

# SEPTEMBER 2017

# news

## Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council

### Make Note of the *Special* Co-op Celebration Coming to South Texas in November

Circle November 8 – 9 for TACC's return to Corpus Christi for its annual co-op triathlon --- Shrimp Boil, Second Annual Co-op Board Chairmen's Conference and its traditional one – day seminar. All events will once again be held at the downtown Omni Corpus Christi Hotel (361-887-1600). The last day's conference will primarily revolve around farm and agribusiness labor from a panel of speakers covering --- how to secure it from many countries around the world; personnel law, compliance and reporting; what workforce solutions are working in other agribusiness centers around the U. S., etc.

Of course, the school will also feature co-op attorney **Gary McLaren**, farm and co-op tax guru **Greg Taylor** and PCCAs commodity marketing review by **Kevin Brinkley**, as well as one of the most popular fixtures in the U. S. on understanding the agribusiness millennials by recognized author and specialist **Kevin Tutt**. The conference is being renamed the TACC Cooperative Leadership Conference in recognition of how attendees have changed since the meeting first began.

Due to the success of TACC's initial and requested Board Chairmen's Conference in 2016, that same seminar will return, but with difference topics. Last year, 13 board presidents attended and were amazed at the different twist that school brought to the co-op leadership team.



### Council About to Begin 14<sup>th</sup> Year in *Current* Location ...

*signs an additional 5 – year lease*

## LEASE

Home for TACC has been three blocks west of the State Capitol for nearly 13 years in the offices of the trade association for county governments, county judges, county commissioners, and county employees --- the Texas Association of Counties. On the first floor is just the Council and a Subway Restaurant. The group initially had a ten - year lease, then followed that with a three - year lease, and recently signed a five - year renewal to begin in January.

Prior to the current location, the group spent four years in the offices of the Farm Credit Bank of Texas in Austin and before that, 18 years with the trade association representing the nearly 70 rural electric cooperatives spread throughout the state --- The Texas Electric Cooperatives. For the old hats in co-op leadership, TACC once was located in the Brown Building in downtown Austin (*which still exists*) for decades, but originally started with offices in downtown Dallas in 1934.



### Co-op Bookkeepers, Office Managers & Accountants Educational School Set for *Lubbock*

Each year two seminars are held in the state to serve as an update on IRS and tax rulings, as well as the latest on business and industry regulatory changes for those individuals who work as co-op bookkeepers, office managers and as accountants. The next such meeting will be held in the offices of Plains Cotton Cooperative Association in Lubbock on Friday, September 29 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. As has been for the past three decades, TACC is coordinating registration for the event.

Many attend these meetings to capture their annual required CEU credits. **Russ DuBose** of the D. Williams and Company CPA firm in Lubbock (806-785-5982), serves as president of the group known as the Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives (NSAC). To reserve a \$63 room at the convention hotel --- Ashmore Inn and Suites at 4019 South Loop 289 in Lubbock --- contact **Dana Brown** at PCCA (806-763-8011). Conference registration begins at \$120.

Topics include latest tax case studies, the status of Obamacare, a millennial discussion by famed author **Michael Daggs**, a co-op legal case update, and a talk on cyber security strategies as well as a farm policy update.

#### TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

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## Notable *Changes* Coming to TACCs 9<sup>th</sup> Year of a Summer Co-op *Internship* Program

What started eight years ago as an attempt by the Council's board of directors to do their part to aid in the search for adequate labor for cooperative agribusinesses, has now turned into one of the premier, most recognized, and very intense ag internship programs in the state. The TACC Executive Committee recently made some significant changes:



- ◆ Removing the minimum salary requirement where now the hosting co-op can negotiate compensation with a prospective intern on their own.
- ◆ Adding an additional ag university to the visits --- Sam Houston State University in Huntsville.
- ◆ Moving the schedule up where college visits will be in late Fall, followed by returning for interviews in January 2018 and formal hiring by March 1.
- ◆ Requiring interns to complete a "project" during their internship.
- ◆ Holding a breakout session for hosting co-ops during the March 2018 TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio to better explain the program.
- ◆ Creating a "Model Summer Co-op Intern" paper to better help define the expectations the for selected interns, and
- ◆ Will encourage first - time hosting co-ops to have their intern split time with another co-op so as to more methodically learn about the requirements of hosting an intern.



Several of the 2017 summer class of co-op interns were offered co-op employment upon college graduation and one --- **Thomas Aars**, a May 2017 ag industries graduate from Tarleton State University in Stephenville and who grew up on a custom farming operation near Clifton --- recently was hired as the farm supply store manager at Wall Co-op in Wall. He served as an intern at the Wall Co-op this past summer.

## Council's Executive Committee Makes *Numerous* Approvals at San Antonio Meeting

To better prepare for the March 2018 TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio, the Fall meeting of the TACC Executive Committee was held and called to order by President **Curtis Stewart** at the La Cantera Resort and Spa on Wednesday, September 6.

The meeting included:

- ✓ The approval of the 2017 – 2018 TACC budget.
- ✓ Selection of the D. Williams and Company CPA firm in Lubbock to conduct the Council's October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017 annual audit on November 13 and 14.
- ✓ Approval of a new five – year lease for TACCs offices in downtown Austin.
- ✓ Approval of changes to TACCs Summer Co-op Internship program for 2018.
- ✓ Initial discussion of the appointment of a TACC Dues Study Task Force for 2017 – 2018.
- ✓ Approved the hotel site selection for the TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting to be La Toretta Lake Resort and Spa northwest of Houston for 2020.
- ✓ Approval to further the development of a TACC HR Career Placement Center.
- ✓ Approved the rebirth of the TACC Young Couples Conference, which was held for over 25 years, but terminated in 2004 and to be renamed the TACC Academy of Cooperative Excellence program. It will be held once every three or four years.
- ✓ Received initial review of a new concept to develop in-house co-op educational circulars from selected speaker proceedings at TACC educational conferences, for later use in private co-op training seminars.



The next meeting of the TACC Executive Committee will be December 7 in Lubbock.

## "White" - Out the Stands and Celebrate *Cotton!*



There's the famous Cotton Bowl football game held around January 1 of each year featuring two of the best college football teams of the season, then there's "Celebrate Cotton" --- which in recent times, has far out-recognized the hard – earned efforts of the state's cotton farmers. This past weekend, "yes" Texas Tech beat Arizona State 52 – 45 in a slugfest, but the real winner was the outpouring of support the industry received by the thousands of fans dressed in white for the game at Jones AT&T Stadium in Lubbock.

Huge supporters in the September 16th effort were AgTexas Farm Credit Services, Plains Cotton Growers, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Farmers Cooperative Compress, and other cotton – related industries where 60 cotton bales were staged around the stadium, thousands of cotton t-shirts were distributed, and a multitude of cotton industry tailgates were held on the grounds; complete with modern – day cotton harvesting equipment and signage displaying how cotton impacts our economy.



# TACC: OUT & ABOUT (recent)

- ✓ Conducted field contact visits to the Gulf Coast one week following Hurricane Harvey to assess damage and assistance needs of member cooperatives on September 2.
- ✓ Developed the 2017 – 2018 TACC Budget.
- ✓ Prepared a proposal on the rebirth of the TACC Academy of Cooperative Excellence program.
- ✓ Prepared a draft for the development of a TACC HR Career Placement Center.
- ✓ Assisted in registration proceedings for the Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives Annual Meeting on September 29.
- ✓ Brought closure to dues collections for the fiscal year October 1, 2016–September 30, 2017. Dues ended at the highest level on record.
- ✓ Assisted in job posting a co-op general manager opening in West Texas.
- ✓ Continued daily Facebook postings, with high views, which began on December 1, 2016.
- ✓ Attended the National Council of State Co-op Council convention in Madison, Wisconsin on August 28 – 31.
- ✓ Confirmed nearly all speakers for the November 8 – 9 TACC South Texas Leadership Conference in Corpus Christi.
- ✓ Participated in numerous board of director meetings of the Texas Ag Co-op Trust health insurance provider.
- ✓ Working with co-op management, prepared an economic footprint placemat for use at the August 8 Wall Co-op Annual Meeting and the September 9 Flower Grove Co-op Annual Meeting in Ackerly.
- ✓ Prepared numerous financial documents to further the work of the newly-created TACC Dues Task Force.
- ✓ Made an initial effort to provide a collective co-op crop inputs model for those in the South Texas wine industry.
- ✓ Initiated the “banner ad” concept for those interested in securing advertising on TACCs new App.
- ✓ Hosted both the TACC Co-op Managers Conference and TACC Co-op Board Chairmen’s Conference to Ruidoso, NM in July.
- ✓ Hosted TACCs summer co-op interns to Austin and the State Capitol on August 7 – 8.
- ✓ Attended the Farm Bill listening session in San Angelo on July 31.
- ✓ Initiated a study to update and replace TACCs office phone system.
- ✓ Made final payment to the Phil Hickman Texas A&M Cotton Engineering Chair Scholarship fund in September bringing TACCs total contribution to \$5,000.
- ✓ Assisted in retracting the FDA proclamation regarding cottonseed damaged during Hurricane Harvey.

## Will Be:

- ◇ Facilitating a strategic plan for the Oklahoma Ag Co-op Council on October 3 – 4 in Oklahoma City.
- ◇ Attending a marketing skills class in Wharton and a USDA “Hurricane Harvey Ag Impact and Recovery” meeting in El Campo on September 21.
- ◇ Teaching classes at various ag colleges to begin the process to attract candidates to TACCs 2018 summer internship program.
- ◇ Along with co-op attorney **Gary McLaren**, conducting a half-day training session for board and management of Driscoll Grain Co-op in Robstown on November 7.
- ◇ Preparing for the November 13 – 14 TACC audit.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2017

### September

- 20: Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Annual Meeting - Lubbock
- 29: Texas Chapter, National Society of Accountants for Cooperatives Annual Meeting - Lubbock

### November

- 5: Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 7: Election Day for statewide amendments and some local races
- 8: **Texas South Texas Co-op Board Chairmen’s Conference - Corpus Christi**
- 8-9: **TACC South Texas Cooperative Leadership Conference - Corpus Christi**
- 11: Veteran’s Day Holiday
- 13: PYCO Industries Annual Meeting - Lubbock
- 13-14: **TACC Audit**
- 23-24: Thanksgiving Holiday

### December

- 1: Texas Cotton Producers Board of Directors meeting - Lubbock
- 7: **TACC Executive Committee meeting - Lubbock**
- 11: Last day to file for statewide political office
- 25-26: Christmas Holiday

2018

### January

- 1: New Year’s Holiday
- 3-5: Beltwide Cotton Conference - San Antonio

### February

- 7-9: National Co-op Convention - New Orleans
- 9-11: National Cotton Council Annual Meeting - Fort Worth