

NEHA NEWS

Note of Thanks to Departing Board Members

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the dedication, hard work, and efforts of three members of the NEHA board of directors on the occasion of their departure from the board: Region 9 Vice-President Edward Briggs, Immediate Past-President Carolyn Harvey, and Region 4 Vice-President Keith Johnson.



Region 9 Vice-President Edward Briggs leaves the board after eight years of dedicated service and leadership. Ed is currently employed by the Ridgefield Health Department in Connecticut as the director of health. He has worked there for 33 years in positions such as a sanitarian, and chief sanitarian. Prior to that, he worked at the Milford Health Department as a sanitarian II and lab director for six years. Ed served two terms as president of the Connecticut Environmental Health Association (1996 and 2004) and received the Raymond Brunelle Sanitarian of the Year Award in 1992 and 1993, and the Region 9 Yankee Conference Robert Perriello Award in 1993. During his time on NEHA's board he served on the Affiliate Engagement and Bylaws Committees.

When asked about his time on NEHA's board, he states, "I am proud to have served NEHA and its membership during a time of significant change. I am sure that NEHA will continue in a positive direction under the leadership of our new board and executive director."



Immediate Past-President Carolyn Harvey leaves the board after five years of dedicated service and leadership. She is currently chair of the Department of Environmental Health at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) and will retire on January 1, 2017. Carolyn has been at EKU for 15 years and has worked in many areas of environmental occupational health for almost five decades. She was honored to be the recipient of the NEHA Past Presidents Award in 2008. She's also has served as a peer reviewer and technical editor for the *Journal of Environmental Health*.

Carolyn was president of Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP) from 2002–2003, and received the Jack Hatlen Distinguished Service award in 2012. She was the faculty responsible for the AEHAP Student Research Competition, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health, for ten years. This endeavor enabled her to work with students from many National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council programs and with great U.S. Public Health Service officers like Pat Bohan and Mike Herring. Her work on the Student Research Competition was one of her favorite experiences with NEHA and AEHAP.

Reflecting on the past five years, Carolyn states, "My service on the NEHA board may have presented the biggest challenge of my career and yet, it was one of the best experiences of working with great people both on the board and NEHA staff. Many of those colleagues are some of my best friends and I have NEHA to thank."

She is currently president of the Past Presidents affiliate and hopes to continue to be a viable member of NEHA.



Region 4 Vice-President Keith Johnson leaves the board after six years of dedicated service and leadership. Keith is the administrator and an environmental health practitioner for Custer Health, a public health unit based in Mandan, North Dakota, that serves five counties. Starting as an environmental health practitioner in coal country in 1977, he provided technical review to county commissions in regard to the placement of energy projects. He was hired as administrator of the health unit in 1988. He is a registered sanitarian and microbiologist, and continues to work as a legislative liaison for the public health community.

Keith will continue to serve on NEHA's Scholarship Committee and is wrapping up work as co-chair on the Food Safety Modernization Act Training and Certification Committee.

"I've seen firsthand what NEHA can do to lift the profession," says Keith. "North Dakota's environmental health practitioners are now a completely different, completely professional corps ever since we affiliated with NEHA and passed state licensure. It's been a privilege to serve others within the field as a regional vice-president."

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Innovating for Environmental Health App Challenge Winner Announced

We, at NEHA, believe that we should always seek opportunities for individual and organizational growth, and that we should support an environment that allows us to challenge ourselves and our communities.

This year's Innovating for Environmental Health App Challenge was a tribute to this idea. The app challenge was a competition where participants developed desktop and mobile apps that would fulfill a new function or improve upon an existing function.

The App Challenge promoted the partnering of technology, environmental health, and government data. It served as a space for new ideas and welcomed individuals from around the world to propose solutions to environmental health issues.

The Innovating for Environmental Health App Challenge could not have been possible without the support of Hedgerow Software and Esri. Their help enabled us to take a step into a new arena. We are so proud of this year's results and look forward to seeing this program grow and evolve in the coming years.

We want to congratulate this year's first place App Challenge winners: Nicolas Leon, Diana Hurtado, and Angela Jimenez. Their team developed Biky, an app that integrates alternative transportation, physical activity, and community building to tackle air pollution and promote a healthy lifestyle. Their winning app can be viewed at <http://devpost.com/software/biky-75gtmo>.

NEHA Staff Profile

As part of tradition, NEHA features new staff members in the *Journal* around the time of their one-year anniversary. These profiles give you an opportunity to get to know the NEHA staff better and to learn more about the great programs and activities going on in your association. Contact information for all NEHA staff can be found on page 57.



Rachel Sausser

I'm NEHA's receptionist and an accounts receivable representative. I started at NEHA a little over a year ago after working in the medical field for 15 years. Helping people has always been my main focus in choosing a career path. I'm here to help answer questions you may have about the organization. I can answer a lot of credentialing, membership, and general office requests. Outside of the workplace, I spend all of my time with my two children. My oldest daughter, Genesis, is 21 and a senior at Colorado Mesa University. Aubrey is nine and will be going into the 4th grade. In my free time I enjoy playing the guitar, swimming, hiking, and crafting. 🎸

DirectTalk

continued from page 62

changing climate. We know that evidence and data alone do not necessarily sway public opinion. Think about gun violence, immunizations, and lead paint if you need immediate examples of where data and evidence have failed to impact public opinion. Recognize and start with the values and beliefs of your community. Tell stories and appeal to our human emotions centered on safety and security. The British in attendance at the Conference openly described the "Brexit" referendum as an emotional decision, not an evidence-based one. Let's identify and harness the emotive power of our arguments.

2. **Lead by example.** Do the right thing. Where possible, move away from carbon-based energy and promote clean and renewable energy sources. What does that look like in practice? Personally, for our part, Angela and I walk to work and hop on public transportation whenever we can. We deliberately purchase locally sourced food and have reduced our meat consumption.

We are also sensitive to our association's visible leadership role. The NEHA 2016 Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition was largely a paperless event. We are also slowly migrating toward a paperless NEHA office environment, and an ever-increasing number of

our members elect to receive the *Journal* electronically. Each of us can be leaders in sustainability and reduced energy consumption within our individual means and social context.

3. **Spend more of your time being interested and less time being interesting.** Learn about sustainable food systems. Educate yourself on the opportunity costs and benefits of renewable energy sources. Reflect on your professional role in a rapidly urbanizing planet. Read an article on evolving vector ecology. Become versed in One Health. Make plans to attend the 2017 AEC in Grand Rapids next July, where sustainability and climate change will receive the attention they deserve.
4. **Insert yourself into the conversation.** I was deeply troubled throughout much of the Conference by repeated references to the role of the health sector, which almost exclusively was linked to the contributions of doctors and hospitals. Cut me a break. For the record, our profession is part of the health sector and we need to self-invite ourselves to the party. I was also disappointed by the composition of the American speakers in Paris. The U.S. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, an American economist, and a New York-based nongovernmental organization, Health Care Without Harm, gave presentations. Where were our government's premier environmen-

tal health practice agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Environmental Health and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency? During the closing session I spoke publicly in front of the 500 or so delegates about the potential contributions of the sizeable global environmental health workforce, which had been largely overlooked throughout the Conference. This omission represented an inexplicable oversight by WHO.

Queen Letizia left a lasting impression on me. She was gracious, she was accessible, and most importantly, she remained in the Conference auditorium listening intently for hours after her speaking opportunity had passed. She also said something during her prepared remarks that cling to me, "Each of us must embrace a fundamental change in attitude toward nature and each other." That would be a magical development if realized—one I aspire to for my career in environmental health and one we might reflect upon as a professional community.

You can view the Conference's conclusions and action agenda at www.neha.org/eh-topics/climate-change-0.

The Hotel Edgar staff inform me that it's time to move on ... got a plane to catch. 🛫

Dave

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