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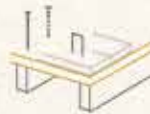
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FEATURES

10

Transportation

To Ensure a Healthy Building Industry, Our State Needs a Viable Transportation System

17

Rally Day 2015

Success At the Capitol

24

Speaking Out

With Comptroller Glenn Hegar

7

President's Commentary

The RPM Cup Series

14

On Council

Handshakes and Preparation

23

HOMEPAK

Topgolf Event + Washers Tournaments

= FUN & Success

26

Featured Project

Bella Vista - Cedar Park, TX

28

Builder Profile

Keechi Creek Builders

30

Lonestar Newsmakers

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The RPM Cup Series



By Steve Sorrells

March 4th was a blustery day at the State Capitol in Austin, as a Texas blue norther blew in hundreds of Builders and Associates from around the state for Rally Day. Despite the hazardous travel conditions, our members made the bi-annual pilgrimage to meet with each and every state official and discussed the vital issues that impact our industry. Several were able to lunch with our local associations and listen to our concerns. Our senators and representatives were amazed at the number of builders overflowing their offices, and appreciated this chance to meet with people from their districts. Establishing this dialogue is critical in the coming months as the Legislature takes on various issues. Equipped with TAB-supplied hard hats and issues lists, we left our elected officials well supplied for the important upcoming weeks' work at the Legislature. That evening, TAB hosted a reception for senators and representatives and their staffers at the historic Driskill Hotel, and Rally Day was deemed an overwhelming success.

The next day featured our HOME PAC fundraiser at Austin's Topgolf center; if

you haven't been to one of these venues, let me just say it is kind of like a bowling alley, a golf course, and a bar got swirled together by a Texas tornado. It made for a great setting for fun, fellowship, and fundraising for a worthwhile cause. All this was sandwiched between two full days of Winter Board meetings, and I left Austin invigorated by our membership's reports of strong business activity from all over the state.

But I was especially excited because it was at our Winter Board meetings that we officially unveiled the "RPM Cup Series Membership Challenge." Sporting a NASCAR theme and a highly competitive attitude, this year's membership drive will be epic. But the best part is that it is so easy and simple to participate and have fun. Builder members – contact your local HBA's executive officer if you want to race in the RPM Cup Series.

McCoy's Building Supply will lead the way as the "Crew Chief Sponsor" and StrucSure Home Warranty has stepped up as our "Pit Crew Sponsor." The support of these companies will allow us to reward the "Drivers" who complete the most "Laps" during the Races. Thank you McCoy's and StrucSure.

As evidenced by Rally Day, membership is the lifeblood of all associations and is critical as we work to protect the home building industry. With 9,300 members representing over 702,000 employees across our state, our association wields a tremendous amount of influence. But based on the meteoric rise in housing starts around the state, we should also be experiencing a similar rise in our membership. With your participation in the RPM Challenge, together we will surpass 10,000 members this year alone.

So, what is this RPM Challenge all about? Well, I'm glad you asked! The RPM Cup Series is a comprehensive, back-to-the-basics "Do Business With a Member" recruitment and retention effort. RPM stands for Relationships Powered by Members, and that is the underlying

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essence of our association. The purpose behind the RPM Cup Series Challenge is for each Builder/Remodeler member to evaluate and increase the amount of business they do with HBA Associate members. The goal is for Builder/Remodeler members to do 100% of their business with HBA Associate members.

Modeled after the NASCAR racing series, the RPM Cup Series will foster competition among Builder and Remodeler members in a fun way and increase the association's size, therefore maximizing the economic impact and influence of our association. All Builder and Remodeler members who sit on the Board of Directors of their local HBA will automatically be registered as "Drivers." Other Builder/Remodeler members may voluntarily participate.

Race #1 is underway and runs to July 1, 2015.

1. Each Driver (Builder/Remodeler who serves on a local Board of Directors) will provide their local HBA Executive Officer with a list of all subcontractors and vendors with whom they did \$5,000 or more in business over the last year.
2. The EOs will help their Drivers determine which subs/vendors are members ("Crew Members") and calculate the percentage of business ("RPM") the Drivers do with Crew Members.
3. Drivers will be ranked by the percentage of business ("RPMs") they do with Crew Members on the Local HBA's Leaderboard that will be displayed at the HBA office.

President's Commentary

4. The Driver's list of non-member subs/vendors with whom they do business becomes the Driver's "Scorecard."
5. A Driver will score a "Lap" for each new Associate member they recruit from their Scorecard. A Driver can earn "Bonus Laps" if they recruit subs/vendors that are not on their Scorecard (or Builders/Remodelers).
6. A Drivers' Scorecard Report will be added to the agenda of each local HBA board meeting, allowing the Drivers to share their successes with each other.
7. At the end of each race, Drivers with the highest RPMs will be recognized at their local HBA's monthly membership meeting.
8. July 1, 2015 – Drivers turn in Scorecards to EO. Laps are tallied and RPMs are updated.
9. The top three (3) Scorecards from each local HBA will be submitted to TAB. The top Drivers from each local HBA and the Drivers with the highest RPMs across the state will be announced at TAB's summer meetings in conjunction with the Sunbelt Builders Show™ the week of July 27.
10. HBAs with the highest RPMs will be recognized as well.

For us to increase our influence, we must increase membership, and this drive allows us to do so in a fun and competitive way. With your help and that of the local HBA staff, I am confident we can make this one of the best membership drives in years.

As I wrap up, I want to extend a special thank you to all of our members and TAB staff for the hard work that went into making Rally Day and the Winter Board Meetings successful. Special thanks to Membership Chairman Mitchell Anderson, EOs Phil Crone, Kim Jacobs-Lindsey and Libby Simmons, and TAB's Lorraine Urey for their enthusiasm and creative guidance in steering the RPM Challenge.

Now, I can't wait to see who the Race #1 winner will be at Sunbelt! See you at the Finish Line! ■



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Rally Wrap-Up



By M. Scott Norman, Jr.

The Texas Association of Builders 16th bi-annual Rally Day at the Texas Capitol was a great success. On March 4, almost 700 TAB members gathered on the south steps of the Capitol where Lt. Governor Dan Patrick addressed the crowd. All 181 legislative offices (31 Senators and 150 State Representatives) were visited by our members who delivered TAB's legislative agenda – and TAB hard hats – directly to their elected officials.

Thank you to everyone who participated in Rally Day 2015. By bringing your passion for the home building industry to the Capitol, you helped make lawmakers aware of how vital their decisions are to the livelihood and housing of so many Texans. Thanks for speaking for our industry and for the future home buyers of Texas.

Rally Day ended with the Legislative Reception at the Driskill Hotel. Dozens of legislators and their staff joined us at the reception, and it was a great opportunity to talk with our lawmakers in a relaxed atmosphere.

During the reception, we presented two awards for outstanding HBA attendance at Rally Day. Congratulations to the Greater

Houston Builders Association for bringing the most members, 165, and to the Builders Association of Corpus Christi who had the largest percentage – 18 percent – of their membership in attendance. It was great to see members from 24 of our 28 local HBAs in Austin visiting their Capitol.

TAB's winter board meetings were held the following two days at the Driskill Hotel. We appreciate everyone who stayed in Austin to participate in the governance of our association. On Thursday evening, we held a HOMEPAC fundraiser at Topgolf Austin. See HOMEPAC Chairman Robert Wood's column on page 23 for an account of this fun event – one that we will surely repeat.

The 84th Session of the Texas Legislature continues until *sine die* on June 1. TAB's professional government relations staff and volunteer members will be working hard for your interests at the State Capitol all the way to the end of session. We will continue to support legislation that prevents burdensome regulations and ensures home builders are able to provide affordable housing to current and potential home buyers. Legislative Line, TAB's e-newsletter that is published at the beginning of each week during the Session provides you with the latest information on legislative activities and bills that are important to our industry. If you are not receiving "Leg Line," please contact TAB.

We hope you will join us at our summer meetings that will be held at the Gaylord Texan in Grapevine, Texas July 28 – 31. Activities on Tuesday, July 28 include the Government Relations Committee meeting, and the HOMEPAC FUNDango

and 2nd Annual Statewide Washers Championship. The Sunbelt Builders Show™ will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, July 29 – 30, and the week's events will conclude on Friday, July 31 with TAB's Board of Directors meeting.

Wednesday's Sunbelt Opening Session speaker is 3-time combat veteran pilot, Dallas Cowboys Super Bowl Champion and philanthropist Chad Hennings. Two General Sessions on Thursday will bring you great information you can use for your business. The morning session is featuring Beth Ziesenis and focuses on technology and how to use, for example, sites such as Pinterest, Facebook and your company's own website to your best advantage. In the afternoon, we will hear from Ross Ramsey, an expert on Texas politics and executive editor of *The Texas Tribune*, and Dr. Jim Gaines, housing economist at the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University. Ross and Jim will bring us their insights on Texas' political and economic landscapes – a timely topic on the heels of the 2015 Legislative Session. Education sessions will also be held both days on the trade show floor.

For complete information, to register for the Show, and to make your hotel reservations at the discounted room rate at the Gaylord Texan, visit SunbeltBuildersShow.com. Bring your family to enjoy the Gaylord's new 10-acre resort pool and lazy river, Paradise Springs. As it has been for the past 15 years, Sunbelt is your best opportunity to do a little business and have a lot of fun.

I look forward to seeing you in Grapevine in July! ■

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To Ensure a Healthy Building Industry, Our State Needs a Viable Transportation System

By Ginger Goodin, P.E.

The state demographer recently released new projections that predict Texas' population will double to 54.4 million by 2050. As population centers and economies in Texas continue to grow, the role of the building industry is pretty straightforward: create and/or expand business and residential spaces to meet the demand for those spaces. In short, build more.

The role for transportation agencies and policy makers, however, is not as simple. That's because expanding our transportation network at a pace equal to population growth is neither practical nor affordable. For a variety of reasons, we cannot simply build our way out of traffic congestion, a problem that worsens every year in our biggest cities, threatening the continued prosperity that rapid growth has brought to us.

This problem can hit close to home for builders. Roadway gridlock impedes mobility, making it more difficult and more costly to simply get around. It can limit peoples' employment options, which in turn can prevent them from trading up in the housing market. It restricts home buyers' choices of where they can live, and threatens the viability of new subdivisions, because neighborhoods are not marketable if they are not accessible.

Worsening traffic and roadway conditions can also discourage businesses from building or expanding here. Those decisions involve a hefty financial investment. And if those who make such decisions don't believe the state is making sufficient investments

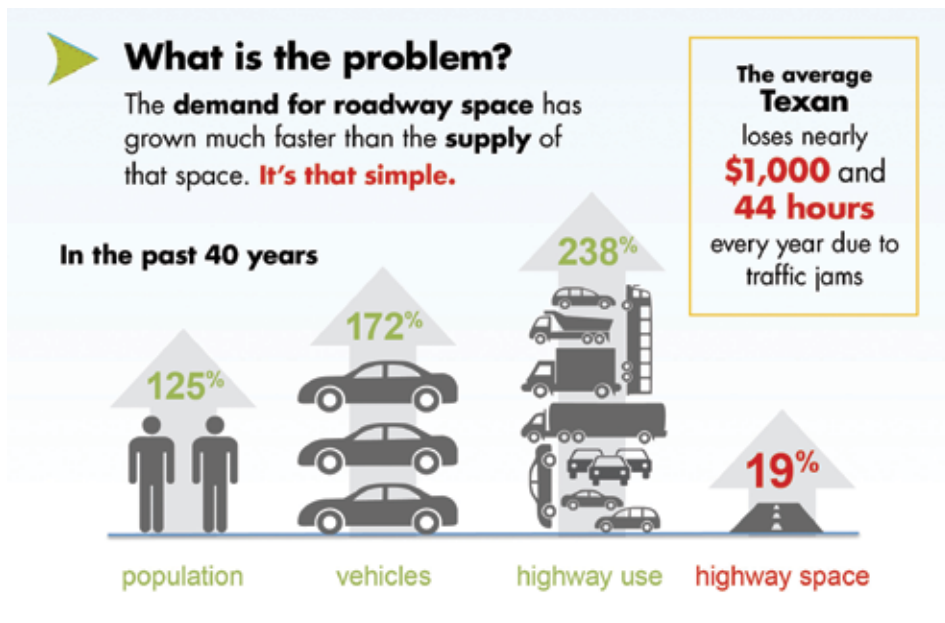
of its own – transportation in this case – it's easy to see why they'd take their new jobs somewhere other than Texas.

How things got this way

How things reached this point is fairly simple. In recent decades, the population of Texas has more than doubled. The number of registered vehicles has almost tripled, and the number of miles those vehicles travel has more than tripled. Over that same time, highway space has hardly grown at all, only about 20 percent. A lot of people are moving to Texas every month. Just about all of them are bringing their cars and trucks with them, but none of them are bringing along any driving space to accommodate those vehicles. Roadway supply simply hasn't kept up with demand – not even close.

At the same time, available transportation funding in relative terms has been shrinking every year. The state's motor fuels tax, at 20 cents per gallon, has remained the same since 1991. Since that time, inflation has doubled the cost of most things – construction included. That 20 cents a gallon in revenue to the state buys about half what it did in 1991. And here's where you'll find the downside to fuel efficiency. As cars and trucks get better mileage, drivers buy less gas, meaning the per-gallon tax is assessed on fewer and fewer gallons purchased. Cost-conscious drivers win, but the same can't be said for the state highway fund.

To help fill this ever-widening funding gap, officials have turned to debt financing, an option granted by voters in 2003, allowing the state to borrow money



state sales tax. And fewer than one percent know the amount of fuel tax that they pay. This lack of understanding is widespread, and it's common among all demographic groups.

to build highways. As a result, the state's transportation budget now includes debt service on \$17 billion in bonds. When other forms of debt are included, the total comes to about \$23 billion.

Bad and getting worse

The state's chronic traffic problem carries a significant cost every year, according to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute's Urban Mobility Report:

- 472 million hours of added travel time;
- \$10.1 billion in delay and wasted fuel costs; and
- \$2.1 billion in added truck freight moving costs.

On a personal level, average urban commuters pay about \$1,000 in added costs every year, largely because of the roughly 40 extra hours they spend in traffic.

Daily commutes have not only become more costly and time-consuming. They've also become much harder to predict. The Urban Mobility Report's "Planning Time Index" (or PTI) illustrates this fact, measuring the added travel time that should be allowed for higher-priority trips, such as those involving a medical appointment or airline departure. With a PTI of 3.0, a traveler should allow one hour for a trip that routinely requires only 20 minutes.

Today, drivers in Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, El Paso and Houston all have PTIs higher than 3.0.

And although gridlock is most conspicuous in our largest urban areas, traffic congestion is not exclusively a big-city problem. Traffic jams in Houston or Dallas can drive up the cost of goods being shipped to countless smaller communities across the state.

Growing public awareness

The Texas traffic problem has been worsening in slow motion, but Texans are beginning to notice it more. In a poll taken last year by TTI's Transportation Policy Research Center, three-fourths of respondents said that they experience traffic congestion where they live, and they attribute that congestion to economic and population growth. Those findings were reinforced by a more recent poll by the University of Texas and *The Texas Tribune*.

Respondents to the TTI poll have little understanding of how the state pays for its transportation needs. Only about half, in fact, know that the state motor fuels tax is based on a per-gallon amount, unlike the percentage-based

Most respondents said they believe a quality transportation system is important to the state, and nearly two thirds also believe the state should invest more money in its transportation system. There was no consensus on how that should be done, however, and predictably, people generally don't want that extra money to come out of their pockets.

Of the options they were offered, people are most supportive of dedicating the motor vehicle sales tax to transportation needs. Notably, our state's leaders have recently taken steps in that direction. Respondents are least supportive of raising the vehicle registration fee from \$65 to \$115.

And from a list of 15 different ways to improve transportation in the state, better traffic signal timing and clearing accidents more quickly are the most popular ideas. Building more toll roads is the least-supported option.

The findings also indicate that most Texans may be reluctant to make significant lifestyle changes to cope with congestion, such as changing where they live. Either this is because congestion has not yet reached a point where people feel compelled to make



such changes, or traffic congestion has become so commonplace that they view such changes as futile, and choose to simply deal with it.

The poll findings clearly suggest that people understand that transportation is a vital issue. But it's not, of course, the only issue. Our state's leaders have to balance our mobility needs along with other needs demanding attention – education, immigration, water, and so many others.

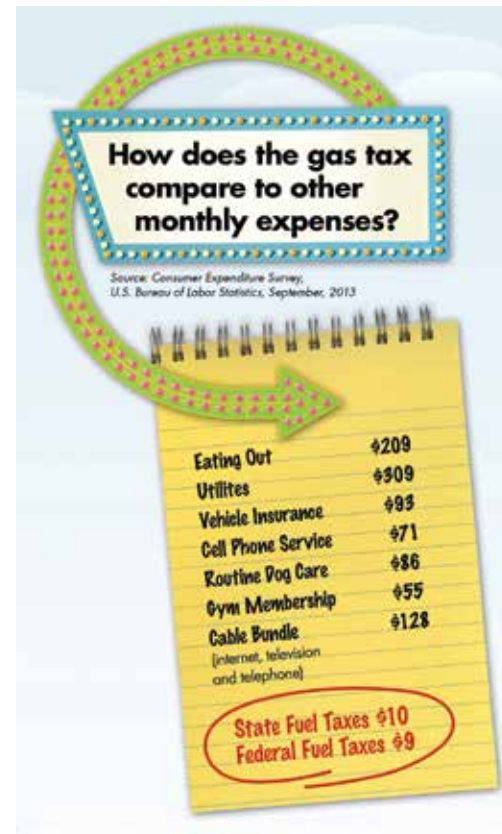
Can't build our way out

Even if the state had the construction budget to build roads at a pace to keep up with population growth – which it clearly does not – that would not be a practical option. The cost of right-of-way, environmental clearance requirements and societal concerns are, by themselves, enough to stymie such an idea. New construction is, of course, one of the answers. But it's not the only one.

Other answers spring from using the system we have more efficiently. This includes employing travel demand management strategies, such as

teleworking, flextime, and alternative work locations. The private sector has embraced these trip-reduction options, and more recently some state agencies have taken steps to implement the same ideas. Employees of those agencies in Austin account for a significant amount of single-occupant-vehicle congestion, so any meaningful reduction in trips can translate to meaningful traffic relief. And in addition to its traffic-reduction benefit, programs like these offer a win-win by boosting morale for employees who appreciate flexibility, and by giving employers a significant recruiting and retention strategy to attract and keep top talent.

Other strategies to encourage mode shifts such as transit, ride-share programs, bicycle and pedestrian options, park-and-ride programs and technology applications will also make a positive difference in Texas. Smart phone apps can help transit users locate the nearest stop, find out when the next bus or train is due to arrive, and even pay their fare before the next ride arrives – all with only a few touches on the phone screen. The introduction



of real-time ridesharing apps help interested commuters find nearby matches and reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles, one carpool at a time. Carpooling is nothing new, of course, but apps such as Carma and iCarpool demonstrate how modern technology can offer new solutions to a not-so-new problem.

Systems in several cities feature high-occupancy vehicle lanes, express toll lanes and toll roads. Buses traveling on those express lanes can reach their destinations faster, making transit options more appealing. The time- and cost-saving benefits in Houston, for example, have led to the emergence of casual carpooling, in which passengers meet at locations close to HOV facilities, and drivers pick up enough passengers to meet HOV requirements and avoid a toll.

To be successful, strategies like these call for the involvement of business as well as government. Since the early 20th century, Texans have relied on the public



sector to meet our transportation needs. State and local agencies assumed the exclusive role of building, maintaining, and operating our system of highways. That model was sufficient for its time. But today our challenges are different, so our approach to those challenges must also be different. For travel demand management to be an effective and successful strategy, its purpose and approach must be embraced by both the public and private sectors.

What's next?

Apart from all these potential solutions, is “doing nothing” an option? Certainly it is, but like all the other available options, it involves a predictable cost. Doing nothing means that we will spend more time stuck in traffic. We

will spend more money on wasted fuel, and we will spend more on just about everything that’s delivered by trucks. And we will also face the prospect of slower emergency response times. Doing nothing is an option, but it’s not a cost-free option.

The state’s booming markets are creating plentiful jobs. Architects, suppliers, manufacturers and builders are filling the landscape with the homes, apartments, offices and stores to attract workers eager to share in the state’s prosperity. And those workers earn the incomes that feed commercial enterprises, fuel our economy, and ensure our future.

But without a viable transportation system, none of that happens. And without system maintenance, none of it can be sustained. Meeting the challenge we face will require an all-of-the-above approach. That will involve more building, but it will also involve more innovation. ■

Ginger Goodin, P.E. is a Senior Research Engineer at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, and the Director of TTI's Transportation Policy Research Center.



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Handshakes and Preparation

By Meagan McCoy Jones



Ten years ago or so I started traveling around to our stores across the State. I was encouraged by a fellow lumber dealer to invite the local legislator to the store when I was headed that way, give them a tour of our store, talk with them about the issues important to our business, and introduce myself and McCoy's.

It was intimidating. But 10 years ago I met with State Representative (now Senator) Lois Kohlkorst in the back corner, under-the-stairs office of our Brenham McCoy's, and amidst yard tickets and caliche dust, we talked about economics, taxes, and policy.

I learned at least two things from that trip: these meetings are equally important to both me and them, and it's important to be prepared. From those early visits, I started making short policy briefs and bill briefs for myself and other dealers and vendors to use as they held similar meetings, and as we had more meetings, we had more impact.

This Rally Day, two McCoy's team members came to the Capitol for the very first time. The building is inspiring, no doubt. Sometimes, though, the work done here can feel a little less inspired. And that is why we must keep showing up, and that is why we must be well-prepared and well-informed on behalf of not only our business but also the businesses and industries that make us successful.

The Texas Association of Builders briefs, like those in our hands during Rally Day, and those prepared by TAB throughout the year, help all of us be prepared for our meetings with these leaders to make the biggest impact with our consistent message.

Rally Day is an important day, but it is only one day.

Our work continues. All of us deeply benefit from the hard work of our TAB team and members, and our work is maximized when we're working together. When TAB staff sits across a desk from a decision maker and calls to mind your face, your business, your handshake... we've given them and us the best opportunity for impact. ■

Meagan McCoy Jones is the volunteer chair of the Associates Committee of TAB. She is a fourth-generation lumber dealer and Vice President of Field Support for McCoy's Building Supply. McCoy's is one of the nation's largest privately held building material suppliers and has served its Born to Build customers since 1927. McCoy's is headquartered in San Marcos, TX and employs 2,000 people and operates 84 stores and two millwork facilities in five states. They can be found online at www.mccoys.com.

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A modern kitchen with light-colored cabinetry, granite countertops, and marble floors. The kitchen features a stainless steel refrigerator, a microwave, a toaster oven, a range hood, a gas cooktop, and a double oven. The backsplash is made of light-colored stone tiles with a decorative tile in the center. The ceiling has recessed lighting.

Granite counters, marble floors and Icynene. (Yes, Icynene.)

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Acme Brick Company Announces Updates to Mobile App Acme Brick Vision

This free app - Acme Brick Vision - allows users to view Acme's brick product line on both residential and commercial building elevations, or as a brick sample in a close up view. Acme Brick Vision allows the user to pick an elevation, put their choice of brick on the building, and change variables such as mortar color, trim paint color, and roof color. With Acme Brick Vision it is possible to create over one million unique combinations of brick, mortar, roof and trim colors.

Acme Brick Vision has been updated with several new features that make it more useful than ever:

- The photo gallery section shows enlarged views of brick panels and rendering, and adds any location photographs taken in the field of a specific product.
- The all new favorites section allows the user to save sets of brick. These can then be shared with other users from within the app and includes a help section.
- There are new elevations for rendering brick, and the mortar colors are updated to reflect the most current selections.
- A new brochures section offers PDF brochures for Acme publications.

All the traditional features in the original version of Acme Brick Vision are in place. The Material Close Up option shows a brick wall section with different

mortar colors. Both views can be enlarged to a full-screen view tailored to the viewer's iPad model, and can be saved to the user's camera roll. Brick selections can be searched by name, size, brick plant, or by color families. For each product listing, viewers can scroll to a detail page that provides a full set of technical specifications for that brick product.

Now more than ever, Acme Brick Vision enables consumers, architects and other building professionals to view and compare brick and mortar color selections and view them on site or wherever they have access to the Internet. This ability to view and compare selections indoors or out, at a moments notice will make the brick and mortar selection process more efficient and accurate. *Acme Brick Vision can be downloaded at the Apple app store at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/acme-brick-vision/id636974483?mt=8>.*

Acme Brick Company, founded in 1891, is the nation's largest brickmaker. Acme owns 26 brick plants and has 70 company-owned sales offices across 17 states, plus a nationwide network of independent distributors. Other Acme operations include American Tile & Stone; Featherlite Building Products; Innovative Building Products; and Texas Quarries. Acme Brick Company has been a wholly-owned subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway, Inc. since 2000. For more information visit www.brick.com.

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Without HOMEPAC's active political participation, decisions affecting the future of the residential building industry will be influenced by other industries and activist groups, many of whom represent interests directly opposed to our own. It is only through the voluntary contributions of our members that HOMEPAC can help preserve a positive political climate for the home building and land development industry in Texas.



RALLY DAY 2015

The 2015 Rally Day event was a tremendous success. On Wednesday, March 4, despite the snow, sleet and ice, almost 700 TAB members representing 24 of our 28 local associations traveled to Austin, Texas to represent the home building industry at the State Capitol.

hometown lawmakers face to face and help educate them on issues that affect our industry. During the course of the day, every Senator and Representative was visited by Rally Day attendees and TAB representatives. Rally Day ended with a legislative reception at the historic Driskill Hotel in downtown Austin.



2015 TAB Rally Day Keynote Speaker:
Lt. Governor Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick provided an enthusiastic keynote speech to the crowd of hundreds at the south steps of the Capitol. In his speech, Patrick acknowledged the home building industry as being a significant part of Texas' strong economy.

TAB would like to thank everyone who participated in this important event. Rally Day proved an effective way for members to get out in front of critical issues that could impact the bottom line for Texas home builders.

Following his address, TAB members stormed the Capitol to meet with their

TAB Rally Day Attendance Awards

Following a full day at the Capitol, Rally Day ended with the Legislative Reception at the Driskill Hotel. During the reception, the Texas Association of Builders presented a pair of attendance awards to two outstanding HBAs. The Greater Houston Builders Association (left) was honored for bringing the most members, 165, to Rally Day, while the Builders Association of Corpus Christi (right) brought the largest percentage of their membership to the Capitol, 18 percent. Overall, 24 of 28 local HBAs attended the 2015 TAB Rally Day in Austin.





RALLY DAY 2015





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By Robert Wood

Topgolf Event + Washers Tournaments = FUN & Success

It was announced that many HBAs had already scheduled their local tournaments. I'm proud to say that the West Texas Home Builders Association reported that they will be having a qualifying tournament, followed by a finalist tournament. After all of that practice, we will not be embarrassed by a bunch of city slickers from Austin this year.

an entry for \$25 per person (\$50 per team) as well as your ticket to the FUNdango for \$100 online at SunbeltBuildersShow.com. If space is available, by-ins may be purchased on site. The winner of the statewide tournament will have the honor and glory of bragging rights for the entire year and will take the trophy to their HBA. If you didn't participate in your HBA's qualifying tournament last year, I would strongly encourage you to sign up this year. The bar has been set pretty high to outdo the funds we raised at last year's FUNdango. I know that last year was only the beginning of what this event can grow to be and do for our PAC. More importantly, anyone can play, and it's a good time for everyone. ■

Here are some important details that you will need to know before you start pitching in Grapevine: there will be two tournaments that will take place at the HOME PAC FUNdango on July 28 at 6 p.m. - the statewide championship and the buy-in tournament. To participate in the state championship, you must be on the winning team (a team consists of two people) from your local HBA's qualifying tournament. The cost for the two players participating in the statewide tournament is a \$100 per person ticket to the FUNdango. For the buy-in tournament, you may either pre-purchase

Robert Wood is the volunteer chair of HOME PAC, the political action committee of the Texas Association of Builders and owns and operates his company Custom Homes by Robert Wood in Lubbock, Texas.

Not even an arctic blast could thwart the rip-roaring good time that was had by all who attended the HOME PAC Topgolf fundraiser that was held in conjunction with the TAB Winter Board Meetings this past March.

For those who have never heard of Topgolf, no, it is not another term for the fanciest golf club in town, but rather a high end driving range that allows even the most amateur of golfers to have fun. Just picture a 240-yard outfield with dartboard-like targets in the ground. The closer to the center or "bull's-eye" you get and the farther out you hit your microchipped balls, the more points you receive. Hitting balls, while sipping on your beverage of choice, and not needing a jacket on one of the chilliest nights that Austin has experienced this winter was nothing short of a grand ole' time, and to "top" it all off, thousands of dollars were raised for our PAC.

Spring has certainly sprung and that can only mean one thing...it is time to fire up those barbeques, fry some catfish, and boil those crawfish – it is WASHERS season! Due to the wild success of last year's local and statewide Washers Tournaments, we are bringing the statewide championship back to the HOME PAC FUNdango during the summer board meetings on Tuesday, July 28 at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. At our last HOME PAC Trustees meeting



El Paso Association of Builders



Greater Houston BA

Congratulations to the El Paso Association of Builders for exceeding their 2014 HOME PAC goal by 252%, which makes them the HBA that raised the most money for HOME PAC on a percentage basis. The Greater Houston BA also deserves a round of applause for being the HBA that contributed the highest total dollar amount to HOME PAC in 2014. Out of the 10 local HBAs that did not reach their 2014 HOME PAC goal, there were two that came within 20% of reaching their goal. Let's not let that happen this year – if you need assistance with fundraising please contact Molly Howard at TAB or your Area VP.

— TOPGOLF EVENT SPONSORS! THANK YOU —

With Comptroller Glenn Hegar



By Glenn Hegar

First and foremost, congratulations on being Texas' new Comptroller of Public Accounts. As a bit of background for our readers, please explain the role and responsibilities of the State Comptroller and the services the agency administers.

Thank you. The Comptroller is the chief steward of the state's finances, acting as tax collector, chief accountant, chief revenue estimator and chief treasurer for all of state government. In addition, our office administers a number of other programs and services including: state purchasing and procurement, transparency in government spending, economic development, college planning and energy conservation.

You have served in public office since 2002. How has your experience as a Senator and House member been influential to you in your new role as Texas' Chief Financial Officer?

I have found that my time in the Legislature has been incredibly beneficial to me in my new role as Comptroller. I have a

complete and thorough understanding of the legislative process, which is essential to this job. I know the difficulties involved in passing a bill and how important it is to interface with state agencies. My experience has taught me the importance of providing quality customer service to the members who are only here for 140 days every other year. It is my job to ensure they have the facts and information they need to pass sound public policy. The data we provide really drives the outcomes. Furthermore, my strong relationships in the Capitol have been very valuable to me as I navigate this new path as an executive office holder versus a policymaker.

As a 6th generation Texan, you are truly connected to the Texas way-of-life and understand the significance of family owned businesses and hard work. How do you plan to serve Texas taxpayers and businesses as Comptroller?

I know firsthand what it's like to run a business and the types of constraints the government can put on success. My priority is providing the best possible customer service to tax payers so that their businesses can thrive. I am committed to doing my part to ensure the Texas economy remains healthy and strong.

Many of the bills that have been filed this session have been aimed at reducing and/or eliminating certain taxes. In your opinion, what is the most effective method to maintain a balanced state budget, while providing relief to tax payers?

Like most taxpayers I have strong opinions about tax relief. However, as I mentioned before, I am no longer a policymaker so I have to respect that line. My new job is to provide the Legislature with the most accurate financial information possible to assist in their decision making process. I am confident the Legislature will find that

appropriate balance this session. From an agency perspective, I have identified nine outdated and antiquated taxes for repeal. I took a hard look at how we employ our resources, coupled with the best way to serve taxpayers and discovered it would be more efficient to eliminate these taxes.

It is well known that you are a strong supporter of transparency, open government and fiscal responsibility for Texas. The Comptroller's website is a great resource that allows taxpayers to understand where their tax dollars are being spent. What do you think could be done to improve upon the current level of government transparency?

My predecessor did a phenomenal job implementing the transparency measures we pushed through in the 2007 session. Because of her, much of our state and local government's financial information can be found online. However, the bulk of that program was created in 2009 and 6 years later it just doesn't pack the same punch given significant advancements in technology. The level of information the public has become accustomed to receiving has also grown significantly. I plan to update and improve the program to reflect these issues. The new program will create new guidelines for financial transparency and include more interactive tools. I know this information is especially important to Texas citizens and Texas businesses so I am committed to not only continuing the program, but also improving it.

The Texas housing economy is leading the nation in the areas of production, affordability and job creation. What can the Office of the Comptroller do to ensure that Texas sustains this status?

As the state's tax collector, we can ensure all businesses are treated fairly and given the tools they need to succeed. Likewise,



as the state's chief revenue estimator we can continuously monitor the economy, tracking both our growth and our job creation rates, so that policymakers can make adjustments when necessary.

As you know, Governor Abbott has declared transportation funding an emergency item. With the understanding that the Rainy Day Fund changes made last session are not enough to address the state's transportation needs, do you foresee the legislators dedicating additional financing sources?

I know that the Legislature is working hard to meet our state's transportation needs. My office is working closely with both the House and the Senate to provide information and statistics as they look at different funding streams. With 500 people moving to Texas every day, we must meet our infrastructure needs to maintain a healthy and vibrant economy.

It is estimated that 25% of the final cost of a home goes towards regulations imposed by the government. What are your thoughts on the influence that government has on rising home costs and other barriers to homeownership due to taxes increases, higher fees, and other regulatory burdens?

Every added cost and unnecessary regulation acts as a barrier to people

becoming homeowners and realizing the American dream. Many of these regulatory burdens assume a one size fits all approach, which doesn't account for regional variances and area specific concerns. We need to take a close look at these types of government fees and assess their true impact.

Building upon the theme of regulatory costs, overly rigid energy mandates (which lack market justification and significantly increase the price of homes in some of the most cost-sensitive markets) have caused our members to call for solutions to alleviate this mounting problem. Would you agree that longer energy code review cycles and reasonable energy code performance paths would result in significantly better compliance rates and effective price-sensitive applications?

Yes, this is an important issue and there have been legislative proposals filed to address it. I also oversee the State Energy Conservation Office, which reviews and considers updates to energy codes, so we are monitoring this issue closely and will continue to work with the Legislature and provide information as they need it.

As the only statewide elected official with young children at home, how do you successfully balance your responsibilities as a husband and father with your civic responsibilities?

Just like all working parents, I do my best to make sure my kids are being raised right. You only get one shot at it. Thankfully, I married up and my wife and I make a great team. My family is my priority, but I also have a responsibility to the folks who elected me. However, my struggle is no different than that of the average working parent in Texas – we all have a boss to serve, mine just happens to be the taxpayers of this great state. ■

Biography

Elected in November 2014, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar is a vigilant steward of Texas tax dollars and a strong advocate for job growth in our economy. As a staunch supporter of government transparency, Hegar believes all levels of government should be open and accountable to those who pay the bills — Texas taxpayers.

Hegar serves as Texas' treasurer, check writer, tax collector, procurement officer and revenue estimator. He has a proven track record of fighting for conservative principles and ensuring taxpayer voices are heard in Texas state government.

In the Texas Senate, Hegar oversaw all state and local revenue matters, during the 83rd legislative session, and he was instrumental in cutting \$1 billion in taxes for Texas taxpayers and businesses. As a business owner, Comptroller Hegar knows first hand that individuals, not government, will make better decisions with their hard-earned tax dollars and in turn help boost the economy.

Hegar also served as chair of the Sunset Advisory Commission, working to eliminate inefficiency in government agencies. In that role, he abolished six state agencies, saving the state taxpayers over \$160 million dollars in the process. As a former member of the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate, Hegar worked on a wide-range of common sense solutions that impact everyday citizens, such as public education, transportation, tax cuts, property tax reforms, water and tort reform.

Before his Senate tenure, Hegar attended Texas A&M as an undergraduate, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts. He then attended St. Mary's University, earning a Master of Arts and his law degree. At the University of Arkansas, he earned his Master of Laws.

Hegar is a sixth generation Texan, who grew up farming land that has been in his family since the mid-1800s. His upbringing taught him the core values of character, honesty, integrity and hard work. These are the same values that Glenn and his wife, Dara, work to instill in their three young children: Julia, Jonah and Claire.

Bella Vista - Cedar Park, TX

"Letting the Inside Out"



By Chad Andycha

DESIGNER POOLS & OUTDOOR LIVING

www.designerpoolstx.com

Local HBA Affiliation:

HBA of Greater Austin

Featured Project:

Bella Vista

Project Location:

Cedar Park, TX

Designer:

Caroline Murphy

Photographer:

Rob Aldridge Photography

Through their customized design and build process, Designer Pools & Outdoor Living of Austin strives to create exterior environments that naturally extend from and complement their corresponding interior spaces. Designer Pools' recent work in the Bella Vista community of Cedar Park was done in conjunction with the construction of a new home, and the end result is a stunning example of what they do best.

Designer Caroline Murphy worked closely with the new homeowners to ensure they ended up with an outdoor living area to suit all their needs and desires. "They're

a fun family," Murphy said, "and they wanted the opportunity to do a lot of entertaining outside all year long." First and foremost, they knew they wanted a pool to act as the central hub for their backyard gatherings and family time—and as an escape from the Texas heat. To add functionality to the space year round, a large spa and fire pit became crucial parts of the plan, especially for those chilly nights and winter months.

Beyond the pool, a cedar pergola was erected over a grill and stone-countertop bar, complete with stainless steel storage compartments and a mini-fridge. This

"They're a fun family," Murphy said, "and they wanted the opportunity to do a lot of entertaining outside all year long."



outdoor kitchen area allows the hosts to spend less time indoors and more time poolside with their guests, continuing to entertain and enjoy the fresh air while they prepare food and drinks. The pool itself has underwater barstools on one edge, so people don't even have to leave the water to eat.

A stone waterfall made for the perfect finishing touch and is one of Murphy's personal favorite aspects of the design. It's a charming focal point of the space, and its soothing sounds are the ideal background noise for relaxing on the deck or laying out on the pool's tanning ledge.

Murphy said her clients "really wanted something that brought the interior of their space outward." In coordinating with the home builders, Designer Pools was able to create an aesthetic that flows seamlessly from the inside out. The house has multiple exits to the backyard, and the short stairway down to the pool spreads across the entire patio, so all ways lead to the water. The outdoor kitchen and gathering areas of the fire pit and spa add to the multi-functionality of the layout.

While the marriage of the indoor and outdoor spaces was a key design concept, Murphy also recognized the

imperative to have the yard conform to the surrounding environment and "fit in nicely with the rest of the neighborhood." Cedar Park, a northern suburb of Austin, is at the edge of the Texas Hill Country, so Murphy drew her inspiration and materials directly from this region. For the landscaping in the front and back, she chose local, low-maintenance vegetation requiring minimal watering. Native stonework such as flagstone was also heavily utilized in the construction of the pool area.

The unique shape of the house and lot offered up some distinct challenges in the drafting stages. Murphy found a way to use these constraints to her advantage by letting the boundaries guide her overall design and layout. The U-shape of the space formed a natural cradle for the free-form pool to sit right in the middle, nestled up near the house, and everything else just fell into place around it.

The clients were thrilled with the design plans and fell in love with the finished product. It's the perfect space for their family-oriented and fun-loving lifestyle. More than just a backyard, it's a true extension of their house and a place where memories are sure to be made for many years to come. ■

Builder Profile



From College to Career, Keechi Creek Builders' Brandon Lynch Was Born to Build

Brandon Lynch | Keechi Creek Builders

By Michael Reed

Sometimes the pieces leading to a person's career just fall into place, and that certainly seems true for Brandon Lynch. His trajectory into home building began simply; he pursued a degree in civil engineering at Texas A&M University, and it was during this education that the pivotal moment occurred, which would guide him on his journey into the construction industry. "I had an internship with a builder in Houston, and it really made me realize that I wanted to do this for a living," Lynch said. "Once I started working, I found that this was a whole lot more fun and fulfilling than the other things I could end up doing."



After graduating, Lynch was recruited by a production builder out of Houston. He worked with many different aspects of

the company and moved on to work as a production manager, sometimes handling over \$20 million in projects at a time. He took on the challenges and proved to his employer, and to himself, what he could accomplish. The experience made Lynch eager to do more, and in 2007 he and his wife, Sheri, started their own company, Keechi Creek Builders.

Pursuing his own vision, Lynch crafted Keechi Creek Builders into a boutique, specialty-remodeling and custom-building company. Lynch admits that he likes to work with a traditional look that also incorporates transitional elements, but emphasizes that what matters most are the customer's wants and making sure that he can fulfill their wishes. "We base our business on working hard to bring what a customer wants to life," he said. "We don't do jobs for everybody. We focus on the right jobs for the right customers."

Part of this prioritizing customers' wants and needs pushes Lynch to keep up with the latest trends and education. And this suits him, as he prefers to keep his designs current and stay on the cutting edge. "I think

it's more fun to try something new," he said. "It's more fun the first or second time we're doing something versus the thirtieth or fortieth time."

Education is essential for Lynch, and he has found a wealth of information in the Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA) educational opportunities





such as industry refresher courses for modern building practices, green home building practices, and energy efficiency courses. “There’s always a good amount of information available at the GHBA... and classes we can take and put in our wheelhouse to make a better company,” said Lynch.

Lynch has taken advantage of these opportunities and has become a Certified Renovator for the EPA Lead Renovation, Repair & Painting (RRP) Rule. He also achieved designations as a Certified Aging-In-Place Specialist (CAPS) in 2010, and as a Certified Green Professional (CGP) in 2009. Currently, he is working toward designation as a Certified Graduate Builder (CGB).

Present and Future

One of Keechi Creek Builders’ more recent projects included a 7,000 square foot, \$2.5 million home in the Houston area. The homeowner wanted elaborate and high-end details which required a high level of communication between Lynch, the customer, and the interior designers. Many of the details had to be designed specifically for their particular rooms and spaces. “When you build a house like that, the attention to detail is very specific,” he said. “And it’s very different than most builders would do it.”



Other recent projects include renovations on custom-built homes from the 1990s. Oftentimes, the homes are completely gutted and then brought up to today’s standards with modern details and finishes. Lynch finds these projects to be particularly challenging due to the complexity involved in the unknowns such as prior workmanship that needs to be fixed or plumbing and duct lines hidden behind the walls that have to be worked around. But it’s all worth it for him. “Seeing the completed project, meeting with the customer after all the

design meetings, the dirt and mess has all been cleaned up, and [the customer] saying, ‘This is exactly what we wanted,’ that’s what’s fulfilling for me,” said Lynch.

Time has been good to Keechi Creek Builders. The company is currently on the upswing and is growing each year. Lynch believes the future is bright for his company. “In ten years, we’re going to be a very well-known home builder in the Houston area,” said Lynch. “And I’d like to expand to the Austin area as they’re very good on innovations and designs, and we’d like to do that too.”

Through his successes, Lynch believes his involvement with the GHBA is an integral part of his success. He joined in 2008, shortly after starting his company, and has formed several relationships with other members that have aided him over the years. “I always believed that the people that want to do the right kind of business, they’re the ones that are in the builders association,” said Lynch. “I’d rather associate with the people that want to do the right kind of business. The HBA, with the education they provide and advocacy they provide, it’s just a no brainer for me. If you want to grow your company and learn and be a part of a group of peers, there’s no better place than the builders association.” ■



Dallas' Honored Life Director Slease Passes Away

Honored Life Director of the Dallas Builders Association Bill Slease passed away on March 14, 2015.

He proudly served his country as an officer in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War. After receiving a MBA from the University of Oregon, Bill began his career with Morgan Guaranty Trust on New York's Wall Street, and in 1970, moved to Dallas as a mortgage banker. Entrepreneurial by nature and following in his dad's footsteps, he formed his own real estate brokerage company in 1984 and later, his own home building company, Tapestry Custom Homes.

An active member of the Dallas Builders Association, both as a Board officer and teacher, Bill was recognized as a Honored Life Director for his many years of service. For

several years, he represented Dallas on the Texas Association of Builders Board. In 2007, he was selected by the National Association of Home Builders as CAPS Builder-of-the-Year.

Bill's passion and enthusiasm for home building and remodeling could be heard and felt in his deep booming voice that echoed through our community as he readily shared his immense knowledge with others. Bill was truly a good man who left an indelible mark on his industry and the lives he touched.

Born in Wichita, Kansas on March 26, 1941, to Adalyn and Merle Slease, he attended Wichita East High School, University of Oklahoma, and Wichita State University.

He is survived by his wife, Judy, four children and 12 grandchildren.



DeWayne Krawl Named Vice President of Business Development

DeWayne Krawl joined MLAW Engineers in 2005 in its warranty department. Bringing years of real estate and business experience to the table, he created and managed the Additions and Remodeling department from 2006 to 2010. From 2011 to February 2015, he served as District Manager and continued to expand MLAW's presence statewide. Most recently in March 2015, DeWayne Krawl was promoted to Vice President of Business Development for MLAW Engineers.

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The TAB Excellence under 45 Awards Program is dedicated to highlighting and rewarding young professionals that have committed their time, efforts and careers to the Texas building industry.

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Member Program Participation

On March 20, TAB staff participated in Lowe's ProServices Customer Appreciation Day at one of their Austin locations. Mary Castetter and Lorraine Urey took advantage of this opportunity to talk with builders, remodelers and subcontractors about membership in the association and the many benefits available to members, including a Lowe's ProServices discount through NAHB's Member Advantage program. The ProServices staff hosted a fun event that included vendor booths, a barbecue lunch, games and prizes. If you have questions about Lowe's ProServices or any of the programs and services available to members, please contact TAB.



Ryan Crawford and Sarah Morales of KFDA-TV along with TPBA's Executive Officer Lew Bradshaw accepts the Addy Award.

TPBA Wins Addy Award

Congratulations to the Texas Panhandle Builders Association on winning the American Advertising Award (ADDY) for its 2014 Parade of Homes Commercial. TPBA is honored to work with the Parade Committee and the creative effort from its Chairman, Chris Lyons, who produced the commercial. To view the local award winning commercial go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Texas-Panhandle-Builders-Association>

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Visit the Foundation's website (TexasBuildersFoundation.org) for more information and to make an online donation.

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In Loving Memory of Jimmie Faye Reardon Snider



On March 8, 2015, Jimmie Snider, who served the East Texas Builders Association for 40 years – 36 of them as executive officer – passed away surrounded by her family in Longview, Texas at the age of 84. Jimmie was a beloved friend and mentor to generations of East Texans and home builders association members and HBA staffs across the nation.

Jimmie loved the home builders association. She was recognized dozens of times by the National Association of Home Builders, the Texas Association of Builders, and the East Texas Builders Association during her decades of service to the home building industry, and her legacy of commitment will not be forgotten.

Scott Norman, TAB's executive director, said upon learning of Jimmie's passing, "It's been a sad weekend thinking about Jimmie and her decades-long impact upon our members and, more importantly, each of us as EOs. I was fortunate enough to know her way before my days with TAB. She will continue to be an inspiration to all of us who knew her and witnessed her dedication and commitment to the important facets of her life."

A few of Jimmie's association accomplishments include:

- Attendance at 34 consecutive NAHB Executive Officers Council Seminars (1977 – 2010) and election to multiple terms as an EOC Director-At-Large.

- Receipt of many NAHB Executive Officers Council Awards, including the "Rachel Manley Memorial Award" for outstanding achievement in association management (1993).
- Recognition by NAHB as the longest serving executive officer in the history of NAHB (2010).
- Election as president of the Texas Executive Officers Council (1998 – 1999).
- Becoming the only executive officer to receive the Texas Association of Builders' "Ted S. Schlossman Lifetime Achievement Award" (2010).

Under her leadership, the East Texas Builders Association established:

- The "James H. Kilpatrick Scholarship Fund" in honor of long-time ETBA member and past president. Since 2002, the fund has awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships to area students.
- The "ETBA Hero" award to recognize members that make outstanding contributions to the local association (2008).

The ETBA's event center bears her name, and a scholarship has been established in her memory.

Jimmie was involved in many home building charities in the Longview area including: Working Woman's Dream Home (1988), Starting Over Project (1990), Seth Rogers House (1999), and Kids View Bathroom Project (2005). She also volunteered with Longview Habitat for Humanity and raised thousands of dollars for the organization.

Following her retirement from the ETBA, Jimmie continued to volunteer her time and energy to local organizations, but her greatest joy was spending time with her family. Jimmie is survived by her husband, Gaylon, five children, five step-children, 20 grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild.

Donations may be made in her memory to the Jimmie Snider Memorial Scholarship Fund in care of the East Texas Builders Association.



Victor Drozd Named a Senior Life Director of NAHB

Victor Drozd of the Bryan-College Station HBA was designated a Senior Life Director of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) by the Board of Directors at their meeting in Las Vegas, NV., on January 22.

"Serving the housing industry by participating on NAHB's Board of Directors for more than 20 years is an incredible accomplishment," said NAHB Third Vice Chairman Granger MacDonald. "NAHB commends Victor for his dedication to advancing housing opportunities for all Americans."

Victor Drozd is the President of 2D Homes in Bryan. He has been a member of NAHB for over 30 years, and has served as a voting director for 20 years.

In order to be designated as a Senior Life Director, a NAHB builder or associate member must have attended at least two board meetings each year for 10 years before being elected as a Life Director, then two meetings a year for an additional 10 years to become a Senior Life Director.

Henley Homes Rewards Marine



U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Clifton “Ray” Coffey joined the military in 1998 after knowing he’d be a Marine his whole life. Following his basic training, Coffey was stationed at Camp Pendleton, California, where he was trained as a Forward Observer.

In 2003 Coffey was deployed to Iraq. During a convoy, Coffey’s unit was ambushed by a group of insurgents. During the attack, Coffey suffered wounds

from enemy fire to his back and legs. Following his return to the United States, Coffey began training for another combat deployment. In February 2004, he was deployed to Iraq for a second time. During patrol, a large insurgent force ambushed Coffey and his fellow Marines. Coffey quickly lead his unit out of the “kill zone” and immediately initiated a counter attack that resulted in an intense firefight. During the attack, Coffey was wounded by the blast of an improvised explosive device

(IED). As a result of the multiple blasts, Coffey lost consciousness and suffered shrapnel wounds to his head, neck, back, knees, ankles and teeth. Following the ambush, he was medically evacuated and treated for his injuries. Upon his return to the United States, Coffey was promoted to Staff Sgt. He medically retired after 13 years of service.

Some of Coffey’s long-term injuries include: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a traumatic brain injury, cognitive disorders, memory loss, hearing loss, vision loss and damage to his back, ankles, knees, feet and teeth. He is currently undergoing surgeries for sinus, jaw and teeth restoration. As a result of his service, Coffey was presented with numerous awards, some of which include a Purple Heart, a Navy and Marine Achievement Medal and a Bronze Star with the combat “v” device.

In August 2014, Ray, his wife, Melanie, and their three children – daughter, Briana and sons, Cody and Justin were surprised to learn that Henley Homes, Inc. would build them a mortgage-free home in Georgetown, Texas! The family moved into their home on January 31, 2015.



Tiffany Acree grows with StrucSure Home Warranty, accepting SVP of Sales

The Greater Fort Worth Builders Association extends our heartfelt congratulations to Tiffany Acree, CGA, CGP on her promotion to Senior Vice President of Sales – North, East and West Texas with StrucSure Home Warranty. Acree joined StrucSure in 2007 and has played a key role in the company’s continued growth and success in Texas. She is also a four-time member of StrucSure Home Warranty’s Million Dollar Club, having received the honor every year from 2011 to 2014.

Acree has served as an exemplary model for association members over many years. Her countless hours of service and leadership, together with her strong financial support of association events and activities, is a reminder of how sustained commitment to ones industry can be beneficial to both personal and professional development. Acree serves as a Life Director of the Greater Fort Worth Builders Association and is the co-chair of TAB’s Sunbelt Builders Show™ Committee.



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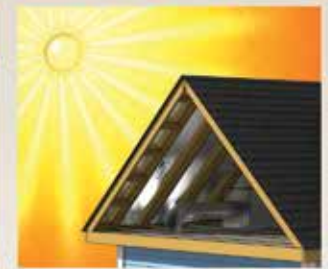
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