



2012 Henry Bellmon Sustainability Award Winners Honored

Covanta Energy-from-Waste in Tulsa earns top award

By Ashley Fuller

TULSA, Okla. – Covanta Energy received the overall 2012 Henry Bellmon Sustainability Award during the third annual statewide competition. The energy-from-waste facility was honored along with three other organizations at an awards gala September 13 at Southern Hills Country Club.

The Indian Nation Council of Governments' *Ozone Alert!* program won the 2012 Quality of Life for All Award while Tulsa Community College's Center for Energy Excellence and Innovation won this year's Responsible Economic Growth Award for its Oklahoma Project Green. The 2012 Environmental Stewardship Award went to the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for its Oklahoma Carbon Program.

"Covanta is an outstanding corporate citizen in many ways," says Corey Williams, executive director of Sustainable Tulsa. "Its commitment to sustainability is clear in the way it operates and its focus on protecting air quality far above EPA standards. The company also reaches out to benefit Tulsans in interesting and unexpected ways, which set it apart from the competition this year."

Tulsa's Covanta Energy-from-Waste facility processes municipal solid waste into clean energy and steam. Energy-from-Waste facilities provide a sustainable, safe alternative to landfills, recycle metal and reduce greenhouse gases.

All of the Bellmon winners exhibited success in four key areas, including developing innovative solutions in targeted areas of sustainability; adaptation/implementation of sustainable practices; integration of all three aspects of sustainability: quality of life, responsible economic growth, and environmental stewardship; and demonstrated leadership in sustainability practices for Oklahoma.

Former Tulsa mayor and former Oklahoma Secretary of State Susan Savage addressed the capacity crowd about Henry Bellmon's legacy saying, "Henry Bellmon practiced what he preached to broaden the possibilities for people from all walks of life in Oklahoma." Savage noted the importance of collaborative work between the many corporate entities, government agencies and community advocates who are leading the way in sustainability issues, saying that "developing long-range sustainability strategies will ensure livability in our state for generations to come."

Again this year, and in partnership with Chesapeake Energy Corporation, a portion of the gala proceeds will help fund the conversion of Oklahoma school buses from diesel fuel to cleaner, compressed natural gas (CNG). Specifically, a comprehensive school CNG fuel conversion guide will be developed to help school districts determine if they are candidates for converting or upgrading their fleets to CNG. Funding will also help with grant writing and other services related to the conversion process.

“This dynamic group of people believes there are new solutions out there to benefit our state, and that also protect the environment,” said Tom Wilson, Bellmon Awards steering committee co-chair. “We don’t believe that sustainability and economic viability are disparate goals, and we are working together with many organizations to show that they aren’t. Our CNG school bus project is just one great example of how strategic partnerships can benefit many in our state, and perhaps become a model for others.”

The Henry Bellmon Awards, in its third year, is a collaborative effort between Sustainable Tulsa and Southside Rotary of Tulsa. The organizing committee includes volunteers from Sustainable Tulsa, Southside Rotary of Tulsa and other community leaders. Members include co-chairs Tom Wilson and Corey Williams, John Benjamin, Jason Brimer, Angela Carnoske, Judy den Daas, Ashley Fuller, Debby Ganzkow, Bill Kosbej, Janice Nicklas, Bryan Osborne, Denise Reid, John Robinson and Randy Sullivan. Judges for this year’s awards were Dave Lawson, Jim Cameron, Felicia Collins Correia, Brett Fidler, Dr. Will Focht, Tom Klenda, Ann McFerron, Susan Savage and Dean VanTrease.

The evening’s sponsors and donors included media sponsor KTUL-Tulsa’s Channel 8, AEP/PSO, Apache Corporation, Aquavita Creative, Arvest Bank, BancFirst, Brannin Family Foundation, CFR Insurance, Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Christiansen Aviation, Inc., Coral Pools, Inc., Covanta Energy, Crane Carrier Company, Cross & Robinson, CPA, Flintco, Debby & Steve Ganzkow, John Haley, Keener Oil & Gas Company, LaFarge, LAW, LLC, National Energy Policy Institute, ONEOK, Inc., Randall Sullivan Family Foundation, Samson Investment Company, Southside Rotary of Tulsa, Standley Systems, Sustainable Tulsa, Terracon, THG Energy Solutions, Tom & Laura Wilson, Triplett Aerospace, Inc., Tulsa Gas Technologies, Tulsa Metro Chamber, The University of Tulsa and Williams.

Henry Bellmon’s Legacy of Sustainability

Henry Bellmon, born in Tonkawa in 1921, was one of 13 children, and grew up in rural Oklahoma. Living through the Depression and attending Oklahoma A&M, his life in agriculture began early. Bellmon spent many years in politics and became Oklahoma’s first Republican Governor in 1962. A noted non-conformist and man who voted his conscience, Bellmon never forgot his roots and continued to raise cattle and farm at his home near Billings. He promoted soil conservation and was instrumental in the adoption of the Clean Water Act. Bellmon remained active and committed to protecting and preserving the environment until his death in 2009.

Sustainable Tulsa

Sustainable Tulsa, founded in 2002, promotes responsible economic growth, environmental stewardship and quality of life for all. The organization's vision is that Tulsa be recognized as the sustainability leader of the Midwest.

Southside Rotary of Tulsa

Rotary of Tulsa was founded in 1958 by a group of Tulsans determined to make a difference in their community. The organization has been involved in dozens of projects around town, in Oklahoma and across the world. Projects include Biscuit Acres Dog Park, the Be Wise, Immunize! program, the Springdale Elementary "Dixionary" Literacy program and the Henry Bellmon Sustainability Awards.

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