

30th Annual Meeting is One To Be Remembered

There was an amazing level of excitement at the Annual Meeting this year. People were excited to be in-person and also excited to see fellow EFO members they haven't seen in a couple of years. It is hard to gauge the excitement of people on the other end of the Zoom, but I expect that they were excited as well to be able to take part of a great meeting line-up virtually. It was another "First" for EFO, a hybrid Annual Meeting. With many companies still not allowing employees to participate in conferences or travel, the EFO Board felt that a hybrid meeting format was necessary this year. I know that you have heard me say this before but – This was the best annual meeting that EFO has Ever had!

The Activities Committee, led by Paula Hofford, did a fantastic job of lining up speakers that had topics relevant to what is impacting EFO member companies today as well as setting up a beautiful day of golf overlooking downtown Tulsa from the Osage hills.

The theme this year was "Environmental Federation of Oklahoma: 30 Years of Purpose, People, Passion & Programs". It was very appropriate considering that EFO has been an Oklahoma institution ensuring that "Oklahoma provides an environment conducive to a high quality of life for all Oklahoman's through balanced, responsible economic growth and protection of our natural resources". Our mission is as relevant today as it was in 1991.

Even with the pandemic, we had over 220 environmental managers, regulators, consultants, and students registered to attend this year's event. The Acting Region 6 Administrator, David Gray opened the conference with a Keynote speech followed by Ken Wagner, Oklahoma Secretary of Energy & Environment. Ken spoke to the group about the state of energy and environmental issues in Oklahoma as well as insights to what to expect from EPA. Then Scott Thompson gave us an update on the state ODEQ. After the Frank Condon Awards Lunch, we heard about the Triple Bottom Line Scor3Card, Cybersecurity, and the Drive Act and its impacts on the OCC. We had great panels on Water Quality Resources where PFAS was discussed among other issues, and Land Protection where PFAS was also discussed among other issues.

On Thursday, we had keynote talks on McGirt and an update on the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority. (I never thought we would be discussing marijuana at an EFO conference!) We had fantastic panels on health and safety, wildlife, and air quality issues, and ended the conference with the annual membership meeting where we voted on a new chairman - Dr. Darrell Townsend from GRDA, a new vice-chairman - Mr. Jeff Everitt from OGE, and retained Mr. Gerald Butcher as Treasurer and Steve Landers as Secretary.

Even the Hospitality Suite was one to be remembered! There was great music, great food, and the Photo Booth was a great hit with many! See the pictures below to see what fun it brought to the Hospitality Suite. Thanks to EMA, Clean Harbors, and Impact Branding for their sponsorship of the Hospitality Suite.

We do want to recognize that OSU, OSU Tulsa Dr. Ede, and Northeastern State University Dr. VuTran and Dr. Martin. Both universities are EFO Members and highly encouraged their students to attend this event. Because of their support, we had a total of 15 students attend, the highest number to date for student engagement. We believe that by offering this opportunity that we are building towards the future. The students enjoyed and learned a lot at the conference about being an EHS professional.

The conference would not be possible were it not for our Exhibitors and Sponsors. We sold out the

Exhibitor Booths in record time this year (all sold in first month of sales), and our sponsors for the Awards Lunch, Box Lunch, and Breaks stepped up to make it a great conference for all. Many of our Exhibitors gave away some very nice gifts. Our attendees greatly appreciate the gifts!

We also could not do an event without our Volunteers. In addition to our Board Members and Committee Chairs to help check in attendees, give them their badges, pass out the conference gifts, and ensuring that everything ran very smoothly, we also had a couple of EFO members step up to help us out: Nyna Saenz of Georgia-Pacific Gypsum and Andrew Pawlisch of Trihydro. If anyone wants to volunteer to help out at an future EFO, we gladly accept all help!

We appreciate all who participated in the conference survey. We had 25 participate. John Schutte of Public Service Company of Oklahoma was the winner of the \$100 gift card from EFO for participating in the survey!

If you did not attend, you missed some great panels, great speakers, and a great opportunity to meet and talk to our regulators from the ODEQ and from Region 6 as well to network with your fellow EHS professionals. The presentations from the Annual Meeting as well as many pictures will be available of the EFO website in the near future.

Highlights from the 30th Annual Meeting:

Of course, we started the annual meeting with golf at Canyon at Blackjack Ridge golf course in Sand Springs. It was a perfect day for golf. The sun was shining, very low wind, and it got to about 80 degrees.



Exhibitors and attendees



A room full of your peers



Speakers



Frank Condon Award for Environmental Excellence



Runners up – Valero - Ardmore Monarch Butterfly Habitat and WFEC - Bottom Ash Closure & Repurpose Project (Hugo Power Plant)



2021 Frank Condon Award for Environmental Excellence award winner



OG&E - Vegetation Management Browse Delivery for Oklahoma City Zoo & Botanical Gardens

2021 James R Barnett Public Servant Award

Mr. Ed Fite was awarded the Public Servant Award for his outstanding leadership and commitment to service for protecting and preserving Oklahoma's water resources, scenic rivers and river basins.



Hospitality Suite





Don't forget: Mark your calendars for the 31st Annual Meeting scheduled at the Reed Center in Midwest City, October 10-12, 2022.