

It Has Been an Honor ... Thank You!

When I came into this industry in 1992, one of the first things my dad said to do and the best way to grow and protect our company was to get involved in the industry association. At that time in Seattle, it was called the Oil Heat Institute of Washington, which later merged with the association representing the Washington motor fuels industry to form the Washington Oil Marketers Association. My dad's advice couldn't have been more accurate. Industry association membership proved not only to be important to the growth of our business, but it also provided many valuable friendships and cherished memories. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that industry association involvement has been the single biggest factor in our company's growth going back to the late 60's when my dad first got involved. Every acquisition that my dad completed as well as every acquisition that I was presented with had its origin in the relationships that we forged through our involvement in our oil industry association. And then there were the battles, many battles. Every external threat to our company was also a threat to our industry. Whether at the local city chamber, the state capitol in Olympia, or at the US Capitol in Washington DC, I am proud to have fought alongside association members. Competitors who became friends as we fought common enemies in order to protect the blessing that we have in our businesses.

Clearly, the threats and challenges continue to be significant. Calls for electrification of everything from cars to homes seem louder and louder every day. Where I live in Seattle, it seems like every other car is a Tesla, even though electric vehicles only account for less than 2% of the vehicles on the road in America. So, the push for lower carbon still requires many years of reliance on our industry and the expertise and adaptability that we can offer. It seems like the experts have been talking about solar and wind energy for decades. Indeed, they have. When I was in 6th grade, the subject of my sixth-grade science project was "Solar Cells, The Power of the Future." Believe me, the irony was not lost on my heating oil industry father. At that time, it seemed that the transition to solar power would be swift. Yet, according to 2021 EIA statistics, nearly 45 years after I presented my 6th grade science project, wind and solar still only account for 10% of all energy produced and consumed. While there are many predictions that non-renewables will account for only 20% of energy by 2050, the off ramp to lower carbon still must go through our industry for many years to come. Because of that our association must remain active and vibrant in order to secure our role in the coming scenario. As an industry, as companies and as individuals, we have so much to offer.

It has been a tremendous honor and a privilege to serve as president of WPMA. It seems like a long time ago that I came on the executive board as the senior PMAA Director in 2015. But just as my dad suggested it would, it was a rich and valuable experience and one that I will cherish forever. Thank you.



*WPMA President,
Steve Clark*