

# The E—Update



# 2020

H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

**The Texas Midwest Community Network has been providing education, training, resource development, marketing and legislative awareness to our member communities in West Central Texas for over 25 years. Our members, Marketing Partners, Event Sponsors, and partnering organizations are the primary reasons for our organization's continued success and sustainability.**

**We are sincerely grateful for the longstanding relationship we have enjoyed with each of you and wish you a inspiring and successful New Year!**

## **Join Us for our First Membership Meeting of 2020**

You spoke, we listened! Join us as we delve into some of the most pressing concerns/interests of you, our members - **Code Enforcement, Housing, Quality of Life and Workforce.**

**Lauren Bush, Executive Director of the Seymour Economic Development Division** will share Seymour's success in developing ordinances that are enforceable - the order of operations for enforcement and the documents used for the process. Focused areas of attention will include Hazardous Building, Livestock and Public Nuisance Ordinances. Attendees are encouraged to bring a copy of their public nuisance ordinance as a working document for this session.



**Raul Salazar, HOME Production Coordinator with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs** will speak with us on the new Homebuyer Assistance with New Construction or Rehabilitation Program. This Program focuses on increasing the available affordable housing stock on a smaller scale. Raul will also touch on other available housing related programs through TDHCA.

**Jimi Copen, Executive Director of the Development Corporation of Haskell and Christina Isbell, President of the Keep Haskell Beautiful**, will share their successes as an affiliate of the Keep Texas Beautiful Program. The KTB Program's mission is to inspire and empower Texans to keep our communities clean and beautiful. Keep Haskell Beautiful meets on a monthly basis and programs include a variety of community improvements, an annual fundraiser, scholarships for high school students, participation in the Great American Clean Up, and their Adopt a Highway initiative. Come learn how your community can create and fund its own beautification initiative as well as the opportunities for project funding through the State Program.

We will also have representatives with Census 2020 to share the importance of an accurate count for rural Texas specifically in the area of broadband accessibility funding.

Again, TMCN's goal is to ensure timely discussions of topics important to our members. The meeting will begin with a delicious lunch and a short TMCN business meeting followed by these presentation. We'll conclude the meeting with our ever popular roundtable discussions. To get the most out of this meeting, we encourage you to reach out to your fellow community leaders and bring them with you. We look forward to seeing you!

FMI and to Register [click here](#). *Attendees registering by noon on Friday, January 17th will have a chance at a cash drawing at the meeting.* The Meeting will be held in the upstairs Conference Room of the Shelton Building at Hendrick Health System - Cost is \$15/person.



**2019 Leadership TMCN Class**

## **2020 Leadership TMCN Class Forming Now**

We're looking for some energetic and passionate students who want to make difference in their communities and a community leader who is willing to work beside them to make it happen. Could that student or community leader be you?

The Texas Midwest Community Network (TMCN) is pleased to announce that Year 7 of its Leadership TMCN Program will begin with its first session on **Wednesday, February 19th**. The Network is excited to welcome back [Kevin Tutt & Michael Daggs](#) as facilitators with sessions again being hosted by TMCN Marketing Partner [Jacob & Martin](#) at their Conference Center in Abilene.

Leadership TMCN was created in response to one of the most common concerns among TMCN member communities - how to engage the younger members of our communities - both students and business owners/leaders. To address this concern and help develop strong local leadership, Leadership TMCN is designed to challenge participants in their current level of commitment and inspire them to maximize their potential impact on the lives of the communities they serve. Students are partnered with a local business leader/owner, in a mentoring role, to develop leadership skills and implement an impactful community project that addresses a specific community need. Each Program project will be recognized at the TMCN Annual Conference in October and participating students will be eligible for scholarships based on the quality and outcome of their specific project.

All TMCN member communities are eligible to participate in this Program. Students must be enrolled as a Junior at the local high school and be one who exemplifies leadership, character and desire to improve their community. The participation fee is \$150 per participant (students and business leader/owner). These fees are typically provided by local businesses, chambers

and, in many cases, by economic development organizations as the sessions are focused on initiatives to promote economic sustainability.

The **2020 Class** is forming now. To learn more about the **Leadership TMCN Program** take a look at the [Program Brochure](#) or give us a call at 325-795-8626.

## Accurate 2020 Census Count Important for Rural Texas

By Gary Joiner, TFB Radio Network Manager

Texas residents will receive an invitation early this year to participate in the 2020 Census, and an accurate count is important for the state, especially rural Texas.

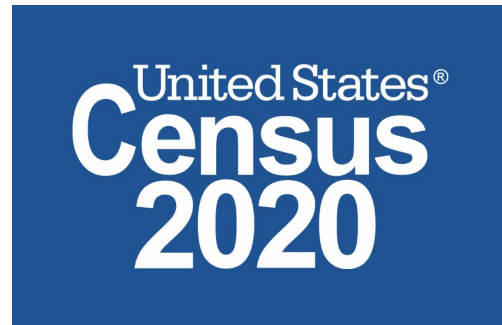
In February or March, a postcard will ask each Texas home to respond to a short census questionnaire online, by phone or by mail.

***The 2020 Census marks the first time that responses can be submitted online.***

The results of the census determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives and the number of electoral votes in presidential elections. Texas is expected to pick up as many as three new Congressional seats from the 2020 Census. Results are also used to draw congressional and state legislative districts. Businesses rely on data from the census for market research, locations and economic development. "It's very important that our Texas census count is as accurate as possible," said Texas Farm Bureau Director of Government Affairs Regan Beck. "Everyone needs to participate. The census count in rural Texas is particularly important, because there is a risk of losing rural representation with so much population growth in other areas of the state since the last census count in 2010."

The Center for Public Policy Priorities noted one in four rural Texas residents does not have broadband service, which could possibly lower census response rates from outlying areas. The center estimated \$300 million per year in federal program funding could be lost from a one percent census undercount in Texas.

Census Bureau employees have been in Texas this year canvassing addresses, which helps ensure everyone receives an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will begin in May visiting homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to make sure everyone is counted. In December 2020, the Census Bureau will deliver apportionment counts to the president and Congress, as required by law. By March 31, 2021, the Census Bureau will send redistricting counts to states. This information is used to redraw legislative districts based on population changes. The 2020 Census will mark the 24th time that the country has counted its population since 1790. For more information, visit <https://2020census.gov>.



## Connect 2019 Expands the Broadband Discussion

Four panels, ninety-six attendees, opportunities to network and the start of a new plan for broadband in Rural Texas! That was Connect 2019, a gathering hosted in partnership with State Representative Stan Lambert's Office, the Matthews Family Foundation, Texas Midwest Community Network, Connected Texas and the Texas Rural Funders Collaborative. The event was held on December 5th at the Region 14

Education Service Center in Abilene.

**Panel 1:** Let's talk Education - specifically distance learning and rural success! Panelists included Kim Alexander, Roscoe Collegiate ISD; Scott Hamm, Hardin Simmons University; Justin Price, TSTC; and Rob McClellen, Region 14 ESC.

**Panel 2:** Mentorship breeds student success but also brings a community together! That was the message conveyed by our non-profit panel. Panelists included Katie Raymond and Stacey Osborne, international Youth Foundation; Amy Hagen, Education Connection; Dena Petty, Mentors Care; and Ann Marie Nafziger, Read Big Bend.

**Panel 3:** Texas as a whole is losing \$5B in economic development due to lack of broadband accessibility. Such was the catalyst of discussions with the Technology and Economic Development Panel. Panelists included Jennifer Harris, Connected Nation-Texas; Gloria Meraz, Texas Library & Archive Commission; Amanda Hofer, Taylor Telephone; Ryan Holmes, Taylor Electric; and Misty Mayo, Abilene Development Corporation.

**Panel 4:** Telemedicine is the future of rural healthcare but broadband is a must to ensure rural coverage. The Telemedicine Panel included Quang Ngo, TORCH; Kirk Canada, Hendrick Health System; Becky Bounds, Texas Tech University Telemedicine; Robbie Dewberry, Mitchell County Hospital; and Jenny Goode, Betty Hardwicke MHA

Gathering such as these are important in highlighting the needs of rural Texas. Ensuring an accurate count for our region in the 2020 Census and letting our legislators hear of the challenges we face in accessing reliable broadband are important catalysts as they prepare to address our needs in the 2021 Legislative Session.

If you want to know more about any of these panel topics or the panelists, please contact the TMCN office at [tmcn@tmcn.org](mailto:tmcn@tmcn.org) or contact State Representative Stan Lambert's District Director, Robyn Wertheim at [Robyn.Wertheim@house.texas.gov](mailto:Robyn.Wertheim@house.texas.gov).

## **Jr. Scholars Program Encourages a Medical Career Choice** by Jason Kelton, Outreach Coordinator, BCAHEC

My name is Jason Kelton and I am the Outreach Coordinator for Big Country Area Health Education Center. I would like to introduce you to our Jr. Scholar Program we have for students that are interested in entering the medical field. The Jr. Scholar Program is meant to grow the interest of students weighing the options to enter the medical field as a career choice. The Program provides information on a wide range of medical career opportunities by exploring options and providing the needed knowledge to assist in college preparation. The hopes of the Program are that the students will understand the need for medical careers in both rural and underserved areas and will return to those areas and apply the skills and talents they have obtained through education and experience. [The Program](#) is self-paced and consist of 2 modules that will take a couple of weekends to complete. The modules are set up for fall and spring, but can both be done in the spring if needed. The spots for the modules are limited but are offered at no cost to the students. FMI, contact me at 325-672-8544 or [jkelton@westcentraltexas.org](mailto:jkelton@westcentraltexas.org).



## **This Past Month's Most Engaging Texas Midwest Facebook Shared Post Inspires**

Check out this fascinating story of "history uncovered" out of Comanche, Texas!

*History uncovered by Clint Tunnell... We purchased our building on the north side of the*





square in Comanche in early 2019. Our intent is to bring back the history and original beauty this building has to offer. As with all historic renovation projects, there are setbacks and unforeseen schedule changes due to the "unknowns" one always finds. Around the end of October we started prepping the inside walls of our building to paint.

After we finished washing the wall, I started chipping away at the bottom of the stucco down at the floor. And what did I find; red brick. Of course! However, after about the 4th swing of the

hammer and chisel...it was still red; but red paint this time.

Each letter uncovered brought a thousand guesses until it became evident we were dealing with TOBACCO. Most old buildings had tobacco on the floor; we now had it on the wall!

So putting two and two together we googled tobacco brands and up popped BULL DURHAM. Duh! But really, did we seriously have an advertisement for Bull Durham Tobacco in Comanche, Texas let alone in our building?

The mural is in pristine condition considering it's age. After a brief amount of research, it was determined that this mural was most likely painted between 1890 and 1900. It is 18' tall and 18' wide.

Clint's post has been shortened here due to limited space but we encourage you to read the "rest of the story" [here](#). Thank you Clint for sharing your curiosity, passion and determination to preserve this piece of advertising history for all to enjoy. To hear about other fascinating stories from across the region, check out our [Facebook Page](#).

## Home Town Takeover - HGTV Could Come to Your Town

by David L. Hayes, Home Town

Restoring and revitalizing an old or historic home has its challenges. Fans of HGTV's popular series Home Town know that - and so do the show's hosts Ben and Erin Napier. But what about breathing new life into an entire town that's struggling and in need of some TLC? Now there's a challenge. But that's precisely what HGTV has in mind for an all-new concept series Home Town Takeover, a six-episode special event slated to air on HGTV in 2021.



The passion, inspiration and expertise that Erin and Ben have brought to their hometown of Laurel, they'll now share with another deserving community.

So just how, you ask, might you have your own home town considered for a whole-town overhaul? So glad you asked. Through Tuesday, February 4, 2020, any citizen of a small town (population 40,000 or less) who loves their own hometown can go to [HGTVHomeTownTakeover.com](http://HGTVHomeTownTakeover.com) and log on to show, tell - and sell - HGTV on why theirs is the one town most deserving to be featured in the special series.

Applicants should strive to highlight aspects of their town that make it special, fascinating, historic or unique - including distinctive features like vintage period architecture, special destinations or a classic main street.

**\*\*\* Could one of our TMCN Member Communities be chosen?  
You never know unless you apply! \*\*\***

## Celebrating Thirteen Years of Service in the Legislature

Many of you know these two amazing women but did you know they've been working behind the scenes on your behalf for thirteen years? This month, Cheryl DeCordova and Robyn Wertheim will celebrate 13 years in the legislature and currently serve as District Directors for District 72 (Darby) and District 71 (Lambert) respectively. They both began their legislative careers when the 80th Texas Legislature convened on January 9, 2007. At the beginning of that regular session, the Republican Party held an 80-69 advantage with one vacancy that was filled by the GOP, creating an 81-69 Republican majority. David Dewhurst (R) was Lieutenant Governor and Tom Craddick (R) was Speaker of the House.



On behalf of your respective Districts and the Texas Midwest Region we applaud you for your dedicated service to us, your constituents, and passion you exhibit everyday in supporting the needs of West Central Texas - you are appreciated!.

## Upcoming Events & Application Deadlines

**January 14** - Texas State Comptroller, America's SBDC - Abilene, FMI [Click Here](#)

**January 15** -- Authentic Leadership, ASU-SBDC, FMI [Click Here](#)

**January 23** - TMCN General Membership Meeting, Abilene, Hendrick Health System - Shelton Building

**February 6** - Cultural Consciousness Workshop, Community Foundation of Abilene, FMI [Click Here](#)

**February 6** - The Basics of Marketing & Branding, ASU-SBDC, FMI [Click Here](#)

**February 7** - Texas Preservation Trust Fund Application Deadline, THC, FMI [Click Here](#)

**February 19** - Leadership TMCN, Session I, Jacob & Martin Conference Center

**February 19** - Profit Mastery, ASU-SBDC, FMI [Click Here](#)

**February 20** - 2020 Governor's Community Achievement Award (GCAA) application deadline, Keep Texas Beautiful, FMI [Click Here](#)

**February 27-29** - Texas State Historical Association Annual Meeting, FMI [Click Here](#)

**March 6** - Kids Art Contest Entry Deadline, Take Care of Texas, FMI [Click Here](#)

**April 3** - Nonprofit Marketing Conference, Community Foundation of Abilene, FMI [Click Here](#)

**April 29-30** - Rural Hospital Symposium, Big Country AHEC & Texas Rural Health Association, FMI [Click Here](#)



Registration for TMCN events is available [here!](#)

## Other Ways to Connect

Stay up to date on all the exciting events and activities going on in the region as well as upcoming educational opportunities by following us on [FACEBOOK](#).

Have a question of your peers within the region? Join and send your inquiries to the [TMCN Forum](#) for opportunities to learn from each other.

And finally, are you a recipient of our weekly "[Fun Things to Do This Weekend](#)" email blast? The blast provides a listing and links to all the TMCN community events found in the Texas Midwest Guide Calendar. If you'd like to be included in the weekly blast, simply go to our [website](#) and click the "[Fun Things to Do!](#)" tab in the top right corner and sign up. We'll be happy to include you!



**Partner Highlight: Texas State**



## Technical College (TSTC)

**Texas State Technical College** was established 50 years ago to help create a strong Texas. At the time, Governor John Connally predicted it would become "the most sophisticated technical-vocational institute in

the country." TSTC is living true to that vision with campuses in the Texas Midwest member communities of Abilene, Breckenridge, Brownwood and Sweetwater and six other campuses throughout the State. TSTC is efficiently and effectively helping Texas meet the high-tech challenges of today's global economy, in partnership with business and industry, government agencies and other educational institutions.

**Thank you TSTC** for your continued support the Texas Midwest Community Network and your commitment to high-tech education and workforce training in our region!

For more information on services provided by Patron Marketing Partner Texas State Technical College [Click Here](#) .

## Thank You to Our Partners & Event Sponsors

The *Marketing & Promotions Opportunities Program* is one of the primary reasons for the continued success and sustainability of our organization. We proudly promote and recognize our partners' unwavering support given not only to our organization as a whole but the 50 communities who make up Texas Midwest Community Network. Please join us in offering our sincere gratitude for the longstanding and continued support of the following partners who have renewed for 2019 and, where possible, please demonstrate this appreciation by utilizing their services:



**Champion:** [Golden Spread Electric Cooperative](#) & [West Texas Rehabilitation Center](#)

**Patron:** [Hendrick Health Systems](#), [Jacob & Martin, LLC](#) & [Texas State Technical College](#)

**Neighbors:** [Atmos Energy](#), [AT&T](#), [Big Country Chevy Dealers](#), [Center for Community Health & Development](#), [Enprotec Hibbs & Todd](#), [Howard College - San Angelo](#) & [Tolar Systems, Inc.](#)

**Event Sponsors:** [Abilene CVB](#), [Abilene Regional Airport](#), [America's SBDC - Abilene](#), [Angelo State University SBDC](#), [Cisco College](#), [Gayla Fullerton CPA](#), [Oncor](#), [Steve Smith - Raymond James Financial](#) & [ResourceCare](#)

**[Learn More About Becoming a TMCN Marketing Partner!](#)**

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