

1968

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2018



UPFDA Executive Director Valera Jessee

The United Producers, Formulators & Distributors Association: A LONG HISTORY OF INDUSTRY SUPPORT

By Valera Jessee

They say there is a special interest group for every known passion but after a few years it's evident which ones have validity and which ones are passing fancies. Back in 1968, the suppliers to the pest management industry felt unrepresented. They knew that the services they provided were valuable and professional pest management was a good business. But their concerns over packaging, shipping, sponsorships, conferences and more were troubling, and they felt the best way to provide service to the industry was to establish an association to voice their common position.

And the rest is history. Never more than about 75 manufacturers and distributors, UPFDA is a staple in the pest management industry. Our members represent most of the suppliers to the industry's specialty applicators. Some years, we sit to the side, watching and taking notes. We're frequently referred to as a standing army — ready to act when needed.

Who are our members? They are most of the distributors throughout the United States, Caribbean,

Canada and Europe, as well as large and small manufacturers. We have huge companies that have made pest control products for 60 years and we have small companies that have specialized products and are new to the specialty industry.

What benefits does UPFDA provide its members and the industry at large? First, UPFDA is the only group that is specific to the structural pest management industry. Other groups represent agricultural, ornamental and turf suppliers, as well as the structural pest control industry. The issues are specialized, just like the products we provide.

Second, it's the networking. Just like state pest control associations evolve over the years with families getting to know each other, second generations coming on board and helping each other during a crisis situation, UPFDA has this same familial culture, contributing to the sense of community that is such an integral part of the professional pest management industry.

At the end of the day, UPFDA's goal is to support

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the pest management industry through quality products, services, training and research. We have two board meetings each year and an impressive spring conference. In fact, this year we're celebrating our 50th anniversary as an organization!

If you have a product or service to offer the structural pest control industry, or if you're a consultant or other industry stakeholder who would like to support our mission, we invite you to consider membership in UPFDA. The issues we discuss, the relationships we develop, and the products and services we provide make a positive difference in the industry. For more information, visit our website at upfda.com or call 770/965-6972. We would welcome your participation. •50•

The author is executive director of UPFDA.

MEMBER SERVICES

UPFDA membership comes with a number of key industry benefits including:

UPDATE. UPFDA's information-packed newsletter keeps members informed.

interests of their constituents at both the state and national level.

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS. UPFDA members meet regularly at their general membership meeting held in conjunction with NPMA PestWorld, as well as other times throughout the year. UPFDA's annual spring conference features educational sessions designed specifically for industry product suppliers and distributors.

MEMBER SURVEYS. Regular surveys provide insights into industry trends impacting both manufacturers and distributors.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES. There's no better way to learn what's happening in the industry than to network with some of the industry's most influential members.

LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION. UPFDA works closely with various trade groups and government agencies to represent the

To learn more, contact UPFDA Executive Director Valera Jessee at 770/965-6972 (office) or 404/275-3302 (mobile).

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to UPFDA on your**

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UPFDA MEMORIES

To honor the association's golden anniversary, PCT asked members to share their impressions about the key benefits, memorable milestones and most unforgettable personalities in the history of UPFDA. *By Nici Lucas*

Founded in 1968, the United Producers, Formulators & Distributors Association (UPFDA) was formed to create a platform for suppliers to the professional pest management industry to address common concerns.

The group represents approximately 75 pest control product distributors, formulators, manufacturers and other key industry stakeholders in the United States, Caribbean, Canada and Europe, and is the only group specific to the structural pest management industry. The association has evolved over the years to include annual meetings, conventions and networking opportunities for its members, as well as to provide legislative representation for the industry by working closely with trade groups and government agencies.

The Benefits of UPFDA Membership

PCT asked members their reasons for joining UPFDA and to share some of the primary benefits of their membership. Benefits and reasons for joining ranged from information sharing to networking to staying on top of industry trends. What follows is a review of

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key responses from UPFDA members on each of these membership benefits.

Focusing on innovation, Karen Furgiuele, president of Gardex Chemicals and an UPFDA member for 28 years, says, “Gardex based its position in Canada on innovation and leading edge-technology; since the U.S. was the leader, it was only a natural fit for our business.”

Jacqueline Angulo, vice president of Superior Angran, shared similar sentiments when commenting on her company’s 35-year association with UPFDA. “It’s simple. This organization adds value to our industry,” she says. “Not only in networking, but in sharing common challenges and discussing real alternatives in how to approach and resolve them.”

Mark Boyd, president of Control Solutions Inc. (CSI), says, “Being a member of UPFDA gave CSI the opportunity to meet with all the industry manufacturers and distributors to discuss the industry and how to improve it. It also gave CSI the chance to build relationships that would not exist if the association had not been formed. The relationships built have been one of the greatest joys of my life.”

Echoing Boyd’s observations about the benefits of UPFDA membership, Rick McDonald, vice president of Atlantic Paste & Glue, said that being a member of the organization for 17 years has been “a great way to connect with suppliers, customers and industry leaders. This was particularly important when I first joined the industry, but even today I find it very beneficial to interact with a very diverse and competent group that is essential to this industry.”

Tom Eichler, segment consultant at Neogen Corporation and member since 1968, says he finds value in UPFDA because it allows him “to stay in touch with key companies in the industry in a relaxed atmosphere with the benefit of strategic networking,” a sentiment shared by Pete Comis, head of key/national accounts for Bayer, who said “networking with our distributor partners, understanding the

PAST PRESIDENTS

Past presidents of the United Producers, Formulators & Distributors Association reads like the “Who’s Who” of the industry. They include:

NAME	YEAR
Ray Northrup	1968-1969
Bill Brehm	1970-1971
Roland Rhodes	1972-1974
Norm Ehmann	1975-1976
Larry Eichler	1977-1978
John Veatch	1979-1980
Ted Zeller	1981-1982
William Cochran	1983-1984
Millard Oldham	1987-1989
Lon Records	1989-1991
Bill Kenney	1991-1993
Tom Wright	1993-1995
Malcolm Stack	1995-1997
Tommy Reeves	1997-1999
Tom Forshaw III	1999-2001
Larry Eichler	2001-2003
Rick Veatch	2003-2005
Steve Levy	2005-2007
Lon Records	2007-2009
Larry Eichler	2009-2012
Tommy Reeves	2012-2014
Tom Eichler	2014-2016
Karen Furgiuele	2016-Present

threats and opportunities in our industry and just developing friendships with industry colleagues” have been the key benefits for him.

Continuing along the networking and industry knowledge lines, the following members communicated:

• “Bell has been a part of UPFDA since its beginning, and I believe that the organization is a great opportunity for industry members, with common interests and goals, to have a vehicle in which to

communicate,” says Steve Levy, president and CEO of Bell Laboratories.

• Lon Records, CEO of Agri-Turf Distributing, shares that he “joined UPFDA to network with other distributors, manufacturers and formulators. UPFDA helped us stay aware of rules, regulations and industry trending.”

• UPFDA Executive Director Valera Jessee, who has been active in the organization for 30 years, says, “Cal Stephenson asked me to consider the position of executive director when it became vacant. My personal benefit is the opportunity to know the CEOs and decision-makers of specialty products.”

• “I have been involved with UPFDA since I entered the industry over 38 years ago,” recalls Randall Davis, regional sales manager of Paragon Professional Products. “I attended my first meeting, I believe, at NPMA in New Orleans. At that time, I was employed by Malcolm Stack at Bell Laboratories. Since there is a Malcolm Stack Integrity Award at UPFDA (*see related story, page 11*), it’s obvious that all Bell employees were indoctrinated and convinced of the positive aspects of UPFDA membership. UPFDA’s spring meeting has always been the premier event with which manufacturers and distributors could discuss important and timely topics amongst themselves, without the time constraints and stress of exhibit halls and customer interruptions.”

Being a member of the family that helped to start UPFDA, Calvin Stephenson Jr., regional sales manager, Paragon Professional Products, states, “I was aware of UPFDA from the very beginning since my father was among those who started the organization. I began to get involved when I started to take on more of a management role at Stephenson Chemical Co. in the late 1970s. As time went by, I became much more involved. I did not join. It was inherited.”

And, finally, Thomas Forshaw III of Forshaw Distribution, shares his family’s historical and extensive involvement:

ROCK ON!

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“As a past chairman of UPFDA, I am proud to say that a ‘Tom Forshaw’ has been a member of the organization for 50 years. My father Tom Forshaw went to the founding meeting of UPFDA at (the) NPMA (Convention), Atlanta, Ga, while I stayed at our display booth. On return from the meeting, he told me that he had associated Forshaw with UPFDA and I was to attend meetings with him. These dual meetings lasted for several years until I started attending by myself. In the 1990s, my son Tom Forshaw IV started to attend the meetings with me. This lasted until my retirement in 2014 when he attended most of the meetings without me. Forshaw joined UPFDA to associate with the major suppliers of the professional pest control industry and join with them on working with manufacturers and government on industry issues.”

Cherished Memories

When asked to share fond memories of their UPFDA involvement, responses ranged from general to very specific, with some being quite humorous and heartfelt, such as:

Norman Goldenberg of Namron Business Associates, a member for almost 40 years, recalls: “The meetings at both UPFDA and with individual registrants, manufacturers and distributors were fun-filled, but also serious business. When we (Paragon/Terminix) ‘made a deal’ it was always a handshake that secured a business ‘deal.’ Trust and respect were always the key components.”

Tom Eichler shares his favorite memory as “surviving the major downturn in the economy and emerging stronger and more fiscally solid than before, a testament to our industry and its leaders.”

Along the lines of honoring UPFDA members, Lon Records recalls, “Being part of the Malcolm Stack Award vote to honor Roland Rhodes.” (*See related story on page 11.*)

And, Thomas Forshaw III adds, “Working alongside the distributor legends has been an honor. The meetings in Chicago with Velsicol or the meeting in Plumsteadville, Pa., with B&G, I will never forget.” Forshaw adds another favorite memory as “expanding the scope of UPFDA by having manufacturers join the distributors by working (on) common issues.”

Karen Furguele humorously recalls heading home from the UPFDA Spring Conference in Lake Tahoe, returning to the Reno Airport in a rental car with Steve Levy driving and Robert Percy navigating. Furguele was “crammed into the back seat” with Sharon and Doug Ashbridge



CONGRATULATIONS, UPF&DA, ON 50 GREAT YEARS.

FROM A PROUD MEMBER AND SUPPORTER.

and two suitcases. “The laughter from the two-hour drive, as well as the cramped quarters made it difficult to get out of the car on arrival,” she recalls.

Jacqueline Angulo shares that her father Juan Angulo smiled when he was asked this question, stating, “I remember listening to Cal Stephenson Sr. reading his ‘library project’ reports. It was very funny!”

Valera Jessee’s favorite memory “would have to be our dress-up evening in Las Vegas where all our attendees came as celebrities,” she says. “From the Blues Brothers (Lon and Rich Records), the gangsters and their molls (Ada and Millard Oldham with Tommy and Marsha Reeves) to Cinderella and Prince Charming (Bonnie and Tom Wright), I have such sweet memories of seeing these lovely people having fun together.” And one of Mark Boyd’s fondest memories is “a round of golf played with Larry Eichler and Tony Smith in Arizona many years ago.”

In general, Steve Levy says, “There are too many good memories to pick just one, however I have certainly enjoyed the banter between original, longtime members when they recount episodes from back in the day — and each recount has a slightly different spin on how things actually happened.”

Randall Davis shares, “I don’t know if I can think of a ‘fondest moment.’ I do know I think fondly of the members we have lost over the years. I shouldn’t start this list because I’m sure to leave many off... Who could forget Clayton Wright with his cigar? Who could forget, let alone imitate, the voice of Tom Evans? Who could forget Roland Rhodes? Who could forget Cal Stephenson Sr.? Who could forget Malcolm Stack?”

The Path Forward

In final remarks about UPFDA, many members shared their congratulations about the association attaining its 50-year milestone, while at the same time saying they were excited about what the future may hold. In fact, some members offered

MALCOLM STACK AWARD HONORS HIS LEGACY

UPFDA launched the Malcolm Stack Integrity Award in 2005 as a way to recognize those companies in the pest control industry that have demonstrated the highest levels of integrity in managing their business. The award, named after the longtime president of Bell Laboratories who passed away in 2006, is presented to a member of the organization that has represented the industry with the highest moral and ethical standards.



Colleagues honoring Roland Rhodes (center) with the UPFDA Malcolm Stack Integrity Award in 2005 included (left to right) Pat Callahan, Chris Donaghy, Tom Wright, Tom Evans, Rick Veatch and Lon Records.

“Through sponsorship of this award, UPFDA reaffirms the importance that it places on these principles,” says Executive Director Valera Jessee. “It’s a way not only to honor dedicated members of our industry, but also the legacy of Malcolm Stack, who dedicated his life to the advancement of the pest management industry.”

The following UPFDA members have been honored since the award was created more than a decade ago:

- Roland Rhodes, Rhodes Chemical Co., Kansas City, Kan.
- Tom Wright, B&G Chemicals & Equipment Co., Dallas, Texas
- Millard and Ada Oldham, Oldham Chemicals Co., Memphis, Tenn.
- Dan Moreland, PCT Media Group, Cleveland, Ohio

specific commentary about the status and future direction of the association.

Regarding the value of UPFDA as an association, Jacqueline Angulo shares that, “For me, UPFDA is sitting [at] a table with a few of the smartest people in the industry, putting our personal business interests aside and looking for ways to improve communications within the industry.”

Valera Jessee adds, “UPFDA is a class act; it has high standards, expects and receives honest behavior from its members and has lifted this industry to a higher level of values and expectations.” Calvin Stephenson Jr. states that “even though UPFDA has tried several worthwhile, academic-type endeavors over the years, the main focus has been networking, personal interaction and gaining insight from across

the various businesses and across the country. And that personal interaction is what I have always valued the most.”

Regarding the association’s future direction, “The pest control industry is one large family that might not always agree on every topic, but defends each other like brothers and sisters,” Mark Boyd says. “UPFDA is one of the organizations that has enabled our industry to bond together to become stronger.”

And perhaps most important, according to Pete Comis, “As we see at the meetings, we are an aging industry group. It is important to continue to introduce the younger generation to UPFDA and assure they understand the benefits. We need to keep UPFDA moving into the future.” •50•

UPFDA'S MOST MEMORABLE Personalities

PCT asked UPFDA members to share unforgettable characters or the most career-impacting friends or colleagues they have met through the association over the years. The members' responses were as follows:

- Rick McDonald: "**Norm Goldenberg** because as my former boss he brought me into the pest control industry. He shared his knowledge, his industry contacts and most importantly a management style that follows [me] every day."

- Mark Boyd: "Very hard to only pick one person, so give me the liberty of the top three: **Bevan Cates**, and **Millard** and **Ada Oldham**."

- Karen Furguele: "**Tommy Reeves** with his eloquent use of language. **Steve Levy** for his continued friendship, not to mention all the driving to and from airports!"

- Pete Cornis: "All have their qualities; I can't point out one individual."

- Randall Davis: "Most unforgettable character, to me, would have to be **Larry Eichler**. A tremendous 'behind the scenes' performer. Affable and a true gentleman. I wish him well in his retirement."

- Jacqueline and Juan Angulo: "**Larry Eichler**."

- Tom Eichler: "Besides my brother [**Larry Eichler**], **Bill Brehm**."

- Steve Levy: "I would say that I greatly admired **Roland Rhodes**. In addition to being a true gentleman, Roland was very dedicated to UPFDA, its purpose and its people. Even as he aged, he still made it a priority to attend and participate in UPFDA meetings."

- Norman Goldenberg: "My relationship with the **Angulo family** from Superior Angran in Puerto Rico. Juan, his father and Jackie always reminded me of what loyalty,

friendship, honesty, integrity and trust meant. I first met Juan's father in 1970 when I became involved with responsibility for Oliver Exterminating Company in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Our relationship has continued over these many years though I am not actively involved in that end of the business any longer. Their collective passion for the industry is immeasurable."

- Lon Records: "**Cal Stephenson Sr.** and **Calvin Jr.** share the most unforgettable character award. They were both awesome. Junior still is! **Valera Jesse** has been and still is a very special UPFDA team member that has helped our association in countless ways over the years. UPFDA has been blessed to have her expertise, counsel, good nature and smile."

- Calvin Stephenson Jr.: "Many people, many interesting characters – **Cal Stephenson**, **Bill Brehm**, **Clayton Wright**, **Larry Eichler**, **Roland Rhodes**, **Norm Ehmann**, **Valera Jessee**, **Malcolm Stack**, **Lon Records**, **Tom Wright**, **Dave Buzzelli**, just to name a few."

- Valera Jessee: "Working with many diverse individuals as they served as officers has greatly broadened my viewpoint of our industry and leadership qualities. From the quiet man to the authoritative one, each has been focused on growing the association and this industry. Not one has had a personal agenda who has misused the office for personal issues or gain."

- Thomas Forshaw III: "The people that were influential in my life were the founding fathers of UPFDA. I will name a few: **Tom Forshaw**, **Norm Ehmann**, **Herb Freeman**, **Clayton Wright**, **Roland Rhodes**, **Cal Stephenson** and **Millard Oldham**." •50•



Norman Goldenberg



Larry Eichler



Juan Angulo Sr.



Norm Ehmann



Roland Rhodes



Malcolm Stack



Calvin Stephenson Sr.



Millard Oldham



Ada Oldham



Clayton Wright