

VEHA's 2020 Annual Report to Membership

The Virginia Environmental Health Association (VEHA) board is pleased to present its' annual report to the membership for calendar year 2020. This report documents the progress of VEHA over the past year from the perspective of the board members, and highlights milestones and accomplishments noted along the way. I invite you to review our report and seek out board members for additional information should you have any questions.

President – Sandy Stoneman (2018-2020)

Greetings from Southwest Virginia! Here in the Blueridge mountains the cool temperatures are proving that fall is here and that time is marching on no matter what else is happening in the world.

This has definitely been a year to remember and also one in which many people, including those of us in the Environmental Health field, have had role changes. COVID-19 has touched us all personally and professionally in some way and it is my sincere hope that this update finds you and yours healthy and safe.

VEHA has always been proud to offer engaging and relevant education opportunities to its members and those in the EH field. While the VEHA board had plans in place to offer multiple training/CEU events this year, they have had to be canceled, rescheduled, and modified. It has been challenging but the Board is still planning to offer the VEHA Fall Education Conference in a virtual format via Zoom on November 18, 2020. Due to the circumstances everyone has faced this year, the board voted that if you are a VEHA member the registration fee is waived! For this event, we will have a short annual membership meeting and then break out into two tracks, onsite and food safety. CEU's will be available. If you have not joined VEHA or if your membership is expired, take a minute and join/renew today (the annual membership fee is only \$20.00!). Please note that you will need to register to receive the link to the conference. Registration will open soon on the VEHA website: <https://veha32.wildapricot.org/events>.

As my term comes to an end as your VEHA president, I want to thank you all for having the confidence in me to head up the board and help our professional organization to continue its work. It has been a truly rewarding experience to serve. If you are interested in helping to support and grow the environmental health profession, please reach out to a board member. VEHA would welcome your knowledge, expertise and ideas.

I hope to see all of you virtually on November 18 and hopefully in person for our 2021 events!

Sandy Stoneman

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VP of Member Services – Jessica Stewart (2018-2020)

Since VEHA has refreshed our software subscription to the Wild Apricot platform, our membership, member maintenance, and the event registration process is completely streamlined and simplified. We ultimately want our members to have easy access to VEHA membership information, educational opportunities, and professional advancement. If you have any suggestions on how to make anything on the website easier to navigate, etc. please provide your input because it is always greatly appreciated!

VEHA currently has 114 active members. We have quite a few members whose membership is about to, or has recently, expired. I encourage you to explore the VEHA website, update your member profile and, if needed, renew your membership. Looking forward to joining our members for the virtual fall conference on November 18th.

VP of Programs and Capitol Area Delegate- Tammy Faulkner (2018-2020)

I continued this past year spearheading the organization of educational conferences as the acting VP of Programs, with continued help from other Board members. It seems I have held the position for some time, but formal occupation has been according to the By-laws.

It is a challenge to think of topics if you consider the soils program does not have much variety, but if you read publications, listen to staff, and participate in other educational events, there is an abundance of information we can bring to our conferences to disseminate information about the industry. Not everyone reads the same publications, attends the same programs, or associates with the same professionals. Locating speakers is a rewarding task. However, if you have an interesting case study, or information to pass on to your professional community, do not hesitate to contact me for inclusion as a presenter, or for development of a special training event. Did you know that when poplar trees decay, they smell like sewage? Yes, I am looking for someone who could speak about vegetation and drainfields.

Thank you for your support.

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VP of Professional Advancement – Bryant Wooden (2018-2020)

As Vice President of Professional Advancement for VEHA, I have attended monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss business and continued success of the organization. Due to Covid-19, these last several months have definitely been a challenge trying to plan our normal VEHA educational conferences and meetings, but we all must continue to be safe and work together.

As always, I encourage fellow environmental health professionals and students to become members of the VEHA organization and take advantage of the trainings and awards that will be helpful for current and future endeavors. I recommend that all members visit the VEHA website to gather an increased understanding of the great opportunities available. As we navigate through this global pandemic please also nominate well deserved environmental health professionals for the various awards available (EH Professional of the Year & A. Clark Slaymaker Award).

It is a great opportunity to work with the VEHA organization and I encourage any professionals and students interested in scholarships and awards to reach out through email to the Vice President of Professional Advancement bwooden@arlingtonva.us

Southwest Area Delegate – Leon Vinci

As 2020 winds-down, it has been a great opportunity to serve as the SW Virginia Area Regional Delegate for VEHA. I have been able to take part in the monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss matters and business of the organization. But, as you all know: 2020 has been a heck of a year due to the pandemic.

I am looking forward to attending our Fall Conference, which is being planned as a virtual meeting to cover food safety and subsurface disposal issues. I encourage my fellow colleagues from the South West Virginia Region to 'attend' the upcoming Fall VEHA Educational Conference online to obtain educational credits for professional credentials.

As for the SW Virginia region, this summer has been consistently hot with record-breaking temps. For the best part of our region---July has been the hottest month on record and being the July with the most consecutive 90 degree-plus days !! As you know, we are still experiencing drought conditions in this section of the Commonwealth. As environmental professionals in situations like this, it is always important to be able to educate and have an open line of communication with our citizenry and facilities to protect public health. *Climate Change is hurting our environment as well as our health.*

It is a great opportunity to work with our VEHA organization as we continue to protect the environment and communities through further understanding of public health. I encourage anyone interested in making the VEHA organization a continued success, to visit our website at virginiaeha.org or reach-out to any of our area delegates.

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Blue Ridge Area Delegate – Reed Cranford

As the Blue Ridge Regional Delegate for VEHA, I have been able to participate in the monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss business and increased success of the organization. I have had the opportunity to attend and assist with planning for the Spring Conference in Charlottesville, which was unfortunately canceled due to Covid-19.

As an Environmental Health Specialist I have been challenged with change of job duties during this pandemic, and reminded of the ever changing roles the position may call for. Flexibility has been the theme for 2020!

I look forward to some normalcy and seeing the VEHA Board and Members in person in the future.

Past President – David Fridley (2018-2020)

Greetings! Over the past 20 years, I have participated on the VEHA Board of Directors as delegate, secretary, vice president for programs, and president— to everyone's benefit, almost everything that didn't require me to balance the checkbook. Over that time, I have been amazed at how the parts of the VEHA organization—delegates, officers, and most importantly our members—contribute to make this group a consistent success. Since 1966, we have been a leader in providing professional education, issue advocacy, and support for career development in Virginia's environmental health field.

As past president, my primary role has been to work toward orderly succession on the Board through the nominating committee for fall elections. I just want to take a minute to reflect on the enthusiasm, professionalism, and positive attitude displayed by each person who have offered their volunteer time to help steer VEHA through the next year. They come from diverse backgrounds in public and private environmental health careers, and their different stories enrich and support each other toward the common goal of advancing our field of work. My sincere thanks to all of them.

And to the rest of our members: renew your membership, attend our educational workshops (even in these "virtual" times), recognize each other's notable contributions through our award programs, nominate a deserving student for our undergraduate and graduate scholarship opportunities, and when you can, let us know you would like to help move our organization forward through volunteering with our Board, either in an elected position or through working with our committees for professional advancement, program development, and member services.

It has been a distinct privilege to be part of this Board, and thank you for your confidence. I am looking forward to more opportunities to help serve this Association in its work.