



## PROFILES OF THE 2010 PGAC AWARDS OF DISTINCTION WINNERS

Calgary, June 4, 2010 - The Propane Gas Association of Canada (PGAC) proudly presents the following profiles of the winners of the PGAC's 2010 National Propane Awards of Distinction. The winners were announced on Thursday evening, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, during the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual PGAC National Conference at the Westin Nova Scotian in Halifax.

This marks the fourth year of this prestigious awards program, which brings recognition to those individuals and companies who have achieved success in the propane industry and, through the student scholarship award, to highlight the richness of experience possible through a career in the industry.

The 2010 Awards Program consists of four awards:

- **President Award – Individual:** Mr. Dom Doucet
- **President Award – Company:** National Energy Equipment Inc.
- **PGAC Volunteer Service Award:** Mr. Don Bietz
- **W.L. Kurtze Scholarship Award:** Mr. Shawn Nolan

### PRESIDENT AWARD– INDIVIDUAL: MR. DOM DOUCET

This award recognizes individuals who have made significant or consistent outstanding contributions to the standards and practices of the propane industry. It acknowledges the hard work, dedication and commitment that these individuals provide. The award has the objective of encouraging individuals to contribute to the leadership, promotion and understanding of the propane industry.

The 2010 President Award (Individual) was presented to **Mr. Dom Doucet, Irving Propane (retired)**, Moncton, New Brunswick.

"It's like being selected for the propane equivalent of the hockey hall of fame!" After more than 46 years in the propane industry and a reputation for knowledge and leadership that continues to keep him 'on call' even in retirement, Dom Doucet says receiving this national award is one of the highlights of his career. Within the Atlantic propane industry Dom Doucet is the first name that leaps to mind when discussing individuals who have single-handedly helped shape and expand the industry.

Dom began his career as a Service Technician/Installer with Speedy Propane in 1964.



*Left to right: PGAC Board Chairperson Dan McPhee, Dom Doucet, PGAC President Ann Marie Hann.*

Over the next five years he adapted an existing training program from the University of Texas to help develop a Speedy Propane training program for Service & Plant Operations – this later became the key to identifying criteria for New Brunswick’s initial provincial propane licensing program. Dom moved on to work in field maintenance for CN Rail in Atlantic Canada, returning to Speedy Propane in 1977 where he stayed through its transition to Irving Propane and remained with the company until his “retirement” in 2001.

After so many years involved in so many aspects of the propane industry, Dom says he feels “like I am being recognized for my own contributions to the industry. In Atlantic Canada I’m known as the person to go to for answers – if I don’t know it, I’ll find it. This award feels like the industry as a whole is recognizing my contributions as an individual.” The fact that Dom retired only after he assured his employers and colleagues that he would remain available to them as a resource speaks volumes about how well he is regarded in his industry. He is affectionately referred to by many as “the Godfather of propane,” a title earned years ago by his willingness to share his extensive knowledge and expertise.

One of the greatest sources of satisfaction for Dom is his continued involvement in the Atlantic Emergency Response Program, albeit in a slightly reduced manner since his retirement. He also continues to offer his training services to small organizations that don’t have their own trainers. “The people I deal with want to learn. They want to know what propane is and they are genuinely interested,” he said. “Once I give them some information about the product, its value and flexibility, they become more interested and that keeps me interested. It gives me the drive to continue to do what I do.”

Dom sees further growth ahead for the propane industry if there is “genius enough to introduce the industry through a variety of venues” and people are educated about the safety and flexibility of propane as a fuel. “I have been in the propane industry my entire life,” said Dom, “and this award is probably one of the most wonderful things that has ever happened to me. I was treated very well by the propane industry and the PGAC and this is like being put into the realm of the elite.”

## PRESIDENT AWARD – COMPANY: NATIONAL ENERGY EQUIPMENT INC.

This award recognizes companies that have made significant, unique and outstanding contributions to propane management in Canada. It appreciates the value of contributions made over a sustained period as well for singular momentous achievements. This award has the objective of encouraging excellence and leadership in company contributions to the Canadian propane industry.

The 2010 President Award (Company) was presented to **National Energy Equipment Inc.**, Mississauga, Ontario.

NEE has over 60 years of experience providing quality and value to Canada’s energy industry – a philosophy that National Marketing Director **Bart Gilchrist** says has helped NEE to grow into the largest distributor of energy equipment products in Canada. More than 335



*Left to right: PGAC Board Chairperson Dan McPhee, Raymond Gouron, PGAC President Ann Marie Hann.*

employees work out of the company's 14 locations across Canada to provide over 5,000 customers from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland with services in the Propane, Petroleum, HVAC & Hearth industries.

NEE has been an actively-involved member of PGAC since the Association's initial inception and continues to participate at all levels across the country. NEE staff members attend PGAC events and are involved in PGAC regional committees throughout Canada. "PGAC provides NEE and our customers with ample networking opportunities. Our involvement keeps us alert to any pending changes in the industry which in turn enables us to support our customers when those changes will affect them," said Bart. "Our involvement with PGAC helps us support the growth of the industry through the success of our customers."

Through the decades, NEE has been bringing to market new products that support the propane industry, beginning with the introduction of the very first auto-propane conversion kits to Canada, as well as electric vaporizers and pre-purged cylinders and tanks. That commitment to providing customers with both quality and value continues today with the promotion of the first certified fuel injection kit, tankless water heaters and other appliances that offer greater energy efficiency. "NEE's business has doubled since 2002," said Bart, and its investments in recent years of over \$1 million in information technology and digital infrastructure will enable the company to easily manage the anticipated growth in the decade to come.

The award was accepted by **Raymond Gouron**, NEE's Vice President – Quebec Region.

## PGAC VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD: MR. DON BIETZ

This award recognizes individuals who have made significant or consistent outstanding volunteer service contributions to the PGAC. The award appreciates the hard work, dedication, and commitment that individuals provide through exceptional leadership and outstanding volunteer service. This award has the objective of encouraging individuals to contribute to the leadership, promotion and understanding of the propane industry through volunteerism with the Association.

The 2010 PGAC Volunteer Service Award was presented to **Mr. Don Bietz, ECL Transportation Ltd.**, Calgary, Alberta.

For Don Bietz, propane has always been part of the family business. During his high school and university years in the 1960s he worked as a driver for the company his father started in 1947. The job introduced him to hauling propane and LPG products when the industry was still in its early stages. Effective April 7, 2010, ECL Transportation Ltd. was purchased by Triwest Capital Partners of Calgary and became part of Westcan Bulk Transport Ltd. The journey continues. Don's two sons have followed in his footsteps and are the third generation of his family working in the business, having now transferred to Westcan Bulk Transport Ltd.

The propane industry, Don said, "has been in my blood my whole working life. I've always been involved on



*Left to right: PGAC Board Chairperson Dan McPhee, Don Bietz, PGAC President Ann Marie Hann.*

the operations side and three generations of my family have worked in this business.” ECL Transportation Ltd. has been a PGAC member since the 1960s during which time Don’s father Harvey volunteered at the PGAC. Don has been on the PGAC Board of Directors for 12 years, having served as a Board Chairperson along the way, as well as having volunteered on numerous Board working groups and committees.

His company, of which he is a principal, has regularly sponsored PGAC events. Under his influence and inspired by his dedication to the industry, it has also been a key player in the operation of the PGAC’s subsidiary, the LPGERC, including recently providing service as the LPGERC’s Response Centre, and supporting the active participation of company staff on the LPGERC’s Operating Committee and as LPGERC response personnel.

The tight knit nature of the propane industry is part of what makes it unique, he said. “We are competitors in a small industry but camaraderie is very prevalent. People enjoy working in this industry so they tend to stay with it longer. They get to know each other and have the opportunity to build trust. It’s a relationship business and that trust is important.” The industry needs support from all sectors, he said, so it is in everyone’s best interest—producers, wholesalers, brokers, transporters and retailers—to promote the propane industry in general and unify the industry across Canada. The green initiative offers great opportunities by drawing attention to the benefits of cleaner fuels like propane, he said.

When asked about his greatest sense of satisfaction in his work, Don said “the people are the most important part of any industry and I’ve enjoyed working with the people in my company and in the propane industry in general. I’ve always been proud of the industry, and of the PGAC in particular. I’m honoured to receive this award. It’s very gratifying to be recognized by your peers for the years of service and it’s a great way to transition out of my term on the PGAC board.”

## W.L. KURTZE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD: MR. SHAWN NOLAN

The W.L. Kurtze Scholarship Award, valued at \$1,000, has been established to honour Bill Kurtze for his exemplary contributions, dedication, commitment and leadership to the PGAC. The purpose of the Scholarship is to provide financial assistance, annually, to recipients planning or pursuing a career related to the propane industry, for post-secondary education at a Canadian Vocational or Trade School, Community College, or University.

The 2010 W.L. Kurtze Student Scholarship Award was presented to **Mr. Shawn Nolan, Wilson Fuel Co. Ltd.**, Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia.

Shawn Nolan followed two generations of family footsteps into the heating fuel industry when he joined his father at Wilson Fuel Co. Ltd. Over the past eight years he has worked in a variety of positions. He started as a temporary labourer, and later graduated at the top of his class in the Oil Heat



*Left to right: PGAC Board Chairperson Dan McPhee, Shawn Nolan, PGAC President Ann Marie Hann.*

Systems Technician Program, before moving on to a Nova Scotia Gas Fitter III designation.

Shawn says he enjoyed his work in the oil sector but prefers working with propane and no longer dealing with the soot and odour of fuel oil. His greatest employment satisfaction comes from “helping a customer when they are in need, and from replacing outdated inefficient equipment with new, compact, cleaner and more efficient equipment.”

“The propane industry,” said Shawn, “is a great field to get into if you are looking for technical and hands-on training and knowledge that you can use in other areas of your life. I learn things every day that help me, like the people skills that are a tremendous benefit in all areas of my life.”

Shawn, who is studying for his Nova Scotia Gas Fitter II designation, is already thinking of the future for his daughter who is not yet one year old. As a young father, he says he feels better knowing he works with a fuel that is cleaner, safer, and more efficient for the world in which his daughter will grow up.

“It means a lot to receive this award from PGAC. I think propane is a terrific industry and I would be proud for my daughter to follow in my footsteps and become the fourth generation of my family to work in this business.”

## THANK YOU!

The PGAC thanked **BP Canada Energy Company** for its generous sponsorship of this year’s awards reception and dinner. Thanks were also extended to **Propane Canada** magazine for providing Awards Dinner photography. Appreciation was acknowledged for those who brought forward deserving candidates through the preparation of nomination packages.