

JULY 2017

news

Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council

Fresh Air, Mountains, and Co-op Mingling Await _ _ _ _

Final preparations are underway for a stellar lineup for next weeks TACCs Cooperative Managers' Conference at the Inn of the Mountain Gods (575-464-7049) in Ruidoso, New Mexico.

Conference theme is

Co-ops: The Business *Model* for *Stability* in Agriculture”

Reasons you should attend:

- 1) The cooler air of the mountains, golf and washer tournaments are calling your name!
- 2) Learn how to retain and engage the young pups (*millennials*) of today from **Michael Dags** of Tuscola, Texas.
- 3) A chance to meet and mingle with the 2017 summer co-op interns to build relationships as prospective co-op employees,
- 4) Learn how to cope with the painful cost of health insurance from **Kimberly Holcomb** from Texas Agricultural Cooperative Trust, **Tony Newton** of Slaton Co-op Gin and **Paul Kulpa** from Agri-Services Agency in Syracuse, New York.
- 5) An update from the unconventional 85th Legislative Session from renowned lobbyist **Ed Small**.
- 6) Crowd favorites **Gary McLaren** of Phillips and McLaren law firm and **Keith Reeger** from D. Williams and Company will address the group and have time to answer those nagging questions.
- 7) Industry updates from Plain Cotton Cooperative Association's CEO **Kevin Brinkley** and National Cotton Council's **Craig Brown**.
- 8) Surviving an HR audit from Triangle's **Cindy Bertram** and learning economic trends from CoBanks' **Dr. Terry Barr**.

With a week to go, there will be nearly 50 co-op / companies represented and some 125 attendees have already registered. The conference is sponsored by 32 generous members and associate members.

19th Annual TACC Board Chairmen's Conference

“Co-ops: Where *Investing* in People is A Two-Way Street”

Attendees to the conference this year are in for a treat of a lifetime with a variety of different programming. The conference is set for August 2-4, 2017 at the Inn of the Mountain Gods in Ruidoso, New Mexico (1-800-545-9011).

The purpose of the conference makes it unique from any other in co-op conference in the U.S.:

- To provide the necessary skills to allow a chair to manage the board of director team, rather than solely relying on the general manager, and
- With the big dollars at stake today and the huge risk associated with running an ag or utility business, provide the necessary tools for the board chair to become a better partner with the co-op general manager WITHOUT getting involved in management.

Your board chair or their designee, should make plans to attend this years program. Only one person can represent each co-op. Make sure your co-op is represented, you don't want to miss out!

At this point to secure a hotel room, please contact **Christy Lewis** at the TACC office for assistance (512-450-0555).

Subjects to be covered:

1. Assessing and measuring board and director performance.
2. Identifying and game-planning for megatrends occurring in agribusinesses.
3. Legal challenges facing board of director teams.
4. An interactive and fun session showing the “individual” impact of each director on a board.
5. Hear from an outside co-op general manager and how they play their role working with a co-op board president.

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

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TACC 2017 Summer Co-op Internship Program

Name/Contact	Hometown	University	Graduation	Major	Co-op	
Thomas Aars	Clifton	Tarleton State	May 2017	Ag Business / Minor Business	Wall Co-op Gin - Wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied with TACC in 2016 • Grew up custom farming • Wants to work in agronomy • Once worked at the Texas Transportation Institute in College Station • Father and grandfather farmed cotton and milo • Interned with Texas A&M AgrLife Extension - Bay City - Summer 2015 • Works for Shoppa's Material Handling managing work orders filed from 500 customers
Mary Failla	East Bernard	Texas Tech	May 2017	Agricultural and Applied Economics	United Agricultural Cooperative, Inc. - El Campo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family owns a horse ranch in Gainesville area • National Honor Society class treasurer • National Society of Collegiate Scholars
Daniel Lucas	Collinsville	Texas A&M	Dec 2018	Renewable Energy Resources	Red River Farm Co-op, Inc. - Gainesville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owns his own skid-steer service company • Student bus driver for Transit Bus System at Texas A&M, CDL certified • Assist at the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo
Chad Pargmann	La Vernia	Texas A&M	May 2019	Agricultural Economics	Uvalde County Farmers Co-op - Knippa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has interned for three summers with Tri-Rotor Crop Services • Experience with sales and application of chemicals • American FFA Degree - 2015
Mitchell Shelton	Hugoton, KS	West Texas A&M	December 2017	Agriculture	Hereford Grain Corporation - Hereford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists on planting and harvesting cotton and wheat on family farm • Worked for Lotex Grain in Lohn, Texas during wheat harvest sampling and weighing all incoming and outgoing trucks; unloading and loading out wheat and canola trucks • Currently working as a welder and installation tech for Ventaire Awning Co.
Bryce Short	Bronte	Angelo State	May 2018	Agribusiness	PCCA - Sweetwater / Central Rolling Plains - Roscoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCCA - Sweetwater / Central Rolling Plains - Roscoe

✱ Denotes first time to ever host a TACC intern.

“Tommy’s Toodles”

After having varying degrees of involvement in State Legislative Sessions since 1983, it is quite apparent that the 2017 Session was the strangest of the 18 over those 34 years.

While the ag community continues to lose its “voice” with the sheer population shift in the state from rural to urban, relying on our long time “friends” has become an even more monumental strategy. The number of rural faces in all facets of state government continues to decline as well. In addition, if you were to ever sit in on those weekly Wednesday meetings in Austin of all ag commodity lobbyists, you would also see these faces changing with regularity.

What made this Session so different?

Our traditional elected legislator “friends” that represent large rural areas of the state, also represent a significant urban population and that urban population is speaking with a louder voice and in greater numbers. Second, we saw a number of ag groups contest one another on several subjects. And third, from the “get – go”, so many of the pressing issues of the state like school funding and paying for state operations were overshadowed and dominated by social issues such as sanctuary cities and the bathroom bill.

On the bright side, we saw some things that gave great hope for success in the future such as: a) some co-ops like CoBank, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Ag Producers Co-op in Sunray and Producers Cooperative Association in Bryan stepped forward in major ways only seen by a few. Their leadership and putting a farmers face on the issues was inspiring to say the least, b) from TACCs standpoint, we saw greater strength of farm groups working together like we have never seen before like the Texas Grain and Feed Association, Plains Cotton Growers, Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, Texas Farm Bureau and others to defeat or amend other measures, and c) the Council had unexpected success in helping others, several of which were: assisting Welchs Grape to secure their co-op franchise tax exemption, killing an unfavorable piece of legislation, having small inner circle input into the White House on producer representatives, and having 58 people attend the TACC / Land O’ Lakes Co-op Legislative Dinner in Austin back on February 22 ---- clearly, the largest co-op gathering ever assembled at the State Capitol in recent times.

With a slim staff at TACC, harnessing talent, banking on long term legislative relationships, planting timely seeds in the right places with the right people, and herding people in the right direction on selected issues may be our greatest takeaway from a very unpredictable last six months on legislative issues. As some have said, “Ag really didn’t lose a lot this Session, but it certainly didn’t gain anything either!” Secondly, we need to be very thankful for the great friends we do have in the legislature. Can you imagine what it must be like to be in their shoes?

Spring Time Brings New Faces to TACC Membership

Since May, TACC has welcomed two new members and two new associate members into their membership. **Tri-County Cooperative Enterprises, Inc.** in Dodson, Texas (40 miles north of Childress), whose General Manager is **Jeff Camp**, is a cotton gin and farm supply co-op. **Farmers Co-op Gin & Elevator** in Vernon, Texas, whose General Manager is **Larry Brown**, is a multi-functioning co-op: cotton gin, elevator, fertilizer, cotton warehouse, fuel, custom application, and seed co-op. Both of these co-ops have been actively attending TACCs meetings throughout the past few years and have recently joined TACC.

Two new associate members have also been accepted into TACC membership recently. **Smarter Sorting of Austin** and **KS Supplies, Inc.** of Lubbock. **Smarter Sorting** (617-413-3241) is a proprietary waste sorting technology that enables chemical products to be diverted into reuse. Products include: fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, and paint. **KS Supplies, Inc.** (806-744-8009) handles cotton gin, irrigation and oilfield supplies and will be attending the July 12-14 Co-op Managers’ Conference in Ruidoso, New Mexico.

2018 TACC Award Applications

It is now time to submit award applications for the *Cooperative Ginner of the Year Award* and the *Cooperator of Year Award* for presentation at the 2018 Joint Cooperative Meeting to be held in San Antonio. Please find the applications attached to this email newsletter and fill out the application for candidates you deem as an outstanding nominee for these awards and send them to TACC. The final date applications will be accepted is September 1, 2017. Please contact TACC (512-450-0555) if you have further questions or concerns about the application process.

In May, the Council Hosted Final Board Meeting for 2017

In mid-May, a large crowd of nearly 55 – 60 Council directors and industry associates met in Austin for the last board meeting of 2017 and the last of two working board meetings annually. A new direction was initiated in 2016 by the board of directors.

Although the TACC Executive Committee will continue to meet in May, September, and December, the next board meeting will not be until the March 2018 TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio. The Austin meeting featured a new TACC administration with **Curtis Stewart** of Spade Co-op, emceeding the meeting. In addition to a number of outside speakers, Divisions and Committees explored and gave direction on a number of fronts. One of the newly – elected state representatives, R) **Lynn Stucky** of Denton, addressed the group on the closing day. He is a practicing veterinarian and a very proud member of the prominent Mid-Kansas Coop Association in Moundridge, Kansas where he grew up.

Given that Council dues have not been studied and adjusted since 2011, the group also voted to form a dues task force to discuss the long – term funding needs of the Council. They also agreed to raise the dues cap \$500 beginning in October 2017.

TACC: OUT & ABOUT (since May 3, 2017)

- ✓ Hosted, along with 65 Texas ag commodity groups, a "Taste of Texas" luncheon for all policy-makers at the State Capitol on May 16.
- ✓ Hosted Tarleton State University students to the Texas Department of Agriculture on May 16th to show them how state government works.
- ✓ Attended a Texas A&M Cotton Engineering Chair Advisory Board Meeting in College Station on June 14. **Jimmy Roppolo** of United Ag Co-op in El Campo chairs the group, but is also represented by TACC, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, and Farmers Cooperative Compress of Lubbock.
- ✓ Attended Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Agents School in Rockport, June 8-9.
- ✓ Assisted in hosting the House Ag & Livestock Committee to a session-ending special dinner on May 16 in Austin.
- ✓ Conducted a May 10 New TACC Director Orientation, a May 10 TACC Executive Committee Meeting and a May 10 – 11 TACC Board of Directors Meeting in Austin.
- ✓ Facilitated a 90 – minute kick-off group dynamics workshop at a week – long leadership camp of nearly 120 people representing 13 electric cooperatives in East Texas. It was held at East Texas Baptist University in Marshall on June 26.
- ✓ Prepared for TACC's two co-op schools to be held in July in Ruidoso, NM.
- ✓ Attended the Texas Cotton Ginners Association Summer Membership Meeting in Fort Worth on June 19-20.
- ✓ Assisted TACC's six summer co-op interns in getting established in their host locations throughout the state.
- ✓ Made three field contact visits to South Texas in June.
- ✓ Hosted a planning meeting for the November 8-9 TACC South Texas Cooperative Managers and Directors Conference on June 22 at Gulf Compress in Corpus Christi.
- ✓ Attended United Agricultural Cooperative, Inc.'s Annual Meeting in El Campo on June 28 and the Texas Cotton Ginners' Association District Safety meeting in El Campo on June 29 and on May 31 in Kingsville.
- ✓ Were deeply involved in several key legislative bills that impacted cooperatives and assisted in others with CoBank, the Texas Grain and Feed Association and Plains Cotton Growers.
- ✓ Continued a policy implemented December 1, 2016, where TACC had a significant daily posting on Facebook --- some receiving several thousand views.
- ✓ Hosted associate member Ag Workers Insurance interns to the State Capitol, TACC, several state agencies, and a number of statewide ag associations on June 12-13 to learn more about state government.
- ✓ Initiated banner ads for TACC's new app, with AgTexas Farm Credit Services in Lubbock having the first such display.
- ✓ Worked with several co-ops to launch a win-win business relationship with Smarter Sorting --- one of the Council's new associate members.

Will Be:

- ◇ Preparing the 2017 – 2018 TACC budget for consideration at the September 2017 Executive Committee Meeting on September 6 in San Antonio.
- ◇ Attending Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Agents School in Ruidoso, NM on July 16 – 18.
- ◇ Preparing an economic footprint placemat for Wall Co-op in Wall and Flower Grove Co-op Gin of Ackerly during the summer of 2017.
- ◇ Working to determine a new lease contract for TACC offices, which expires December 2017.
- ◇ Hosting TACC's Managers' Conference on July 12-14 in Ruidoso, NM.
- ◇ Hosting TACC's Board Chairmen's Conference on August 2-4 in Ruidoso, NM.
- ◇ Attending a Texas Agricultural Cooperative Trust Board Meeting on July 12 and August 17.
- ◇ Attending a Cotton Inc. Caucus meeting on July 20 and a Texas Cotton Producers board meeting in Austin.
- ◇ Hosting TACC's six summer co-op interns to Austin in early August to learn about state government, receive a mock interview and to conduct an exit interview.
- ◇ Confirming numerous speakers for the November 8-9, 2017 South Texas Co-op Leadership Conference in Corpus Christi.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2017

July

- 12-14: TACC Co-op Managers Conference - Ruidoso, New Mexico
- 16-18: Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Agents School - Ruidoso, New Mexico
- 20: Texas Cotton Producers Board Meeting - Austin
- 20: Cotton, Inc. Caucus Meeting - Austin

August

- 2-4: TACC Board Chair Conference - Ruidoso, New Mexico
- 22-24: National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives Annual Meeting - Madison, Wisconsin

September

- 4: Labor Day Holiday
- 6: TACC Executive Committee Meeting - San Antonio
- 16: Celebrate Cotton Day --- Arizona State Sun Devils at Texas Tech football game - Lubbock
- 20: Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Annual Meeting - Lubbock

November

- 5: Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 7: Election Day for statewide amendments and some local races
- 8-9: TACC South Texas Cooperative Leadership Conference - Corpus Christi
- 11: Veteran's Day Holiday
- 13: PYCO Industries Annual Meeting - Lubbock
- 23-24: Thanksgiving Holiday