

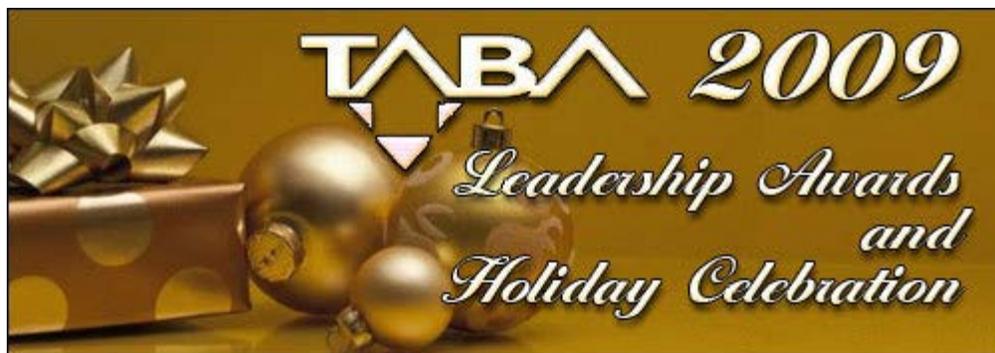


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On The Level - December 2009

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At the Annual Association Christmas gathering TABA presented its top leadership awards. In honoring the recipients, association President Chris Alexander noted that "these award recipients are the backbone of our association and the leaders of our local building industry. We salute them for all they have done to promote and enhance affordable home ownership in our area."

The top awards presented included:

Sponsor of the Year Award:

Temple Daily Telegram – Gold Award

Lengefeld Lumber Co.– Silver Award

TABA Real Estate Agent of the Year Award went to:

Ryan Smith, Re/Max Temple-Belton

TABA Agency of the Year Award went to:

Gold Award – Rodney Dunn Co.

Silver Award – Re/Max Temple-Belton

The association also elected its new officers and directors to serve one-year terms in 2010. They are as follows:

Officers:

President..... Jason Carothers

Vice President..... Robbie Johnson
Secretary..... Mike Pilkington
Treasurer..... Jerry Tyroch, Jr.
Past President..... Chris Alexander

Directors:

Jared Bryan
Jamey Secret
Bruce Walker

Tony Gallagher
Derrick Hunt
John Howe

Presidential Awards were given to those members in the Association who exemplified excellence in achievement both in the building industry and in the community. Those recipients are as follows:

Builder of the Year Award

Steve Wright with Wright Builders

Associate of the Year Award

Kelly Hosch, First Community Title

President's Award of Excellence

Jason Carothers of Carothers Executive Homes



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President's Message

Chris Alexander

As we enter into this Christmas season, I am reminded of all that we have to be thankful for. In spite of it being a difficult year for our industry, we have many things to be thankful for...our health, our families and the business that we have had in 2009. We are fortunate to be in the Central Texas area where things have not been as bad as in many other areas of the country.

TABA is fortunate to have weathered the year as well as we have. This can be attributed to the wonderful commitment and dedication of our staff, our leadership and our membership. I have enjoyed serving as your 2009 president. It has been a year of many challenges and rewards. Thanks to all of you who have assisted me during the year. I could not have done this without your support. Your loyalty to our association is what makes TABA strong.

I know that you will continue your support as Jason Carothers and his 2010 Board of Directors begin the next year. Best wishes for a happy and blessed holiday season!

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Troy Glasson
Executive Officer

Interstate 35 Expansion Funding Secured by Local Leaders

Major appreciation is in order for the Bell County Officials contingency that went to Austin to attend a recent transportation commission hearing. They brought back funding that will provide the **completion of the expansion of Interstate 35** in Bell, Hill and McLennan Counties (except the urban segments). **Senator Fraser, Representative Sheffield, County Judge Burrows, Commissioner Brown, Mayor Jones and David Blackburn** all attended the meeting and testified in support of the funding recommended by Transportation Commission staff. In all, more than \$1 billion will be spent on the expansion, and large amount of those dollars will go for projects in the vicinity of Bell County.

Thank you for your leadership Mike Pilkington!

Mike Pilkington of Pilkington Development has served the TABA Government Affairs Committee well as our Chairman for the past two years. During that period he didn't miss a single meeting and has taken great pride in living up to this major commitment, working diligently to expand his knowledge about the inner workings of local and state government. In addition to attending local GAC meetings, he has attended every Texas Association of Builders GRC meeting that I've attended. In service to the City he has served on the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and the Temple Planning and Zoning Commission. To the latter board, he was recently nominated Chair for 2009 - 2010. In Belton, Mike was instrumental in assuring that our industry was well represented as the City worked to adopt new development standards. Thanks for your great service and commitment to our industry Mike!

HomePAC Update

HomePAC met for our last time this year in November. Preliminary budget work for 2010 is complete, and nominations have been made for next year's trustees, which if approved by our members, will look much the same as in the past couple of years, however a change in leadership will take place as Chairman Dean Winkler has completed his two year term in that role. **Join me in thanking him for his great leadership over the past two years.** Taking his place, would be Mike Pilkington. Chris Alexander will step down from the trustees, as she has completed her term as TABA president and her accompanying role as automatic trustee during her tenure. Chris is going to spend the next year focusing on her business and her new grand baby, who lives in San Antonio.

City of Temple to Adopt 2008 NEC

2008 NEC has been considered and approved by the Temple City Council. As few may recall from when the [TABA Code Council](#), chaired by Phillip Snyder, began reviewing other codes for adoption, the Temple Electrical Board was reviewing the Electric Code. This has been going on for some time now (since 2007), and the board has now unanimously agreed to recommend the code with amendments. These amendments were reviewed by the GAC when City Construction Safety Director Richard Therriault presented an overview at a recent meeting. He will present a similar overview to our membership at a January Codes Seminar at TABA. Be on the lookout for more information about that event next month in *On the Level*.

CRIME ALERT

Builders, it is time for you to start taking extra precautions around the job site. Make sure you bolt down everything or at a minimum don't leave it unattended. We've been receiving numerous reports of criminal activity around job sites lately. Copper continues to be a target, but we are hearing of thieves becoming even more brazen--stealing everything from lumber materials, to batteries, to HVAC units.

Be on the lookout and don't take the security of your site for granted!!!

EPA Lead Paint Rule Challenged by TAB

The Texas Association of Builders has submitted a letter to the **EPA** against removing the opt-out and record keeping provisions in the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Program concerning lead paint. They noted that the proposal would require all homeowners to comply with the requirement to have a certified remodeler to oversee renovations of any home built pre-1978 homes. Currently homes without children under six and pregnant women residing in them may opt out of the requirement. If the opt out provision were removed, potentially 40 million homes would become subject to the rule.

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The *2010 Home & Garden Show* is just around the corner and booking is strong. If you didn't participate in the 2009 show and would like to exhibit in 2010, 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 can be found there as well.

With an anticipated 5,000 visitors over the course of the weekend, our vendors consistently tout this opportunity as one of the best ways to spend marketing dollars. The dates of the event are February 27th and 28th. A membership Preview Party takes place on the evening of the 26th. Please don't wait to secure a booth.

We will continue tout **GREEN/energy efficient** products in 2010. Green continues to be a huge industry buzz word and a growing market segment. If you have a "green" product that helps home to become more energy efficient or reduces water usage, please let us know as we will continue to denote these booths in the Expo tabloid.

If you have any questions regarding the *2010 Home & Garden Show* please contact Cheryl Hunka at 254-773-0445.

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[NEW HOME STARTS](#)

	Nov '09	Nov . '08	'09 YTD	'08 YTD
Temple	21	11	400	402
Belton	4	2	62	68
Morgan's Point	1	0	8	17
Totals	26	13	470	487

Note: this data represents a compilation of the statistics that are reported by the Temple Daily Telegram every Sunday.

ALL HOME CLOSINGS

Nov. '09	60	'09 YTD	1,674
Nov. '08	107	'08 YTD	1,828

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EO's Comments

Cheryl Hunka
Executive Officer

Merry Christmas and Some Final Thoughts...

December is finally here and it has been a challenging year to say the least. I am very proud that TABA leadership anticipated that the year would be difficult going into 2009 and planned accordingly. We are now running just about as lean as we possibly can from an operational standpoint and we continue to refine our projects to maximize their success. The Board, our various committees and staff work together to make sure TABA pulls through every circumstance and we will continue to do just that.

Our projects oftentimes met or exceeded budget, with the year end result reflecting that success. The Home & Garden Show was a fantastic success and all early indications are that it will be in 2010 as well. The 2009 Parade of Homes was successful in showcasing the abilities of area builders. Our membership events, such as the golf tournament and reverse raffle took a hit due to attendance, but our introduction of the first ever TABA fishing tournament helped make up for that loss by attracting a large contingent of members and non-members alike.

In planning for 2009 we guessed our membership numbers could fall, and unfortunately they did. In comparison with associations around the country, TABA was fortunate not to lose as many members in these tough financial times, but losing even one hurts, so there is no positive when membership numbers drop. If there is a silver lining to this it is that many of our departing members noted intentions to return when business picks back up. We will eagerly welcome them back when they are able. In all, membership for the year is down 30 members, or about ten percent.

All said and done, TABA was able to finish the year in respectable financial condition and better than we estimated when preparing our 2009 budget. This was due to the cohesive effort put forth by our leaders, sponsors and members under the watchful eye of President Chris Alexander of Texas Tradition Homes. Her goal in planning was to do our best to take the burden off of our members when it came to sponsorships by limiting the number of meetings we had. This led to heavy emphasis on the success of the meetings we did have and we spent a great deal of time trying to assure that goal was met.

No doubt, 2009 presented TABA with many challenges, all of them were met head on. More times than not, we came out on top and my guess is 2010 will be no different. Though we continue to expect challenges going into 2010, TABA is blessed with many committed leaders and I hope to be writing about improvement in all areas this time next year.

I hope everyone has a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year. I look forward to seeing all of you next year at our first event of the year - *2010 Home & Garden Show* and Preview Party on February 26th.

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The Temple Area Builders Association recently received an Award of Excellence in the following category from the Executive Officers Council (EOC) of the National Association of Home Builders: *Best HBA Special Interest Website*. Awards were presented during the annual National Association of Home Builders' 2009 EOC Seminar held in Louisville, Kentucky.

The council's membership consists of the staff executives who manage the more than 800 state and local home builders associations that comprise the National Association of Home Builders.

"Winning an Association Excellence Award is truly a great honor," said Susan Ritter, president of the Executive Officers Council and executive officer of the Home Builders Association of Tennessee. "Each award recognizes the outstanding effort, commitment and achievement an executive officer and the association membership made to further the value of involvement in the association."

The winning entries will become part of the Executive Officers Council's Idea Loan File in an effort to help other executives and associations across the country provide better service to members and their community.

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We continue to ask our members to weigh the benefits of having a strong local voice for our industry--it is now more important than ever that you remain committed in your support of TABA to assure we are able to represent you in the halls of government and to provide opportunities for your business to grow. Here are just a few of the things that TABA has provided for our members lately:

Government Affairs. TABA works hard to maintain our voice at the negotiating table in representing our industry when local issues arise that can impact your business. We have a continuing commitment to developing and maintaining relationships and tracking government proposals for increased regulation. From codes to plans to ordinances, there has not been a new development related regulation proposed or approved in our area that TABA and our leadership has not weighed in on since we've had a full time government affairs person on staff. In fact, in 2009 the TABA organizational structure became an imitated model for local association management.

This year TABA has testified at government hearings or provided committee input regarding the Temple Fire Code; the Temple Electric Code; TCEQ irrigation standards; the City of Belton Design Standards (for which we made 25 recommendations for change); Temple's citywide trail and sidewalk system; storm water compliance; vested rights for existing developments; and multiple other issues that never reached the committee level. TABA continues to be the voice of the development community in East Bell County and with your support we will be for the foreseeable future.

Creating marketing opportunities. The TABA Home and Garden Show and TABA Parade of Homes are trade events that just about everyone in the area not only knows about, but looks forward to on an annual basis. These events provide our members with opportunities to market their businesses to the community in ways that can't be compared. The 2009 Home & Garden Show allowed about 150 vendors to market their wares to more than 5,200 people in one weekend. The Parade provided our builders with an opportunity to showcase their homes to almost 1,200 visitors. These events require monumental levels of coordination and oversight to achieve the success that they do year and year out. Couple these events with ongoing opportunities to sponsor membership events that occur regularly and there is no doubt that TABA provides our members with powerful opportunities to market their businesses to their target market. At TABA, we are working for you!

The **2008/2009 TABA Buy Now Program** was a five month effort designed to keep the benefits of new home ownership at the forefront of the minds of potential homebuyers in Central Texas during a period of traditionally slow sales in an already down economy. TABA leveraged our relationships with local print, radio, television and outdoor advertisers to provide a constant reminder of these benefits. TABA and our participants spent about \$40,000 on the program--which in all honesty could have cost twice that if it wasn't for the relationships we have developed with the local marketing community over the years. The result was that your association worked to contribute to the reduction of the local inventory of new homes on the market in effort to keep builders building and supporting their associates, subcontractors and suppliers. Of the 53 homes originally marketed in the program prior to November 2008, about 40 percent had sold by the end of January 2009. The program also produced a [national award winning website](#) that complimented our marketing efforts.

At the **2009 Legislative Rally Day** TABA took a contingency of members to Austin and joined more than 30 other home builder associations from around the state to emphasize to our legislators that we understood the significance of their work at the Capitol. We let them know that we appreciated their looking out for our industry as the 81st Legislature progressed. Senator Troy Fraser and Representative Ralph Sheffield could not have been more gracious in meeting with us and hearing us out on our issues. The message we left them can best be summarized in a [presentation](#) that was created leading up to the briefing. One of the key issues we presented was an opposition to a requirement for fire sprinklers. The Legislature ended their session by assuring that fire sprinklers would not be a requirement for new built homes in Texas. See the presentation page of our website for more on that issue.

Educational Seminars continue to be among the most important benefits of membership. With the demise of the Texas Residential Construction Commission, the mandate for continuing education for those in our industry has gone away for the time being. In our area, education was never really seen as a "have to" as much as it was embraced by our association and our members as an opportunity to remain current on industry trends and increase our knowledge on relevant industry issues. Local seminars in 2009 were held on a quarterly basis. In 2010, we hope to be able to offer even more frequent opportunities. Individual member savings from \$30 to \$50 is realized at the majority of the meetings.

Meeting rooms. Depending on your needs, TABA members can save \$50 to \$175 per day in the rental of our conference facility. The room, adjacent facilities and available technology can provide a quiet and professional setting for your next business meeting, seminar or small banquet. Members also have access to the smaller workrooms at TABA on an as needed basis.

At TABA, we try to go out of our way to serve our members. We are continuously looking for ways to improve. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any ideas for ways we may better serve you!

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