

# NEPPA's Fall Expo made a huge splash in Lil' Rhody!

The Rhode Island Convention Center and the Providence Biltmore were the places to be for a magnificent Fall Expo this year – where Big Ideas in Lil' Rhody captivated suppliers and distributors alike.

On Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, NEPPA hosted its Annual Meeting and Opening Reception at the Providence Biltmore. With delicious food and drink, a spectacular view, and a caricature artist to top it all off, the night was full of excitement and anticipation. The Board of Directors was voted upon, and Pat Buff, President of the Board, passed along the gavel to our incoming President, Heather O'Neill. Awards were given out to our retiring Board members, Lee Coscia and Jim Curtis. NEPPA Cares held a raffle to financially assist in the recovery from the latest hurricanes and disasters. A great vibe led to great networking and catching up with old friends (and making new ones)! The night was a wonderful start to the Fall Expo!

The following morning, Seth Barnett, PPAI's Diversity Development Manager, gave an educational session about Managing the Millennial Market – a very insightful and relevant topic that was well received. Don't hesitate to connect with Seth (and NEPPA) on social media!

Once on deck in the trade show, suppliers were ready to show off their products and ideas to the incoming distributors. The Trending Product Pavilion created a lot of waves because of its new placement this year – smack dab in the middle of the show floor. This created much enthusiasm about New Products, Quarter 4 Launches, Made in the USA products, and Top Sellers from an array of suppliers. Overall, the show created valuable ideas and takeaways for both suppliers and distributors.

Our friendly mascot whale Captain Rhody would like to thank our Fall Show Committee for their hard work putting on yet another great show this year.

From all of us on the NEPPA Board, we want to thank YOU, our members, for a swimmingly fun show this year! We'll be setting sail for the DCU Center in Worcester for the Fall Expo in 2018. Until then, Bon Voyage!

*Deanna Cross, CAS, Cross Promos*

*Pat Buff, MAS, Imagination Branding*

*NEPPA Fall Expo Committee Co-Chairs*

## Opening Reception & Annual Meeting

NEPPA's Annual Meeting was held during the Opening Reception on September 18<sup>th</sup>, the evening before the Fall Expo at the Providence Biltmore. Led by President Pat Buff, MAS, elections for NEPPA's 2018 Board of Directors took place.

President: Heather O'Neill, Walker-Clay Inc.

Vice President: Christie Wright, Ellco Promotions

Treasurer: David Kennealey, BrandHero promotions, inc./Geiger

Secretary: Deanna Cross, CAS, Cross Promos

Immediate Past President: Pat Buff, MAS, Imagination Branding

Directors:

Michael Bender, Michael A. Bender

Loren Cayer, SnugZ USA

Katherine Couture, alphabroder

Sandy Klein, Evans Mfg.

Karen Santos, Hub Pen Company

The 2018 Board will take office in January.

Pat asked Jim Curtis, JC Corporate Sales, and Lee Coscia, THEMCO, LLC, who will be leaving the Board, to the podium. They were presented with plaques in recognition of their dedication and service to NEPPA.

We were honored to have several NEPPA Past Presidents in attendance:

JoAnn Goodloe, Barker Specialty Co., Immediate Past President

Nancy Bercovitz, BAG MAKERS, Inc.

Kim Coen, Polyconcept North America

Nicholas D'Eramo, Triple Stitch Promotions

Pat Dugan, MAS, Budgetcard Inc.

## NEPPA Cares Fundraiser

While we all enjoy the chance to mingle with industry suppliers and distributors during the Opening Reception, a very important aspect of the evening is the raffle.

Many distributors generously supplied items worthy of the evening and our cause. The NEPPA Board decided to donate all monies raised to the RAC Business Recovery Fund in support of hurricane relief efforts with a goal of \$500. At the end of the evening we surpassed our goal and a gift was made of \$560!

A huge thanks to all those in attendance who made this donation possible!

*Jim Curtis, JC Corporate Sales*

*Lee Coscia, THEMCO, LLC*

*Committee Co-chairs*

## Education Session

### PPAI's Seth Barnett Talks Millennials at The Fall Expo

On Tuesday morning before the NEPPA Fall Expo trade show floor opened, distributors and suppliers gathered for an education session addressing Managing the Millennial Market, given by PPAI's own Seth Barnett. Barnett, PPAI's Diversity Development Manager, helped the audience to understand who millennials are, how they operate within the workplace, and best practices for doing business with this younger generation. The millennial workforce is the largest workforce among us now, and Barnett's educational session resulted in many "Ah-ha" moments and nodding heads from the audience. Barnett's realistic and straight forward view of how millennials will be effective in the promotional products industry allowed for a great session and discussion points amongst the crowd. Effectively managing this workforce and knowing how to do business with millennials provides advantages to all within our industry going forward. This session had many valuable takeaways and is very relevant to our social media driven world. Thank you to Seth for coming out to NEPPA and presenting such a great session! You can find Seth Barnett on LinkedIn or by emailing him at [seth@ppai.org](mailto:seth@ppai.org).

*Deanna Cross, CAS, Cross Promos*

*Professional Development Committee Chair*