

# TACC NEWSLETTER

## TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

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### OFFICERS

#### President

**Brian Lehrmann**

Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin  
Ropesville, Texas

#### Vice President

**Tony Morton**

PYCO Industries, Inc.  
Lubbock, Texas

#### Secretary

**April Graves**

United Ag Co-op, Inc.  
El Campo, Texas

#### Immediate Past President

**Suzy Davis**

Brownfield Farmers Co-op Station  
Brownfield, Texas

### STAFF

**Tommy Engelke**

Executive Vice President

**Christy Lewis**

Director of Administration and  
Member Services

**Jessica Minter**

Administration and  
Communications Assistant



### Board of Directors Meeting Setting the Direction for TACC in 2021

Given the early arrival of attendees, the size of the crowd at nearly 100, and the sincere respect everyone had to see one another once again during a terrible pandemic, the board of directors meeting in Lubbock was a welcome sight for all. It was the first – ever, one – day full board meeting of the group. The normal two – day meeting was revamped into a very busy consolidated event. The meeting was chaired by TACC President **Brian Lehrmann**, General Manager of Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin in Ropesville, Texas. The meeting was held on Wednesday, September 9 at the Overton Hotel and Conference Center in Lubbock.

Highlight of the meeting was the Awards Luncheon, emceed by Triangle Insurance CEO **John Berg** of Enid, Oklahoma, where three honorees were recognized. Although there were a number of protocols in place as a result of the pandemic, the effort given by everyone was not even noticeable. Everyone seemed to be craving the opportunity to once again mix in a respectable manner ----- and they did!

Some of the actions taken included:

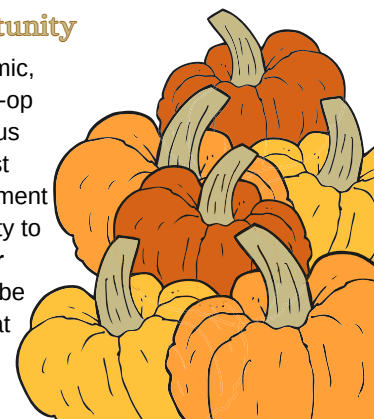
- Approving the October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021 TACC budget.
- Approving the auditor for the 2019 – 2020 fiscal year, which was the D. Williams and Company CPA firm of Lubbock.
- Review TACC administrative operations.
- Laid out and reviewed proposed programs of the Council for 2020 – 2021.
- The awards selection committee met to determine honorees for the March 2021 Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio at the La Cantera Resort and Spa.
- Revised TACCs long – held policy on central notification vs direct notification when handling ag products.
- Reviewed legislative priorities for the 2021 State Legislative Session in Austin.
- Voted on a pilot program to move the February Co-op Director Development Program (DDP) to one program & that it be located in Lubbock.

The next meeting of the full board of directors will be on March 14, 2021 in San Antonio and the next working board meeting will be in Austin in May 2021.



### Postponed South Texas Meeting Opens Up a New Opportunity

Due to safety guidelines surrounding meetings held during the pandemic, TACC leadership decided to postpone the scheduled South Texas Co-op Leadership Conference & joint Board Chairmen's Conference in Corpus Christi this year. However, development and training does not stop just because meeting in person is limited. So, TACC is planning a replacement webinar for the beginning of December. This is an excellent opportunity to have co-op attorney **Gary McLaren** and co-op tax expert **Greg Taylor** back to update the membership on any COVID-19 related issues and be available for questions. TACC will send out meeting information as that day approaches.



# 2020 TACC Award Winners

The Cooperator of the Year Award is reserved for those that provide exceptional service, leadership and who leave a lasting impression on others for many years to follow—setting an example in their local and statewide cooperative communities. With his enthusiasm, dedication and sense of humor, **Robert Lacy** has demonstrated time and again his worthiness of this award. Since 2015, he has served as the President and CEO for PYCO Industries, Inc. in Lubbock, Texas, where he started working in 1990. His steadfast leadership has ensured PYCO's continued success as the most modern and efficient processing facility in the industry.



This year's Cooperative Ginner of the Year, **Rick Timmins**, demonstrates the necessary commitment to co-op and community that it takes to win this award. As the 20-year manager of Flower Grove Co-op Gin, he has pushed his organization to be more efficient and effective and works relentlessly to improve the abilities of himself and co-op employees through training and meetings. He also inspires younger producers to get involved with the industry by encouraging them to attend local and regional meetings and industry events.

**Frank Thompson** has dedicated his life and career to the cotton industry and cooperatives, working in the industry since he was 12 years old! For this and a multitude of other examples, it was no surprise that he was awarded this year's Distinguished Service Award. This award is reserved for an industry or government leader deeply committed to our kind of work and Frank has gone above and beyond the calling impacting numerous facets of the industry and countless people's lives.



## New Director Development Program To Be Piloted in 2021

The ever popular and successful Director Development Program is getting an updated schedule in February 2021, moving to a one day, one-stop shop in Lubbock. By combining the usual two programs (Amarillo & Lubbock) into one, participants will benefit from a strong line-up of speakers and a bigger pool of directors to socialize and share ideas with. Meeting information will be released as the event approaches. During the September 2020 TACC board of directors meeting, TACC staff had proposed piloting a combined Amarillo – Lubbock DDP into one & that it be held in Plainview. However, after deliberation, the group voted to propose one location & that be in Lubbock.

## Co-op Summer Internship Program Kicks Off Its 12th Year

On this year's campus visit to Angelo State University, TACC's **Tommy Engelke** and **Jessica Minter** spoke to over 200 students, some of them joining over livestream, about the cooperative business model and internship opportunity within.

So far, we have had interest in interns for agronomy and farm credit roles. If your co-op has need for an intern next summer, please let our office know!

### Keynote Speakers Set for Farm Store Summit

Though the Farm Store Summit is young in its formation, it has become one of the more talked about meetings that TACC offers—especially concerning the day one “round table discussion.” From the beginning, the idea for this specific school was driven by members and has taken on a wonderful life of its own. This year, **John Prickette**, president of Grocery Supply Company in Sulphur Springs, who also happens to be in a Sunday school class with Northeast Texas Farmers Co-op's **Brad Johnson**, is set to be the key speaker. Grocery Supply Company is a Drayton McLane – type operation that supplies food products to convenience stores throughout Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kansas and Missouri. The other keynote speaker is **Bart Krisle**; CEO of Tennessee Farmers Cooperative near Nashville, TN. This regional co-op operates in several surrounding states and is in the farm supply store business. If your co-op has a farm supply store and you want to learn how to bring profitability back to that operation, be sure to join us at The Inn on Barons Creek in Fredericksburg on January 28 & 29, 2021.



### TACC-PAC Newsletter Getting An Early Start

As is tradition, TACC will be releasing the highly – anticipated biyearly TACC-PAC Newsletter (to coincide with the November 3 General Election) with a contested race insert to educate members on aspects of the Texas legislature, highlight important races, and report the designation of PAC donations within the state. This is set to be sent out to the membership in early October just in time for the start of early voting on Tuesday, October 13, 2020. Be looking for it!

### Roy B. Davis Professorship Celebrates 50-year Anniversary Next Year

**Roy B. Davis** is credited with much of the success of local and regional cotton co-ops in West Texas, and in 1971 the then Texas Federation of Cooperatives, along with some of its member associations endowed the Distinguished Roy B. Davis Professorship in Agricultural Cooperation within the Texas AgriLife Extension at Texas A&M University. Fifty years later, **Dr. John Park** holds the position and works to aid cooperatives through researching & analyzing the industry, helping conduct strategic plans, and educating and training co-op leadership. Plans are being made for a 50-year anniversary celebration at next year's Joint Cooperative Meeting in March in San Antonio!



### Road Sign Drives TACC-PAC Participation

Those co-ops attaining the Charlie Award level of giving to TACC-PAC—each director & the general manager contributing at least \$100 and the total from the organization reaching \$1,000—were awarded a 12” x 18” metal Texas Farm to Market road sign listing the co-op's name. The reception to these gifts was phenomenal and led to four other co-ops expressing an interest in joining this level of giving.

### A New Co-op Director Orientation Being Drawn Up

A most unusual and enterprising training program for NEW co-op directors is in its early stages of development. There are 10 – 12 universities in the nation having a “Co-op Chair” position within their College of Agriculture. Several of those individuals decided earlier this year to tap USDA for a grant to develop a 6 – module program to help jump – start those newly – elected individuals to serve as a farmer cooperative director. The program is designed to be a 12 – 18 month orientation; thereby allowing individuals not to cram the material, but instead learn at their leisure and in segments. Personal attention by a variety of instructors throughout the program is also a highlight of the concept. Hopefully, the program will be offered initially in early 2021 and travel and in-person training is not a part of the roll – out. Be looking for more on this in the near future!



### Something to Watch for in Upcoming Legislative Session

With the retirement of current Texas House of Representatives Speaker, R) **Dennis Bonnen**—Angleton, a new representative will take his place. Currently, the majority in the 150-member Texas House of Representatives is comprised of Republicans. If the ratio in the house shifts, it is very likely a Democratic house speaker will be elected for the first time since 2003 when the house speaker, D) **Pete Laney**—Hale Center, retired from the position.



### Helping Co-ops Navigate the Government Process

Over the past few months, TACC worked to produce legislative readiness papers containing legislative maps & contact information for key elected officials in state and federal government as well as contacts with key state and federal committees that impact agriculture. Co-ops and individuals that have achieved one of the three TACC-PAC contribution levels were sent this paper as a thank you for their years of support, also serving as a tool to elevate the membership's understanding of the government process. Our second phase of this project will be to prepare a paper noting key “regulatory” contacts at the state and federal level.



## Important Dates for Voting in Texas

<b>REGISTRATION DEADLINE</b>	<b>OCTOBER 5 (POSTMARKED BY OCTOBER 5)</b>
<b>EARLY VOTING</b>	<b>OCTOBER 13-30</b>
<b>ABSENTEE BALLOT* DEADLINES:</b>	
<b>REQUEST</b>	<b>(RECEIVE BY) OCTOBER 23</b>
<b>RETURN BY MAIL</b>	<b>POSTMARKED BY NOVEMBER 3</b>
<b>GENERAL ELECTION</b>	<b>NOVEMBER 3</b>

\*An absentee ballot application must be filled out and submitted to your local election office for you to receive a ballot to vote by mail. The application can be found online or requested from your local election office (may be the county clerk). Election duties and contact information can be found at <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/county.shtml#F>.

## Compensation Study Report Coming Soon

Thank you to everyone that assisted TACC in collecting data for the routine compensation study report conducted every 5 years. There was a 67% response rate! This information is now in the hands of a co-op CPA firm to analyze and compile the data for the final report which will then be distributed to the membership. **Greg Taylor** of the co-op CPA firm D. Williams & Company in Lubbock will be providing the analysis of the data as he has done for the past 20 years.

## Out and About

(since July 29, 2020)

- Attended a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension strategic listening session on August 3.
- Concluded the 2020 summer internship program with a closing interview and review of TACC. Two interns are staying on to work during school at their current co-ops.
- Participated in a Texas Tribune rural symposium conference call on August 12 & September 18 to plan for the November 9-11 event.
- Confirmed keynote speakers for the March 14-16, 2021 Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio.
- Taught the co-op business model and began the 12th year of the co-op internship program with visits to four college classes at Angelo State University on September 23.
- Preparing a follow up McLaren/Taylor webinar for the beginning of December as a replacement for the South Texas Cooperative Leadership Conference, but now able to reach a statewide audience.
- Continued to attend the bi-weekly Roy B. Davis online seminar series.
- Conducted a hotel site visit to La Cantera Resort & Spa regarding next year's Joint Cooperative Meeting in San Antonio on March 14-16.
- Coordinated a TACC Awards Selection Committee Meeting on September 9.
- Prepared the 2020 – 2021 TACC budget which was approved at the Fall board of directors meeting.
- Attended a reception for state senate candidate **Drew Springer** in Austin. He is currently a state representative and serves as Chair of the House Ag & Livestock Committee.
- Prepared and distributed Legislative Readiness Papers to TACC-PAC members.
- Began preparing the 2020 TACC-PAC Newsletter to be distributed to the membership in early October.
- Finalized the TACC dues solicitation process for the fiscal year October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020.
- Continued posting daily updates of industry and other pertinent news on Facebook.
- Determined TACC-PAC contributions to the November 3 General Election.

## Will Be

- Coordinating a TACC-PAC Board of Trustees meeting on October 1 to determine contributions to the November 3, 2020 General Election.
- Initiating the dues solicitation process for the next fiscal year beginning on October 1.
- Joining in on an EPA Region 6 webinar on October 7.
- Attending an ag lobby webinar with R) **Giovanni Capriglione** of the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex on October 8. He serves as Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, where all state budgeting/funding is determined.
- Joining in on an ag lobby webinar with R) State Comptroller **Glenn Hegar** on October 14.
- Attending the Certified Crop Advisors State Board Meeting on October 16.
- Participating in a Texas Tribune political rural symposium on November 9-11.
- Assisting in the TACC audit by the D. Williams and Company CPA firm November 12-13.
- Teaching the Co-op Class at Texas A&M University on November 16.

## Calendar of Events

### November

- 1** Daylights Savings Ends
- 3** General Election Day
- 12 - 13** **TACC Audit**
- 26 - 27** TACC Thanksgiving Holidays

### December

- 24 - 25** TACC Christmas Holidays

### January

- 28 - 29** **TACC Farm Store Summit - Inn on Barons Creek, Fredericksburg**

### March

- 14 - 16** **TACC Joint Cooperative Meeting - La Cantera Resort & Spa, San Antonio**