

Adam and Chad Miller with Eagle Investments, Inc. and Luke Miller with Miller Energy, Inc.

Michigan Oil And Gas Association welcomes fourth generation of Millers to membership rolls

by Jack R. Westbrook
MOGN Guest Reporter

ACME, Mich. — On the roster of those whose applications for membership in the Michigan Oil And Gas Association (MOGA) were approved for Member-At-Large status by the board of directors April 16 here was a pair of brothers — Adam and Chad Miller of Traverse City, Mich.-based Eagle Investments, Inc. Along with their cousin, Luke Miller of Kalamazoo, Mich.'s Miller Energy, Inc. — who became a MOGA Member-At-Large in October 2008 — the three have made MOGA history, representing the fourth generation of the Michigan oilpatch pioneer family to have become active in MOGA.

Adam and Chad Miller are sons of Kelly Miller. Luke Miller is the son of Mike Miller. The newest Miller MOGA members are great-grandsons of Clyde B. Miller, who with his brother George W., moved from Parkersburg, W. Va. to Ashley, Mich. in 1929, following the Aug. 27, 1925 Saginaw Field discovery that officially put Michigan in the ranks of commercially producing oil states.

Those original Miller brothers drilled either the third or fourth hole in that founding field, and in 1938 the families moved to Allegan, Mich., where they drilled shallow wells in southwestern Michigan. In 1941 Clyde B. Miller, with sons C. John Miller, Clyde E. "Gene" Miller, and H. Jack Miller continued operations as Clyde B. Miller, Contractor and Producer.

One or both of the original Miller brothers were present in nearly every historic Michigan play during the 1920s through the 1940s.

Following the 1953 death of Clyde B. Miller, sons C. John and Clyde E. "Gene" formally incorporated the Miller Brothers Partnership name in 1954 as a drilling contracting/petroleum exploration and production firm. H. Jack Miller was superintendent for the new company.

The Miller Brothers tradition of involvement in every historic Michigan petroleum play continued through the 1990s.

C. John Miller was elected president of the Michigan Oil And Gas Association in 1966 and 1967, the first of four Millers in two generations to serve in the organization's highest elected office. In 1973, C. John was the second elected president of the Independent Petroleum



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C. JOHN MILLER (LEFT), CLYDE E. "GENE" MILLER (CENTER), AND H. JACK MILLER became part of oilfield history in 1988 when H. Jack followed his brothers in serving in the Michigan Oil And Gas Association's highest elected office. C. John served as president in 1966 and 1967, Clyde E. "Gene" was president in 1976 and 1977 and H. Jack served as chairman of the board in 1988 and 1989. C. John Miller's son, Mike Miller, would later serve as MOGA chairman in 2000 and 2001.

Association of America (IPAA) from Michigan, with Harold M. McClure Jr. being the first elected nearly a decade earlier. C. John served in that office until 1975 and, when IPAA revised its by-laws in 1979, he was made IPAA president for an indefinite period, a position he relinquished due to temporary health problems in the early 1980s.

Meanwhile, C. John's son Mike and Gene's son Kelly had joined the Miller Brothers firm.

In 1976 and again in 1977, Clyde E. Miller served as MOGA president, leading the organization as top elected officer through a period fraught with new regulations and taxes brought about by disparity with the public as industry fortunes improved after several lean decades.

A new entity, Miller Brothers Oil Corp., was formed in 1979 by C. John and Gene Miller.

Following more than 31 years of continuous operation in Allegan as a partnership, C. John and Gene announced the decision to "pursue further activities as two separate entities." In 1985, C. John and son Mike Miller formed Miller Energy, Inc. in Kalamazoo, and Gene and son Kelly located in Traverse City as Miller Oil Corp. H. Jack Miller managed legal and legislative affairs for both of the Miller Brothers co-partnership entities from Allegan, Mich. and later Grand Rapids, Mich. offices.

In early 1988, Millers sold their primary oil and gas properties to Conoco, Inc.

Also in 1988 and again in 1989, H. Jack Miller was elected to MOGA's highest elected office, now chairman of the board,

as the last of the Michigan petroleum industry second generation Millers to head the organization. During the H. Jack Miller tenure, emphasis on Michigan petroleum production shifted from primarily crude oil to mainly natural gas output. Jack Miller passed away on Jan. 17, 2000.

Miller Oil Corp. went public in 1998, with the firm name changed to Miller Exploration Co. In late 2003 Miller Exploration merged with Edge Petroleum Corp. The Traverse City-based Miller family continues to operate in the oil and gas business as Eagle Investments, Inc.

Michael J. Miller served as MOGA chairman of the board in 2000 and 2001.

Now, appropriately in the 75th year of Michigan's premier oil and gas exploration and production industry organization, a new generation of Millers, Adam, Chad, and Luke, takes up the family standard of service in and to the industry through committed involvement.

