

OCTOBER



2016

news

First-ever TACC South Texas Cooperative Board Chairmen's Conference!

"Changing the Code, the Culture and the Expectations"

For nearly 20 years, TACC has been hosting a Co-op Board Chairmen's Conference in July/August in Ruidoso, New Mexico, however due to harvest times many of the board chairs in South and Central Texas have been unable to attend. The idea for South Texas was borne recently and it was suggested to be held in conjunction with the South Texas Cooperative Manager / Director Conference. The conference will be a fully-packed agenda for one day on Wednesday, November 2 at the Omni Corpus Christi Hotel (361-887-1600).

The founding focus of the Co-op Board Chairmen's Conference has been the same for nearly 20 years and is still relevant today:

- ♦ To provide the necessary skills to allow a chair to manage the board of director team, rather than traditionally totally relying on the general manager; and
- ♦ With the big dollars at stake today and the huge risk associated with running an agricultural 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.

Highlights for the 2016 Board Chairmen's Conference:

- ✓ Two long-time co-op leaders will provide some tools and tips to better working relationships, how they fed off one another, and how they used one another as a "messenger" between management and the remainder of the board,
- ✓ Hear of the lessons learned from a co-op board chair and what he would do if he could do it all over again,
- ✓ A recognized, premier co-op manager will give you their view on what they think the model co-op board chair looks like,
- ✓ Get down to "nuts and bolts" of the conference by learning how to manage the board and its varied personalities; and
- ✓ A conference would not be complete without focusing on challenging and legal issues occurring within co-op board rooms.

Only one representative can attend per co-op!



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Kristi Ruth — Cowgirl Tough Coming to Corpus Christi!

A compelling and inspiring story about a young lady from Columbia, Iowa will add to the South Texas Manager / Director Conference program in Corpus Christi. **Kristi Ruth**, had a dream of owning her own cattle operation from the age of 15, but a farm accident changed her life forever. After many years of recovery, Kristi is now following her passion for animal husbandry and currently doing what she loves every day --- managing cattle as a ranch hand on the Warm River Ranch in Dubois, Wyoming. She is a safety advocate with the Progressive Agriculture Foundation and a board member for the Rural Health and Safety Clinic in Johnson County, Iowa. She has spoken to thousands of youth, communities, and people in leadership positions across the country about the importance of farm safety.



Three Co-ops Assist in Senator Cruz Visit to West Texas!

U.S. Senator **Ted Cruz** of Texas and staff were busy the week of October 9 - 14 visiting various West Texas farms and agribusinesses. Of all his stops, three were with co-op leaders. He began his tour at **Dahlen Hancock's** cotton farm near New Home. Hancock is the immediate past president of New Home Co-op Gin. The next day he met with **Dan Jackson** and several board members of the Meadow Farmers Cooperative Gin. Jackson is past chair of TACCs Legislative and Governmental Affairs Committee. By that afternoon, they were in Friona at **Jason Wright's** family farm. He serves as board chair of Friona Wheat Growers.



Council's September Board Meeting

On September 7 - 8, 2016 TACC held its annual Fall board meeting with nearly 60 people in attendance at the Overton Hotel and Conference Center in Lubbock. This was a perfect chance for all board members to come together and brainstorm and give direction for the coming year.

Highlights from the board meeting include:

- ◇ Approved the October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017 budget;
- ◇ Received input and initial planning efforts for several upcoming co-op conferences;
- ◇ Added two new board members:
 - **Will Coenen**, Dairy Farmers of America, Sulphur Springs
 - **Duncan Welch**, General Manager, Friona Farmers Co-op Gin, Friona
- ◇ Discussed the results from the August 2016 TACC strategic plan;
- ◇ Reviewed the Council's operations and established the program agenda for the new year;
- ◇ Heard from two 2016 Summer Co-op Interns regarding their experience and set the direction for the 2017 internship program;
- ◇ Guest speakers included U.S. Congressman-Elect **Jodey Arrington** of Lubbock and **Lt. Mark Gumaer** from the Texas Department of Public Safety also from Lubbock;
- ◇ Reviewed the Council's financial operations at July 31;
- ◇ One of the most moving portions of the board meeting occurred when DPS Lubbock Region Commander **Gary Albus** and several of his key lieutenants joined the group for the Wednesday evening reception in tribute to "Salute the Blue". Albus has long-been an ag-friendly law enforcement supporter for the industry.
- ◇ Heard from numerous industry speakers on a variety of topics; and
- ◇ Selected the D. Williams and Company CPA firm in Lubbock to conduct TACCs FYE September 30, 2016 audit. It will be conducted on November 7 - 8.



Council Votes to Contribute to Cotton Engineering Scholarship Fund

Long time respected Valley Gin Company General Manager, **Phil Hickman** passed away recently, but his memory lives on. Hickman managed the El Paso Valley Tornillo co-op for years, but also spread his leadership to the cotton industry by serving on the Austin - based Texas Cotton Ginners' Trust (512-615-4800) board of directors for many years. He was also a graduate of the Ag Systems Management program in the Agricultural Engineering Department at Texas A&M University.

A scholarship fund was established in his honor within the department and at the September 2016 TACC Board of Directors meeting, the group voted to contribute \$5,000 to the fund with \$2,500 donated in the 2016 fiscal year and \$2,500 in 2017.

21st Annual South Texas Co-op Manager / Director Conference with *New Twists and Turns!*

TACCs South Texas Cooperative Manager / Director Conference will be held November 2 – 3 at the Omni Corpus Christi Hotel (361-887-1600) on the water in downtown Corpus Christi; complete with all the traditional fun and a couple of new twists!

Conference Theme --- *“Co-ops: Separating Economics from Superficial”*

Highlights for the 2016 program:

- ◆ Traditional golf outing at Palmilla Beach Golf Club near Port Aransas on Wednesday,
- ◆ The much-anticipated Shrimp Boil cooked by legendary co-op chefs,
- ◆ **Brad Perry**, a business/operations strategist from Nebraska, will be there to help participants rethink the way they conduct business,
- ◆ Crowd favorites **Gary McLaren** and **Greg Taylor** will be addressing the group to provide free legal help and tax advice,
- ◆ A celebrity of sorts: **Kristi Ruth**, a farm safety, animal husbandry and Wyoming farm girl, will tell her personal story and 10-year battle as a result of a farm accident,
- ◆ **Kevin Brinkley**, CEO of PCCA, will bring a loaded session to the group about the issues affecting the cotton industry, and
- ◆ To end the conference, a **Mike Conaway** fundraiser will be held on Thursday afternoon hosted by the Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council and Texas Grain and Feed Association.

All in all, the conference is shaping up to be a hit for co-op directors and managers! Hotel cut-off for the special room block rate of \$129 is October 19, 2016. Call TACC should you need assistance! Registration fee for the conference is \$125 / person and you may register online or send in a paper form (both can be found on our website: www.texas.coop) For more information or questions, contact TACC at 512-450-0555.



Mike Conaway Fundraiser

The Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council and Texas Grain and Feed Association invite you to join them for a reception honoring **Congressman Mike Conaway** on Thursday, November 3, 2016, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30p.m. in the Bayview Room at the Omni Corpus Christi Hotel.

Serving his sixth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Mike Conaway represents 29 counties in Texas' 11th congressional district. Representative Conaway believes in lower taxes, smaller government, and a secure nation. His background as a CPA gives him a unique perspective on fiscal responsibility and ensuring every taxpayers dollar is being spent wisely.

Conaway is a native Texan who earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in accounting from Texas A&M University-Commerce in 1970. In the House, Representative Conaway is chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture and also serves on the House Armed Services Committee and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

For those contributing by themselves or as a group and their total reaches \$500 or more, your name will be recognized on a large poster throughout the fundraiser --- provided you submit your name(s) to **Sarah Schultz** at sarah@lillyandcompany.com by Tuesday, November 1.



Co-op Accounting Group to Meet in Lubbock

If you play an office manager role, a bookkeeper position, you are a CPA, or do co-op audit work, you are encouraged to make plans to attend the Fall meeting of the Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives meeting. It will be held at the Plains Cotton Cooperative Association's office all day Friday, November 11, 2016. President of the group, **Russ DuBose**, is audit manager for D. Williams and Company in Lubbock (806-785-5982).

This is the second and final meeting of the group for 2016! Topics for the conference include: updates on auditing and accounting, cooperative taxes and legal updates, the construction process of fraud prevention, and a review and impact from the November 8th General Election.

For more information on this seminar, contact Russ DuBose or **Christy Lewis** at the TACC office.

Joining the Rest of the World... TACC Launching an APP!

One of the immediate impacts of the TACC strategic plan in August dealt with technology. As such, TACC will be launching an app beginning in 2017. Research, preparations, and design work is currently taking place for this to happen. “Move Creative”, a Lincoln, Nebraska – based company, will be creating the app, with hands-on influence from the Council staff. Move Creative has worked with other agriculture companies designing their apps, including the Florida FFA, Texas 4-H Roundup, and one of our own --- Garden City Co-op in Garden City, Kansas.

This app will have features similar to the current “Guidebook” that TACC uses for meeting schedules, however it appears to be much more detail inclusive. It also offers “push notifications” as opposed to TACC acquiring another service (*texting*). The TACC App will include everything!

TACC is always open to input from anyone who has ideas as to the app content.



Council Takes a Giant Leap to Determine its Long Term Direction

At a special – called meeting, the TACC Executive Committee met over two days in mid-August to attack some lingering challenges of the association and to determine its long term direction. Facilitating the meeting was **Beth Brooks**, the recently – retired CEO of the Texas Society of Association Executives (*the coordinating voice for all ag and non-ag trade associations in the state*).

The group focused on three major direction-setters: governance, finance and marketing. Some of the resulting outcomes were:

- ◆ to build a 3 – 5 year financial contingency plan; to include improving non – dues revenue.
- ◆ establish two task forces to further refine the proper governance structure and second, to properly define membership categories for the association.
- ◆ establish a human resource development center; complete with an electronic job posting bulletin board, on-demand how – to and training videos, webinars, and other things to assist co-ops in lessening workforce challenges.
- ◆ expand communication technologies and frequencies to include an association app, more effective use of Facebook, etc.
- ◆ although the Council provides many tools to assist, formalize efforts to further expand marketing assistance to co-op members to help with: better connecting with the emerging leaders within a co-op’s trade territory, retention efforts within a membership, effective use of social media, use of grower educational schools, etc.



TACCs Website New “Facelift”

After meeting with **Trey Rice**, Program Coordinator for Web Based Technologies for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in May, and having him speak at the Managers Conference in Ruidoso, New Mexico, TACC decided it was time to move forward with the latest and greatest technology and give the TACC website a new “facelift”. After going through an extensive upgrade last year, the TACC website is now mobile-friendly, more user-friendly, and easier to access than before. Through the new website, you can utilize the new credit card processing portal, flip through the pages easier, visit TACCs Facebook Page, and review upcoming events.



TACC: OUT & ABOUT (Since August 11, 2016)

- ✔ TACCs **Christy Lewis** attended a Cotton Board Women's Tour to Cary, NC August 14 – 16.
- ✔ Made a strategic planning presentation to the board of Winter Garden Co-op Gin in Batesville on August 17.
- ✔ Coordinated a TACC strategic plan in Marble Falls on August 18 – 19.
- ✔ Facilitated a strategic plan for United Cotton Growers Co-op of Levelland August 23-25 in Fort Worth along with AgTexas Farm Credit CEO **Tim McDonald**, co-op attorney **Gary McLaren**, and Texas Tech Ag Economics Professor **Dr. Darren Hudson** and for Midkiff Farmers Co-op on September 22-23 in San Angelo.
- ✔ Attended **Dr. Calvin Parnell**, holder of the Gin Engineering and Mechanization Chair at Texas A&M University, retirement luncheon in College Station on August 26.
- ✔ Prepared the 2016 - 2017 TACC budget for consideration at the September board of directors meeting September 7 – 8.
- ✔ TACCs **Whitney Curry** attended and participated in the "Celebrate Cotton" activities on September 17 at Texas Tech University in Lubbock.
- ✔ Developed and published the eighth Special Edition TACC-PAC Newsletter; complete with an insert listing where many of the states' agricultural PACs placed their contributions in contested races for the November 8, 2016 General Election.
- ✔ Attended an ag commodity group meeting on September 1 and October 19 in Austin to discuss the upcoming General Election and the impacts on the industry.
- ✔ Completed dues solicitation activities for FYE September 30.
- ✔ Coordinated a TACC-PAC Board of Trustees meeting on October 18 to determine contributions to the November 8, 2016 General Election. A total of \$20,300 will be contributed making the grand total of contributions in this election cycle by the TACC-PAC of \$37,750. Check distributions were made following the meeting.
- ✔ Conducted field contact visits to 17 different co-ops along the Texas Gulf Coast on October 4 – 7.
- ✔ Coordinated and attended several discussions with numerous groups regarding proposed legislation for the 2017 State Legislative Session impacting the cotton and grain industries.
- ✔ Conducted considerable research to begin the process to develop a TACC app. The Nebraska-based provider specializes in developing apps for ag industries.
- ✔ Initiated the 2016-2017 dues solicitation process.

Will Be:

- ◇ Attending fundraisers for State Comptroller **Glenn Hegar** on October 26, Texas House Speaker **Joe Straus** on November 30, and Texas Governor **Greg Abbott** on December 6 --- all in Austin.
- ◇ Facilitating the November 2-3 TACC South Texas Co-op Manager / Director Conference in Corpus Christi and hosting a joint fundraiser with the Texas Grain and Feed Association for U.S. House Ag Committee Chair, **Mike Conaway** on November 3 also in Corpus Christi.
- ◇ Assisting in the TACC audit by the D. Williams and Company CPA firm in Austin on November 7 – 8.
- ◇ Coordinating and hosting a TACC Executive Committee Meeting in Lubbock on December 15.
- ◇ Attending, coordinating registration, and speaking at the Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives meeting in Lubbock on November 11.
- ◇ Participating in the national co-op government affairs committee meeting in San Antonio on November 14 – 16.
- ◇ Conducting a hotel site visit for the March 12-14, 2017 TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting at the Westin Stonebriar Hotel and Golf Club in Frisco, Texas on December 21 – 22.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2016

October

24: First Day of Early Voting

November

2-3: TACC South Texas Cooperative Manager / Director Conference - Corpus Christi
 4: Last Day of Early Voting
 6: Daylight Savings Time Ends
 6-8: Texas Cattle Feeders Association Annual Meeting - Ft. Worth
 8: General Election
 11: Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives Meeting - Lubbock
 11: Veteran's Day Holiday
 14: PYCO Industries Annual Meeting - Lubbock
 24-25: Thanksgiving Holiday

December

2: Texas Cotton Producers Board Meeting - Lubbock
 15: TACC Executive Committee Meeting - Lubbock
 23-26: Christmas Holiday

2017

January

2: New Years Day Holiday
 10: State Legislative Session begins - Austin

February

5-7: Texas Ag Forum / Southwest Council of Agribusiness Annual Meeting - Fort Worth
 6: TACC Director Development Program - Amarillo
 9: TACC Director Development Program - Lubbock
 10-12: National Cotton Council Annual Meeting - Dallas
 15-17: National Co-op Convention - Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
 26-27: Land O' Lakes Annual Meeting - Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN

March

12-14: TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting - Frisco