

Texas Statewide Telephone Cooperative, Inc. is a statewide telecommunications non-profit organization representing the interests of Texas rural independent telephone systems. All member companies are regulated by the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

TSTCI TEAM

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CREATES TEXAS BROADBAND TASK FORCE

Delbert Wilson Represents TSTCI

To better service areas lacking high-speed Internet connectivity, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples announced the creation of the Texas Broadband Task Force. The group, which includes private-sector

stakeholders and representatives from the Office of the Governor, the Texas Legislature and the Public Utility Commission (PUC), will help guide efforts to make broadband services available across the state.

Delbert Wilson, General Manager of Hill Country Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and chair of the TSTCI Regulatory Committee, will represent TSTCI on the task force.

"Broadband connectivity allows communities to attract new businesses, create more jobs and opens doors to the global economy," Commissioner Staples said. "High-speed Internet access improves educational and healthcare opportunities, and allows rural families to live in the country, but stay connected to the urban world. This new task force is a first step to ensure no Texan gets left behind on the information highway. I thank the members for their leadership and service."

The Texas Broadband Task Force will assist the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and the PUC in maximizing broadband programs created through the Broadband Data Improvement Act of 2008 and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Several state agencies will assist the task force in an advisory capacity and provide input to TDA and PUC.

For a complete list of task force members, visit www.tda.state.tx.us.

TSTCI TEAM**CENTURY CLUB CONT'D**

Rocky Rocchio
 Alan Rohmer
 Bill Sides
 Steve Smith
 Tommy Swaringen
 Bonnie Taylor
 Scott Thompson
 Lori Vergin
 Jim Whitefield

CAUCUS CLUB

Stanley Degan
 Billy Hale
 Mack Isaacs
 Carolyn McPherson
 Beryle Murdoch
 Edward Murray
 Jerry Smith
 Joe Smith
 Eric Swenson
 Jeff Thacker

Thanks also to:

The employees of
 Nortex Communications

To date, their collective
 investment in TSTCI PAC
 is \$2,136!

Remember...**T**ogether**E**veryone**A**ccomplishes**M**ore!!!**Finance/Marketing/Commercial Conference**

The 2009 Finance/Marketing/Commercial Conference was held July 8-10 at the Westin Riverwalk in San Antonio. For the first time this meeting hosted a marketing component in addition to the traditional financial and commercial sessions. The combination proved most beneficial for all attendees.

The conference kicked off Wednesday afternoon with sessions designed to provide continuing education for bookkeepers and accountants. Topics included *Form 990 and General Tax Update* from **Bill Miller, Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss**; *Ethernet/Internet Transport/DSL/Broadband – Assets and Depreciation* from **Kathy Jackson, Curtis Blakely & Company**; *Depreciation Issues and Alternate Methods* from **Blake Lackey, Curtis Blakely & Company**; and *Payroll Tax and Compliance Matters Update* from **Clay Adrian, Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss**. The day was topped off with a **Welcome Reception** that evening for all attendees and guests.



Thursday began with a welcome from **TSTCI President Kirk Petty** and the introduction of keynote speaker **Bobbie Staten**. Bobbie's rollicking, high-energy, laugh-out-loud look at life and how to enjoy its ups and downs was the perfect start to a very fact-filled, educational conference.



After the keynote address, attendees split into groups and began their respective sessions. For the marketing group, **Lori Vergin, CHR Solutions**, presented *CORE Training*, which consisted of three components: CORE (customer care, operational efficiency, retail experience, energy and enthusiasm), Becoming Sales Driven (focus on consultation sales skills), and Motivating Buyers and Sellers (incentive and loyalty programs). Following the CORE Training, **Don Richards, Richards, Elder & Green** gave valuable information on *Anti-Trust Laws*. The marketing group finished the day with a marketing panel and an open forum discussion.



Attendees on the finance/commercial side learned about *Common Audit Findings* from **Nathan Paden, Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss**; discovered the value of *Blazing Bundles* from **Dee Dee Longenecker, John Staurulakis, Inc.**; took a look at personnel issues and social networking from **Sheila Gladstone and Amy Emerson, Attorneys at Law, Lloyd Gosselink Rochelle & Townsend** with their presentation of *Can a Tweet Land You Out on the Street - Hiring and Firing in the Age of Social Networking*.



The conference continued after lunch with a general session on *Life Insurance for Directors* from **Wade Wilson, Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss** and breakout sessions on the topics of *Universal Service Fund, Loops, Lines and Miscellaneous* from **Linda Hill, NECA** and *Telemarketers – Tell 'Em No!* presented by **Jim Miller, GVNW**.



The next general session of the day was *Tips & Tricks – Cell Phones and Computers* from **Todd McElmurry, Curtis Blakely & Company**, after which attendees joined their choice of roundtable discussions on *Customer Communications* facilitated by **Teresa Pennartz, Santa Rosa Telephone** and *General Information Exchange* facilitated by **Linda Hill, NECA**.



Friday morning brought everyone together for information on the *Federal Stimulus Program* by **Jo Shotwell, CHR Solutions**; a *Federal USF Update* from **Adam Healy, NTCA** and a *Legislative/Regulatory Update* given by **Cammie Hughes, TSTCI Director – Member Services**.



The conference wrapped up with the drawings for the Grand Prize, a \$500 Dillard's gift certificate sponsored by **UDP** and the Raffle Prize, a very fashionable Coach purse sponsored by **CHR Solutions**. The lucky winner of the Grand Prize was **Earl Laird** (Taylor Telephone Cooperative) and the Raffle Prize was won by **Jacob Ochoa** (Smithville Telephone Company).

Congratulations!

FINANCE/MARKETING/COMMERCIAL CONFERENCE SPONSORS

Thanks to the following companies for their generous sponsorship of this conference!

PLATINUM

Eastex Telephone Coop., Inc.

GRAND PRIZE

UDP

SILVER

Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss
Curtis Blakely & Co., PC

RAFFLE PRIZE
CHR Solutions, Inc.

BRONZE

Cap Rock Telephone Coop., Inc.
Coleman County Telephone Coop., Inc.
Dell Telephone Coop. Inc.
Richards, Elder & Green, LLP
Taylor Telephone Coop., Inc.

DISCRETIONARY FUND
CoBank
Coleman County Telephone Coop., Inc.
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Upcoming Events

August 2009

- 5-6** *TSTCI Futures Retreat – Lake Tahoe, Nevada*
- 11 FCC Open Meeting
- 13 Texas PUC Open Meeting
- 26 Texas PUC Open Meeting
- 27 FCC Open Meeting

September 2009

- 7 *Labor Day (TSTCI office closed)*
- 24 Texas PUC Open Meeting

October 2009

- 7-9** *TSTCI Annual Membership Meeting – Dallas, Texas*
- 8 Texas PUC Open Meeting
- 22 Texas PUC Open Meeting