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On The Level - November 2008

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## *Annual TABA Awards Banquet*

*Sponsored By:*



**Compass Bank**

The Annual TABA Awards Banquet is scheduled for Tuesday, November 11th at the Strasburger Hall of the Temple Cultural Activities Center. A reception will begin at 6:15pm and dinner will be served at 6:45pm. The program will begin at 7:00pm. A number of individuals and groups will be recognized for their contribution to TABA and the home building industry throughout the year. The cost of admission for this event is \$25 per person. TABA member, Classic Catering will again be providing a delicious meal. A reservation is required so please call the TABA office to reserve a seat.

The Awards Banquet is also the time where TABA members elect their new board for 2009. Below is the slate for the 2009 Board of Directors as presented by the Nominating Committee.

President - Chris Alexander

Vice President - Jason Carothers

Secretary - Robbie Johnson

Treasurer - Lisa McKinnon

Past President - Derrick Hunt

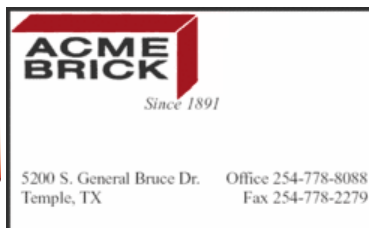
*Directors:*

Jared Bryan, Scott Goodfellow, Kelly Hosch, Mat Naegele, Will Sears and Bruce Walker

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## President's Message

Derrick Hunt

By now, most of you may have seen the full color two-page insert, *Temple-Belton Real Estate Today* in the *Temple Daily Telegram* listing all of the move-in ready new homes in the area and outlining why now is a good time to buy a new home.

What you may not know is that your local homebuilders association is behind this effort in full force to help builder members move some of the existing inventory so they can start new homes. The ads are specifically designed as an information piece rather than an ad. The intention behind it is to counter the doom and gloom we hear everyday from the national news media.

Two ads have already run. They are the first in a series of ads that are the heart of the the first phase of a "Buy Now" campaign that is organized and funded by TABA. The program will consist of a series of ads that are similar to those you have already seen. A portion of the expense will be underwritten through the sale of three ads on each pull-out.

The campaign is designed to continue through the *Parade of Homes* in April of '09. While on its face this may seem like a program that benefits mainly builders, it is intended to get our entire industry rolling again. Obviously, when a builder starts a new house, the involvement of associate members is not far behind, and sometimes, ahead of the actual start.

Almost a year ago I stood before our association and told you that we would be focusing on education and membership benefits during my year as president. We have done exactly that. We have held numerous seminars on topics ranging from shear walls to ethics. The notes from some of these seminars can be found on the presentations page of our website.

We have also rolled out various membership advantages, including the latest, a fuel discount program. Of all we've done, I don't think I can ever remember a membership benefit as large and direct as the Buy Now campaign. This campaign is a great example of using builder and associate resources, combined with the strength of our association to promote our mission - **home ownership**.

When you pay dues to the various organizations that you belong to, whether business, personal, or

charitable, you may often wonder just exactly what they do with the money. I'm proud to say that a substantial chunk of it is being directly used to market local home ownership during a period our industry can use it most.

Don't misunderstand me, there are many other appropriate uses of the funds we collect that indirectly promote home ownership at the local, state, and federal levels, and we are still involved at all of those levels. However, in times like these, it is nice to know that your money stays local and direct.

Earlier I mentioned builder and associate resources. Our associate members have once again stepped up to the plate to help TABA when called upon. I would like to say thank you to associate members Gary Garner of the *Temple Daily Telegram*, and Mat Naegele of Lamar Advertising, for their efforts to assist in our Buy Now Campaign. They have offered steep discounts in their services that have allowed the campaign flexibility and longevity far outside what we could have normally afforded.

If you see them, join your organization in thanking them. I'd also like to thank the advertisers who have helped out, starting with Bill Woodward from Woody's Signs and Woodward Creative Group. Other advertisers include Extraco Banks, Cornerstone Mortgage, First Texas Bank, New South Federal Savings, First State Bank and Compass Bank. I'm sure there will be more, but at this early stage, thank you, thank you, and thank you!

One last note, if you missed Hugh Shine's explanation of the mortgage meltdown, you missed a startling, detailed explanation (dating back to the Carter Administration) of exactly how we ended up in the shape to we are now. You won't hear this on the national news, and you certainly won't hear this from Barney Frank or Chris Dodd. However, Hugh has agreed to present this to other groups around town and I would encourage you to attend if you can. Thanks again to Hugh for his time and effort on this informative presentation. If you can't attend one of Hugh's presentations in person, we have provided a recording of his message on our website.

Finally, I also want to thank Weldon Vybiral from Tri-Supply for sponsoring our Elected Officials Night along with Masonite International. The food was terrific and we even heard a "short" political speech from Eddy Lange. Miracles never cease!

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Troy Glasson  
Executive Officer

**Alert from TAB**

The TRCC has proposed rules regarding the SIRP process in an effort to streamline the process and reduce the time it takes to complete a SIRP. The comment period is open until Sunday, November 23, 2008. Please look over the proposed rules, paying special attention to Sec. 313.20 regarding the SIRP appeals process. If you have any comments that you would like included in any possible Texas Association of Builders written comments, please forward those to us by Monday, November 17th and we'll get them to Austin for further consideration. The proposed rules can be viewed in their entirety at the following link:

<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/texreg/archive/October242008/PROPOSED/10.COMMUNITY%20DEVELOPMENT.html#100>

**TARP—What's it all mean for us?**

One time State Representative, local radio host, and local economic advisor Hugh Shine was at the TABA office in October to provide a briefing to our membership about the recent economic downturn. Hugh provided his insight into the federal government bailout of the financial industry known as the Troubled Asset Relief Program and it's impact on Central Texas.

The recent downturn is years in the making according to Hugh and he provides information on significant events leading up to the need for the bailout including the Community Reinvestment Act and No Money Down programs. We were able to record the presentation and it is available to all on the home page of our website [www.tahb.org](http://www.tahb.org)

Additionally, the folks at Advantage Home Loans provided the real estate community a briefing on how the economic downturn is impacting local mortgage deals. This event also took place in the TABA conference room and the video of their presentation is available in its entirety on the TABA website.

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## ***TABA Will Do Everything We Can To Help!!!***

**TABA understands the impact that a tough economy has on our industry. We are currently caught up in the result of poor decisions made by people that don't live anywhere near east Bell County. The good news is that the bulk of that impact is not taking place here. The bad news is that there is a local fear factor that has to be addressed. While we are waiting on the fallout to come to an end, and for consumer confidence to turn around, we all have to cut back and find ways to make ends meet.**

**When we turn off the television and really take a look at the things going on around us it doesn't take long to understand that we've got it pretty good here in Central Texas. Our community is creating jobs and our population is growing. The constantly evolving and growing health care industry in our area is a reliable source of jobs that our community has embraced. Toyota, Panda Energy and others will be hiring before we know it. With them will come more competition for employees which should further stimulate area jobs and income. Additionally, impressive amounts of infrastructure is being put in place to attract and accommodate more and more growth in the coming years and our community leaders are working to assure that our area is the most attractive place it can be to businesses looking to expand or relocate.**

**It is for these reasons that TABA has decided that it is time to put our money where our mouth is and get the word out that our economy is still on track around here. The sky is not falling.**

**TABA is hard at work on a "Buy Now" marketing campaign to promote the purchase of new homes in our region. Low interest rates, competitive new home prices, a sensible mortgage market, great selection and the energy efficiency of today's new homes are just a handful of the reasons why home buyers with good credit scores in the Temple and Belton marketplace should get off the fence and buy their new home. We are obviously experiencing a buyer's market, this won't last forever. People with the means to purchase a new home are taking a significant risk if they continue trying to time the market to see if there will be a better time to buy.**

**The TABA Board of Directors has put together a committee to explore opportunities to promote new home buying in the short term (through January) and long term (summer time). Initially the charge is to promote the reduction of current new home inventory. Once this is accomplished, the committee will consider ways to include the promotion of custom building and remodeling in our program in order to keep the economic wheels of our industry turning through these difficult times.**

**TABA is using our financial resources and community relationships to provide for this effort. If our goal is achieved, this effort will have a positive effect for our entire membership. We want our members to know that we are working harder than ever for you.**

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## **TABA Announces Dues Increase**

In a recent board meeting the TABA Board of Directors made the difficult decision to implement a dues increase effective December 1, 2008. As is our policy, membership renewals are billed one month prior to the actual renewal date in order to keep up with NAHB's membership records. Therefore, January renewals are billed on December 1st and will be billed at the new dues rate.

Relatively speaking, TABA is one of the most affordable home builders associations around.

### ***Other HBA Dues Structures:***

Waco - \$500 for Associate and Builder members

Tyler - \$395 for Associate Members and \$45 for Builder members

Victoria - \$475 for Associate members and \$550 for Builder members

Bryan - \$415 for Associate and Builder members

The board has voted to increase dues for Associate members to \$400, up \$55 from the current \$345 and increase Builders members dues to \$500, up \$125 from the current \$375. With all businesses facing tight times, TABA is working hard to be good stewards of your investment in this association.

We have had rigorous budget sessions in which we've explored every opportunity to keep costs down and income at a realistic figure taking into account current economic situation and its impact on our members. You may see some adjustments to several 2009 events that are being implemented in an attempt to ensure our sustainability in the coming year. We are tightening our belts as we know many of you are doing with your own business.

The dues increase we are implementing will provide strictly for TABA. Our last increase was in response to an increase NAHB implemented. Of each dues check a TABA member sends, a portion (\$231.50) is automatically sent out to pay for the national and state dues.

The TABA Board of Directors worked very hard to ensure the lowest possible increase to our members. We sincerely appreciate all of our members and their contribution to this organization. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the TABA office.

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Booking of NEW exhibitors for the 2009 Home & Garden Show has opened up. If you were not in the show this year and would like to exhibit in 2009, please call the TABA office and have the show layout in hand when you do so. The layout can be printed from the TABA website by clicking on the [Home & Garden Show tab](#). A booth price guide is found on this page as well.

Booking for the 2009 show is moving along swiftly however there is still plenty of booth space available in all three buildings. That said, don't delay! As time goes by the best booths are taken first. Call early to get a good spot!!

The center booth exhibitor has been determined. Solartex: Innovation in Daylighting, has proposed to construct a phenomenal center booth with plenty of interactive and educational information on solar lighting. Solartex products line up perfectly with our GREEN theme this year. Remember that if will be marketing a green building product at your booth in the 2009 show, please let Cheryl know. We are working on a way to showcase our "green" exhibitors.

If you have any questions regarding the 2009 Home & Garden Show please contact Cheryl Copeland at 254-773-0445.

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## [NEW HOME STARTS](#)

	Oct '08	Oct '07	'08 YTD	'07 YTD
Temple	27	39	369	461
Belton	5	17	66	113
Morgan's Point	1	0	17	22
Totals	33	56	452	596

# ALL HOME CLOSINGS

Oct '08	148	'08 YTD	1,721
Oct '07	180	'07 YTD	2,052

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## ***Congratulations Candidates***

Hard fought races proved to be the rule rather than the exception this election season. Campaigning was hard work from beginning to end on national and local scales. In the end, TABA Home PAC endorsed candidates faired well. Of special note, Texas House District 55 was won by Ralph Sheffield. Ralph will begin work immediately in trying to fill the shoes of his predecessor Dianne White Delisi. Congratulations to Ralph and his campaign staff as they proved that they could not be outworked in this campaign.

Other Home PAC endorsed candidates including Senator Troy Fraser, State Representative (District 54) Jimmie Don Aycock, and Bell County Commissioners Eddy Lange and Richard Cortese also were victorious in their races. Congratulations goes out to these proven public servants as well. All of them are doing a tremendous job for our area and this was reflected in the vote as they all received at least 60 percent of the vote.

On the national scene, U.S. Senator John Cornyn and U.S. Congressman John Carter were both successful NAHB Build PAC endorsed candidates. And finally, all you know by now that Change is here. Barack Obama is our new Commander in Chief.

Hopefully, our officials will learn to work together for the benefit of all in the coming days. TABA and TABA HomePAC remain committed to be engaged in the process and we will work with all of our elected officials to assure a brighter tomorrow for our community and our industry.



## ***Elected Officials Night***

There was a great turn out for our 18th Annual Home-PAC Elected Officials BBQ—which was sponsored by Tri-Supply and Masonite International. Thanks very much to these companies for supporting the event, we couldn't do this without you! Make sure to click the online banner above this article to see the slideshow of the night's events.

Among the 230 attendees were public officials from the Halls of Congress in Washington D.C., to the Texas Legislature in Austin, to a group of officials who serve in a variety of capacities throughout the county and our local governments. Additionally, our members turned out in force and joined us in recognizing and thanking our leaders for their commitment to growth and quality of life in Bell County.

As is our tradition in an election year, all candidates on the November ballot were provided an opportunity to speak at the event. Additionally, we had an opportunity to recognize more than 100 public officials and special guests that were in attendance.

The festivities were led by **Mr. Buck Prewitt**, who served as Master of Ceremonies. Buck graciously agreed to lead our event for old time sake. He had served as MC of this event for many years in the past and it was fun to be able to bring him back for another go around. We sure appreciate him taking time out of his schedule to help us out one more time. Buck is the only "Lifetime Member" that TABA has and we think a great deal of him.

Thanks also to **Dean Winkler of CRW Construction**, who provided the opening remarks and put in a plug for Home-PAC. It can't be emphasized enough to our members the important role that Home-PAC dollars provide in assuring our association a voice in the political arena. The funds from Home-PAC allow us to support the campaigns of candidates that share the pro-growth philosophies of TABA. If you are not a member, please consider joining.

TABA HomePAC would also like to say a special word of thanks to **Congressman John Carter** who led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and to **Jack Jones of Jones & Harrell P.C.** who led us in prayer to start the evening off.

Finally, we appreciated the information provided by the Texas Association of Builders about the going's on in Austin. It is undeniable how much our state association does for the home building industry and we are grateful to **TAB Region 6 Vice President Steve Sorrells** for taking time out of his schedule to come and provide our group a snapshot of all that TAB is working on.

In addition to the work that Buck and Dean did in assuring that the program was a success, there were a number of people that deserve recognition for the behind the scenes work that they provided. These folks include:

- \*\*\***Cheryl Copeland, who assisted in set up and take down, and greeting officials.**
- \*\*\***Mike Pilkington of Pilkington Homes, who assisted in set up and take down.**
- \*\*\***Bruce Walker of Lengefeld Lumber Company, who assisted in greeting officials, set up and take down.**
- \*\*\***Debbie Swift of Kiella Homebuilders, who helped with set up and greeting officials.**
- \*\*\***Misty and Wes Perryman for help with name badges.**
- \*\*\***Kody Shed of Inhouse Systems who assisted with set up.**
- \*\*\***Richard Hoelscher of DMerz Domain Services, who assisted in technical support.**
- \*\*\***John Paysse of Paysse Properties, who assisted in greeting our officials and take down.**
- \*\*\***John Kiella of Kiella Homebuilders, who helped with set up.**
- \*\*\***Special thanks to Temple College, Temple Independent School District and Temple Economic Development Corporation for lending us a variety of presentation equipment.**

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## *EO's Comments*

Cheryl Hunka  
Executive Officer

## **Annual Awards Banquet**

I encourage you to attend our Annual Awards Banquet on November 11th at the CAC - Strasburger Hall. We have a fantastic meal planned and a great night of recognition and fellowship. We will also be voting and swearing in our 2009 Board of Directors. Reservations are required so please contact me today if you plan to attend.

## **Christmas Open House**



It's the end of the year and I can't believe how fast 2008 came and went! We have scheduled another Christmas Open House to take place at the TABA building from 11am - 1pm on December 4th. This will be a come and go event. We invite all of our members to drop by and taste a few of our Christmas goodies and share in some Holiday cheer. There is no program associated with this event, it is simply our way of saying *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year* to our supportive members. It is also a great way to check out our new building if you haven't seen it already. We plan to have our donor wall complete in time for this event. No reservations are required. Troy and I hope you can stop by for a few minutes to visit.

## **The Year Ahead**

We have completed planning for 2009 and you are likely going to notice a few changes as we get further and further into the year ahead. The budget process was a huge undertaking and the Executive Committee believes that we have come up with reasonable numbers to address and meet all of our concerns for 2009. You will see some changes to several of our events that have been put in place to meet our needs and make sure we don't overburden our membership. We believe these to be necessary changes that will hopefully last for no more than a year. I believe we have been very conservative in our approach to planning for next year, as I am sure you all have been in your preparations for 2009.

The current market conditions have spurred TABA to bring together a coalition of builders to produce a "Buy Now" Campaign. In the short term, this campaign is addressing current inventory. But in the long term, this campaign is designed to educate the home buying public as to the difference between the local market and the national marketplace. With all of the bad press on the national front, it is tough to combat the negative ramifications on the local area. We are trying to help deflect some of the negativity by educating the public that NOW is the time to buy a new home.

Homes are always going to be a sound investment - especially in our local area where home prices trend steadily higher year in and year out. It's been a great teaming up with TABA members who have come together to work for the common good of our overall membership. TABA is proud to be able to pool our resources in this unusual time for the benefit of our entire industry.

*That's it from my desk. I hope to see many of you at the Annual Awards Banquet on November 11th.*

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## **Another TABA Membership Advantage—Members Only!**

### ***Invitation to attend 2008 NEC Follow-up***

***TABA invites you to come by the office on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup> from 2pm to 4pm to check in with Gary Jones about the 2008 NEC. Recall, Gary was at the TABA office in August to present the new requirements of the 2008 NEC to our members. Though no presentation will be involved, he will make his presentation slides available for you to review and answer any questions you may have now that you are working under the new code when you build in unincorporated areas.***

***This opportunity is free to all members.***

***Please call 254-773-0445 if you have any questions.***

***Thank you!***

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