

IS YOUR WEBSITE ACCESSIBLE? p.12 ★ WHY THE 2020 CENSUS MATTERS p.19

# TEXAS REALTOR®

Succeed in Texas Real Estate

January/February 2020 \$3.50



CENTENNIAL  
CHAIRMAN  
OF THE BOARD

**CINDI  
BULLA**

p.22



SHAPING  
TEXAS



1920-2020



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AWARENESS\*

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## SAVE WITH THESE DISCOUNTS

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Track expenses and mileage to maximize deductions with this easy-to-use app. Plus, get great tax tips in a free e-book and quarterly webinars.



### TransUnion SmartMove

Screen tenants with this safe online system that provides a credit report, background check, and eviction records. No subscription required. Use code TXREALTORS2020 to save \$10.



### Office Depot/Office Max

Use your discount card to save up to 60% on office supplies, furniture, and print services. To shop online, set up an account at [texasrealestate.com/officedepot](http://texasrealestate.com/officedepot).



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Save up to 70% on hotels and resorts all over the country (and abroad). Plus, save on car rentals, theme park tickets, and more.



### Rx Discounts

Save up to 80% on your prescriptions. Visit [texasrealestate.com/rx](http://texasrealestate.com/rx) to find the best pricing available at local participating pharmacies.



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Save up to 12% on real estate signs with a production turnaround on most options of just three business days.



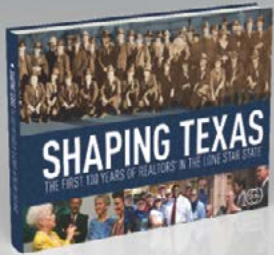
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# INSIGHTS



## REALTORS® PASS NEW FAIR HOUSING ACTION PLAN

NAR leaders met with U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson in January to discuss fair housing issues just hours after unanimously passing a new plan to tackle the issue.

The meeting allowed NAR to reiterate its commitment to partnering with HUD to advance fair housing protections, while the two sides agreed to work jointly on public service announcements and other proactive initiatives to communicate the importance of housing access for all Americans.

“NAR has been active in our pursuit of innovative new policies and partnerships that will help us preserve the fundamental right of housing in America,” said NAR President Vince Malta. “While we have long been a champion of the Fair Housing Act, recent incidents have underscored the progress our nation must still make. That’s why I am proud to announce that our association’s Leadership Team has voted today to approve an action that will directly ramp up and reinvigorate NAR’s fair housing commitment.”

The new NAR initiative is abbreviated ACT to emphasize Accountability, Culture Change, and Training to ensure REALTORS® are doing everything possible to protect housing rights in America. Specifically, NAR will take new actions to ensure members uphold the fair housing standards incorporated in NAR’s Code of Ethics; begin integrating fair housing into all conferences and engagements; and form partnerships with fair housing advocates to pursue shared goals around accountability and training, among countless other initiatives.

“NAR’s Code of Ethics and its adherence to fair housing are the cornerstone of our commitment as REALTORS®,” said NAR CEO Bob Goldberg. “With this new plan, we will see more robust education focusing on core fair housing criteria, unconscious bias, and how the actions of REALTORS® impact communities. A partnership with government officials and fair housing advocates will allow us to further promote equality as we continue to work to diversify our industry.”



## TEXAS REALTORS® WEBSITE EARNS NATIONAL AWARD

Your member website, [texasrealestate.com](http://texasrealestate.com), earned recognition in the Best Association/Regional MLS category of the 2019 Real Trends Website Rankings.

The category covers sites that connect REALTOR® members and associations, serving multiple purposes for members with different entry points to publish and share information, such as listing educational events and conferences.

## TRAY BATES HIRED AS TEXAS REALTORS® VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Tray Bates joined the Texas REALTORS® staff in December, adding to his long list of experience as a REALTOR® advocate.

Bates brings to the association more than 25 years of firsthand industry knowledge and skills gained as a third-generation commercial real estate broker.

During his career, a passion for real estate advocacy took him up the leadership ranks at the local, state, and national levels within the

REALTOR® organization. His volunteer positions have included terms as Texas REALTORS® chairman, Texas REALTORS® Political Involvement Committee chairman, and REALTOR® Party Fundraising liaison.

Bates says he's especially proud of his membership in the RPAC Hall of Fame, demonstrating the importance of investing to protect the real estate industry, and will ensure the REALTOR® perspective remains front and center for the association's advocacy efforts.

"Our members exemplify grassroots engagement at its finest," he says. "I'm honored to join this incredible team of volunteers and staff in a new capacity as we move into the association's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020 and beyond."



## TEXAS REALTOR® PRIMARY VOTER GUIDE

Find out which candidates in the March 3 primaries support your business.



Primary elections let you decide who you want on the November ballot ... but how do you know which candidates support *you*?

You visit [texasrealtorsupport.com](http://texasrealtorsupport.com).

This interactive website lists the REALTOR®-supported candidates on *your* ballot, as determined by REALTORS®.

First, local REALTOR® associations interview candidates. Then, they tell the Texas Association of REALTORS® Political Action Committee (TREPAC) who they recommend because of the candidates' support of private property rights and a strong real estate industry.

Don't miss your chance to play an integral role in the political process.



### WHAT IS AN OPPORTUNITY RACE?

When a local association identifies an election that could use extra support to ensure the candidate is elected, local REALTOR® leaders work with the state association to engage in what's known as an opportunity race.

This program allows the state association to provide resources that encourage REALTORS® to support certain candidates because they support real estate interests.

### OPPORTUNITY RACES ON YOUR BALLOT


Texas REALTORS® is conducting opportunity races for the following candidates, who are all facing contested primaries:

- Senate District 27 – **EDDIE LUCIO JR.**
- House District 2 – **DAN FLYNN**
- House District 30 – **GEANIE MORRISON**
- House District 38 – **EDDIE LUCIO III**
- House District 72 – **DREW DARBY**
- House District 106 – **JARED PATTERSON**

SEE THE TREPAC-SUPPORTED CANDIDATES ON YOUR MARCH 3 BALLOT AT [TEXASREALTORSSUPPORT.COM](http://TEXASREALTORSSUPPORT.COM)

# INSIGHTS

## MEMBERS COMING AND GOING (MOSTLY COMING)



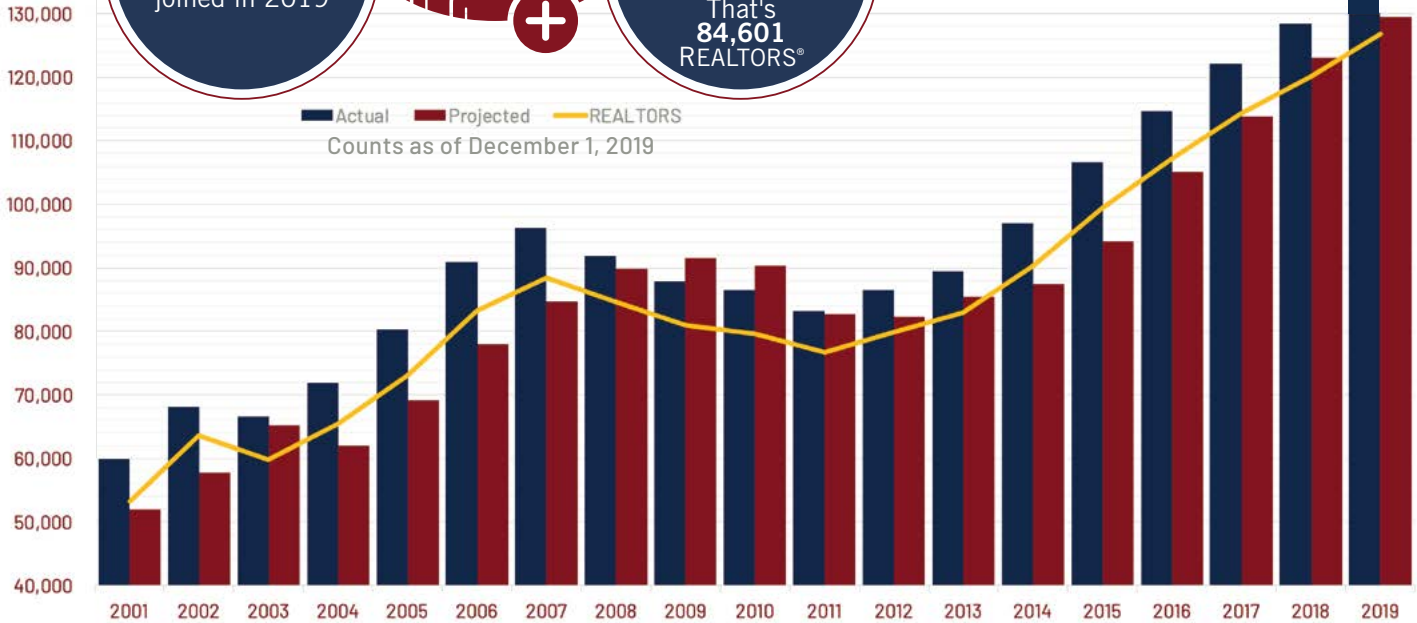
**126,845**  
REALTORS® in Texas

**135,132**  
Total Members of  
Texas REALTORS®  
(Includes Affiliate Members)

**17,350**  
current REALTORS®  
joined in 2019



**Two-Thirds**  
of current REALTORS®  
joined since 2010  
That's **84,601**  
REALTORS®



Explore the intersection of real estate, technology, and social responsibility at the first ever Texas REALTORS® SXSW event on March 19. Hosted in the heart of downtown Austin, Real Tech X Texas REALTORS® will feature a tiny home you can tour, tech demos, and industry leaders speaking on thought-provoking topics. Grab a taco from the Rosarito food truck and enjoy a free drink as you wander through the interactive real estate zone designed by the Art Institute of Austin. You can also meet select graduates of REACH, the award-winning accelerator to propel tech companies into the real estate industry. No badge is required, but RSVP and find more information at [texasrealtors.splashthat.com](http://texasrealtors.splashthat.com).

**REAL TECH**  
X  
**TEXAS REALTORS®**

**03 SX**  
**19 SW**  
**2020**

**10AM-3:30PM**



## TEXAS COMMERCIAL MEMBERS RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY

Seven commercial members of Texas REALTORS® were recognized by NAR as 2019 National Commercial Award recipients. As previous winners of awards from their state or local associations, these REALTORS® were honored at the national level for their dedication to the commercial real estate industry and commitment to strengthening their communities.



**ANDY FLACK, ALC**  
Homeland Properties  
Tall Pines Association of REALTORS®  
*2018 RLI TOP TWENTY PRODUCER  
APEX AWARD*



**KASEY MOCK**  
Keller Williams Realty  
Austin Board of REALTORS®  
*RLI NATIONAL BROKER OF THE YEAR  
RECREATIONAL LAND SALES*



**WILLIAM NORTHERN**  
Northern Realty Group  
Greater Fort Worth  
Association of REALTORS®  
*2018 CHARLES D. TANDY AWARD*



**FRANK ROBERTS, ALC**  
RE/MAX Landmark  
MetroTex Association of REALTORS®  
*2018 RLI TOP TWENTY PRODUCER  
APEX AWARD*



**SHELDON SNYDER, ALC**  
Clift Land Brokers  
Dalhart Board of REALTORS®  
*2018 RLI TOP TWENTY PRODUCER  
APEX AWARD*



**MINOR TAYLOR, ALC, CIPS**  
Taylor Land Investments  
Houston Association of REALTORS®  
*2018 RLI LARGEST ALC TO ALC REFERRAL  
APEX AWARD*



**LEE WHEELER III, CCIM**  
Wheeler Commercial  
Beaumont Board of REALTORS®  
*2018 WILLIAM C. JENNINGS AWARD FOR  
OUTSTANDING COMMERCIAL TRANSACTION*



## JULIO LAGUARTA

1933 – 2020

**JULIO LAGUARTA, CHAIRMAN OF TEXAS REALTORS® IN 1975, DIED JANUARY 3.** Laguarta was also president of the Houston Association of REALTORS® in 1967 and president of the National Association of REALTORS® in 1982. He was instrumental in the formation of the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University, serving as its first chairman in 1972. Laguarta also was a key proponent of Texas REALTORS® purchasing the land where its building now stands.

“Julio brought great passion to everything he did in real estate,” says Texas REALTORS® CEO Travis Kessler. “As important, he was persistent, persuasive, and a man of action. There are many examples of important initiatives and accomplishments that remain to this day because of Julio Laguarta’s hard work and positive influence.”

# BUSINESS

## DEMYSTIFYING FLOOD-RELATED TERMS AND RISKS



A representative from the Federal Emergency Management Agency delivered a webinar to Texas REALTORS® in December about flood terminology, flood events, risk information, and flood-related questions on the *Seller's Disclosure Notice*.

The whole country is a floodplain—but some areas have a higher risk of flooding than others, according to Gilbert Giron, regional flood insurance liaison with FEMA. About 80% of homes damaged during Hurricane Harvey did not have flood insurance, and of those, 65% were not in a high-risk flood zone. All property owners—not just those in designated flood zones—benefit from learning more about flood risks, terminology, insurance, and disclosure.

### The Risks Are Bigger Than Many People Realize

Just one inch of flood water can cause more than \$25,000 of damage to a home, and a FEMA grant alone may not deliver the funds needed to rebuild. A FEMA disaster grant is designed to provide food and shelter immediately after a flood, but a flood insurance claim payment goes much further toward rebuilding your home, according to Giron. For example, the average grant after Hurricane Harvey was \$6,000, while the average flood insurance claim payment was \$116,000.

Misunderstanding flood-related terms can lead property owners to underestimate their risk and need for appropriate insurance. FEMA has moved away from the term *100-year flood*, as many people thought this meant that a property would flood only once in 100 years. However, a home in the 100-year floodplain has a 1% chance of flooding in *any given year*, which equates to a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage, according to FEMA. FEMA refers to this as the base flood. A flood that has a 0.2% chance of occurring (often called a 500-year flood) has a 6% chance of flooding over the course of a 30-year mortgage.

### Resources For You and Your Clients

Property owners can use FEMA's Map Service Center (MSC) to find a flood map of the area including their property and a range of other flood hazard products and tools. The MSC is available at [msc.fema.gov](http://msc.fema.gov). The National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL)—a database with current flood hazard data—is accessible through the MSC as are Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which show flood zones and areas for insurance rating purposes.

Flood insurance maps do not predict where floods will happen, Giron says. There are no “no-risk” areas on a FIRM. Everyone lives in an area with some flood risk—it's just a matter of whether it's low risk or high risk.

A recording of the webinar and the slides used are available at [texasrealestate.com/members](http://texasrealestate.com/members) under *Events* and *Past Webinars*.

YOUR CITY CAN  
HELP YOU *AND*  
YOUR CLIENTS

3  
1  
1

Many Texas cities make it easy to find information and report issues through their 3-1-1 services. You can call 3-1-1 or, in many cities, use an app or go online to notify the city of potholes, traffic sign problems, graffiti, code violations, loose animals, dead animals, abandoned vehicles, missed garbage pickups, and more. Use the service yourself to make the neighborhoods in which you work safer and more appealing, and let your clients know the ways they can rely on 3-1-1 to improve the place where they live.

## BROKERS: LOOKING FOR SALES MEETING MATERIALS?

NAR's *REALTOR® Magazine* has prepackaged sales meeting materials on a handful of topics, such as creating better listing presentations, working with difficult clients, and improving time management skills. Each topic includes an agenda, talking points, activities, and handouts. Find the materials at [magazine.realtor/tool-kit/sales-meetings](http://magazine.realtor/tool-kit/sales-meetings).



## FORGING NEW CROSS-BORDER RELATIONSHIPS

For nearly a decade, Texas REALTORS® has developed a relationship with the *Asociación Mexicana de Profesionales Inmobiliarios (AMPI)*, the national association of real estate professionals in Mexico. As an extension of this relationship, the new AMPI Memorandum of Understanding Program encourages strategic cooperation between local REALTOR® associations in Texas and AMPI sections.

As the ambassador association to Mexico, Texas REALTORS® assists in the process of relationship building, setting meaningful goals, and supporting the participants in their efforts to meet those goals.

The program has already provided results. The El Paso Association of REALTORS® and AMPI-Juárez section recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreeing to focus on goals of professionalism, education, and international business exchange.

If you believe your local association would benefit from an AMPI MOU, contact the Texas REALTORS® Global and Commercial Department.

# 5%

of Texas REALTORS® pilot drones for their real estate businesses, while 14% hire professional drone operators. Another 12% plan to use drones in the future.



Learn about the regulations for commercial drone use at [faa.gov/uas/commercial\\_operators](http://faa.gov/uas/commercial_operators)

SOURCE: 2019 Profile of Texas REALTORS® Members. Check out the full report at [texasrealestate.com/members/research/profiles/texas-realtors](http://texasrealestate.com/members/research/profiles/texas-realtors).

## AN EASY WAY TO CREATE SHARABLE REAL ESTATE INFOGRAPHICS



People love to know what's going on in their local housing market. With MarketViewer—an exclusive benefit for members of Texas REALTORS®—you can easily generate the latest market stats for your city, ZIP code, and even many neighborhoods.

- From the MarketViewer dashboard at [texasrealestate.com/marketviewer](http://texasrealestate.com/marketviewer), click the *Report Menu* red button in the upper-left corner.
- Select *Infographic Generator*.
- Choose your local board of REALTORS®, your market type, market area, frequency, reporting period, and the type of file you'd like to download. You can choose a PDF, JPG, PNG, or TIFF.
- Click the *Download* button.

Your infographic will be ready to share on social media, via email, and in your marketing materials.



## WHAT'S ON BROKERS' MINDS?

### The Two Most-Pressing Issues

- Pressure on net profit margins
- Difficulty in recruiting

55%

of real estate brokers surveyed believe that competition for agents will intensify in the near term.

SOURCE: REALTRENDS Q4 2019 Broker Sentiment Survey

## 6 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR STRESS RIGHT NOW

Life as a real estate agent or broker can be stressful. Transactions involve so many moving pieces, large financial stakes, and multiple entities. The next time you feel your stress level rising, here are six things you can do to calm yourself:

**BREATHE.** Even a single deep breath—inhaling and exhaling—can provide relaxation. If you can, minimize distractions, close your eyes, and string together several breaths.

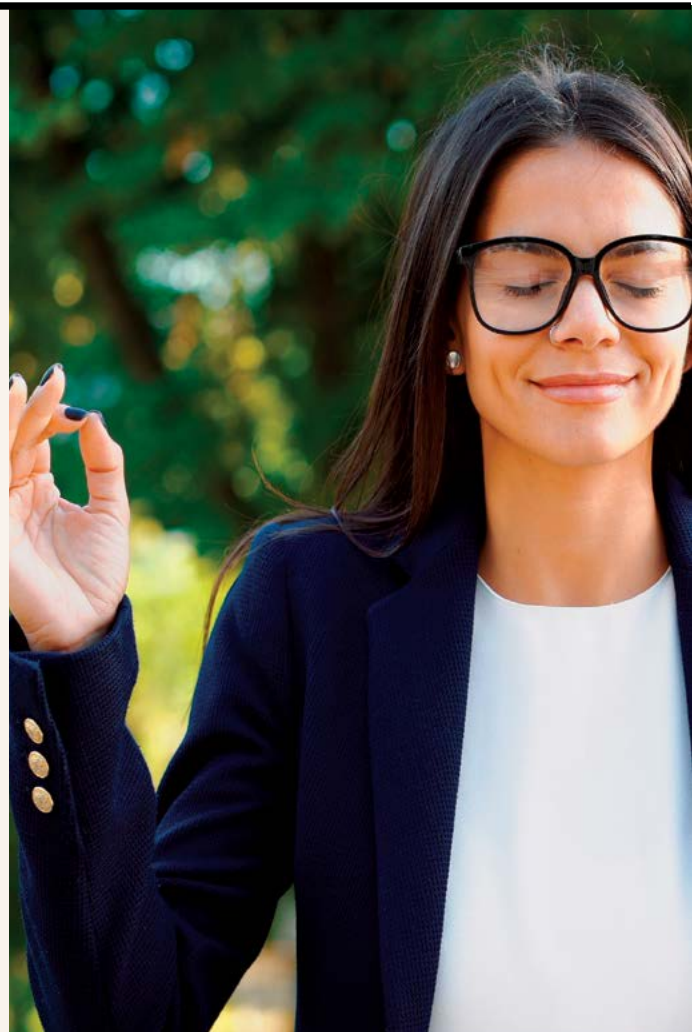
**GET OUTSIDE.** Take a walk around the block or sit somewhere outside and observe the world around you. If you can't go outdoors, try light exercise, like climbing stairs or performing easy stretches.

**FOCUS ON ONE THING.** Stress builds when you think about future activities and imagine all that can go wrong. When this happens, focus on one item you can tackle now, then begin.

**TURN ON YOUR TUNES.** Listening to your favorite music can bring your stress levels down.

**LAUGH.** Find a short, funny video online—even one you've seen before—or remember a favorite joke.

**CHECK IN WITH A FRIEND.** A hug, quick phone call, or text exchange can shift your focus from what's stressing you out to the good things in your life. Spending a moment with a pet is another good stress-reducing connection with a loved one.



Photos: © snapitude, © kohanova1991 - stock.adobe.com

## ONE WAY TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

Have a goal in mind? Great. Now start writing. Otherwise, your goal may fade into the background while you attend to the daily grind.

Start by defining what you would like to accomplish. Writing it down forces you to focus on specifics.

Include details of how you will get there. You now have a game plan. The plan may change as you progress, but you can write that down, too.

On a regular basis, add notes about what you've learned that will move you closer to your goal as well as obstacles that are making it difficult to achieve. Again, provide details of how you plan to leverage opportunities or overcome challenges.

It doesn't matter whether you write in a journal, on a dry-erase board, or in an app—what's important is that you have a spot that keeps your goal top of mind. With a defined objective, steps for how to get there, and your thoughts and lessons learned along the way, you will write your way to success.

## CREATE YOUR OWN "THAT'S WHO WE R" GRAPHICS

REALTORS® can now create personalized graphics using content from the "That's Who We R" advertising campaign to share on social media and with prospective clients.

The National Association of REALTORS® partnered with photo content creation service Photofy to create a members-only version of the app that allows REALTORS® to personalize graphics using assets from the popular consumer advertising campaign and share or download ready-to-use content. Visit [photofy.com/nar](http://photofy.com/nar) to register using your NRDS number, then download the app.

Logging into the app with the account associated with your NRDS number will give you access to graphics and videos from the "That's Who We R" campaign. You can upload your own photos, logos, and contact information to personalize the images. Personalized images can be shared directly from the app, or choose from a library of existing "That's Who We R" graphics and videos to repost.



**WANT TO BE PART OF TEXAS REALTOR®?**

**?**

**HERE'S HOW**

Share your article ideas, be a source, or write for us. Learn more about contributing to the magazine at [texasrealestate.com/writeforus](http://texasrealestate.com/writeforus).

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# LEGAL & ETHICS

## WHAT MAKES A WEBSITE ACCESSIBLE?

How the Americans with Disabilities Act could apply to your business's online presence.



If you receive a demand letter alleging that your brokerage website violates the American with Disabilities Act, contact your attorney.

REALTORS® in Texas have received demand letters alleging their brokerage websites are in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. These letters typically come from an attorney and include threats of litigation and demands for monetary compensation.

### How Does the ADA Affect Websites?

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and ensures equal access and services to those individuals. The law focuses on places of public accommodation—facilities that are used by the public and affect commerce—and was written before websites were commonplace. However, the U.S. Department of Justice has held that if your business fits the definition of a place of public accommodation, the law may apply to your website.

The ADA's requirement that businesses provide physically accessible spaces is undisputed. However, the ADA is silent on its application to the internet. Without guidance from the Department of Justice, businesses have been left to struggle with if and how to comply with the ADA in their electronic spaces. Although not part of the ADA, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards have been adopted by federal agencies to bring their websites into ADA compliance. Also, these guidelines are often cited by courts as the standard for website accessibility.

### Recent Court Rulings

Consumers have turned to the courts to resolve accommodation issues, resulting in a mounting body of case law finding that the ADA's existing accessibility requirements do in fact apply to a business's online presence.

In Florida, a visually impaired consumer filed an ADA lawsuit against Winn-Dixie, a large grocery store chain (*Gil vs. Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc*). The consumer alleged that the grocery store's website was incompatible with screen-reading devices, thereby making the website inaccessible to consumers who used these devices. The court ruled that the ADA did apply to the grocery store's website because the website was "heavily integrated" into the grocery store's physical locations and operated as a "gateway" to the stores. The court ordered the grocery store to bring its website into compliance with WCAG standards.

In another case, a consumer in California filed suit against Domino's Pizza (*Robles vs. Domino's Pizza, LLC*). This case alleged that the pizza chain's website was incompatible with screen-reading devices, preventing individuals who used these devices from making purchases. Domino's Pizza argued that the court should delay ruling in this case because the Department of Justice had not issued specific rules for websites. Rejecting the company's argument, the court held that a business can be held in violation of the ADA even though the Department of Justice has not promulgated specific website accessibility standards. The court further held that the ADA applies to websites that act as a connection to a physical place of public accommodation.

Neither the U.S. Supreme Court nor the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers Texas, has ruled on this matter.

### What You Can Do

There are no clear guidelines that will guarantee your website's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. However, the National Association of REALTORS® recommends the following actions:

- Ask the person in charge of your website if he or she knows the accessibility standards adopted in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). If not, hire someone who does.
- Audit your business's website for accessibility using the WCAG standards. Create a plan to address any identified accessibility issues.
- Post an accessibility policy and notice on your website. NAR encourages members to use its accessibility statement on your website. You can find NAR's statement via the *Accessibility* link at the bottom of NAR's homepage or at [nar.realtor/accessibility](http://nar.realtor/accessibility).

**Legal Hotline 800-873-9155**

We've been asked if the closing date for a residential contract can be set a year after the execution date. If a residential contract does not close within 180 days (six months) of it being executed, Texas Property Code Sections 5.061 to 5.085 come into effect, adding notice and disclosure requirements that are not contained in the TREC residential contracts. Before setting a closing date for more than six months after the contract's execution, the parties should consult with an attorney.

Traci Jackson,  
associate attorney



**Your Forms**

When your clients want an idea of how much profit they will realize from the sale of their home, commercial property, or ranch, use the *Seller's Estimated Net Proceeds form* (TXR 1935). Fill out the sales price and various closing costs, and the zipForm version of this form automatically calculates estimated net proceeds. This is just one of more than 130 forms exclusively for members of Texas REALTORS®.



**24 SECONDS**

That's how short the average hold time was for members calling the Texas REALTORS® Legal Hotline since it switched to a "live" format on January 7, 2019. Prior to that time, members who called the hotline left a phone number for a return call later that day.

Staff attorneys dedicated to answering members' legal questions field more than 1,000 calls per month. Though attorneys cannot give legal advice regarding specific transactions or factual situations, members can receive information from a general perspective on regulations, contracts, agency, brokerage, closings, and more.

All members receive access to the hotline, which is staffed from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Central time, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The Designated REALTOR® for the caller's office will be notified by email of the call.

To access the Texas REALTORS® Legal Hotline, call 800-873-9155. An attorney will be with you shortly.

## LEGAL & ETHICS



### CAN A SELLER FINANCE A BUYER'S PURCHASE?

**YES.** However, seller financing is subject to state and federal laws. The Texas Real Estate Commission promulgates the *Seller Financing Addendum* (TXR 1914) for seller financed transactions. If the seller finance box in a TREC contract is checked, you must fill out and attach this addendum to the contract.

### UPDATED: MODEL BROKERAGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL



#### Texas REALTORS® legal staff has updated this risk-reduction tool for 2020.

The Model Brokerage Policies and Procedures Manual provides Texas brokers with written policies and procedures required by the Texas Real Estate Commission. Each chapter contains policies that will guide a broker in his or her management of daily affairs.

It's available to members as a PDF for \$99.99 plus tax. If you purchased the previous version of the manual, you receive an update at no cost.

Visit [texasrealestate.com/manuals](http://texasrealestate.com/manuals) to purchase the manual or to download your free update.

### PROTECTING YOUR SELLERS IN PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Depending on the option chosen in Paragraph A of the *Addendum for Property Subject to Mandatory Membership in A Property Owners Association* (TXR 1922), a buyer may be able to terminate the contract within three days after the buyer receives the subdivision information (or until closing if closing occurs in fewer than three days). Some options in Paragraph A also stipulate that if a buyer does not receive the subdivision information at all, the buyer may terminate the contract at any time prior to closing. In either situation, the earnest money will be refunded to the buyer.

To protect sellers against lengthy periods when buyers can terminate based on this



paragraph, agents can counsel their sellers to order the property owners association documents immediately after taking a listing. Doing so ensures the documents are received quickly, as procuring them can often take some time. Getting the documents quickly also lines up the buyer's right to terminate after receiving the documents with the buyer's option period. Even if a buyer forgoes an option period, having the property owners association documents on hand at the time of the contract execution will limit the buyer to three days in which to terminate and avoid a situation where a buyer has the right to terminate up until the closing.

### DIFFERENT LANGUAGE, SAME ETHICAL STANDARDS



The REALTORS® Code of Ethics sets out how members must treat clients and customers, the public, and other REALTORS®. It is the cornerstone of the high level of professionalism that REALTORS® bring to their work every day.

Although the English version is the only official document used for enforcement, the Code has been translated into 14 languages for informational purposes:

- Chinese - Simplified
- Chinese - Traditional
- Danish
- French
- German
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

To download the files of these translations, visit [nar.realtor](http://nar.realtor) and type *Code of Ethics translations* in the Search box.



## LEGAL & ETHICS



*What should I do if I'm representing a seller and an unrepresented buyer who does not want to be represented approaches me about the property?*

To meet the requirements of Section 1101.558 of The Real Estate License Act, you will need to disclose either orally or in writing who you represent at first contact with the buyer. Of course, it will be easier to prove you've provided this disclosure if it's in writing. You'll also need to provide the buyer with the *Information About Brokerage Services* form upon first substantive communication regarding a property.

If an unrepresented buyer presents an offer on a home where you represent the seller, the buyer is a customer—not a client—and intermediary rules do not apply to the situation. A broker acts as an intermediary when representing the buyer and the seller in the same transaction.

### Contract Closeup

## SHOULD AGENTS' INFORMATION GO IN PARAGRAPH 21?

Paragraph 21 of the Texas Real Estate Commission contracts includes spaces for contact information for the parties to the contract to indicate where notices should be sent. The buyer and seller should consider several factors before deciding what contact information should be inserted.

Time is of the essence in almost all notice provisions in TREC contracts, which means receipt of a notice requires time-sensitive action. Having an agent as the point of contact to receive notices for his or her client could create delays that may result in the party losing a time-sensitive option or right provided in the contract, such as the buyer's right to waive the contingency under the *Addendum for Sale of Other Property by Buyer*.

In addition, the word "notices" in Paragraph 21 has contractual meaning. Giving notice to a party can affect the party's rights and obligations in several parts of the contract, so care should be taken to provide notices in ways that don't cause needless delay. Some agents are reluctant to put buyers' and sellers' contact details in Paragraph 21 because they think direct contact with the other party is forbidden. However, as long as you're using the contact information to provide notice to the other party, you're not crossing the boundary of soliciting another agent's client.



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# Texas REALTORS® CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL



*Shaping Texas: The First 100 Years of REALTORS® in the Lone Star State* is a commemorative coffee table book that highlights key milestones in each decade of the association's first century. Proceeds from the \$35 book will benefit the Texas REALTORS® Relief Fund. A limited initial run for the book will be available for order soon.

**The founding principles remain strong after our first 100 years.** Today, REALTORS® continue the legacy of shaping Texas through professionalism, advocacy, and resources.

The travel couldn't have been easy in 1920, but they came to Dallas from across the state because they believed in their mission. Real estate professionals traveled from Fort Worth, Denison, Abilene, Houston, San Antonio, and even El Paso to join their Dallas colleagues. Their goal? Bring higher standards to the industry. These pioneers were tired of dishonest operators and con artists preying on Texans who bought and sold real estate. And so they gathered on October 11, 1920, to form the Texas Association of Real Estate Boards.

It was not the first attempt to organize real estate professionals in Texas. However, the association that was formed in 1911 dissolved when Americans' attentions turned to World War I.

At that 1920 Dallas meeting, attendees elected officers for the new organization, endorsed a plan to require licensing of real estate professionals, and set a date for a convention in San Antonio in December.

The early going was difficult. Financial concerns popped up frequently, and the licensing requirement they thought would come easily did not gain traction in the Legislature. Still, association leaders were not dissuaded. After 19 years of hard work, a real estate licensing requirement was signed into law.

It would take another 10 years of persistence to pass a bill to create the six-member Texas Real Estate Commission. Even then—with a license act and a real estate commission in place—the association had to continu-

ally fight forces that wanted to weaken the standards they had set for the real estate profession.

In those early decades, members tackled many issues that the association still grapples with today: the creation of standardized forms to help consumers and real estate brokers reduce risk in transactions and avoid unnecessary delays; fairness and transparency of property taxes; a robust economy and healthy business environment; home-equity and homestead protections; educational opportunities and requirements to ensure proficiency among practitioners—always with a focus on doing what best served the people of Texas.

Along with the association's successes came growth—growth in membership, new programs and services, the formation and evolution of the Texas Real Estate Political Action Committee (TREPAC), and expanding influence in legislative, political, and regulatory matters. Through efforts by association leaders, institutions like the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M and the TREC Broker-Lawyer Committee were formed to continue the mission of advancing the real estate industry and putting consumers' interests first.

Time and again, Texas REALTORS® made a difference in the quality of life Texans enjoy. Through the insight and dedication of association leaders and members, real estate transfer taxes and taxes on services were defeated, standards for minimum service to real estate clients were created, eminent domain laws were strengthened—the list goes on.

As Texas REALTORS® marks its 100<sup>th</sup> year, the association celebrates a history of shaping Texas while looking to continued success in the future. Though times have changed since that 1920 gathering in Dallas, the visionaries who gathered there would no doubt be proud that, 100 years later, the association they formed continues to shape Texas.

## OVER THE YEARS



1920



1937



1969



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

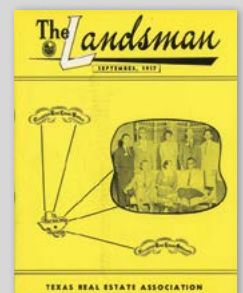
1996



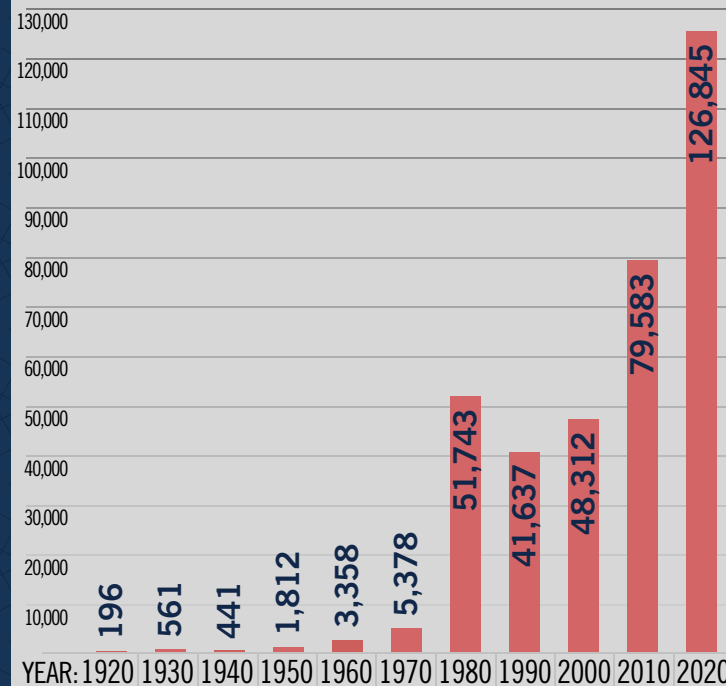
2020

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

The first known copy of an association magazine was published in July 1936—a 24-page black-and-white magazine called *The Texas REALTOR*®. In 1948, a four-page bulletin titled *The Landsman* was distributed to members. *The Landsman* became a full-fledged magazine in 1955 and was renamed *The Texas Landsman* in 1959. In 1968, the association's flagship publication unveiled a new design and a name nearly identical to the one from 1936: *Texas REALTOR*®.



## MEMBERSHIP



Membership numbers provided by the National Association of REALTORS®. The large increase between 1970 and 1980 reflects a shift from recording only brokers as members to recording all brokers and agents as members.



SHAPING TEXAS 1920-2020

# A YEAR-LONG CELEBRATION OF TEXAS REALTORS® SHAPING TEXAS

*You can play a part!*

Here are a few of the ways Texas REALTORS® is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary ... and how you can get involved.

## VIEW THE 3D ART PIECE IN PERSON

A 5' x 5' piece adorned with milestones and mementos will be on display at the Texas REALTORS® Winter Meeting in Austin in February and at the Texas REALTORS® Conference in San Antonio in September ... or stop by the Texas REALTORS® office in Austin to view it in the lobby.

An interactive version of this art piece with captions and videos will be available at [texasrealestate.com/100](http://texasrealestate.com/100).

## CHECK YOUR FEED FOR #SHAPINGTEXAS

Weekly posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter will celebrate the association's rich history. Be sure to use #shapingtexas to add your own memories.

## LOOK IN TEXAS REALTOR® MAGAZINE

More information about the association's history will appear in future editions of *Texas REALTOR®* magazine, including a special feature in the March issue.

## NOMINATE A TEXAS REALTOR® FOR "100 ACTS OF KINDNESS" RECOGNITION

This recognition shows the many ways REALTORS® help their communities. Any member, brokerage, or local association can submit entries. Find more information and the nomination form at [texasrealestate.com/100](http://texasrealestate.com/100).

## GET YOUR CENTENNIAL MERCH

Limited edition centennial merchandise will be available for purchase—get yours to show your Texas REALTORS® pride!

## COME TO SAN ANTONIO FOR A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME CELEBRATION

The 2020 Texas REALTORS® Conference returns to the city that hosted the association's first convention 100 years ago: San Antonio.



## TEXAS REALTORS® CENTENNIAL ADVISORY GROUP



Jessica Bates



David Bowers



Cindi Bulla



Socar Chatmon-Thomas



Vanessa Dirks



Dave Dalzell



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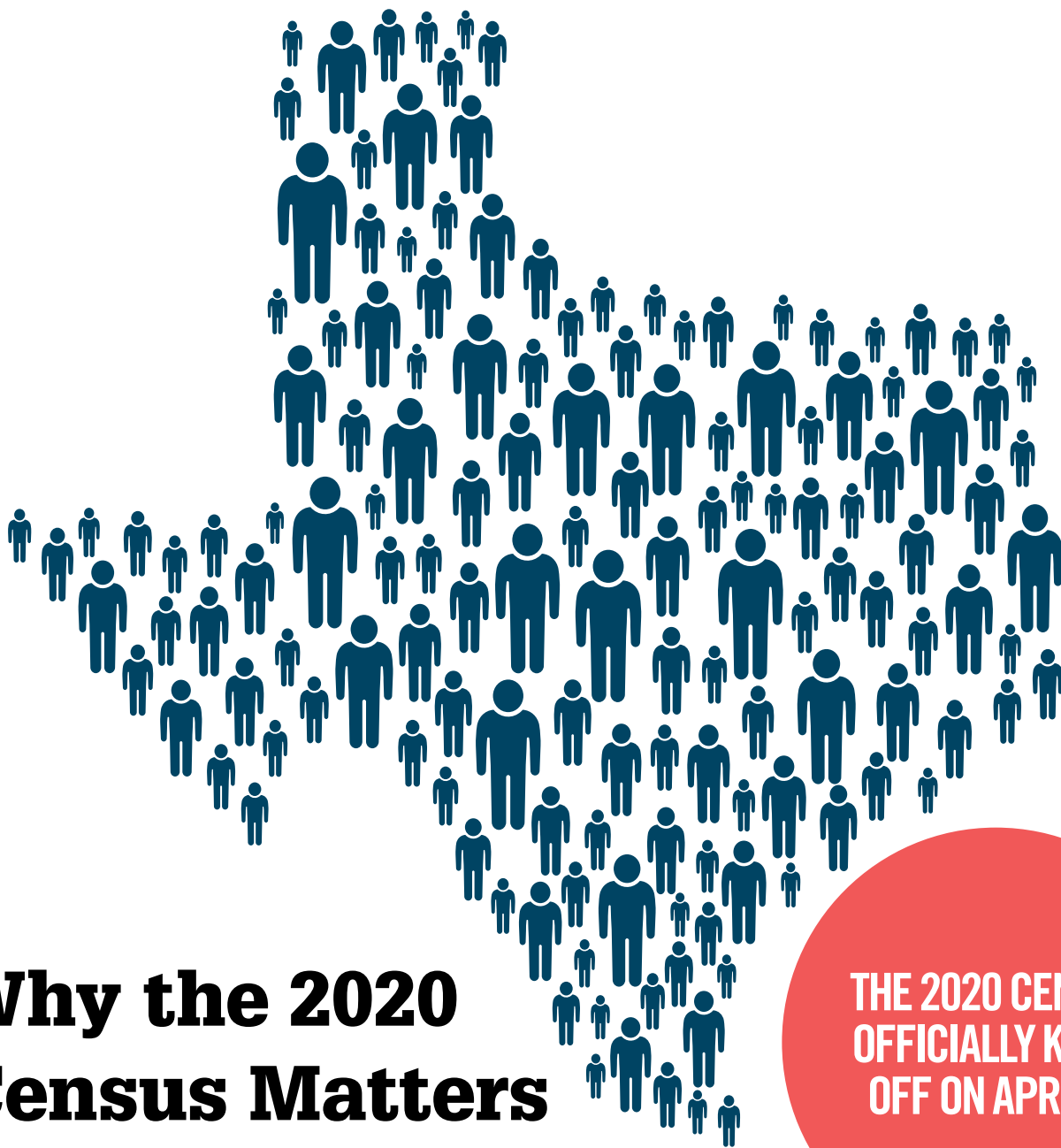
Jennifer Wauhob



Cameron Willmann



Avis Wukasch



# Why the 2020 Census Matters to Texas REALTORS®

THE 2020 CENSUS  
OFFICIALLY KICKS  
OFF ON APRIL 1.

**Political representation, billions in funding, and programs relevant to Texas REALTORS® and their clients all depend on a complete count.**

by Michael Schrantz

Each decade, as mandated by the Constitution, the United States counts every resident within its borders. This population count is used to determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives, to draw state legislative districts, and to distribute billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities. REALTORS® can play an important role in making sure the 2020 census accurately counts Texans.

“The census affects our business more than any other business,” says Shad Bogany, a past Texas REALTORS® chairman and partner specialist with the U.S. Census Bureau working on generating awareness of the 2020 census. “Whether you’re a part-time agent, full-time agent, or broker, you should want to get everyone counted in your community.”



## CENSUS QUICK FACTS

### Why is there a census?

Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution requires a head count every 10 years of all residents of the United States.

### When was the first census?

1790

### What's new in 2020?

For the first time, the form can be filled out online. Responses can also be returned by phone or mail.

### What does the census do?

Census data is widely used by local, state, and federal governments and private businesses. Three important ways the data is used are determining how many legislators each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives, drawing state legislative districts, and distributing more than \$675 billion annually in federal funds to tribal, state, and local governments.

### How does the census affect my industry?

In addition to affecting who represents you in government and money your community receives, census data is used to determine what areas are eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans, forecasting future transportation needs, and assisting with emergency response programs to name just a few ways it impacts your clients and industry.

### Is my response confidential?

Yes. The Census Bureau is required by law to keep all individual responses confidential for 72 years.

## The Impact of the Census

An accurate count of Texans would help ensure the state is properly represented at the national level and receives the federal funding it's due. More than 300 federal spending programs rely on data derived from the census to guide the distribution of dollars to states, counties, cities, and households. Texas received nearly \$60 billion in fiscal year 2016 from just 55 large federal spending programs that are guided by data from the 2010 census, according to George Washington University's Counting for Dollars Project, a program that studies the connection between the census and the distribution of federal funds.

"The biggest part of the census is the funding it brings to the state of Texas," Bogany says. "We should want our money to come back into the state."

The data derived from the 2020 census will help determine funding for schools, housing assistance and loan programs, infrastructure programs, transportation grants, energy assistance, disaster aid, and employment assistance to name just a few ways the real estate industry will be affected. Private companies—such as developers and large employers or businesses like retail chains, grocery stores, and franchises—also rely on census data to decide where to locate and make forecasts that guide their investment decisions.

The Census Bureau estimates that it undercounted Texans by about 239,500 residents in 2010. About two thirds of the state's population lives in census tracts where the low response score—the likelihood someone will not respond to the census—is above average. And the Census Bureau estimates that the population of Texas has grown by more than 14% from the 2010 census to 2018, which is the most recent estimate.

If the state's population were undercounted in 2020, Texas could potentially lose billions in funding, and the data that drives redistricting, important government services, and private economic development decisions would be faulty. Some estimates indicate that Texas will add three congressional seats, but an incomplete count could jeopardize that possibility.



## How Texas REALTORS® Can Spread Awareness

“Our role is to make people aware of the census,” says Bogany. “Then ask them to fill out the survey.”

The 2020 census form will include 10 or 11 questions and should take about 10 minutes to complete. Each household will receive an invitation to complete the questionnaire by mail, phone, or—for the first time—online. The form will be available in English and Spanish versions to mail, and many different languages will be available online. An in-person interview option may also be available for those who need it. All individual census responses are confidential for 72 years.

Texas REALTORS® and NAR are official partners with the U.S. Census Bureau to help drive participation for the 2020 census. In addition, many individual REALTORS® and local boards have volunteered to raise awareness of the 2020 census and encourage members of their communities to respond. For example, the Collin County Association of REALTORS® produced public service announcement videos with members of the association promoting the 2020 census in a number of different languages.

One of the prominent ways to get involved in promoting the 2020 census is to join or form a Complete Count Committee. These are volunteer groups that spread the word in their own communities about the importance of the census, and resources and training are available to members of Complete Count Committees to help. The committees can plan kickoff events and rallies, partner with other organizations, and host or support other events, Bogany says. REALTOR® leaders and staff across the state have become involved in Complete Count Committees.

“It’s about smaller groups helping us with the bigger job,” he says. “They have local knowledge and can help us promote the census through targeted outreach efforts.”

Bogany has traveled to speak at local REALTOR® associations, other industry groups, and local meetings about the importance of the 2020 census and why a complete count is vital to the real estate industry and communities.

“Texas is one of the few states that decided not to have an

organized effort to be counted,” Bogany says. “That’s going to leave it to us as professionals who count on accurate population counts.”

Texas failed to pass any measure in the past legislative session allocating funds or establishing a statewide effort to ensure an accurate count. In contrast, California will spend as much as \$154 million on the 2020 census.

“If Texas REALTORS® are setting the tone, that brings in other businesses who realize they benefit too,” Bogany says. “We have standing in our communities and this state, and this is for a good cause.”

---

**MICHAEL SCHRANTZ** is digital marketing manager for Texas REALTORS®.



## WAYS REALTORS® CAN HELP

There are a number of ways REALTORS® can reach out to their sphere to spread the word about the importance of the 2020 census. If you’re looking for ways to get involved, start here:

- Join or start a Complete Count Committee. Learn more at [census.gov](https://census.gov) by searching the phrase *Complete Count Committee*.
- Contact your local REALTOR® association and volunteer to help with 2020 census efforts.
- Reach out to current and former clients about the census.
- Speak at community events about the importance of the census.
- Stress the local benefits to HOAs in areas you work.
- Add information about the importance of the census and how to respond to your website or social media channels.

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Visit [texasrealestate.com/2020census](https://texasrealestate.com/2020census) for information about the census, links to how you can get involved, and more.

# 2020 Chairman **CINDI BULLA**

leads Texas REALTORS®  
into a second century  
of shaping Texas.

by Marty Kramer





**H**ere's the first thing you should know about Cindi Bulla: She's counting on you. She believes wholeheartedly that every REALTOR® in the state has a role in shaping our association, the real estate industry, and Texas itself.

But don't worry—she has faith that you will come through. She has this confidence because she has seen it play out in the member-driven results that span the 100-year history of this association.

“Everything that has ever happened under the Texas REALTORS® banner started with one REALTOR®'s idea,” Bulla says. “Our whole system is set up for a flow of ideas from members to leaders—not the other way around.”

Bulla's trust in the power of member engagement comes from her personal journey. She has traveled a path from not knowing what a REALTOR® is to becoming a new, uninvolved member to serving on association committees and now assuming the role as chairman of the board for the association's centennial.

### **A Breadth of Real Estate Experience**

Bulla first entered the real estate world through her employment with a central Texas-based savings and loan. She worked her way up to management of the department charged with servicing its residential mortgages and packaging them for sale into the secondary mortgage market.

After another servicing job with a savings and loan with branches closer to her hometown of Plainview, Bulla took a job as a loan workout specialist for a savings and loan in Amarillo. “It was the early '80s, when we had almost 20% interest rates and the savings and loan crisis, so many of the seasoned drivers in that industry were either trying to get out or going to jail. That left a gap into which a 23-year-old single mom could walk in.”

The female CEO who hired Bulla told her that the board expected the CEO to go down with the ship. “If you come here, just know they expect us to fail,” she had said. But failure was not what Bulla and her boss had in mind. Bulla made the most of the opportunities in her first foray into real estate-related work.

Her job involved attending lender meetings for foreclosed commercial real estate projects—\$50 million and \$60 million developments—to attempt to get the savings and loan's money back.

At one of those first lender meetings, Bulla found herself in a room with 40 other lender representatives, all men. “All they wanted was out,” Bulla remembers. When they looked around the room for someone

“ *I want us all to huddle up and remind one another that this is more than a career for us.* ”

## 100 REASONS TO SERVE

It is not coincidental timing that Cindi Bulla is serving as Texas REALTORS® chairman during the association's centennial year. “The centennial has powerful meaning to me,” she says. “A stranger you didn't know from a different era—someone you may have disagreed with on every other thing—did what was necessary to ensure we would enjoy healthy markets, happy consumers, and that we would stand for integrity that would sustain our profession into perpetuity. Somebody identified that in 1920, and Texas REALTORS® have been doing it ever since.

“I wanted us all to huddle up and remind one another that this is more than a career for us. Almost everyone one of us has a story that doesn't have anything to do with how much money we made on a transaction. Almost every one of us has walked out of a closing feeling like we made a powerful difference that didn't have anything to do with a commission check. And almost every one of us who has volunteered at any level of this association has to feel like they are part of something huge, because they are.”

Bulla gets animated when talking about what members will experience during the centennial year. “There are so many things most of our members don't know about that literally changed the way we do business. REALTORS® efforts to work with the Bar Association to create the Broker-Lawyer Committee averted a major dust-up between the two organizations. That story is fascinating.”

She points to the creation of standardized forms as one of many examples of REALTORS® working on behalf of consumers over the years for long-term benefits. Though consumers may be focused on their specific transaction, Bulla believes there is a bigger story to share with your clients. “You can tell them: ‘Guess what? I went to work for you 100 years ago! In 1920, the people who started this organization decided that consumers need a voice—consumers need us to be professional and have scruples and be accountable. We started working for you a century ago, and we're going to be around for the next century to keep things in check. That's why we exist. That's the value we bring.’”

someone to take the lead on working out a deal, Bulla raised her hand. She did the same on the next project and the project after that, picking up a tremendous amount of experience in commercial acquisition, commercial development and construction, and project management. “It was an opportunity that would not have been availed to me had the times not been what they were,” she says.

Over the ensuing years, Bulla was involved in the workout of bankrupt projects up and down the I-20 corridor. She negotiated on behalf of the Resolution Trust Corporation and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. She managed the utility structure, streets, gutters, and paving of a large development on the north side of San Antonio, negotiated the sale of a famous Utah ski resort, and managed the remediation of a massive mold problem in a high-rise condo in the Florida Keys.

### **Perspective on Ethics and Tough Markets**

Bulla embraced high ethical standards long before she ever heard of the REALTOR® association. At one of her jobs, she discovered, tracked, and reported a pattern of theft by her immediate supervisor. Instead of the attaboy she expected to receive, she was fired by the person to whom she reported it. It turned out that person was part of the scheme as well. Bulla handed over the keys to her company vehicle and walked home.

Bulla’s experience during the savings and loan crisis showed her what a real estate bust looks like. “What we saw in 2008 was bad,” she says, “but that was nothing compared to what we rolled through in the beginning of the ’80s.”

Noting that two-thirds of members have joined Texas REALTORS® since 2010 and have experience only with a booming market, Bulla offers the same advice she shares with the agents at her brokerage: *Be the surgeon.* Don’t panic when things get tough, she says, or you will exacerbate the problem. Whether facing a challenging market or a snag in a transaction, clients need an agent who is “looking for a solution, not curled up in a corner ... somebody who will say, ‘I’ll go meet that dragon. Let me give it a try.’”

### **A Firm Focused on Culture**

Bulla’s next career move involved originating mortgage loans at an Amarillo construction firm that built residential properties. She worked her way up to CEO, overseeing construction and operations. Bulla earned her real estate license while at the company—not with the intention to sell real estate broadly but to sell the properties the firm built.

When Bulla moved on after 14 years at the firm, she considered going into real estate sales at a well-known broker’s firm in Amarillo. After more thought, though, she chose to open her own brokerage. “I had a huge drive to create a brokerage with my own culture. I decided that culture was more important to me than money.”

Her business plan started with this: “I would rather have 10 agents making \$100,000 a year than 100 agents

making \$10,000.” Her model focused on staying small and open to change. She relished the idea of choosing the agents she works with—even new agents—as she felt she could provide the training to help them succeed. “Everything I did was based on building a culture rather than making money,” says Bulla. In the process, she found that the culture came with “a nice living for everybody ... *and* a great place to get up and go to work in the morning. That culture has brought me tremendous joy,” she says.

### **Going All In**

The residential construction company where Bulla served as CEO was a REALTOR® firm, but she was not involved in the association. “Honestly, I didn’t know the difference between the REALTOR® association and the Texas Real Estate Commission,” she says.

Upon opening her brokerage and attending a mandatory orientation at the Amarillo Association of REALTORS®, Bulla’s eyes were opened. “Although I went there with the idea I would network with other

REALTORS®, I realized there was a lot more going on.”

The biggest catalyst for her association involvement came in the form of a phone call. Randy Jeffers, a broker Bulla calls an icon of Amarillo real estate, asked Bulla to serve on the Amarillo association’s Grievance Committee.

Bulla initially did not know what the Grievance Committee did but quickly found out. “It was substantive and impactful. We had a duty to protect consumers but also to understand that these were our colleagues, and our decisions could affect their livelihoods.”

She realized that she had a vested interest in her competitors’ success—that by making sure that other REALTORS® were professional and responsible and had the tools they

needed to be successful, it would benefit her as well. She says that cooperation among competitors is like no other profession she knows.

“Once I was in, I was in all the way,” Bulla says. She started attending association luncheons. She got involved in TREPAC, served on committees at the local, state, and national levels, chaired task forces, and pulled other members into the process along the way, as Randy Jeffers had done for her.

Reflecting on her own personal experience as a member for 10 years without even realizing it, Bulla understands that many new members follow that same road. But she’s doing everything she can to shrink the time frame. Wherever she comes into contact with members, she invites opinions, encourages involvement, and urges those already involved to ask others to step up. She does this because she has seen firsthand how powerful the results can be when REALTORS® work together and take action. Remember ... she’s counting on you.

“  
Once I was  
in, I was in  
all the way.  
”

**MARTY KRAMER** is editor-in-chief of Texas REALTOR® magazine.

# GET TO KNOW CINDI BULLA

## **She didn't include her name in her brokerage's name, Realty Central Services.**

Although she takes pride in meeting most of her brokerage's clients at some point during a transaction, she wanted her agents to promote their own names without fighting against the name recognition that would come with "Bulla" being on the company sign or as the biggest name on the business cards. Realty Central Services currently has nine full-time agents, though the firm's new building constructed in 2018 has space for a few more.

## **She dissuaded her daughter from working at her firm ... at first.**

"My daughter Cristine was never, ever, ever going to be a real estate agent. And then one day I got a call from her saying, 'You know what?'" Bulla advised her daughter to start with another broker rather than herself. She recommended Randy Jeffers, a broker Bulla considers a mentor. Cristine did just that, and eventually moved over to Realty Central Services to work with her mother.

## **She used to act in a popular two-woman show, *Always...Patsy Cline*.**

While she currently serves on the boards of performing arts organizations, Bulla has mostly stepped away from the stage. However, *Always...Patsy Cline* was reprised for a reunion show last year, and Bulla has not ruled out other future performances.



**ABOVE:** Bulla (on left) in *Always...Patsy Cline*. **BELOW:** (clockwise from upper-left) With her family at her installation as chairman of the board; with daughter Cristine White; with Congressman Mac Thornberry of the 13<sup>th</sup> District of Texas; at her newly constructed building with Realty Central Services agents (from left) Leona Grubbs, Teresa Franco, Melanie Scott, Bulla, Sally Jennings, and Shawn Walsh; with 2020 HAR Chairman John Nugent.





# MEET YOUR 2020 LEADERSHIP TEAM

**CHAIRMAN-ELECT**  
**MARVIN JOLLY** CRS

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**Years with REALTOR® organization: 20**

**Key volunteer roles and honors:** Collin County Association of REALTORS® President; CCAR REALTOR® of the Year; CCAR Past President; Frisco Rotary Club Past President

**What's the best advice you've been given?**

Lean in. When facing a challenge, it's easy to avoid the problem, go into mental paralysis, or even let human nature move us away from the difficulty. A healthier solution is to move toward the problem—lean in—to proactively find a solution.

This advice works in business and personal relationships and organizations of all sizes. I choose to lean in.

**What are you most looking forward to in 2020?**

Two things: The Texas REALTORS® centennial celebration at the conference in San Antonio and planning for the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas legislative session.

We have a large group of REALTOR® members who serve on committees and work groups. They are doing valuable research and having strong dialogue about issues that are important to Texas property owners.



*From the beginning of our organization, we have focused on professionalism. And that's still very important today. I'm looking forward to charting the beginning of our second century.*

- MARVIN JOLLY



*Be yourself, own your mistakes, and try to do better. We all have faults, but if you pretend to be someone different to please everyone, people will know. You are who you are. Own it, move forward, be genuine, and make a difference.*

- RUSSELL BERRY



*No other state can match the passion for member service and involvement that Texas has.*

- TRAVIS KESSLER





**SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
**RUSSELL BERRY** CRS, NARLA,  
SFR, TRLP

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**Years with REALTOR® organization: 18**

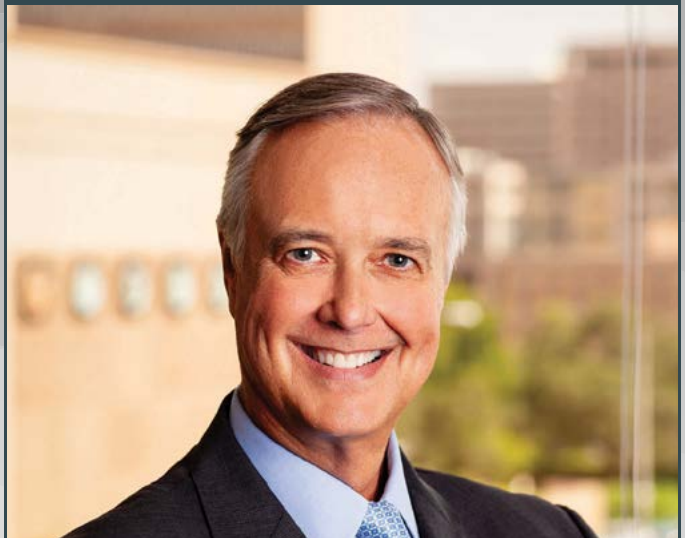
**Key volunteer roles and honors:** Region 12 RVP; Chairman, Texas REALTORS® Public Policy Oversight Committee; Chairman, Texas REALTORS® Conference Committee; President of MetroTex Association of REALTORS®; MetroTex REALTOR® of the Year and Easterwood Cup winner; Chairman, MetroTex Leadership Academy; NAR Texas Representative to Participation Council; NAR RPAC Trustees Fundraising Committee; NAR Federal Housing Committee

**What's the most important decision you have made as a leader?**

I put my name in the hat for leadership of Texas REALTORS®. It has not been an easy journey for me, but my passion, determination, and willingness to serve has made me a better leader. I've learned humility, teamwork, and perseverance from this experience. I have had some truly great advocates beside me every step of the way, unwavering in their support and always there for me with encouraging words and actions. You never take this position on by yourself, and if your intentions are right, you will succeed. The best is yet to come!

**What are you most looking forward to in 2020?**

Continuing to shape Texas. It's a centennial year for Texas REALTORS®, an opportunity to reflect on the past but also prepare for the future. The association has seen a lot of change in the past 100 years, but the next 100 will be the true test. REALTORS® are adaptable, resilient, and essential. They are the heart of the real estate transaction, and our job as REALTORS® is to promote the profession, protect private property rights, and provide service to our clients, community, and profession. We must be ready to take on challenges, be nimble and adaptable toward change, and be aware of transitions going on in our industry. We cannot be afraid to take chances or effect change.



**PRESIDENT/CEO**  
**TRAVIS KESSLER** RCE, CAE

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**Years with REALTOR® organization: 42**

**Key volunteer roles and honors:** Texas REALTORS® Leadership Team; RPAC Fundraising Trustees; REALTORS® Relief Foundation; RPR Advisory Council; Swanepoel Power 200

**How is association leadership able to make such good decisions on behalf of more than 126,000 members?**

Making the best decisions for members requires maximizing input from three areas.

The first is strategic planning: knowing what our path is going to be. The vision of where we want to be and why we want to be there is very important.

Second, you look at the budget process and the resources available. The plan drives the budget; the budget drives the resources. If decision making follows that path, we'll be ahead of the game and looking toward the future and where we need to be.

Third, as CEO, I listen to staff, volunteer leaders, and members. Member input is critical to effective decision making.

**What does the centennial of Texas REALTORS® mean to you?**

This year, we celebrate 100 years of making a difference in the success of REALTORS® and the lives of Texans. Throughout all real estate cycles, this organization has persevered and become a cornerstone for professionalism, service, advocacy, and relevance.

Texas REALTORS® was formed with seven local real estate boards, and now we celebrate our milestone in collaboration with 75 local REALTOR® associations, representing more than 126,000 members. And those members take pride in working together to enhance REALTOR® service and success. They surpass the needs and expectations of their clients.



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The regional vice presidents are your representatives for policy decisions at the association. Their role is to gather feedback from their regions and provide it to the Texas REALTORS® Executive Board so it can make informed decisions about association policies. If you ever want to provide feedback or have questions about how these policy

decisions are made, contact your regional vice president.

Regional vice presidents are also available for board luncheons or office presentations and can share the latest information about the industry and your association, including how Texas REALTORS® advocates on your behalf or the value of membership.



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# 2020 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Learn more about what these committees do at [texasrealstate.com/committees](http://texasrealstate.com/committees), and look for the volunteer signup in May.

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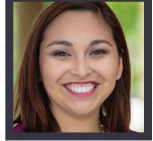
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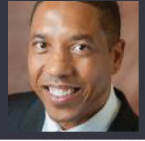
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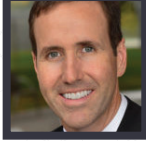
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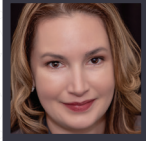
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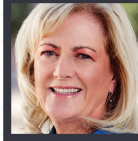
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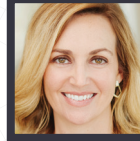
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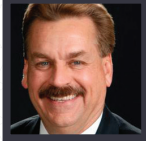
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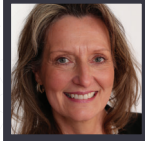
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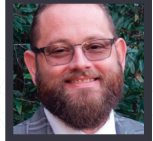
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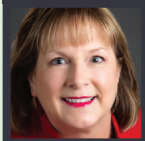
# 2020 EXECUTIVE BOARD APPOINTEES

These appointees join the Leadership Team and regional vice presidents to constitute the 2020 Executive Board.

The Executive Board manages all the association's affairs except the following, which require approval of the Texas REALTORS® Board of Directors:

- Amending the association's bylaws
- Electing officers
- Approving expenditures more than 10% of the annual budget
- Approving the strategic plan
- Approving increases in membership dues
- Defining regional boundaries.

## ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES APPOINTEE



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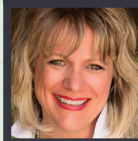
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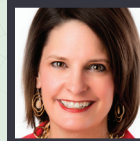
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SHAPING TEXAS 1920-2020

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## DID YOU KNOW?

# REALTORS® ARE MORE THAN JUST REAL ESTATE AGENTS

Although some people use the terms *real estate agent* and *REALTOR®* interchangeably, they don't mean the same thing. Real estate agents and brokers are licensed by the state to help consumers conduct real estate transactions. REALTORS® are real estate agents and brokers who voluntarily join the National Association of REALTORS® as well as their state and local associations of REALTORS®.

### WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

All licensed agents and brokers must comply with Texas laws, but REALTORS® go beyond those requirements. REALTORS® pledge to abide by a Code of Ethics that holds members to higher standards. REALTORS® also take more classes than the minimum required to maintain a license. And REALTORS® work together to advocate for laws and regulations that benefit property owners, buyers, sellers, landlords, and renters.

For example, REALTORS® in Texas have blocked taxes on real estate transactions that would have made buying and selling property much more expensive. Members of Texas REALTORS® have been the driving force behind lowering property taxes, making home equity laws that protect homeowners from

foreclosures, and countless other initiatives that benefit Texans.

### A CENTURY OF ADVOCACY

The sole reason real estate professionals formed an association of REALTORS® in Texas in 1920 was to create higher standards for the industry. They fought for 19 years to pass a law requiring licensing of real estate professionals. Texas REALTORS® then worked tirelessly to pass laws to hold unscrupulous agents and brokers to account.

In 2020, REALTORS® are celebrating a century of putting the interests of consumers first and are looking forward to the next 100 years of ensuring that Texans enjoy strong private property rights.



## WHEN YOU HAVE REAL ESTATE NEEDS, MAKE SURE YOUR AGENT IS A REALTOR®.

Even when you aren't considering a real estate move, rest assured that REALTORS® are working on your behalf for the next time you do.

# TAKE 5

Photo: © Asier - stock.adobe.com



## COMMUNICATION TIPS TO WIN MORE LISTINGS

You have a polished listing presentation, comprehensive data from RPR and MarketViewer, answers ready for common questions, and preliminary details about the property. Pair your preparation with these communications skills to make an impression that stands out and helps you win the listing.

### START SMALL

Small talk will kick off the meeting on a positive note. Ask about the person's hobbies or family or recent vacations—or find something in the home to compliment.

### ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Inquire about the seller's motivation to sell, what qualities the seller wants most from an agent, what the seller considers the best and worst features of the property, and other topics to help you learn about the seller's goals.

### LISTEN ATTENTIVELY

Resist the reflex to think about what to say next while the seller is speaking. Focus on what the seller is telling you. Repeat what you heard from the seller to make sure you're on the same wavelength. Effective listening skills—easy to understand but hard to implement—help you tailor your responses to what the prospect really wants.

### WATCH FOR CUES

Pay attention to body language and tone that don't match what the seller is saying. Crossed arms or averted eyes could be a signal that you should ask additional questions.

### INVOLVE THE SELLER

Provide the seller opportunities to ask you questions. Before you ask for the listing, find out if there are any items you haven't covered that the seller thought you would.



# Don't miss your Texas REALTORS® 360 Meeting!

## It's your chance to

- Gain insights from Texas REALTORS® leaders
- Hear about the latest industry trends
- Network with other REALTORS®

## 2020 Meetings

<b>March 19-20</b>	Regions 7 & 13	<b>Fredericksburg</b>
<b>April 8-9</b>	Region 16	<b>El Paso</b>
<b>April 13-14</b>	Regions 5 & 9	<b>Tyler</b>
<b>April 22-23</b>	Regions 2 & 6	<b>San Angelo</b>
<b>April 23-24</b>	Regions 8 & 15	<b>Austin</b>
<b>April 27-28</b>	Regions 3, 4, & 12	<b>Grand Prairie</b>
<b>April 30-May 1</b>	Region 11	<b>Corpus Christi</b>
<b>June 3-4</b>	Region 1	<b>Amarillo</b>
<b>June 23-24</b>	Regions 10 & 14	<b>Lake Jackson</b>

Meeting schedules vary. Some regions will hold an evening event on the first date listed. Meetings will be held on the second date listed.



# Find your escape.

Every day, we work with our fellow Texans to help them buy the land they've always envisioned. And as a cooperative, we share our profits with those same customers. Last year alone, we paid our customers more than \$57 million in dividends. So when you're ready to secure a property loan for the perfect place to retreat, try a **partnership that really pays**.

**Together we're better.**



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