service you should already have in place a policy of how that is dealt with and implement the company policy when a delivery driver encounters one of these situations. In some companies delivery drivers do perform leak checks on site and if company preset safety criteria are satisfied he will fill the tank and then continue on his route.

In all of these situations it is imperative that the leak test and other service work you company policy may or may not require is documented and time/date noted. I recommend that you employ a way to communicate the work done immediately after it is completed in the field. Don’t wait to get back to the shop and file the paperwork! Don’t wait for the delivery driver to finish his route and drop off the paperwork at the end of the day.

If you can communicate this work from the field in real time. Send an e-mail I understand there are software forms that can be completed on the computer and forwarded to the company when the work is done and before the employee leaves the customer property.

If you don’t have this type of technology a simple phone call to the office confirming that you completed the leak test, et cetera along with the date, time and other pertinent details can go a long way in establishing when and what was done.

In this day of digital technology I also recommend that a photo be taken of the actual leak test and whatever other work your company policy requires in these situations. These photos are worth a thousand words. They clearly show that the work was actually done. To make the photos truly valuable I recommend you take orientation photos of the house and the tank identification numbers so that it can be matched up later in the event a problem arises following one of these situations.

We will always have accidents. For as long as I have been fortunate enough to defend the industry in litigation I have seen how critical documentation can be in defense of these cases. New technologies can be added to improve our ability to document what we have done. These new forms of documentation are readily available and very powerful when confirming what we have done.

Success to you!

John V. McCoy is recognized as one of the country’s top trial lawyers in the field of catastrophic fire and explosion cases. Especially those involving flammable gases such as propane and natural gas. He has handled trials and appeals of these matters in over 38 states and serves as National Trial Counsel for several companies. A frequent lecturer and author at national conferences on litigation issues, John is a founding member and Past President of the Propane Gas Defense Association and has lent his time and expertise to numerous trade and industry associations in the field of litigation. He has been chairperson of the DRI Fire and Casualty Committee and has been on the Attorney Advisory Committee to the International Association of Arson Investigators. John has been named a “Wisconsin Super Lawyer” by Law & Politics Media Inc. every year since its inception in 2005 and has been independently profiled for his contributions in the current edition of Marquis’ Who’s Who in American Law. John was also recognized as having one of the “Top 10 Defense Verdicts of 2004” in a nationwide survey conducted by the National Law Journal. He has been recognized in 2008 as a Leader in the Law by The Wisconsin Law Journal. He is also the author of the “Legal Brief” column in LPGas Magazine and his articles appear in many state propane association newsletters. He also serves as outside legal counsel to PERC on drafting training manuals for the propane industry. [e-mail: jmccoy@mh-law.us]

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The Louisiana Propane Dealers were a major sponsor of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA) Game of the Week for the 2012 football season. As a major sponsor, they had the opportunity to set up a tailgate at each game which enabled them to provide food to game security, police officers and the TV crew. Each week starting in Week 5, the Louisiana Propane Dealers did a giveaway of a crawfish boiler, turkey or fish fryer. Anyone who stopped by the tailgate and registered was eligible to win. The winner was announced at Halftime each week and we had a total of 15 winners.

The Dealers received several food donations throughout the season and would like to thank the following businesses for their generosity and support: Cashio’s Catering (Thibodaux), Breaux’s Mart (Lafayette), The Times Grill (Mandeville), Piggly Wiggly (Loranger), Super I Foods (West Monroe, Bossier City & Shreveport), Tramonte’s (Central & Dutchtown) Champagne’s Supermarket (Eunice), Billy’s Boudin (Lafayette/Scott) and Rice Palace Restaurant (Crowley).

We would also like to give a big thanks to all of the dealers that came and out and volunteered their time to help. We couldn’t have done it without you and it was much appreciated.
At Enterprise, we put the ‘pro’ in propane, providing superior service to Louisiana propane dealers

Contact our marketers for info about:
• Supply availability in Breaux Bridge, Norco and Geismar, Louisiana.
• Company-owned fleet terminals in Breaux Bridge and Baton Rouge, LA and Hattiesburg, MS.
• Year-round transport delivery within 48 hours.

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featuring Clean Fueling Technologies Dispensers & Skid Package Systems, Blackmer Pumps, and Gasguard Nozzles

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Jessica Bennett
President
AmeriGas Propane
P.O. Box 551
Winnfield, LA 71483
318-628-3023

Bryan Cordill
Secretary/Treasurer
Cordill Propane
7989 Hwy. 165 N
Monroe, LA 71203
318-324-8844

Supplier Representatives
Steve Sampson
Supplier Chairman
CUD Distribution
P.O. Box 67
Simmesport, LA 70461
318-879-3009

LPGA Staff
Executive Director: Randy Hayden
Staff: Lori Berteau, Howard Veeder and Marica Vlahos

Regional Directors
Artie Cole
Vice President
Ferrel Gas
12557 Airline Hwy.
Baton Rouge, LA 70817
800-367-6629

Al Cadwallader
Northwestern District
Southern LP
102 Horseshoe Rd.
Winnsboro, LA 71295
318-628-4667

Bill Cox
Central District
Buddy’s Home Gas
1985 Genna Ln.
Ville Platte, LA 70586
337-365-8376

Brent Guillory
Southwestern District
AmeriGas Propane
3217 N University Ave
Lafayette, LA 70507
337-232-4771

Steve Sampson
Supplier Chairman
CUD Distribution
P.O. Box 67
Simmesport, LA 70461
318-879-3009

Stanley Strickland
Suppler Elect
Bergquist, Inc.
20 Gene Gunter Rd.
Deville La. 71328
318-623-9962

Bryan Cordill
Secretary/Treasurer
Cordill Propane
7989 Hwy. 165 N
Monroe, LA 71203
318-324-8844

Cara Jo Brunley
Northeastern District
Macon Ridge Propane
P.O. Box 14204
Baton Rouge, LA 70898
318-878-7700

Jeff Harris
Southwestern District
AmeriGas Propane
2317 N University Ave
Lafayette, LA 70507
337-232-4771

Ira Cleveland
Southeastern District
Lucx Inc.
1027 Oak St.
Hammond, LA 70403
985-345-5180

Joey Cordill
North At-Large Director
Cordill Propane
4051 Foist St.
Winnsboro, LA 71295
318-435-0067

John McManus
South At-Large Director
Reed’s Gas
2706 Audubon St.
Eunice, LA 70535
337-457-4261

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State Directors
Billy Cox
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O’Neal Gas
P.O. Box 536
Choudrant, LA 71227
318-768-2511

Jessie Bennett
President
AmeriGas Propane
P.O. Box 551
Winnfield, LA 71483
318-628-3023

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BT Express
Clay’s ATV
Coastal Welding Supply of Louisiana
D & B Supply
Dennis’s Restaurant & Bar Equipment, Inc.

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