

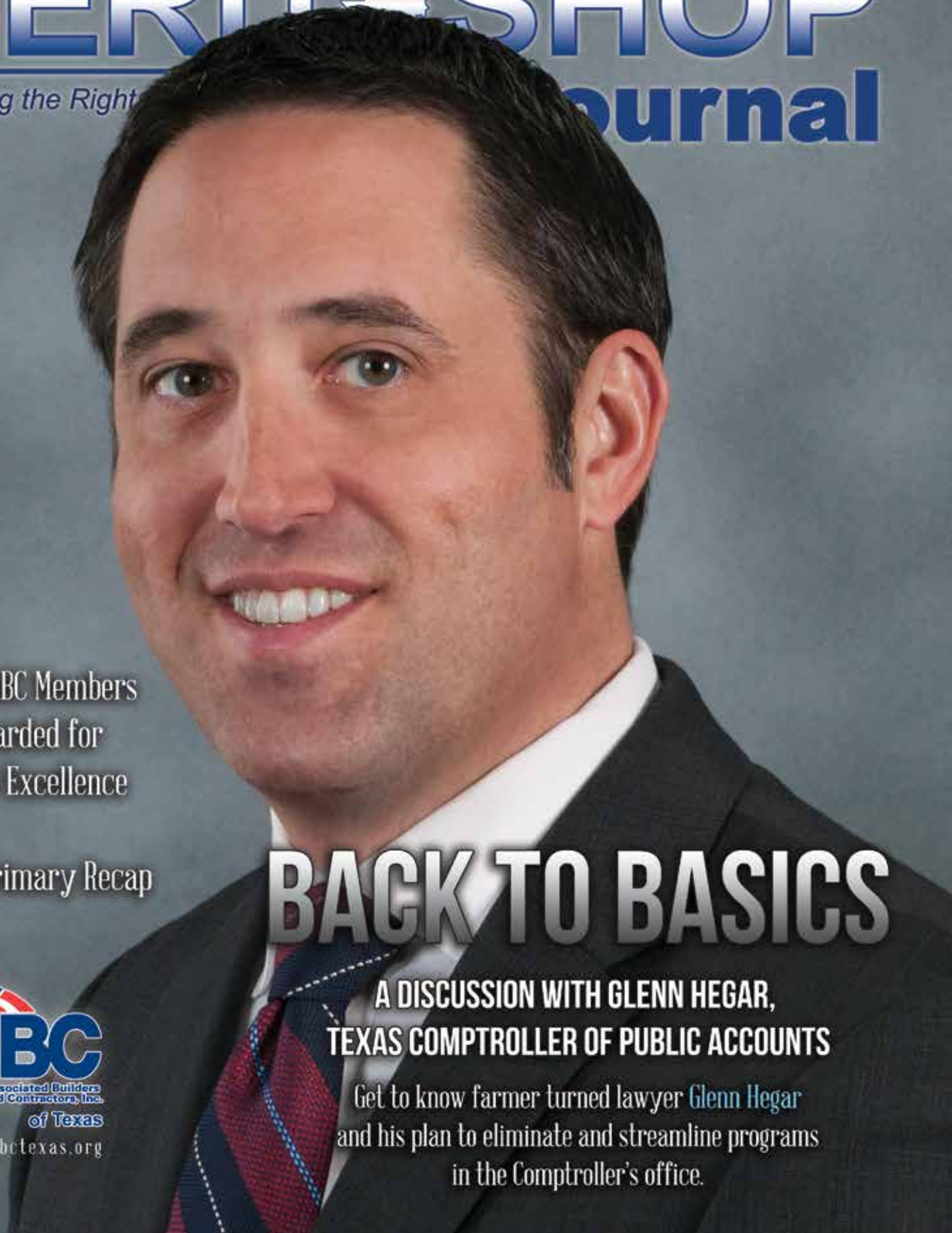
# Texas

May 2016

# MERIT SHOP

Defending the Right

# Journal



Texas ABC Members  
Rewarded for  
Safety Excellence

March Primary Recap

## BACK TO BASICS

A DISCUSSION WITH GLENN HEGAR,  
TEXAS COMPTROLLER OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Get to know farmer turned lawyer Glenn Hegar  
and his plan to eliminate and streamline programs  
in the Comptroller's office.



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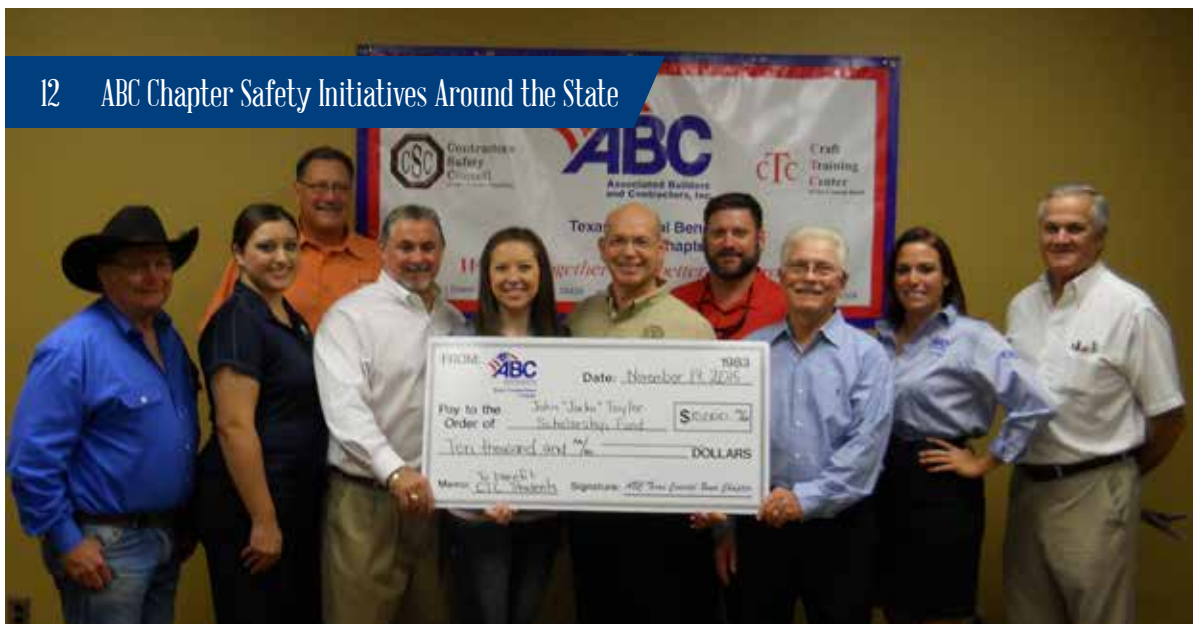
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# LETTER from the Chairman



JOHNSON

I am pleased to report that ABC of Texas has been very productive during the three months since the start of 2016. At ABC Texas' last Board meeting in early April, the Board discussed the association's progress so far, and set goals for the next three months as well as the state legislative session for 2017. It was really great to have the input of the ABC-Southeast Texas Chapter to assist the board in planning. Kimberly Bernard, President/CEO of the Chapter headed the contingency at the meeting. ABC Texas is now more than 1,700 members strong!

Mike Gremillion of the Greater Houston Chapter chairs the Revenue Task Force and reported on its progress and recommendations. The Board decided to set the Task Force's recommendations for vote at the next meeting in June. These recommendations included a State dues increase for 2017 which will be discussed by each local chapter in more detail.

Ben Westcott of the Greater Houston Chapter chairs the Legislative Task Force, and discussed the proposed revisions to Chapter 53 of the Texas Property Code regarding mechanic's lien. The Board evaluated the highlights of the revisions, and Ben requested all ABC members study the revisions in depth and give him comments. If one needs copies of the proposed revisions, please contact your local chapter government affairs chair.

GPaul Holliman of TEXO, chair of ABC Texas PAC Task Force, reported on the use of PAC funds for the primary as well as the runoff elections, and there was a lengthy briefing by Jon Fisher and Mike Toomey regarding the primary results as well as the upcoming runoffs. Jack Baxley of the TEXO Chapter also provided insight. There was a spirited discussion of merit shop and political attacks on that bedrock concept of the free enterprise system.

I want to take this opportunity to encourage all ABC members to VOTE in the upcoming runoff elections as well as the November general election. Election, or re-election, of representatives who champion merit shop and the free enterprise system is crucial to your business. As you all know, this has been a heck of a primary season and there are likely more fireworks on the horizon. Stay the course. Contact your local government affairs chair for ideas on how you can help.

Finally, there was an in depth analysis and adoption of the legislative priorities of ABC for the 2017 Texas legislative session as well as a review of the Strategic Plan. Jon Fisher will discuss both of these topics in his letter in this Texas Merit Shop Journal. Each local chapter and Jon will report on their accomplishments in achieving the Strategic Plan goals in upcoming board meetings.

The Board is very excited about the remainder of the year, as well as the 2017 Texas legislative session. Board members have, and are committed to continue to put substantial time and effort in planning, and implementing the plan. Each board member as well as the presidents of the local chapters urge you to be politically active - your business depends on it.

## Wes Johnson

2015 - 2017 ABC of Texas Chairman  
The Gardner Law Firm

At the last ABC of Texas Board meeting, the Board adopted a Strategic Plan and set Legislative Priorities. As mentioned in a previous letter to members, Chuck Swallow of TDIndustries facilitated the development of this plan. It has 5 goals which were basically agreed to prior to that planning meeting last November. Those goals are:

- Expand Communications with Members;
- Advance and Protect the Interests of the Merit Shop Construction Industry in the Texas Legislature;
- Expand Relationships with Elected Officials;
- Increase the Amount of PAC Money Raised and Distributed; and
- Provide Funding to Allow the State Office to Pursue the Board's Goals.

The bulk of that planning meeting was spent identifying and prioritizing strategies and tactics to support those goals. One of the takeaways from our facilitator was not to put this on the shelf, but to make updates a regular part of the Board agenda at all future Board Meetings. Wes had decided on his own to do that before I shared the facilitator's suggestion. Nice to have everyone on the same page!

We also set our Legislative Priorities for the 85th Texas Legislature which meets in 2017. Those priorities and a brief description follow. The first three are our highest priorities in no particular order—they are all important. Those that follow the first three are in order of votes received.

- Neutrality in State Government Contracting—This bill, on which ABC of Texas has the lead, is supported by five other associations. It would prevent an entity using state funds from requiring or prohibiting the use of a project labor agreement.
- Lien Law Reform—For the last two and a half years, a group of attorneys representing ABC of Texas, TCA and AGC-TBB have struggled mightily to come up with a simpler process for preserving lien rights. This proposal has been shared with other stakeholders. It will be a monumental task to deal with all the interests and craft a final bill that can pass.

- Public Employees Dues Deduction—Last session the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) proposed legislation to prevent public entities from deducting union and association dues from the paychecks of public employees. Of course, ABC of Texas actively supported the measure. The Texas Business Coalition has been formed (ABC of Texas is a member) to advance this legislation, but NFIB will still be in the lead.



FISHER

- E-Verify (safe harbor)—Ben Westcott of Andrews Myers (now our Board Chair-Elect) developed language last session to insert in any E-Verify bill that affects contractors.
- Workers' Compensation (sole remedy)—This is intended to stop third party lawsuits. Chances of success are minimal unless a broad group of business interests decide to address this problem.
- Employee Misclassification—We have been working on this the last two sessions. We are hopeful we can get something that protects contractors from the hiring decisions of others, protects the legitimate use of contractors, and increases penalties for misclassifying employees.
- State Breach of Contract Cleanup—Last session we had a bill on the House Calendar poised to bring the state waiver of sovereign immunity in line with that for other governmental entities. Last minute delays doomed the bill.
- Retainage/Trust Funds—The group elected to keep this issue on the list even though the Lien Law Reform proposal deletes statutory retainage.
- License for Journeyman Industrial Electrician—There is already a special journeyman license for linemen. This would be designed to deal with those working exclusively in the industrial sector.

As you can tell, the Board is proceeding with another aggressive agenda. If we follow our Strategic Plan, we will enhance our chances of success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Fisher', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Jon Fisher**  
ABC of Texas  
President

# Texas ABC Members rewarded for **Safety Excellence**

BY JASMINE SWOOPE

On March 2, 2016, during the 26th annual Excellence in Construction® Awards in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) announced the winners of its 2015 National Safety Excellence Award. A total of 41 ABC member companies were recognized for their safety processes and performance—12 of the companies recognized are members of various ABC chapters throughout Texas.

ABC members are an exceptional group. Their commitment to providing excellent service is only enhanced by their commitment to a safe working environment.

The National Safety Excellence Awards are presented in three major North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code categories: NAICS 236 – Construction of Buildings; NAICS 237 – Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction; and NAICS 238 – Specialty Trade Contractors. The winners were selected from ABC member firms that achieved Diamond, Platinum and Gold status in ABC's Safety Training Evaluation Process (STEP) in 2015. During the selection process, they were judged on self-evaluation scores, lost workday case rates, total recordable rates, leading indicator use, process and program innovations and video interviews conducted by members of ABC National's Environment, Health & Safety Committee.

## **Taking a STEP in the Right Direction**

Established in 1989 by ABC National's Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) Committee, the STEP program was developed and written by contractors, for contractors.

STEP is the standard for developing world-class safety programs in construction and is designed to help both large and small contractors evaluate every aspect of their corporate safety and health program and identify opportunities for improvement.

"If the STEP application isn't easy for you to complete, then you have some deficiencies within your safety program," said Brandon Mabile, with Performance Contractors. "That's the beauty of the program, it can only make you better."

In 2015, ABC published its first Safety Performance Report, which documented that the average STEP Diamond company is 720 percent safer than average, based on its total recordable incidence rate compared to the Bureau

of Labor Statistics' average for the entire industry. All ABC members are encouraged to apply to STEP.

"STEP is important because it's a benchmark to see how you stack-up against peers within the industry, applying to STEP is a win-win for the company," said Mike Gremillion, of ISC Constructors, LLC. "Even if you don't pass the application process, you're given a break-down of which areas you need to improve upon, to become more safe—that's a win-win to me."

ABC members who apply for STEP are not only working to improve safety conditions for their company, they're trying to both retain the employees they currently have, and recruit new employees who value safety and see it's importance.

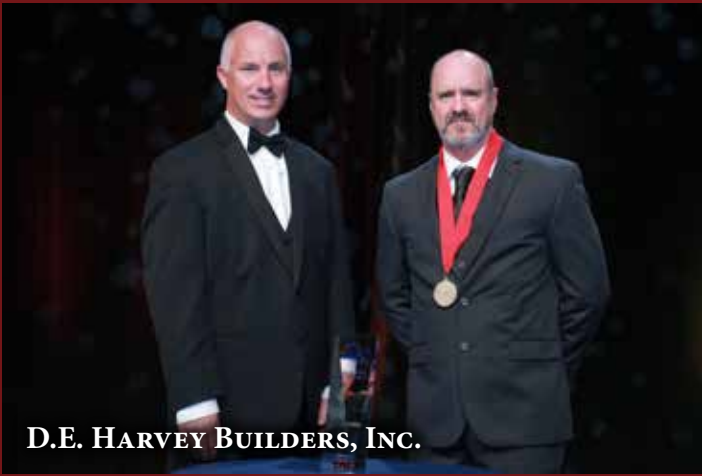
"There is a shortage of qualified workers in our industry, and the value of establishing a quality safety program is immeasurable. Teaching safety has to be repeated to become engrained and habitual," Chuck Mobley, Mobley Industrial Services, LLC, said.

## **It is more than an award**

Winning a National Safety Excellence award is a great achievement for the company and those they impact around them. Like many great triumphs, there was a team of dedicated supporters involved working to overcome challenges and remain true to the overall goal.

"It was an honor to win this award, especially because it was our first year winning," said Aaron Smith, of Standard Constructors. "We had applied for the award for three years, and finally got called onto the stage. After we didn't win the last two times, we made sure to keep updating and improving our safety program."

The National Safety Excellence award is a badge for ABC members to proudly wear. The award is a testament to the customers, employees and supporters of the winning company that safety is an important tenet for them. Applying for STEP is only the first step to achieving safety excellence, member companies must continuously strive to maintain the level of excellence the industry desires to see. STEP Applications are accepted until Dec. 15th. Each ABC Chapter has their own deadline. Check with your local ABC chapter to when the STEP deadline is for you. 🇹🇽



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# MARCH

## PRIMARY RECAP

**BY: MIKE TOOMEY**

Super Tuesday has come and gone but the vote tallies of the March primary races will have a lasting effect on the upcoming legislative session.

House Speaker Joe Straus, and his key Chairmen, Rep. Charlie Geren (R-Ft. Worth), Rep. Byron Cook (R-Corsicana), and Rep. Dan Flynn (R-Van), all pulled off victories in high-dollar primaries.

Republican challengers unseated four incumbent House members in this year's election cycle. Defeated in their party primary, Debbie Riddle (R-Tomball), Marsha Farney (R-Georgetown), Molly White (R-Belton) and Stuart Spitzer (R-Kaufman) will not return to the capitol building in 2017.

Several races continue into a run-off where the vote leader did not reach the necessary 50% +1.

### **Central Texas Chapter (2)**

The Senate District 24 run-off is interesting as there isn't a clear tea party candidate in the race. Rep. Susan King (R-Abilene) drew flack from tea party groups like Empower Texans (ET) during her tenure as a State Representative, while Dr. Dawn Buckingham has not garnered tea party support due to her ties with Speaker Straus.

There will be some new faces to get to know in your area. Rep. Molly White (R-Belton) was unseated by former legislator Hugh Shine (R-Belton), a veteran and financial advisor. Rep. Marsha Farney (R-Georgetown) was defeated by retired U.S. Army Colonel Terry Wilson.

House District 54 will head to a run-off pitting the current Mayor of Killeen, former homebuilder, Scott Cospers (R-Killeen) and Austin Ruiz (R-Killeen), a local optometrist.

### **TEXO (4)**

Although Rep. Bryan Hughes (R-Mineola) and Rep. David

Simpson (R-Longview) have both held strong tea party support in the House, tea party groups like *ET* and *We The People* have endorsed Rep. Bryan Hughes in this race. Former Lt. Gov. Bill Ratliff and Jerry Patterson have endorsed Rep. Simpson, while *Texans for Lawsuit Reform* endorsed Rep. Hughes.

Rep. Stuart Spitzer (R-Kaufman) was defeated by former legislator Lance Gooden who will return to the House of Representatives in January 2017.

House District 5 run-off is between Cole Hefner (R-Mount Pleasant) and Jay Misenheimer (R-Lindale). Cole Hefner is tea party endorsed (ET) and received 30% of the vote in Misenheimer's own county in the March primary.

House District 33 run-off hosts John Keating (R-Frisco) and Justin Holland (R-Heath). Keating is tea party endorsed (ET) and currently sits as a Frisco City Council member; Holland is in his third term on Heath's City Council and is co-owner of a Rockwall County real estate business.

House District 64 showcases a run-off between veterinarian Dr. Lynn Stucky (R-Denton) and tea party endorsed (ET), former public school teacher Read King (R-Denton County). HD-64 is comprised of only one county (Denton), in which Dr. Stucky seized a 12% point lead over King in the primary.

### **Southeast Texas and Greater Houston Chapter (1)**

The House District 18 run-off is between Keith Strahan (R-Liberty) and Ernest Bailes (R-Coldspring). Strahan is a tea party endorsed (ET) lawyer while Bailes owns a deer & cattle reproductive services company.

### **South Texas Chapter (2)**

Sen. Jose Menendez (D-San Antonio) and Sen. Carlos Uresti (D-San Antonio) repelled democratic primary challengers and will hold on to their Senate seats.



## Mike Toomey

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.

House District 73 run-off is between incumbent Rep. Doug Miller (R-New Braunfels) and tea party (ET) challenger Kyle Biedermann (R-Fredericksburg). Miller won his county seat in the primary and received only 6% less than Biedermann in the remaining HD-74 counties. Miller currently sits as chairman of the Special Purpose Districts Committee.

House District 120 run-off is a duel between Barbara Gervin-Hawkins (D-San Antonio) and Mario Salas (D-San Antonio). With almost equal vote tallies in the primary and multiple local run-off elections in Bexar County, this is another race that will come down to the wire.

### Greater Houston Chapter (3)

Rep. Debbie Riddle (R-Tomball) will not be returning to the Texas House, she was defeated by tea party endorsed (ET) Valoree Swanson, a Real Estate Broker and Republican Party activist.

House District 128 run-off hosts incumbent Rep. Wayne Smith (R-Baytown) and tea party (ET) challenger Briscoe Cain (R-Houston). Cain is a young lawyer three years out of law school. Cain edged Rep. Smith by 6% in the primary. Smith currently chairs the Licensing & Administrative Procedures Committee.

House District 27 run-off features incumbent Rep. Ron Reynolds (D-Missouri City) and Angelique Bartholomew (D-Missouri City). Rep. Reynolds doubled Ms. Bartholomew's vote total in the primary.

House District 139 run-off will feature another close race between Kimberly Willis (D-Houston) and Jarvis D. Johnson (D-Houston). Voters will decide between a social worker (Willis) or a current District Council member in Houston (Johnson).

Run-off elections will be held May 24, 2016. Please remember to vote! 🗳️

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BACK TO BASICS



TEXAS COMPTROLLER

**Glenn Hegar**

**Texas Merit Shop Journal: Thank you for speaking with us today. Could you begin by telling our readers a little something about yourself?**

Glenn Hegar: I'm a sixth generation Texan who grew up on a farm that has been in my family since the mid-1800s. Yes, I am a lawyer by education and served in both the Texas House and Senate, yet most of my lessons in life were learned growing up on that rice farm. Between our farm, equipment dealership, and grain elevator, I got a crash course in hard work and learned no matter how big the issue is at hand, there will be another to replace it around the corner. I learned to take a deep breath, question assumptions, stay persistent, and often the most common sense approach is always the best option. I like to fix problems and out there we tackled issues with what we had at hand, which was challenging yet rewarding when even the most basic problem got resolved.

It might not be obvious, but farming's a pretty good training ground for keeping the state's books. Working with the family business, I had to learn to track costs and calculate profit margins. And I learned whether the market's up or down, you still have to make your payroll, and have a little left over, if you want to put food on your own table. Agriculture's a constant struggle — you've got to be as efficient and cost-effective as you can.

**TMSJ: What's your view of our free enterprise system, and how government relates to it?**

Hegar: Free enterprise is the engine that guarantees our economic growth and prosperity. The proper role of government is to aptly nurture it by making sure the laws and regulations that govern the marketplace are fair and evenly applied. That kind of certainty is essential for people who are attempting to start and grow businesses.

Small business, not government, is what employs most of America's workers and is the engine of creativity and innovation. And in my view, Texas is ahead of most states in giving its business people the freedom and the flexibility they need to succeed. That's reflected in our job growth — Texas has less than 9 percent of the U.S. population, but accounted for more than 12 percent of the nation's job growth since late 2011. Our unemployment rate has been lower than the nation's for 110 months in a row.

**TMSJ: Two of your most important jobs are estimating state revenues and certifying the state budget. What do you see as the most important aspect of these roles?**

Hegar: It's pretty straightforward: to do the best I can to get our estimates right, based on the data we have. I've got to keep the state's leaders equipped with most current and accurate information on the state's financial position, so they're never blindsided. At times this means I will need to adjust our economic analysis to reflect our economic conditions. It's about reporting the facts, and never playing politics with the data.

**TMSJ: Tracking the state's finances requires you to keep a close eye on the state and national economies. Given the national economic picture, and the profound drop in energy prices, what's your current view of the Texas economy?**

Hegar: There's no denying that the oil patch is hurting, and it will slow the state's economic growth. We're going to see a lot of consolidation in the energy sector and jobs losses have hurt many Texas families.

Some areas are feeling it more than others. For the three months ending in January 2016, employment was down by 5.7 percent in Houston, 11.3 percent in Corpus Christi and 19 percent in Midland, compared to the same period a year before.

On the other hand, other parts of the state are still thriving and adding jobs. For the same period, Dallas, Austin and San Antonio all posted healthy job gains.

In all, it's heartening that Texas has weathered the oil price

collapse so well, and continues to grow. The state gained about 175,000 additional jobs in calendar 2015, and 31,000 in January 2016 alone.

Looking ahead, we're projecting moderate economic growth for Texas, about 2.4 percent in fiscal 2016 and 2.3 percent in 2017.

**TMSJ: What's your take on the 2015 legislative session? How much progress was made towards addressing our state's needs?**

Hegar: The Legislature took some important steps to address many tough issues facing the state, but there's more work to be done. Texas is doing well economically, especially compared to other states, but a lot of big bills are coming due.

For example, Texas' growth has created a seemingly bottomless need for road construction and repair. The 2015 Legislature gave Texas voters the opportunity to direct more money to highway funding. They did, and the additional funds will help.

Another issue that concerns me is the increasing cost and liabilities for our state workers and teachers health care and post-employment benefits. Texas is nowhere near as bad off as some of the other large states, but our pensions still carry a large unfunded liability. In my view, the 2015 Legislature acted wisely in increasing the contribution rate both for members and the state, which should help us keep the system healthy.

The Legislature also appropriated \$768 million to fully cover an anticipated cash shortfall in teacher health plans.

My office oversees the Texas Tomorrow Fund, the state's guaranteed college tuition program, and it's currently underfunded to the tune of \$568 million. In 2015, the Legislature provided \$88 million for the fund, a step in the right direction, but not enough to fix the entire issue.

Also, many of our state facilities, in Austin and elsewhere, are in bad condition and past due for renovations and improvements. Because these issues have been ignored for years, the expected costs have increased significantly, to about \$1.5 billion. The Legislature did appropriate nearly \$400 million for facility maintenance projects over the next two years, which was a major step forward to addressing this issue.

**TMSJ: Finally, what are your personal priorities for the Comptroller's office?**

Hegar: I've come to the agency with what I call a back-to-basics approach, focusing on our main duties of revenue estimating, keeping the state's books, tax collection, and the Treasury operations. We've eliminated some programs and streamlined others.

We're working hard to improve our customer service, to make sure that Texas taxpayers get accurate information and courteous interactions at all times.

And we're pushing for greater government transparency throughout Texas. We already provide the nation's largest storehouse of online information about state finances, available to anyone with an Internet connection. We're always expanding our offerings, and we're pushing for local government transparency as well, through a new program called Transparency Stars that recognizes local governments that go the extra mile in opening their books to the public. 📖



South Texas Chapter's Spring Golf Tournament saw 40 teams play on the two courses at the Fair Oaks Country Club.

## Southeast Texas Chapter

In 2013, ABC-Southeast Texas (ABC-SETX) expanded its NCCER Safety Training Program to include an OSHA 30-Hour in Construction Certification to be taught in conjunction with the NCCER's Safety Learning Series (aka, Construction Site Safety Technician Program). The NCCER's program has been recognized by the Council on Certification of Health, Environmental and Safety Technologists (CCHST) as exam preparation for their Safety Training Supervisors (STS) and Occupational Health and Safety Technologists' (OHST) Certifications.

Since this program's inception in 1993, the interest level and enrollment has grown exponentially with the offer of the OSHA 30-Hour. When looking at both safety training programs, the OSHA certification is typically required for individuals who are pursuing a career in Safety for the petro-chemical industry. The incorporation of this OSHA 30 Hour into ABC-SETX's existing program has not only been beneficial for the students, but also the chapter, because of the increased enrollment in this program. Since both the NCCER and OSHA follow similar training guidelines in their required curricula, teaching them both simultaneously has been relatively seamless for the Instructors. Upon successful completion of the Safety training program, students receive "dual certifications"—both an NCCER Construction Site Safety Technician Certificate and an OSHA 30-Hour card. To the chapter's knowledge, ABC-SETX is currently the only ABC Chapter in the State of Texas offering this dual certification for Safety, and it has proven to be very beneficial, especially for our member contractors working in the petro-chemical industry who reap the benefit of employing these highly trained individuals.

Other classes offered by the ABC-SETX Safety Instructors include:

- NCCER's "Your Role in the Green Environment";
- American Heart Association's CPR / First Aid / AED Training;
- Accident Investigation Training;
- Bloodborne Pathogen Training; and
- OSHA-based Hazwoper Training.

ABC-SETX's objective is to provide as many "tools" available in training and certifications for the local workforce and members, in order to assist them in working safely, achieving their goals, and being successful. For more information about the Chapter's training programs, visit [www.abcsetx.org](http://www.abcsetx.org).

## TEXO Chapter

2016 came in with a bang for TEXO Safety and it does not appear to be slowing down.

### TEXO Safety Department

The four safety professionals who make up TEXO's safety department have been going nonstop, providing jobsite inspections for members along with classroom and on site trainings. With classes available in both English and Spanish, TEXO provides education and training to workforce personnel to assure compliance and awareness of all mandated changes and know how to perform their jobs safely.

### Safety Committees and Forums

The Safety Superintendent and Latino Safety Committees and Forums continue to meet monthly discussing the hot topics which affect the construction industry. With guest speakers and knowledgeable participants, TEXO's monthly Forums continue to grow.

The monthly forums provide TEXO members with a place to meet on a regular basis for the purpose of collaboration and honest dialogue and an excellent arena for networking and relationship building, resulting in stronger relationships between members who are tackling similar issues often from different perspectives.

### TEXO Safety First

More than 11,500 individuals have participated in the TEXO Safety First program since September 2013. With more contractors and owners now requiring the program on their jobsites, classes are reaching capacity daily.

KDC which has over \$1 billion in volume is now mandating the TEXO Safety First Program on their current DFW projects — State Farm Phase II, Toyota Headquarters, Liberty Mutual Headquarters and JP Morgan Chase.

TEXO Safety First is unique in the fact that it is hands-on, interactive and is delivered at the Construction Education Foundation's (CEF) Safety Lab. The program meets OSHA standards and, while the first day's curriculum is 7.5 hours and intentionally focused on the essentials of commercial construction jobsite safety, individuals can return on day two to complete the 2.5 hours to receive their OSHA 10-hour card.

The program has been developed by area company safety professionals — subject-matter experts who are part of TEXO's Safety Leadership Group. It has also been developed with additional input from OSHA and other industry safety consultants.



For the first three months of the year, South Texas Chapter's Safety & Health committee conducted five OSHA 10 or OSHA 30 Hour classes, more than the first six months of 2015.



Texas Gulf Coast Chapter extends congratulations to ABC National Craft Championship medal winner, Jacob Henson, RPM Services.

### South Texas Chapter

2016 is looking to be another outstanding year with increased membership participation at all events and construction education programs, especially the safety related courses. The first three chapter events were all successful. Our first annual Casino mixer started the year off with over 120 members and guests at the various gaming tables. Thanks to great sponsor support in the past, five \$500 gift cards were the surprise door prizes. Having to be present to win meant everyone stayed to the very end.


Next was the annual chili cook-off organized by the chapter's Future Leaders Task Force. Their enthusiasm and hard work made this the most successful event to date, with 31 teams competing. This year featured a new "People's Choice" award based on Facebook voting. The weather in early March was perfect chili weather - cool and damp. The Spring Golf Tournament, held three weeks later, saw 40 teams play on the two courses at the Fair Oaks Country Club. Again the weather was perfect for an event - clear bluebonnet blue skies, warm temperatures and slight breeze.

The Chapter's Workforce Development Committee created a new Supervisory Leadership Program utilizing various modules from the NCCER. Classes are held one night a week for five months. Participants in the first class were a great cross section of the workforce - young new supervisors, seasoned veterans, general contractors and subcontractors. The next class scheduled to start in June is already filling up. Task specific classes are being prepared for a few trades that do not lend themselves to a formalized four year apprenticeship program. The committee and staff have also been participating in the various high school career fairs, including the "Build Your Future" program with over 1,200 students, to show the many rewarding career opportunities in the construction industry.

One of the goals of the Safety & Health Committee is to increase the number of STEP participating companies from 30 to 50 in 2016, and they could reach their goal! The committee has also organized and conducted a number of safety related seminars, including Fall Excavation & Trenching, Scaffolding, and Qualified Signal Person and Rigger. For the first three months of the year the committee has also conducted five OSHA 10 or OSHA 30 Hour classes. This is more than the first six months of 2015. The committee is also fortunate to have the Area Compliance Officer attend the monthly meetings.

### Texas Gulf Coast Chapter


Safety is top priority for members of the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter, so much so that the chapter received recognition for Highest Participation of Members in the South Central Region in the STEP Program (Safety Training and Evaluation Process) through ABC National. Over 50% of contractor companies not only participated but most were awarded either Platinum or Diamond level recognition, thus receiving the Chairman's Award at the ABC Workforce Development Conference held in Fort Lauderdale in early March. The basic philosophy behind this self-evaluation application is that while safety is always a



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*Texas Gulf Coast chapter received recognition for Highest Participation of Members in the South Central Region in the STEP Program through ABC National.*

priority in this industry, it can always be improved and this comes through measuring and evaluating what you do. The chapter congratulates the following for their achievements at the PLATINUM Level: Brazos M&E; GC2 Specialty Construction, LP; ICS, Inc.; Infinity Construction Services, LP; Infinity Maintenance Services, LP; ISC Constructors, LLC; Lone Star Resin Systems, Inc.; TIC Energy & Chemical, Inc.; J V Industrial Companies, Ltd.; McGill Maintenance Partnership, Ltd.; The Brevard Company; Thermon Heat Tracing Services; Tri-Construction Co., Inc.; United Electrical & Instrumentation; and Zachry. Achieving DIAMOND, the highest level for the STEP Awards, were Brock Services, LLC; Civil Mechanical, Inc.; Excel Construction & Maintenance; Marquis Construction Services, Inc.; Performance Contractors, Inc.; PCL Industrial Construction Co.; Polk Mechanical Company; S & B Engineers & Constructors, Ltd.; Skyline Technologies, LLC; Standard Constructors, Inc.; and Wolfenson Electric, Inc. ABC Texas Gulf Coast is extremely proud of these members whose dedication to safety in the area is outstanding!

In association with contractor member companies, Texas Gulf Coast Chapter and its affiliates, Brazosport Safety Council (BSC) and Merit Shop Training, Inc. (MSTI), continually seek to meet the training needs of members and local industry. High quality craft training with an emphasis on safety is a first step in ensuring safe work environments. To that end, in addition to long standing classes, several new classes have been implemented recently. At the request of local industry, Brazosport Safety Council inaugurated a new Aerial Lift class with a shift back to more direct hands-on instruction, in addition to classroom learning as opposed to CBT's (computer based training). The full class includes validation through both knowledge based assessment as well as a hands-on practical. About 2 years ago, also at the request of industry, BSC implemented a 2-day Enhanced Foreman Training course that not only deals with safety and management but also places a strong focus on a leader's values in regards to safety and production. Finally, BSC offers a Safe Work Permits Acceptor Training. This training helps a contractor better work with the safe work permit issuer in order to complete work efficiently and in a timely manner while ensuring a safe work environment.

Merit Shop Training Inc., has recently partnered with University of Texas at Arlington, an OSHA Training Institute Education Center, for the opportunity to provide numerous OSHA-based courses in the Safety and Health Training areas. The first class offered will be Arc Flash and NFPA 70E Awareness

training. There will be one 16 hour class offered for in-depth training in this area and two 8 hour classes on the same topics for other level employees. Plans are in place for many other open-enrollment classes in the summer and fall. MSTI partners with Brazosport College for craft training in many areas and is always proud of the quality training that for many years has resulted in medals at the ABC National Craft Championships. This competition has a safety component in the scoring rubric, so even here, safety is top priority. This year, the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter brought home another medal. That makes # 21 since beginning to compete in the mid-1990. Congratulations are extended to medal winner, Jacob Henson, his company RPM Services, and the Brazosport College Coordinator for Machine and Millwright, Jim Slick.

### **Texas Coastal Bend Chapter**

The Texas Coastal Bend Chapter is off to a strong start for 2016! The Chapter welcomed ABC National Chairman David Carlin to Corpus Christi. David installed the 2016 Chapter Officers and Board of Directors and also presented Randy Larson with Larson Plumbing and Utility an appreciation plaque for the time and dedication he spent serving as the 2015 ABC TCB Board Chairman.

In February, the programs committee, chaired by Carla Moore with Prosperity Bank, invited Jim Moloney, local historian,



*The Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend hosted the 68th Annual SkillsUSA State Championship in April.*

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At the January Membership Breakfast, Greater Houston Chapter recognized the 16 member companies who are part of the OSHA partnership.

to give members a trip through the history of our city and surrounding areas.

In March the chapter hosted a luncheon with McCarthy Building as the presenter. They gave an update regarding the new renovation being made at the Spohn Shoreline Hospital. The presentation gave members a firsthand overview at what to expect as the project continues.

The Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend hosted the 68th Annual SkillsUSA State Championship in April. SkillsUSA is a

construction trade's competition where students from high schools and colleges across the state compete in welding, wiring, masonry, industrial motor control, and plumbing crafts. The students that participate in the competition are the top performers in their areas and are ideal candidates for our workforce.

The chapter is excited to announce that the Contractor Safety Council (CSC) of the Coastal Bend will begin an expansion of the safety training facility at the end of April 2016. The expansion will enlarge the CBT Lab, registration area and restroom facilities.



South Texas Chapter

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The CBT Lab will be enlarged by 50% to 4608 square feet which will allow for an additional 81 workstations for a total of 216. The chapter will also be enlarging the CBT Monitors work areas from 2 to 4 workstations for the additional flow of students. This will allow for quicker in-and-out processing times for the lab. The practical lab will also expand by 6 workstations for a total of 34. An additional testing lab will be added upstairs that will service 60 workstations. When the remodel is completed the council will have increased its CBT training stations from 191 to 338. In 2015, the CSC offered over 400 safety training courses with over 31,000 students that completed over 255,600 training courses.

Finally, the Texas Coastal Bend Chapter is in the process of coordinating the 28th ABC TCB Annual Golf Classic headed by Mike Blundell with Repcon. It is scheduled for May 9th with over 150 attendees, thanks to the help of volunteers and sponsors.

### Greater Houston Chapter

ABC Greater Houston offers numerous programs which recognize members for their efforts in safety, quality, innovation and excellence.

When a company becomes a member of the Houston Chapter they are given the opportunity to join the OSHA Partnership or Safety Committee. Currently, there are 16 member companies who are part of the OSHA Partnership.

The OSHA Partnership provides benefits (special recognition from OSHA, i.e., priorities in compliance assistance activities and inspection incentives such as focused inspections and applicable penalty reduction factors) to participating companies who voluntarily improve their safety and health performance

while demonstrating the implementation of an effective safety and health program.

Members engage in discussion and proactive solution brainstorming once a month during the safety committee's brown bag lunch meetings. Members who are committed to safety come together in an open forum to discuss industry safety trends, new personal protective equipment in the market, and more. Companies are given the chance to sponsor lunch and provide a presentation that focuses on one of the many facets of safety.

Members also have the opportunity to apply for the Safety Training and Evaluation Process (STEP) program and Accredited Quality Contractor (AQC) Program.

"STEP is not just a safety program, it's an opportunity for us to provide our members the tools to improve and develop their safety programs and an opportunity for our members to provide their employees a safe working environment," Callie Fields, Membership Services Coordinator for ABC Greater Houston, said.

As an incentive, members who go through the process and apply for STEP (at a Diamond or Platinum level) are eligible to apply for the National Safety Excellence Award. The award serves as validation and recognition of the hard work the member company performed to achieve a safe working environment. ABC is proud to recognize companies who continually strive to maintain outstanding safety training programs.

Looking forward, ABC Greater Houston has partnered with the Houston South Area Office, OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor;

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American Subcontractors Association-Houston Chapter; Gulf Coast Safety Institute/College of the Mainland; and Scaffold & Access Industry Association to support OSHA's National Safety Stand-Down to prevent falls in construction by hosting a Houston Fall Prevention Safety Day on May 3, 2016. This free event will allow attendees to learn valuable safety measures to implement in their daily safety routine while participating in safety demonstrations.

### Texas Mid Coast Chapter

The ABC Texas Mid Coast Chapter continues to expand workforce development initiatives and looks forward to guiding Young Professionals in the construction industry. In an effort to accomplish this goal, the chapter is implementing the following:

- CEO, Kristi Stevenson, is volunteering every week through Communities in Schools of the Golden Crescent and the "Mentor HOST program" through Victoria Business and Economic Coalition (VBEC) at the high schools to be on site for mentoring and construction education.
- In January, ABC teamed up with VBEC for the Dream Big STEM Expo and spoke to 1,200 eighth graders from six local middle schools about construction and the career opportunities available.
- In March, the CEO spoke to a group of young ladies from Victoria East High School about work ethic and the opportunities there are for ladies and minorities in construction.
- On April 15, several Texas Mid Coast Chapter Board Members spoke to the Senior Class of 2016 from Victoria West High School at a "Fridays for your Future" day.
- Workforce Solutions of the Golden Crescent has toured the Chapter facility and agreed to fund safety training for unemployed citizens and veterans. The Chapter is getting busier with training and education by offering a combo class where students can earn an OSHA 10 & OSHA 30 in one extended class over several days.
- The NCCER Construction Site Safety Technician course continues to fill up each semester with the students earning 7 certifications for safety upon completion.
- A number of members and the Chapter CEO continue to serve on the VISD Construction Technology & Architectural Design Advisory Committee assisting the local high schools and community outreach programs to inspire future construction workforce.
- On May 4, 2016, the Chapter will host a dinner social with the topic of discussion being "open carry laws" featuring Detective Tanya Brown with Victoria Police Department. That same night, the Young Professionals group will be introduced by Board member Scott Lewis with MMR Constructors, Inc.
- New this year, the Chapter Board has voted to offer two scholarships for students pursuing a construction career. The deadline for application is May 13.

By partnering with member construction firms, local outreach programs and local schools, ABC is investing in students' lives to prepare them to be successful construction professionals and future leaders. The chapter's workforce efforts will continue to expand over the years and illustrate the rigor and relevance we offer the construction industry.

### Central Texas Chapter

The New Year has kicked off at full speed for the Central Texas chapter, and the membership seems more excited than ever for 2016. With priorities set through a lengthy and thorough strategic planning process, all eyes are focused on making this

year all about safety, political advocacy and fundraising and continuing to create more value for all ABC members in the greater Austin area.

Two early victories came in the March 31 Primary Election, where industry leaders and sitting State Representatives John Cyrier and Paul Workman passed the test against strong opponents. They'll both spend at least two more years advocating fiercely for construction issues at the Capitol. The membership took quickly to the chapter's message on the importance of fundraising for their elected leaders, and, in roughly 6 weeks, they nearly doubled annual local PAC contributions from recent years.

The safety-focused ABC-OSHA Partnership group held events including top speakers from UT Systems and OSHA Regional Director Casey Perkins. The chapter has also initiated one of the key member-value programs in their quarterly Train-the-Trainer series. On March 31st, four of the chapter's top safety professionals educated a group over breakfast on topics including preparing for success on the jobsite and overcoming cultural and language barriers to keep workers safe.

All-in-all, the chapter looks to build on a very positive 2015 and continue to enhance and support ABC's safety and political advocacy priorities in Central Texas, and continue building value for their members and expanding the ABC brand.

# THANK YOU

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