

[Become A Member](#)[Upcoming Events](#)

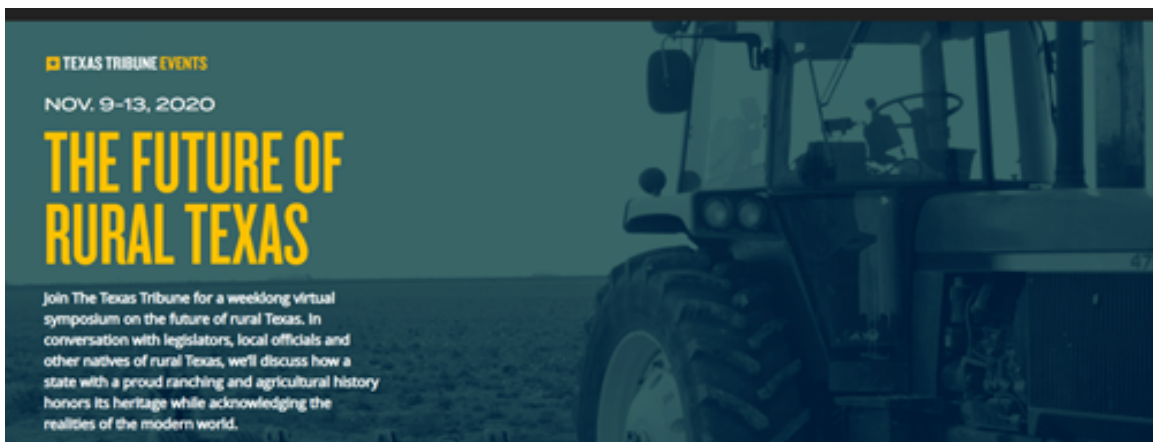
Communities Working Together to Accomplish What One Community Cannot Do Alone

## *The* **E—Update**



**"Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgiving, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings."**

*- William Arthur Ward*



**Join This Week's Conversation on the**

## Future of Rural Texas

Against a backdrop of COVID-19 and the economic downturn it precipitated, the Texas Rural Funders will host a Texas Tribune event during which they will sit down with legislators, local officials and other natives of rural Texas to ask if our state government can continue to provide the resources necessary to accommodate and uplift the nearly three million Texans who live in rural communities, especially in an era of rapid urbanization.

You are invited to join the weeklong virtual symposium this week, Nov. 9-13, over lunch — from 12-1 p.m. Central — to dive in to public and higher education, health care, natural resources, infrastructure investment, economic development, broadband access and more. And they'll also preview the priorities and likely hot-button topics of the upcoming 87th legislative session.

Today's session included a conversation with lawmakers — State Sen. Chuy Hinojosa, D-McAllen and State Reps. Tracy King, D-Batesville; Geanie Morrison, R-Victoria; [Drew Springer, R-Muenster](#); and James White, R-Hillister — on what the 87th legislative session that begins in January will have in store for rural Texas. Among the key priorities were broadband, public and higher education, school finance and healthcare.

For more information on the daily topics and to register [click here](#).

## Online Training Available for Newly Elected Officials

In response to our member communities who welcomed newly elected officials at their recent November elections, we are offering our recorded July 14th "**Newly Elected Officials Training Seminar**" at a cost-effective individual or group rate to our members.

This Seminar was co-hosted by TMCN and the [WCTCOG Center for Community Health & Development](#) and included the following topics and speakers:



### Newly Elected Officials Training

- **Parliamentary Procedures/Open Meetings Act** by Justice John Bailey, 11th Court of Appeals, Eastland
- **Making Dollars Count in Your Budget** by Diana Lopez, City Manager, Coleman
- **Maximizing Your Economic Development Power** by Kelly Cheek, Director of Economic Development, WCTCOG
- **Guest Speaker, State Representative Stan Lambert, District 72**
- **Ethics and Conflicts of Interests** by Jeff Betty, Attorney at Law for Local Governments
- **Effective Working Relationships Equal Success** by Emily Crawford, City Manager and Stephen Haynes, Mayor, Brownwood
- **Developing Viable Communities: The Benefits of Grants** by Judy Langford, Owner, Langford Community Management Services

The recording is moderated by Darwin Archer, TMCN Board Member and Cisco City Manager, and includes the **7 Pillars of Leadership**. To learn more about how you can bring this high quality and informative seminar - *on demand with unlimited views* - to your staff and elected officials, contact us at [tmcn@tmcn.org](mailto:tmcn@tmcn.org) or give us a call at **325-795-8626**.

## Staying Connected Influences Our Path Forward: Together We Succeed - Renew Your TMCN Membership Today

There's no doubt 2020 has challenged us all to rethink and reimagine the future of our communities and our local businesses. We, at the TMCN, have and continue to be focused on providing you, our members, the most up-to-date resources surrounding the ongoing pandemic, networking opportunities to share solutions, and training to address key issues to see future opportunities. We trust you continue to realize the value of being a part of this longstanding and grassroots networking organization.



There is no question that when we and our neighboring communities work together, what's good for us individually benefits us all. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to renew your annual membership and join us for another year of leadership development, peer-to-peer networking, sharing and addressing mutual challenges, showcasing our tourism destinations, strengthening regional participation on statewide concerns, and building our resources for the betterment of the region.

For more information on the [Value of Membership](#) and the [One Invoice Option](#), click on the corresponding links. We look forward to another successful year of growth, discovery and opportunity!

## Annual Conference Offers Informative Topics & Expert Speakers



Such was a comment echoed by many of this year's attendees of our virtual Annual Conference held on Wednesday, October 28th. Kudos go to our Board of Directors for their insights into the key issues facing our communities, our incredible speakers (see below), and to TMCN Marketing Partner [Tolar Systems, Inc.](#) for providing exceptional backend technical services which ensured the success of our very first virtual Conference.

Key topics and expert speakers included:

- **Seeing the Small Town Future** with Deb Brown, [SaveYour.Town](#)
- **Crafting Meaningful Goals: Strategic Planning 101** with Alysia A. Cook, [Opportunity Strategies, LLC](#)
- **Revitalizing Your Downtown** with Lori Vincent, [Acceleration by Design](#)
- **Leadership That Works** with Jimi Coplen, [Knox/City-Haskell Counties Rural Leadership](#) and Becki Womble, [Bastrop Chamber of Commerce](#)
- **Building a Way Forward: Market-Base Housing Best Practices** with Ray Tipton, [Brownwood Municipal Development District](#) and Ken Becker, [Sweetwater Municipal Development District](#)
- **Sense of Place - Use it to Strengthen Your Community for Residents, Businesses and Visitors** with Vicky Soderberg, [Cygnet Strategies, LLC](#)

***If you attended the Conference, we'd love to hear your feedback.***

***Please take our short survey [here!](#)***

We are excited to announce that we will soon be offering a rebroadcast of each session to allow those of you who were not able to attend an opportunity to learn from these incredible experts in their respective industries. Attendees of the Annual Conference will be able to view the rebroadcasts free of charge.

***Be watching for the dates and times of these rebroadcasts coming soon!***

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## **Legislative Update - November Election Results**

### **Texas State Senate**

Incumbents Dawn Buckingham, District 24 and Charles Perry, District 28 won their respective seats.

### **Texas House of Representatives**

Incumbents Andrew Murr, District 53; Drew Springer, District 68; and, Dustin Burrows, District 83 won their respective seats.



Newly elected Shelby Slawson, District 59; and Glenn Rogers, District 60; as well as Incumbents James Frank, District 69; Stan Lambert, District 71; and, Drew Darby, District 72; did not face challenges on the November ballot.

### **Special Election - Senate District 30**

The runoff in the Texas State Senate Special Election between Shelley Luther and Republican State Representative Drew Springer will be held on December 19th, Gov. Greg Abbott announced on October 10th. ***Early voting for Senate District 30 will begin December 9th.***

Luther and Springer were the top two vote-getters in a Special Election on September 29th for the seat which became open when State Senator Pat Fallon was nominated by Republicans in Congressional District 4 after John Ratcliffe resigned to join the Trump administration.

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## **Our Most Engaging Facebook Post This Past Month - Leadership TMCN**

Our most engaging post this past month - and rightly so - was the announcement of our 2020 Leadership TMCN Scholarship Awards:

Our **First Place \$2,000 Scholarship Award** went to **Team Anson: Marissa Flores, Roy Soliz and Mentor Amy McIntire** for their project, ***Bags of Love***. This project raised funds to fill duffle bags full of essential and care items - such as stuffed animals, fleece blankets, coloring books and toothpaste - to children in foster care throughout Jones County.





Our **Second Place \$1,500 Scholarship Award** went to **Team Stamford: Luke Thane and Mentor Luci Wedeking** for his project, ***Wendenborn Park***. Working with the Stamford City Council, Chamber of Commerce and numerous volunteers, Luke was able to secure much needed improvements to the pool, restrooms and surrounding park area. This project led to improvements at other city parks and the establishment of the Mayoral Parks Committee of which Luke is a member.

Our **Third Place \$1,250 Scholarship Award** when to **Team Early: Ty McConn, Jax Managan and Mentors Denise Hudson and Larry McConn** for their project ***RAMPS: Recreation and Activity Through Mental and Physical Sports***. This project raised funds and developed the plan to create opportunities and healthy recreation for all and to give children from all walks of life a dream. Planned amenities include a Yalp Suto soccer wall, memorial benches and sail shade, giant outdoor games, and a locally made ping-pong table.



We would be remiss not to recognize the three additional teams who participated in this year's Program and whose projects greatly impacted their respective communities: **Team Breckenridge: Thomas Hamilton, Kayla Wood, Caroline Turner and Mentors Jason Reeves and Lisa Echols** for their project ***South Park***; **Team Coleman: Hannah Rose, Jenifer Garza and Mentor Kim Little** for their project ***HomeworkU***; and **Team Haskell: Addisyn Decker and Mentor Christina Isbell** for her project ***Blessing Box***.

We would like to thank TMCN Marketing Partner [Jacob Martin](#) for hosting this year's class and facilitators Mike Daggs and Kevin Tutt with [Tutt & Daggs](#) for leading and inspiring our future leaders to make a difference in their communities!



## Community Recognitions

Community and leadership achievements enrich our region and here are few worthy of recognition:



**Development Corporation of Abilene:** Recognized by the Texas Economic Development Council as the 2020 CEDA Award for Community Commitment & Leverage

**City of Anson:** LeeAnn Blankenship, City Secretary, recognized by the Texas Municipal Clerks Association with her Texas Registered Municipal Clerk Certification

**City of Breckenridge:** Heather Robinson-Caraway, City Secretary, recognized by the Texas Municipal Clerks Association with the 2020 Emerging Leader Award

**City of San Saba:** City Manager Stan Weik recognized by the Texas Downtown Association as 2020 Downtowner of the Year

**City of Stephenville:** Recognized by the Texas Historical Commission as a 2021 Main Street City

## Regional Career Changes

Here are a few career changes you may have missed. We extend our best wishes to those accepting new positions:



**City of Breckenridge**: Scott Dixon, interim City Manager replacing Andy McCuiston who retired in April (*correction - previously reported as Eastland*)

**Stamford Chamber of Commerce**: Angie Johnson, new Chamber Manager

## Your Regional Resource Connection

We have worked diligently to bring you timely information and resources to assist you and your community in overcoming the challenges presented by COVID-19 and put you on a path to economic recovery.

If you have not already done so, please check out the **Resource & Links** under the **Members Tab** on our **website**. This page is continually updated with the latest news, announcements and resources coming out of Washington, the Governor's Office, State agencies, and our vast base of local and regional community partners. You will also find contact information for various State agencies, National and State Legislators, Workforce and SBDC Offices.

We are also posting timely informational resources, sharing articles of interest, and links to informative webinars on our Facebook Page through our internal TMCN ListServ and on our **Facebook Page**. We trust you have found this information timely and of value to you and your communities. Our promise to you is to continue to be diligent in keeping you abreast of the current news and events affecting our region.



**November 9-13:** Future of Rural Texas Symposium, Lubbock, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 9-12:** Texas Downtown Annual Conference, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 12:** Texas Emissions Reduction Plan Grant Deadline, TCEP, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 13:** How to Get Your Business on Google Search & Maps, Abilene SDBC, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 12, 13, 19 & 20:** Elements of Successful Philanthropy, Texas Historical Commission, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 19:** [National Rural Health Day](#)

**November 19:** Lunchtime Live, Texas Conference for Employers, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 23-25:** Texas EMS Conference, Virtual, FMI [Click Here](#)

**November 28:** Shop Small Saturday, FMI [Click Here](#)

**December 3:** Lunchtime Live, Texas Conference for Employers, FMI [Click Here](#)

**December 11:** Deadline for Scholarship Application for career in manufacturing, Big Country Manufacturing Alliance, FMI [Click Here](#)

**December 15:** Deadline for GO Texas Event Grant, Texas Department of Agriculture, FMI [Click Here](#)

**January 28:** TMCN Quarterly Membership Meeting, Location TBD

**January 28-29:** TMCCP Election Law Seminar, Fisco, FMI [Click Here](#)

**\* TMCN Event**

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### Partner Highlight: Tolar Systems Inc.

**Tolar Systems** is a leading provider of IT services across central and west Texas. They are conveniently located in downtown Abilene, with a service area that spans from the Big Country, West Texas and the Hill Country. If you're in need of IT services anywhere between Odessa and Midland to Dallas/Fort Worth and south to Austin, **Tolar Systems** would love to help you.



**Tolar Systems** has provided IT Support services such as technical helpdesk support, computer support, and IT consulting to small and medium-sized businesses in Texas since 1999. They provide affordable enterprise-level IT practices and solutions to small and medium sized business. Their signature service package, called Complete Care, delivers the experience and infrastructure needed to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, ensuring a more more efficient and profitable operation.

For more information on **TMCN Marketing Partner Tolar System Inc.** [Click Here](#).

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### We Appreciate Our Partners!

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 53 communities who make up Texas Midwest Community Network. We recognize and express our sincere gratitude for the longstanding and continued support of the following partners and, ask you, where possible, to demonstrate this appreciation by utilizing their services:

**Champion:** [Golden Spread Electric Cooperative](#)

**Patrons:** [Hendrick Health System](#), [Jacob|Martin](#), [Texas State Technical College](#) & [West Texas Rehabilitation Center](#)

**Neighbors:** [Atmos](#), [AT&T](#), [Center for Community Health & Development](#), [Enprotec/Hibbs & Todd](#), [Howard College-San Angelo](#), [Raise Your Hand Texas](#) & [Tolar Systems](#)

**Event Sponsors:** [Abilene CVB](#), [Abilene Regional Airport](#), [Angelo State University](#), [SBDC-San Angelo](#), [Cisco College](#), [Coleman County Electric Cooperative](#), [Fullerton & Associates PLLC](#), [Oncor](#) & [Texas Tech University SBDC-Abilene](#)

***Interested in becoming one of distinguished Marketing Partners? [Click Here](#) for more information and how your company can benefit!***



## Texas Midwest Community Network

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