

VLA President's Corner

On August 22, 2020 I assumed the position as President of the Virginia Loggers Association. I gladly accepted this opportunity with honor and pride, and deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve the people in this great industry.

I also assumed this responsibility with humility because of the great VLA Presidents I follow who made great strides for our industry and built a strong foundation for you and me. As a long - time board member, I have witnessed firsthand the growth of our professional Voice so desperately needed by Virginia's loggers. Past Presidents Danny Goodbar, Ronnie Wright, Judd Smith, and Vance Wright all have been instrumental in helping the VLA gain the respect that we have today. These strong past leaders along with help from our Executive Directors, members' activism, and fellow partners in forestry and agriculture, have been immensely beneficial for Virginia's loggers.

As We move forward, VLA will face many challenges, but they will have to wait for another article. I look forward to writing about our challenges and opportunities and encouraging your involvement to keep us moving forward.

2020 has been a year most of us would like to forget! The pandemic has affected all of us, from the loss of loved ones to economic hardships. As we close in on the end of the 2020 elections are fast approaching for Congress and the Presidency. These elections are as important as any previous in America.

I encourage each of you to vote and ask those close to you to do so as well. It is your constitutional right to vote and, in this year's elections, all votes will be important. Do not ever think your vote does not make a difference because it does on all levels of government. From your local board of supervisors, state, and federal offices, to the President of the United States, they all have the potential to change our business and our way of life.

Take the remaining time between now and the election to study the candidates. Think about what they are saying, what they have done, and how it will affect your business. Will the loss of a biomass market impact your business? Is there a place for biomass in America's energy policy? Can you afford more taxes on your business? Do you feel the loss of stumpage to solar fields will eventually impact your timber supply? How have increased regulations affected your bottom line? Will our candidates for office push for more regulations that add financial and administrative burdens to your business?

Next, think about your family. What kind of health insurance do you need? How safe do you feel today? Do you support law enforcement and our judicial system? We have all seen the destruction in some of the cities across America and the talk of defunding the police. If our police are defunded will your loved ones be safe? Now add those concerns with the pressure on the second amendment of the constitution, will we be able to protect our family, business, and the American way of life? These are serious matters before us this year at our election polls. I encourage you to learn about our candidates and vote!

Our youth are the leaders of tomorrow. How will our children in rural areas be competitive with urban youth when you cannot get internet at your house? Will our children in the rural acres have the same opportunities as other children?

Your list of questions may be completely different from mine and each of you should vote for the candidate that you believe will deliver the best results. Research their views and compare them to yours regardless of their party.

We need our elected representatives to protect the rights of free enterprise, security, family owned businesses, and support a strong economy in the U.S. So, please, make the best of the time remaining to learn about the candidates and choose to **VOTE** on November 3rd.

This is the Reason I Vote!



Frank Myers

President, VLA