**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL LANDMEN**

**Local Association Award**

Best Member Communication

(During Calendar Year 2020)

**Awards Committee Evaluation Form**

**To be completed by Local Association Local Association Name: Houston Association of Professional Landmen**

**Member Name: HAPL Past Presidents**

**Title of Communication: Letters from Past HAPL Presidents**

**Date Presented or Month Published: November 2, 2020**

**ATTACH THIS ENTRY FORM TO COPY OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION** **OR ORAL TRANSRIPT**

**(No comments or further explanations will be considered)**

#### To Be Completed By Awards Committee

The following criteria are listed to assist in the evaluation of the Member Communication.

TOTAL POINTS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Points** | **Score** |
| **EDUCATIONAL/MOTIVATIONAL VALUE** | 0-6 |   |
| **INTEREST TO OTHERS** | 0-5 |   |
| **ORIGINALITY OF WORK** | 0-5 |   |
| **OVERALL PRESENTATION** | 0-5 |   |

HAPL Newletter – November 2, 2020

Letters From Past HAPL Presidents

As many seasoned landman know, the oil and gas industry will go through its ups and downs. During the good times, it’s easy to forget the tough times. During the tough times, it’s easy to forget that this is what our industry does. Due to COVID – 19 and the economic repercussions from it, 2020 has been a rough year for the industry. We thought it would be a good idea to hear from past HAPL Presidents about what the industry was like during their terms and what things were going on with the Association during that time so that we could be reminded of how far we have come not only as an Association but as an industry. In doing so, we can be reminded that no matter what it was like during the rough or easy years, our industry will continue to keep moving forward.

# HAPL Past President, Jeanine Haller Piskurich, CPL (1996-1997)

1996-1997 was a special year for me both personally and professionally. I started my year as President as Jeanine Haller – the same year that Fox News Channel made its debut, about 10,000 websites existed on the internet and the North American Prospect Expo held its 5th event in the ballroom of the Westin Galleria hotel. Much was new that year, but HAPL was celebrating its 50th anniversary. We spent the year reflecting on how our association began – in the summer and fall of 1946, four, and later eight landmen in the City of Houston met and agreed that an association of petroleum landmen should be established to promote personal acquaintance and aid in the professional enlightenment of landmen. The first organizational meeting of the Houston Landmen’s Association was held on December 1, 1946 with approximately 45 landmen present.

Much has changed in our profession and in the industry in which we work – in 1996 we had 1,153 members who met the challenges of our industry and enhanced the stature of landmen by focusing our attention on education, professionalism and embracing change. We held a spectacular 50th Anniversary Gala at the Wyndham Warwick Hotel and celebrated the many whom had gone before us to create the largest local landman’s association in the nation. Now 24 years later, that legacy of excellence has continued to thrive in all areas of professional growth and development, industry leadership and community service. We still have work to do in terms of gender parity and equal compensation, but overall, the same innovation and value creation that is the core of the land profession will continue to serve our industry and our ever-changing world of energy needs.

I ended my term in 1997 as Jeanine Haller Piskurich and remain grateful for the very special and memorable year. As Houston landmen, we have the honor and privilege to collectively provide heat, light and mobility to the world which has and will continue to change lives for the better. I can’t imagine a better group to take on that formidable task.

# HAPL Past President, A. Frank Klam, CPL (1981-1982)

I was very pleased when Lindsey Griffith asked for me to write an article about the HAPL during my term as President in 1981-1982. It’s amazing that I can remember any events back that far, especially since I can’t remember what I did yesterday.

In 1981, which was only two years after the 1979 Middle East oil embargo, the oil busines was booming. The U. S. was dependent on middle eastern oil and that had been cut off, so what the oil industry did was to dramatically expand. Times were good for everyone, especially landmen. To give you an idea, oil prices in 1981 were $35.75 ($101.57 in today’s dollars) and in 1982 it was still strong at $31.83 ($85.15 in today’s dollars). The price of oil was expected to exceed $100/barrel in 5-10 years. New companies were being formed and job opportunities were plentiful. It was so good even I had a job.

The HAPL was the largest local association at the time. We had a Management Night and Teacher’s Appreciation Night. The names of these events have been changed but were basically the same as today. HAPL also had all the usual sporting events, golf and skeet shoot. Our monthly meetings were always well attended and, as today, we tried to get the best speakers.

With the expansion of the oil business, companies were located in every geographic region, which made it hard for many to come downtown for the luncheon. For the first time ever, we started having our luncheons in places other than downtown. This was so successful that later the West Houston and North Houston Associations were formed.

I still try to attend as many luncheons as I can, since I know the benefit of networking. Our association has improved so much since I was President. We have truly had some great landmen take that leadership role and make HAPL a great organization that offers so many benefits to its members.

# HAPL Past President, Justin R. Matthews, CPL (2016-2017)

*“It’s a troublesome world. All the people who are in it are troubled with troubles almost every minute. You*

*ought to be thankful, a whole heaping lot, for the places and people you’re lucky you’re not.”*

That is a quote from Dr. Suess and seemed relevant for this article, more on that in a minute. When I was President of the HAPL 2016-2017, we were just coming off of one of the largest price declines in modern history as oil plunged down 70% to $29 per barrel just months before I took office. The price ended up recovering to $41 and stayed in the $40’s for the duration of my term, but the impact of the drop had the industry on its knees. Layoffs were taking place, HAPL membership was down considerably, there was a noticeable drop in enrollment being reported by the university energy commerce/management programs and donations from HAPL fundraising had all but dried up.

As a result, my mission and that of the board at the time, was to be laser focused on the HAPL budget. I chose the year’s theme to be based on the John Wayne quote *“Tomorrow hopes we’ve learned something from yesterday”* in hopes the board and committees of the HAPL would be inspired by it to the point of turning over every rock, to be fiscally creative and open minded to cut spending or move dollars, and to adjust for down times. It was a real concern; the “what ifs” began to drive every decision we made at the HAPL and sometimes even kept me up at night. When outgoing president Mike Gibson handed the gavel to me, I recall him saying “good luck with all that” in jest of course, but point well taken.

I wished oil was at $100/bbl. The world itself that year was kind of crazy. Trump was just elected to the surprise of just about everyone. US troops were withdrawing from Afghanistan after 15 years, the UK withdrew from the EU (“BREXIT”), and Houston was still recovering from the Tax Day Flood.

Back to what Dr. Suess said, “be thankful for the places and people you’re lucky you’re not.” Our perspective of the time was well founded. Times were scary and to many of us in the industry, uncertain, but perspective matters. Looking back on it now, in 2020, after being in the midst of a global pandemic which has led to [social](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_impact_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic) and [economic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_impact_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic) disruption, [mass cancellation of events](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_events_affected_by_the_COVID-19_pandemic), worldwide quarantine, the [largest economic recession](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_recession) since the [Great Depression](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression) and a historic bottom for oil prices as the price of futures ventured below zero on April 20th. I’m sorry but…LOL to 2016-2017 and really every other year. 2020 has been the year of all years and is arduous for us all. There are many landmen who have lost their jobs during this unbelievable time. There are many students, interns and new hires who have had their offers revoked and careers put on hold. There are many companies who are struggling to survive. I know this must be extremely taxing on the HAPL and this year’s board who will be faced with hard decisions and hopefully be able to rely on the fiscal responsibility of the boards of the past. Some people have even lost their lives or loved ones. My thoughts and prayers go out to all of you. If you are in any of these categories, hang in there; today is the storm, but tomorrow there will be sunshine. We will all grow from this and the industry will rebound. Energy and the need for oil and gas will not disappear. I personally believe we will see a multi-year period of suppressed prices, more bankruptcy and possibly more consolidation as companies transition from survival to a healthy balance sheet. Ultimately, prices will stabilize at a survivable and investable level again by 2023. Shale investment will remain in check as more sound investment decisions are made to meet financial thresholds. Longer term, we may even see the eventual rise of natural gas as it becomes more and more necessary to replace crude and coal to meet the needs of a re-growing global economy and as more emphasis is placed on reducing the carbon footprint. There will be less locations drilled and less flaring, both of which will assist crude and natural gas prices. Yes, we will likely see more and more emphasis on renewables, but that transition cannot and will not happen overnight. The need and demand for fossil fuels will continue well past our lifetimes. We just need to sustain the trough.

I hope we all are able to get back to one another again soon. We need to safely return to networking and social interaction. The HAPL will be there for all of us, whatever your personal situation when the time comes, and I encourage you all to take advantage of that. The HAPL network is the place to begin whether you are just getting started or you are a tenured landman and just reconnecting. Don’t let the opportunity pass you by. Until then, remember what you have to be thankful for, stay safe and stay healthy.

Keep an eye out in future newsletters as we continue our letters from past HAPL President’s.

