



Texas MERIT+SHOP Journal

January 2012

Defending the Rights of Merit Shop Contractors

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Strategic Planning

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Rep. Callegari

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Publisher: Associated Builders
& Contractors of Greater Houston
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Graphic Design: Jennifer Woodruff

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MERIT SHOP
Journal

Defending the Rights of Merit Shop Contractors



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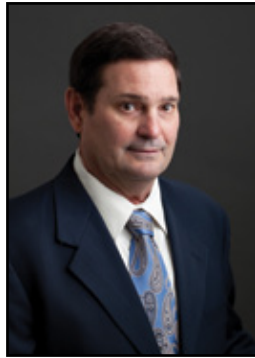
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Letter From the Chairman



GREMILLION

Dear ABC of Texas Member,

I would like to thank all of the members who participated in the planning conference in November. The event was very successful and will allow ABC of Texas to outline a strategic plan for 2012 – 2015. I would also like to thank Mr. Dennis Winkler with Winkler Public Relations, an ABC member, for facilitating the planning conference. In the upcoming months we will be finalizing our strategic plan and identifying and prioritizing legislative issues for the 2013 session. If you have any issues that you would like ABC of Texas to address in the next session

please discuss them with your chapter's state board members.

During our planning conference two issues surfaced that will require us to utilize separate task forces. The first is to develop strategies to grow our political action committee (PAC) which will allow us to have a bigger impact on upcoming elections. During the 2009 – 2011 legislative cycle we more than doubled our PAC and this trend needs to continue, if not escalate, for upcoming cycles. The second task force will address the methods by which each Chapter's position on legislative issues (bills filed) during the session is communicated to our President. This is a very complex issue, as often proposed legislation in Austin moves/changes faster than our current processes are designed for. I am looking forward to working with these two task forces to provide the greatest value possible to the members of ABC of Texas.

I have been asked many times what my vision for the future of ABC of Texas is, so I will close with a few thoughts on this topic. My vision is to have a large enough PAC (\$500,000.00) to make a difference in all important elections in the state; to be a recognizable and respected entity at any event we attend in Austin — from fundraisers for candidates, to legislative committee meetings; from meetings of state agencies that regulate our industry, to hearings on legislation during the sessions; from joint meeting with other construction trade associations, to visits with all statewide elected officials; to better communicate the value we provide to our members; and to continue to solidify our relationship with other lobby groups. I invite you to join us in making these visions a reality.

I look forward to working with you for the next two years.

Michael A. Gremillion
2012 ABC of Texas Chairman
Vice President – Houston Office
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Letter From the President



FISHER

Dear ABC of Texas Member,

In the October Issue, I outlined the deadlines for the upcoming Primary Season. As you may have heard, those deadlines have slipped a few days due to the lack of pre-clearance of our redistricting maps pursuant to the Voting Rights Act. A federal court panel in San Antonio has issued interim maps which have caused a lot of confusion, consternation, anger and even some head-scratching.

As this letter is being written, we await a decision from the U.S. Supreme Court concerning Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott's attempt to set aside the federal court panel's interim maps and delay the primaries on affected races until a later date so the pre-clearance process can proceed and any deficiencies can be addressed based on findings of law or fact. Apparently, the panel in San Antonio decided it did not initially need to find problems to make changes. They just made wholesale changes, some of them quite confusing.

In order to clarify its reasoning, following the issuance of new interim maps, the court issued some findings. This could have been in response to assertions that the court went about this backwards.

In any regard, by the time you get this issue of Texas Merit Shop Journal, things could have changed again...or not.

You will notice that we are covering our Legislative Awards in this issue even though not all of the awards have been presented. Hopefully, that will be accomplished soon. It is important to recognize in a timely manner those who have supported our industry.

Since this is the first issue of the New Year, I thought I might share with you our planned activities over the year. Some of that is determined by our Strategic Plan—Task Forces, for example—and some is determined by the chronology of a two-year legislative cycle.

I mentioned the primaries above. Regardless of what happens in the primaries, we will still have to be participative in the general elections. Those will be held November 6, 2012.

And, with a regular legislative session on the horizon in 2013, we have to select and prepare our legislative priorities. This session, I hope to be in a better position to coordinate our industry priorities with other industry partners. While we've done well in the recent past, I believe we are in a better position than ever to continue success.

But, taxes may be on the Legislature's agenda, and the House Ways and Means Committee is studying several items, including the Franchise Tax (Margins Tax). This could have a major, or minor, effect on your business, depending on the outcome.

As you can see, there is plenty to do, and we will be more effective if you are involved in your local chapter's efforts.

Happy New Year!

Jon Fisher
ABC of Texas
President

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The Free Enterprise Alliance Gains Momentum Marked By Recent Successes

For those who are not familiar with the Free Enterprise Alliance, here is a brief introduction to help you understand the value of what the Free Enterprise Alliance does for you, your Company and how you can help. The Free Enterprise Alliance was founded by the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. to help educate our employees, elected officials and the public as well as be an advocate for the voice of small business and fair and open competition.

Free enterprise defined is simply an economic system based upon the voluntary exchange of goods and services where both parties benefit from the exchange. Only a free enterprise economy provides people with the opportunity to achieve financial success in meeting the needs of others. However, for free enterprise to work, these transactions must be free of government intervention.

The prosperity that we have enjoyed in the past is at risk with an ideology in Washington of government controlled redistribution of wealth, an onerous regulatory agenda, higher taxes (now referred to as an increase in “revenue”), out of control spending, a growing national debt, and other job-killing policies.

People frequently ask what is the Free Enterprise Alliance and what does it do? The Free Enterprise Alliance is the action arm for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and other advocates of limited government, as well as for fair and open competition and for the economically sound principles upon which America was built. Last year, the Free Enterprise Alliance launched its campaign to “Halt the Assault” on America’s job creators — it’s small and medium sized businesses.

At the heart of the Free Enterprise Alliance mission is the belief that while we need government for common sense regulations, the scales have recently been tipped too far in favor of government

“At the heart of the Free Enterprise Alliance mission is the belief that while we need government for common sense regulations, the scales have recently been tipped too far in favor of government intrusion and its advocates.”

intrusion and its advocates. Like you, the Free Enterprise Alliance also believes small business and entrepreneurs — not union bosses and federal bureaucrats — are the ones that create jobs and grow our economy.

Recent Successes of Advocating Free Enterprise

- Visit <http://www.halttheassault.com>: In 2010, the Free Enterprise Alliance launched the “Halt the Assault” campaign, which has built a 100,000+ grassroots army, appeared on more than 300 radio and cable news programs, and has taken its message to the country’s top free enterprise-focused online media outlets.
- Fighting Card Check: The Free Enterprise Alliance was involved in fighting the anti-employee, job-killing card check bill known as the “Employee Free Choice Act” (EFCA) by taking to airwaves in key Senate races in 2008 and building a leading issue repository at <http://www.thetruthaboutefca.com>.
- Supporting Pro-Business efforts: The Free Enterprise Alliance is routinely engaged in supporting key pro-business initiatives from California to Florida when the threat to free enterprise, fair play, limited government or protecting taxpayers and small business was at risk, the Free Enterprise Alliance was there to help.

Currently, the Free Enterprise Alliance has been involved in some national newsworthy campaigns such as in Ohio's Issue 2 campaign, the special elections in Wisconsin, and in numerous fights to ban project labor agreements on both public and private work. The Free Enterprise Alliance is constantly educating the public on the facts and how these policies often come at small business or taxpayer's expense.

The prosperity that we enjoy is the direct result of our Founding Fathers creating a society based upon the principles of free markets and limited government. The United States of America is quickly heading toward a western European style of socialism where the public is losing its freedoms and liberties. We must protect those rights and freedoms as small business owners, or it won't be long before the government will regulate us out of business.

Simply put, we need your help to defend free enterprise! Please consider supporting the Free Enterprise Alliance by contacting me, or go online (<http://www.freeenterprisealliance.org/donate>) and make an online contribution today. The Free Enterprise Alliance accepts both corporate and personal contributions; there is no limit to the amount you or your company may contribute. Our country is fast approaching a philosophical fork in the road. Fortunately, you have the opportunity to do something about it. Thank you in advance for support of our efforts, and God Bless America.



HOLLIMAN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

In 2002, GPaul Holliman started Holliman Construction Consulting Group, PC, (HCCG) after serving as CFO and Executive Vice President of a large mechanical /industrial contractor in Texas. His twenty-five plus years of experience helps construction companies become a stronger team and more productive. HCCG helps increase productivity and communication between the accounting/finance, operations and marketing/sales teams within a company. He continues to serve and has served as Chairman and/or a member on several Board of Directors and Executive Committees supporting the construction industry, free enterprise, and merit shop philosophy. Comments are welcomed at www.hollimanconsulting.com

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ABC of Texas Legislative Awards



The ABC of Texas Board of Directors selected recipients for Legislative Awards last year based on service in the 82nd Texas Legislature in 2011. This is the second session for the ABC of Texas Free Enterprise Champion Awards (given to those legislators who champion ABC of Texas issues), and the first year for the ABC of Texas Public Service Awards (given to those legislators who are also ABC members).

Due to the number of initiatives and the overall success of the ABC of Texas legislative agenda, more Free Enterprise Champion Awards were earned in 2011 than in 2009.

State Senator Mike Jackson

State Senator Mike Jackson of La Porte was presented both the Free Enterprise Champion and Public Service Awards at a Greater Houston Chapter Breakfast on October 28. Senator Jackson was the Senate author of the Alternative Delivery System bill and the Public-Private Partnership bill. He also won the Free Enterprise Champion Award last session. His father was an early Chair of ABC of Texas. Senator Jackson chairs the Senate Committee on Economic Development.

State Representative Todd Hunter

State Representative Todd Hunter will be presented with both the Free Enterprise Champion Award and the Public Service Award on January 25 at a Texas Coastal Bend Chapter Luncheon. Rep. Hunter chaired the House Committee on Calendars and was in a position to help ensure ABC had a successful session. Every single bill ABC supported had to be set for House consideration through this committee. He also won the Free Enterprise Champion Award last session.

State Representative Tim Kleinschmidt

State Representative Tim Kleinschmidt was another two-time Free Enterprise Champion Award winner. His award was presented at a Central Texas Chapter Excellence In Construction Banquet on November 15. He authored two bills suggested by the Greater Houston Chapter, and helped on other ABC of Texas initiatives. This session, he sought to author ABC of Texas bills.

State Representative Paul Workman

State Representative Paul Workman received both the Free Enterprise Champion and Public Service Awards at the Central

Texas Chapter EIC Banquet on November 15. Rep. Workman, a member of the TEXO Chapter, authored a bill on State Breach of Contract as well as Diminishing Statute of Repose. As a member of the House Business and Industry Committee, he was helpful all session.

State Senator Craig Estes

State Senator Craig Estes has yet to be presented his Free Enterprise Champion Award due to scheduling issues. TEXO is trying to arrange a convenient venue. Senator Estes was the Senate author of the number one priority of ABC of Texas. Senator Estes chairs the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Rural Affairs. He was helpful all session through his service on the Senate Committee on Business and Commerce.

State Senator John Carona

State Senator John Carona was presented his Free Enterprise Champion Award at a TEXO Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting on November 29 in Dallas. Senator Carona was the Senate author of one of the two bills from the Greater Houston Chapter. In addition, as chair of the Senate Committee on Business and Commerce, Senator Carona helped with many other ABC of Texas issues.

State Representative Joe Deshotel

State Representative Joe Deshotel was presented his Free Enterprise Champion Award at a luncheon in Beaumont attended by some ABC of Texas representatives and a member of the Southeast Texas Chapter Board on October 28. Rep. Deshotel was the primary House author of the number one priority of ABC of Texas. As chair of the House Committee on Business and Industry, Rep. Deshotel was helpful on many ABC of Texas issues.

State Senator Jeff Wentworth

State Senator Jeff Wentworth was presented his Free Enterprise Champion Award at the South Texas Chapter Excellence In Construction Banquet on October 13 in San Antonio. Senator Wentworth was the Senate author of one of the bills from the Greater Houston Chapter. He also introduced State Breach of Contract and Diminishing Statute of Repose legislation in the Senate. And, he secured Senate passage of Retainage/Trust Fund legislation. He carried more construction-industry related legislation than any other Senator.

State Representative Bill Callegari

State Representative Bill Callegari was presented his Free Enterprise Champion Award at the Greater Houston Chapter Breakfast on October 28. Rep. Callegari was the House author of our Alternative Delivery System bill. This bill, always a high priority of ABC of Texas, took 4 sessions to pass. In addition, as Chair of the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform, he tried to bring transparency to local government procurement of construction services.

State Representative Dennis Bonnen

State Representative Dennis Bonnen is a member of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter. His Public Service Award will be presented as soon as the chapter has an event and works it into his schedule. Rep. Bonnen was Chair of the Select Committee on Voter Identification and Voter Fraud and Vice Chair of the House Calendars Committee last session. He currently chairs the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission. He is always helpful to ABC of Texas.

State Representative John Davis

State Representative John Davis is a longtime member of the Greater Houston Chapter. When he was presented his Public Service Award at the October 28 chapter breakfast, he spoke of the value of ABC. Rep. Davis was also the House author of the Public-Private Partnership bill and reached out to ABC of Texas for input. He chairs the Economic and Small Business Development Committee in the House.

State Representative Allan Ritter

State Representative Allan Ritter is a longtime member of the Southeast Texas Chapter. Although the chapter is not a member of ABC of Texas, the Public Service Award is for ABC members in the Texas Legislature. Rep. Ritter was presented his award at the luncheon in Beaumont on October 28. He chairs the House Committee on Natural Resources and sits on both the House Ways and Means and Calendars Committees.

State Representative Raul Torres

State Representative Raul Torres is a member of the Texas Coastal Bend Chapter. He was presented his Public Service Award at the chapter Christmas Party on December 7. Rep. Torres served on the House Insurance Committee and was consistently asking for the ABC of Texas position on legislation.




FISHER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jon Fisher has been President of ABC of Texas since mid-2008. Prior to that he was senior vice president at Texas Chemical Council. He has led ABC of Texas in preparing plans for legislative sessions and participation in the Texas elections. Most recently, he helped ABC of Texas prepare a Strategic Plan for the next 4 years with emphasis on the next 2 years. To contact Jon, email jon@abctexas.org.

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One on One With...

TEXAS REPRESENTATIVE BILL CALLEGARI

Representative Bill Callegari has represented the Katy area since his election in 2000. As a staunch fiscal conservative with an eye towards reducing the size of government, he has passed several bills to eliminate unnecessary government functions, lower citizens' tax burdens, and improve accountability. During his tenure in the Texas House, Representative Callegari has worked extensively on complex issues including water policy, eminent domain, transportation, low-income housing reform, and government streamlining. He currently serves as Chairman of the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform, and as a member of the Urban Affairs Committee and the House Research Organization.

Representative Callegari has received multiple awards and recognitions for his conservative voting record from numerous organizations. A licensed engineer by trade, successful businessman, and a graduate from Louisiana State University and the University of Houston, Representative Callegari and his wife Ann have four children and eleven grandchildren.

Q: What is your business background?

A: I am a licensed engineer, and am currently the owner of WC Engineers, an engineering consulting firm. Before coming to the Texas Legislature, I was the CEO of AM-TEX Corporation for over 20 years, which provided management services to cities and water districts throughout Texas. Prior to that, I worked as an engineer for Caterpillar Tractor Company, Shell Pipeline Corporation, and S&B Engineers. In the early part of my career I was responsible for the design and construction of numerous pipeline and water and wastewater facilities. I also served as president of AquaSource which owned and operated public and private water systems.

Q: How would you envision helping the Texas economy during these trying times?

A: Texas is fortunate to have one of the strongest economies in the nation. The state should continue to encourage economic growth by lowering the tax burden on businesses, particularly small and medium-sized businesses, and streamlining our regulatory climate. Moreover, we need to focus in earnest on policy changes that can bring manufacturing jobs back to Texas or elsewhere in America from overseas. Lower taxes and regulatory predictability help in that regard, but we also need to ensure that, in the long run, we have an educated workforce that can do those jobs, as well as the energy, water and transportation resources necessary for building that manufacturing base.

Q: You passed a bill that was one of ABC of Texas' priorities for the last 4 sessions. It has been one of our highest priorities at least the last 2 sessions. What was different about this session that secured passage?

A: The public works procurement consolidation bill, House Bill 628, was an extraordinarily big, ambitious piece of legislation. It took considerable effort to convince all of the stakeholders of its importance, and why it should become law. It's not unusual for bills of this magnitude to take several sessions to pass. Ultimately, with herculean efforts from people like ABC President Jon Fisher, we were able to finally pass the bill.

Q: One of your committee's interim charges deals with purchasing cooperatives and interlocal agreements. How did that issue get up on your radar?

A: Multiple bills in previous sessions have addressed this same issue. Governmental entities use purchasing cooperatives, or interlocal contracts, to purchase goods and services. In theory, these procurement arrangements allow government entities to secure better deals than they could obtain otherwise, and save taxpayers' dollars.

The issue that came up this session—specifically for roofing—was some purchasing cooperatives or interlocal contracts offering products that could only be fulfilled by specific vendors. Several governmental entities felt this helped them save money and simplify the procurement process. Contractors argued, however, that the process did not allow for open competition for public sector bids.

Several measures were introduced aimed at addressing the problems, but none passed. In light of the concern surrounding these cooperatives and contracts, House Speaker Joe Straus charged my committee to study the issue.

Q: Your committee is called the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform. What do you view as your committee's role in the Legislature?

A: I believe state government should adopt a continuous improvement mindset within all state agencies. This committee can be the Legislature's champion for encouraging and implementing that kind of change. The key to success in this area is to encourage agencies to come forward with their own ideas on how to improve.

Q: What are the big issues going into the 2013 Legislative session?

A: Although I am Chairman of the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Reform, my strength is in the field of water policy. Looking ahead, I think the Legislature needs to invest energy into ensuring we have enough water supplies for future generations. The current drought has wreaked billions of dollars in damages. Without developing additional water supplies, future droughts of this scale could cost Texas' economy over \$100 billion. As Texas' population grows, unless we develop more water supplies there will not be enough water for everyone in drought conditions.

The drought should bring Texas' water policy into sharper focus. The Legislature needs to work on policies—other than praying for rain—to develop additional water supplies. The passage of Proposition 2 last November, which provides \$6 billion in bonding authority for water projects, takes a step in the right direction. We also need to build more reservoirs, consider new desalination plants, and incentivize conservation. I hope to work on several of these issues going forward.

I also believe the state budget and school finance will remain top issues going into the 2013 session.

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POLITICAL UPDATE

Redistricting is Totally Dominating the Political Arena



Because of redistricting and newly created or vacated seats, there will be an extraordinarily busy and expensive primary campaign season. General election contests should remain fairly consistent with prior years. As a cautionary note, this article was written before the filing deadline closed. There is always the possibility of a surprise addition to the list as well as a change in other circumstances.

A candidate must be a resident of a district from February 1, 2012 to the General Election date to run in a district. Applications for office must be amended by February 1, 2012 for the intended district. The single primary shall be on April 3, 2012 with a run-off on June 5, 2012.

The filing deadline had been, as of publication, December 19th for all offices, with candidates being allowed to file for any office including Texas Legislature and Congress. Candidates needed to write down the district and which map they are using. Candidates are being given the right to amend or withdraw any application filed to date. Filing will be reopened once legislative and congressional district lines are set.

At the request of Attorney General Greg Abbott, the United States Supreme Court issued a stay in regards to the map drawn by the three judge panel. A three judge panel consisting of two Republicans and one Democrat re-drew several key House, Senate and Congressional seats. What angered the legislators is that the three judge panel re-drew several seats passed by the legislature that the Justice Department did not object to under the Voting Rights Act.

As you know, Texas is one of several southern states remaining under the thumb of the Voting Rights Act. Any changes to political boundaries must either be approved by the US Justice Department or the DC circuit court in Washington DC. The legislature and the Governor made the proper decision and did not go to Obama's Justice Department to approve the new boundaries, but instead filed for approval/pre-clearance with the DC circuit. The United States Supreme Court has set the date of January 9, 2012 for oral arguments on the State's objections to the three judge map. The Supreme Court can re-draw the boundaries themselves, leave the

legislative maps alone or send it back to the three judge court with directions on how to re-draw the lines. It is hoped that the US Supreme Court will just redraw the districts the Justice department objected to and that is all. In the Texas House, the Justice Department objected to five seats, principally in South Texas. For example, the Justice Department didn't object to any State Senate seats, but the three judge panel, on their own, re-drew several Senate seats. This of course angered the legislature. To further complicate the political scene, the DC court has set a hearing on the Voting Rights Act issues raised by the Justice Department on January 19, 2012.

To summarize, the US Supreme Court granted a stay on the three judge activist map and arguments will be heard on January 9th. The Supreme Court has never granted a stay on a redistricting map before the Texas case. Also, a DC circuit will hear arguments on the Voting Rights Act issues on January 19.

As a result of census growth, Texas received four new seats in Congress. The three judge court map makes two of the seats lean Democratic, and two lean Republican.

TEXAS SENATE

It is impossible to go over in detail who is running for all the races, but for a start, in state Senate races, with the backing of Texans for Lawsuit Reform, Elizabeth Ames Jones is challenging incumbent Senator Jeff Wentworth for his seat in District 25 in Bexar County. Senator Jeff Wentworth has the support of the South Texas ABC Chapter. Representative Mark Shelton is challenging Senator Wendy Davis, and Representative Rodney Anderson and Representative Kelly Hancock will compete for the seat formerly held by Chris Harris. Larry Taylor is running for Mike Jackson's former seat in Senate District 11. There are two other candidates, Daniel McCool — a sheriff's deputy, and

Dave Norman, an insurance agent. With Senator Ogden retiring, Dr. Charles Schwertner, a current State Representative, was the first to announce for the seat. Ben Bius who ran against Ogden in 2010 will be challenging Dr. Schwertner. Mr. Bius is a real estate investor. Senator Florence Shapiro from the Metroplex area has decided not to run again. Current House member, Ken Paxton, a long standing conservative, has announced to run as has Scott O'Grady, a veteran. It is expected that millions will be spent on State Senate races this cycle and should result in a much more pro business and conservative Senate after these elections, which will be very good for ABC.

Lt. Governor David Dewhurst is doing well in his U.S. Senate race and undoubtedly will win. When he wins, the Senate body will be responsible for electing the next Lt. Governor out of their membership.

Governor Rick Perry is working hard to overcome debate performances and he is engaged in a major push in Iowa and South Carolina. If things progress as we hope and Governor Rick Perry wins the Republican nomination, the Senate would in essence be picking the next Governor along with their choice of Lt. Governor.

JUDICIAL

In judicial races, there are three Texas Supreme Court races up. The current justices in these positions are David Medina, Don Willett and Nathan Hecht. All three are strong, qualified, conservative judges. They will probably be challenged in the Republican primary by unqualified individuals. In the Court of Criminal Appeals, Sharon Keller and Elsa Alcala both are very conservative and are law and order candidates. They also will most likely be challenged by unqualified individuals in the primary as well. We will update you further before the primary election.

TEXAS HOUSE

Details in House races will have to wait because of court challenges and the large number of contested races. For a few examples, let me point out where the ORVS (optimal republican voting strength) numbers will make it a highly contested general election. (ORVS between 49 and 54=highly contested)

- Rep. Craig Eiland in Galveston / South Harris County has a 51 ORVS and there are several candidates vying for the Republican nomination.

- Rep. Charlie Howard, from Ft. Bend, is not running again. His ORVS is 54.4. We expect a democratic challenger in that race.
- In Corpus Christi, our friend Connie Scott has an ORVS of 50.9. Solomon Ortiz, Jr. has announced that he will be running against Rep. Scott.
- District 34, currently held by Rep. Lozano has an ORVS of 50.3. This will be a highly contested race.
- Rep. Linda Harper Brown, from the North Texas area has a 52 ORVS. She will face a challenge in the General Election.
- From the greater Houston area, our friend Rep. Sarah Davis has a 54.2 ORVS. She will face a General Election challenge.
- In the South Texas area, our friend John Garza's seat is now 49.4, and it will be a hard fought General Election contest.

I hope this has given you a brief summary into what is happening in the political arena this campaign season. In one word—uncertainty.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Mike Toomey is the longtime ABC of Texas lobbyist and has the distinction of being the only individual in Texas history to have served as chief of Staff for two Texas Governors. He is a former State Representative from Houston and was voted in Texas Monthly magazines "Top Ten Legislators". Mr. Toomey is a strong supporter of Tort Reform in Texas and is widely acknowledged as one of the most respected and effective lobbyists in the State of Texas.

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ABC of Texas Strategic Planning

The ABC of Texas Board met on November 8, 2011, with invited guests from the local chapters, to formulate a Strategic Plan to carry ABC of Texas into 2015. Much like the planning efforts in 2009, this group revisited the Vision and Mission, prepared a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), set 4-year goals, and then worked on the 2-year goals that would position the association to be able to address the 4-year goals.

The day-long meeting was facilitated by Dennis Winkler, a public relations professional who is a member of the Greater Houston Chapter.

In addition to State Board members and Chapter Presidents, each local chapter was invited to bring a guest to assist in the planning process. Those guests included Bob Duda (Central Texas), Michelle Seward Davis (South Texas) and Darlene East (Greater Houston). Also in attendance were Jeff Webb of AltairStrickland, a guest of Board member Bob Parker, as well as Andy Conlin and April Brown of ABC National.

The revised mission reads: "Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas shall represent members in affecting state legislation and other governmental affairs favorable to free enterprise principles and the Merit Shop Philosophy."

The goals for 2015 were proposed to be:

- Increase influence in political arena.
- Increase awareness of ABC of Texas to ABC members.
- Develop relationships, educate and influence selected state agencies of the benefits of a pro-business environment.
- Pass 4-5 ABC of Texas bills.

The goals for 2013 which position ABC of Texas to pursue the 2015 goals remained unchanged with one exception. "Industry stakeholders" was added to the second goal. Those 2013 goals are:

- Increase influence in political arena.
- Increase awareness of ABC of Texas to ABC members and industry stakeholders.

- Leader in identifying issues and building coalitions.
- Increase influence with state agencies.

The group also recommended that the Board establish two Task Forces—a Political Action Committee Task Force and a Legislative Review Task Force. The PAC Task Force would be charged with establishing a process to increase funding and reviewing the means of coordinating PAC contributions for maximum effect. The Legislative Review Task Force would be charged with examining the process for selecting bills for review, increasing information received from chapters about positions, improving witness identification and recruitment, and establishing a fast-track process for feedback.

All but a few of the Board members were present at the meeting to develop the plan, which is subject to the action of the Board at its next meeting on January 11, 2012. Of course, since this plan is a creation of the Board, the Board can revise it or re-direct resources at any time.

ABC members are encouraged to talk to their local chapter's State Board Members if they want more information about this Strategic Plan. To find out who your State Board Members are, go to www.abctexas.org or contact your local chapter staff.



FISHER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jon Fisher has been President of ABC of Texas since mid-2008. Prior to that he was senior vice president at Texas Chemical Council. He has led ABC of Texas in preparing plans for legislative sessions and participation in the Texas elections. Most recently, he helped ABC of Texas prepare a Strategic Plan for the next 4 years with emphasis on the next 2 years. To contact Jon, email jon@abctexas.org.



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ABC INITIATIVES AROUND THE STATE



The ABC Central Texas Chapter had their Annual Excellence in Construction and Safety Awards Banquet at Hyatt Hotel in Austin on November 15 with 280 in attendance. There were 18 Eagle award and 13 Merit Awards given out.



The ABC Texas Coastal Bend recently held a planning conference for the upcoming year, where the chapter successfully established goals and objectives. In attendance was Doug Curtis and April Brown from ABC National, who did a great job helping facilitate.

ABC CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

The Central Texas Chapter had their Annual Excellence in Construction and Safety Awards Banquet at Hyatt Hotel in Austin on November 15 with 280 guests in attendance. There were 18 Eagle Awards and 13 Merit Awards given out for the 2011 Excellence in Construction Awards program. They also recognized 12 Award of Excellence in Construction Safety winners and five Awards of Distinction that were given out to acknowledge superior safety performance by a company's commitment to safety and safety training.

There were 20 companies that received the National Safety Training Evaluation Program (STEP) award, which recognizes outstanding successes in safety, proven by statistics and evaluation. Jon Fisher, ABC of Texas President, presented Paul Workman and Tim Kleinschmidt with the Free Enterprise Champion Award for their work in the 82nd Legislative Session. Workman also received a Public Service Award and Fisher presented Kleinschmidt with a birthday cake for taking time out on his birthday to be with ABC to receive his award. Ed Clements, radio legend with KLBJ, served as the Master of Ceremonies.

The Central Texas Chapter also had a "Meet and Greet" at Sherlock's Pub on November 22 and a "Meet and Greet" at Abel's on the Lake on December 6. Both of these were free events where members could come and network with other members in the construction industry. The chapter typically hosts four to five of these free events each year.

ABC TEXAS COASTAL BEND

ABC Texas Coastal Bend has enjoyed a busy year full of activities. They ended the year with the 3rd Annual ABC BBQ Cook Off on October 14 & 15 — ABC'S Community Outreach event benefitting the Children of Nueces County Youth Football League. The Committee Chair Randy Larson with Larson Plumbing & Utility

went on a mission to have "No Child Left Behind". With a total of 32 teams and plenty of entertainment it was a great success. All proceeds went to scholarships and equipment for the League.

Also in October, ABC Texas Coastal Bend went for the Gold in Tampa, Florida for Leadership and Professional Development. The hands on learning sessions provided the insights and the strategies to position the chapter for success! Board of Directors Chairman, Mark Roach, with Dealers Electrical Supply, and Board of Director, Jeff Harper with Waukesha Pearce Industries Inc. along with Chapter staff Kathy Burnette & Corinna Howerton came back ready to tackle the rest of 2011 and set the goals high for 2012.

With the challenges due to the economy "Retention & Growth" is one of the primary focuses. Membership Chair, Sandra Baucom with KAP Project Services has put in place a great plan for the membership committee as they continue to recruit. The retention is at 86.27%, with that said, the chapter has not only reached goal for growth but has exceeded it.

During the planning conference for the upcoming year the chapter was able to successfully establish goals and objectives. They were fortunate to have the presence of Doug Curtis and April Brown from ABC National, who did an extremely good job. Mark Roach Board of Directors Chair felt the success of the conference is contributed to their presence!

To end the year, the Chapter is excited to announce that Programs Chair Jeff Harper, with Waukesha Pearce Industries Inc., and his Committee hosted a fabulous Christmas Party for members along with a canned food drive on December 7 at Katz 21. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, door prizes, a DJ and live music performed by member Bob Springsteen with TIC, provided some great entertainment. Plenty of canned goods were donated to the Corpus Christi Food

ABC INITIATIVES AROUND THE STATE



ABC Greater Houston's Fall Golf Tournament was held October 3rd. The tournament featured pre-tournament games, tournament long drive contest, BBQ teams and hosted 147 players.



The South Texas Chapter co-sponsored the annual Construct A Kids Christmas Toy Drive and Christmas Gala - designed to help the foster children in Bexar and surrounding counties have a great Christmas. Over 750 attendees enjoyed an evening of food & drinks, live & silent auctions and the ever popular casino games. The event helped raise over \$15,000!

Bank. The event had a great turn out and attendees had a terrific time!

The chapter is also excited to announce the 2012 Chairman, Curtis Miller with TICO Insulation Co., who has high expectations for the Chapter in the coming year.

ABC GREATER HOUSTON

ABC Greater Houston chapter has ended the last quarter of the year with a big bang! Thanks to the social media spin on their Annual Membership Recruitment Campaign, which launched in October 2011, the chapter has welcomed 30 new members to the chapter and reached growth. They do not intend to stop there; their goal of 475 is only twelve more members away!

ABC Greater Houston's Fall Golf Tournament was held October 3 and had 147 players in attendance. The Excellence in Construction Awards had 46 submittals, with a total of 19 categories; 17 projects walked away with an ICE Award and 29 received Merit Awards. The PAC Holiday party celebrated the holiday season with approximately 140 attendees who bid on 16 silent auction items and two live auctions including a trip to Napa Valley, and ski trip to Avon Valley.

After the fun and games, it was time for the Greater Houston Chapter to buckle down and get straight to business. The Greater Houston Political Action Committee and its trustees endorsed Mayor Annise Parker and six other City Council Members who all got elected to office. Unfortunately, three Greater Houston PAC endorsed Council Members did not get elected. The Greater Houston PAC also made the suggested contributions to the ABC of Texas PAC.

The Greater Houston PAC will start their screening for state candidates in January for the upcoming March primary election for the state representative races. If you are an ABC member of the Greater Houston Chapter and would like to voice your political concerns, join the chapter at the PAC Luncheon on January 10, 2012, at the Houston City Club. The only requirements to become a PAC member are that you are a current member of the ABC Greater Houston Chapter and a \$35 contribution. Vote on PAC Trustees, who will make decisions on endorsements of candidates and contributions at the PAC Luncheon—register at www.abchouston.org.

The Greater Houston chapter is looking forward to the New Year and all of its possibilities.

ABC SOUTH TEXAS

The South Texas Chapter ended the year by co-sponsoring the annual Construct A Kids Christmas Toy Drive and Christmas Gala. This event is designed to help the foster children in Bexar and surrounding counties have a great Christmas. Over 750 attendees enjoyed an evening of food & drinks, live & silent auctions, and the ever popular casino games. By the end of the evening it was determined that over \$15,000 had been raised! The next day at the toy drive, over 1,200 toys and a few thousand dollars in gift cards had been collected.

In November, the chapter conducted its annual "Wounded Warrior Project" gift bag program. This program was started six years ago following a board retreat discussion on how the chapter could help the wounded warriors stationed at the Brooke Army Medical Center's Warrior & Family Support Center. Over 300 gift bags are put together thanks to the generous donations of the ABC members, and around \$6,000 in gift cards were received.

ABC INITIATIVES AROUND THE STATE



ABC Texas Gulf Coast Board Members recently met with ABC National Board Chairman, Mike Uremovich (pictured at left). Buck Blevins (pictured right), Texas Gulf Coast Chairman; Gerald Andrews, First Vice Chairman; Mark Monical, Secretary; Lisa Bundick Woods, Immediate Past Chairperson; Daryl Dauer, Assistant Secretary; John Woods, Treasurer; Amando Gonzalez, Director; and Terry McAlister, President were also on hand.

The gift bags were delivered the day before Thanksgiving. On a special note – the executive director of the Warrior & Family Support Center, Judith Merkelz, was presented with the 2011 ABC South Texas Chapter's Chairman's Award. This award is presented to an individual who is not a member of ABC but deserves special recognition for everything they do for the industry, and our great country.

The Chapter was successful in obtaining amendments to a proposed City of San Antonio ordinance that will consolidate the various appeals boards and put all of the construction & building related codes in one chapter. Key amendments were the shortening of time for an appeal to be heard, the creation of trade specific task forces for the tri-annual review of the various construction related codes, and ensuring adequate representation from all sectors of the construction process. ABC worked with the other construction trade groups to present a unified industry on this important issue.

The chapter's Future Leaders Task Force has worked with the University of Texas at San Antonio's Construction Management Student Association to form an ABC Student Chapter. This has resulted in a series of panel discussions on various aspects of the construction process and industry organized by the task force for the benefit of the students. One of the first topics was entitled "What I Wished They Would Have Taught Me When In Was in College". This generated a lot of interest and questions. The program went on longer than planned!

ABC TEXAS GULF COAST

The fall months provided a variety of opportunities for Texas Gulf Coast members, starting with the 27th Annual Golf Tournament in early September. The sold-out event gave over 70 two-man teams a day of networking and friendly competition. The Human Resources Committee provided a Q & A Session led by chapter attorney Mark Jodon of Littler Mendelson in early September and a symposium on using social networks for recruiting in October. Also in September, members were inspired by guest speaker 'Termite' Watkins, a boxing coach who led an 'against all odds' team from Iraq to success at the 2004 Olympic Games. At this event, twenty STEP Awards for 2011 were presented, including 1 Silver, 8 Gold, 9 Platinum and 2 Diamond. Membership then elected officers for the 2012 Board of Directors.

In October, the chapter officers welcomed ABC National Board Chairman Mike Uremovich. Officers and directors discussed many of the issues facing ABC both locally and nationally, political action and plans for the future. Additionally, the Suppliers' Members Committee held its second mixer for the year, providing an evening of networking, good food and drink and door prizes for the many in attendance.

The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter has strong community ties and members continue to generously open their personal pocket books to provide support. The ABC Cares Committee made \$1,000 donations to each of 3 local charities: ActionS provides meals to the elderly; Operation Backpack provides weekend food for homeless students; and the Women's Center provides shelter and support for battered women. Additionally, this committee has spent many hours soliciting, collecting and sorting warm coats and other clothing for 3 local elementary schools, the Boys & Girls Club of Brazoria County, and the Texas Port Ministry—an area ministry that provides free clothing to seafarers, truck drivers and port workers. Finally, this committee delivered hundreds of dollars of new toys to two local police stations for their Blue Santa programs.

The Chapter closed out the year with appreciation and gratitude for many loyal members, old and new. The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, along with educational affiliate Merit Shop Training, Inc. and Contractors' Safety Council of Brazosport, hosted the annual Christmas Social on Tuesday, December 7. Good music, food and drink provided the background for the evening. Members filled up the empty space under the Christmas tree with hundreds of dollars of new toys for area children while enjoying an evening of sharing with many friends.

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