



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

JANUARY 26, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 1

President

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President

- [Heider Garcia](#)

Treasurer

- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Secretary -

[Shannon Lackey](#)

Education Chair

- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison

- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor

- [Jenise Miller](#)



Wow, I was completely blown away by the attendance at the Mid-Winter Conference in San Antonio. We had 259 attendees registered and several on site registrations. We also had 17 Vendors, most of which partnered with us by being a sponsor. We did encounter some growing pains with over 100 of our registrations being two weeks prior to the conference. When we have to make large changes to food and beverage orders at the last minute it can be very costly. The Board is looking at making some changes for next year's registration process so please look for those this summer. I am working to get the presentation posted on the [TAEA website](https://www.taea-elections.org/) (https://www.taea-elections.org/). I would love to hear any feedback that you have, what you liked, what you didn't. Again, thank you for making this past conference a success.

Just a reminder that we are heading into a legislative session shortly. If you signed up to assist the Legislative Committee by reading bills, Remi Garza and Chris Davis will be reaching out to you. If you are still interested in helping please contact Remi Garza (remi.garza@co.cameron.tx.us) or 956-544-0809. From looking at what has been pre-filed I think we have a lot of work ahead of us.

Look forward to seeing everyone in the summer at the SOS conference.

- Trudy Hancock

Job Openings

Travis County – [Elections Management Coordinator](#)
Williamson County – [Deputy Elections Administrator](#)

Vice President

Working....

- Heider Garcia



Capitol Reception

TAEA is preparing for a Capitol Reception held jointly with the County and District Clerks Association of Texas on February 1, 2023 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Capital Legislative Conference Center.

Map and invitation attached to email.



88th Legislature Regular Session Texas Legislature Online

Election Bill Tracking

Bill Readers that have signed up:

TAEA Legislative Team		
Linda Beale	Lavaca	361-772-4902
Amy Kloesel	Lavaca	512-914-4752
Lisa Sertuche	Ector	432-631-2232
Melissa Alcazar	Dewitt	361-243-6333
Kelsi Stephens	Grayson	903-821-2131
Kristin Miles	Bastrop	512-237-0713
Pamela Hill	San Patricio	361-215-3402
Laura Watkins	Palo Pinto	940-682-5445
Benjamin Kleiber	Hays	843-743-9184
Shannon Brown	Rusk	903-721-9434
John Oldham	Ft Bend	832-449-2616
Jose Luis Castillo	Webb	956-235-6336
Andrea Wilson	Llano	325-247-0833
Ivet C Roman	El Paso	915-251-9810
Bruce Elfant	Travis	512-923-3895
Tandi Smith	Kaufman	214-202-9237
Paula Ludtke	Henderson	903-477-6041
Vona Hudson	Tom Green	325-234-7466
Helen Floyd	Martin	432-770-3519
Rebecca LaCourse	Colorado	979-733-4870
Terri Hefner	Fayette	512-431-8130
Carol Jackson	Washington	979-251-1632
Cynthia Lum	Houston	936-544-7500

Appreciation

A big shout out to Bexar County for hosting the Mid-Winter this year and to all of Jacque’s staff for working so hard to make sure the event went off without a hitch! The speakers were interesting and full of new ideas and processes we could all utilize. The venue and hospitality were phenomenal. The weather was perfect. The Alamo reception and graduation was fun, and those mariachis were surely a hit with everyone. I also want to thank Vista for selecting a perfect keynote speaker, as well as all our vendors for their sponsorship. We couldn’t be as successful without your support. Excellent job Jacque and Trudy on another successful Mid-Winter!

Planning for next year!

If you couldn’t attend REO classes, be sure to start planning to attend next year. For those of you that are new to elections, remember to include the expense in your budgets this year. Next year related to conference attendance and membership, we will start taking registration forms in September 2023 for the 2024 membership year. This will help us better plan for food, space at the conference. You can send your check after October; we are just hoping to know who will be there for planning purposes. Also, please keep in mind that the office of Treasurer will change before then. Shannon will send everyone a new W-9 after the August business meeting, for you to forward to your Auditor’s in advance. Hopefully, this will help ensure that the checks go to the correct address and person. Thank you all for your cooperation in advance.

Current Membership

We currently have 328 members, and we are still receiving registration forms for this year. Our conference attendance was larger than usual at 269 members attendees. This does not include our vendor/members. I’m excited to see our membership grow and welcome to all the new election officials!

Regional Groups

Thank you for all of you that stepped up to lead your region in this effort. I’m working on a Plan of Operation for the group. I plan to get that out to the board this week for approval to send out to all of you in the very near future. Your first meeting should be held sometime in January, February, or March for the first quarter. The plan of operation will include some ideas for an agenda. Remember, if you include voter registration items – your expenses to attend can be reimbursed from Chapter 19 funds. The Secretary of State’s Office is happy to send trainers to your area to present at your regional groups on topics that are of interest. Also, they have offered to prepare a webinar, or Zoom training to your group. They do this for the Texas Municipal League with much success. There are many resources. Feel free to give me a call or shoot me an email if I can help find resources for your first meeting.

Additional educational opportunities!

The Texas Association of Counties will host it’s first in-person [Texas Election Academy at the Sheraton in Georgetown](#) on April 2nd – 4th. The goal of this academy is to provide education and resources for county officials and staff responsible for holding efficient and secure elections. The conference will provide information about the biggest election-related issues facing Texas county election officials. The curriculum board has been working hard to plan an agenda that is exciting and different. Education is one of the top priorities of legislators. We want to thank Texas Association of Counties for this opportunity to gain more knowledge that will help us all perform our duties on an increased professional and efficient level. You won’t want to miss out on this class.

– Jennifer Doinoff

Secretary

It was great to see everyone in San Antonio! I always enjoy the Mid-Winter Conference. There is no one else that knows what we endure besides us. The conference reminds me that we are all very different but have one common goal and we are all better together. I won't pretend that 2022 wasn't difficult but we did it!

We are, like you, starting the preparation for the May election. This is a reminder to reach out to all of your entities now so you don't get surprised in a month or so when you find out that they called an election without your knowledge.

Take care and stay warm. We had a snow day yesterday! It was nice to stay home but now I'm a day behind. Don't hesitate to reach out to any of us if you have questions, concerns or just need someone to talk through a situation with you.

- Shannon Lackey

**Education
Chair**

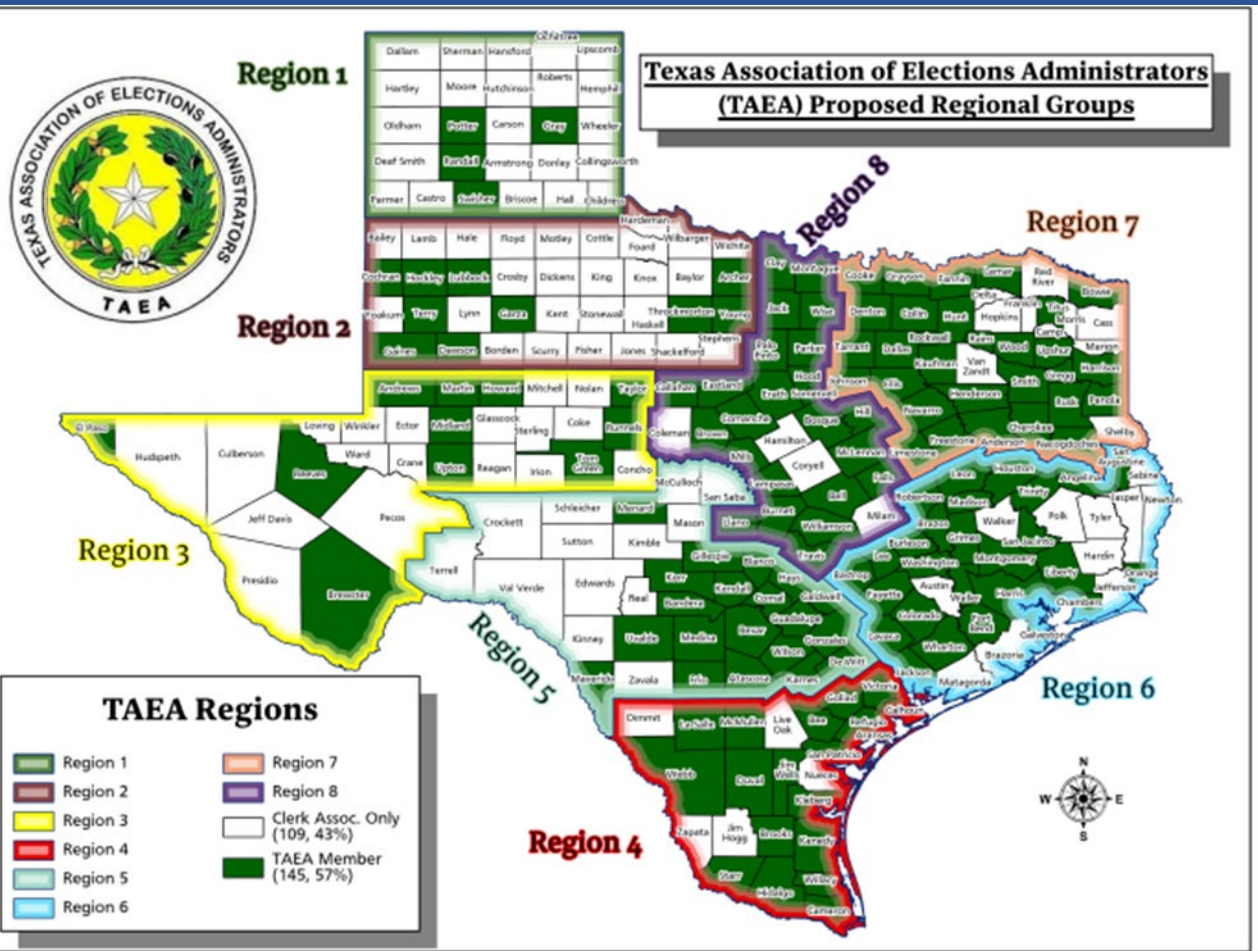
I want to thank Trudy and the TAEA officers for conducting a great mid-winter conference. Kudos, as well, to Bexar County for hosting. This was one of the best run, informative, and inspirational conferences I remember. Thank you for allowing each speaker sufficient time for their presentations, and for questions.

I was also impressed with the turnout among our election officials. It seems as though participation has doubled in recent years.

These conferences are among the many opportunities we have to gain the knowledge and skill we, and our staff need to better serve our voters. It also affords us networking opportunities to learn from one another. We can also meet with our vendors and be exposed to new products and services. Finally, it affords us the opportunity to vent about our various "election enthusiasts".

Hopefully, 2023 will be a quiet year for all of us as we prepare for the next Presidential Election in 2024. Over the last 18 months we have been working to improve our chain-of-custody and record management so that we will be better prepared for the next round of records requests. We are also working on documentation for each of our election related procedures.

- John Oldham



TAEA Regional Group Planning Guidelines and Sample Agenda will be attached to the newsletter email.

Regional Groups – Contact person, email and phone number

Region 1 – [Shannon Lackey](#) – Randall County 806-468-5510

Region 2 – [Jody Rose](#) – Hockley County

Region 3 – [Vona Hudson](#) – Tom Green County 325-659-6541

Region 4 – [Remi Garza](#) – Cameron County

[Pam Hill](#) – San Patricio County 361-364-6121

Region 5 – [Staci Decker](#) – Kendall County 830-331-8701

Region 6 – [Christine Mills](#) – Bastrop County 512-581-7160

[Cynthia Lum](#) – Houston County 936-544-3255 ext. 250

Region 7 – [Laura Wise](#) – Wood County 903-763-2400

Region 8 – [Chris Davis](#) – Williamson County 512-943-1630

Legislative Chair

I don't know about you all, but this year is starting to heat up, despite the recent cold fronts. I hope everyone is okay after the storms and cold snaps we have experienced. As to the convening of the legislature, much is still pending. The Senate has named the members of the State Affairs Committee; follow the link below and see if any of your areas Senators have been appointed: (<https://capitol.texas.gov/Committees/MembershipCmte.aspx?LegSess=88R&CmteCode=C570>) We are waiting for the House of Representatives to announce the members of the Elections Committee for their body.

In the meantime, I would like to thank the members who volunteered to help us read through the bills filed so far. We will be reaching out to you once the committee assignments are finalized. The deadline to file bills is March 11th, so there may be more to come.

As of now, the TAEA is preparing for a Capitol Reception held jointly with the County and District Clerks Association of Texas on February 1, 2023 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Capital Legislative Conference Center. Any members wishing to attend should feel welcome, but please let us know so we can make sure we are on the lookout for you. The corridors of the Capital can be puzzling in more ways than one.

As for the legislation filed so far, the ones that can have most impact on administering elections in one form or another deal with Online Registration, the availability of school buildings as polling sites, the creation of Elections Marshalls in the Secretary of State's Office and the alignment of corrective actions available for ballot by mail voters. The Legislative Committee will be meeting further to discuss the relative consequences of other bills filed and how best to respond to the impacts anticipated whether in the positive or negative. But, as of now, the level of uncertainty is too high to do so.

I hope, if you are in the area or a short drive away, you will join us at the Capital Reception. You never know who you might meet. They may just represent you.

- Remi Garza

Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

FEBRUARY 23, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 2

President

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President

- [Heider Garcia](#)

Treasurer

- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Secretary -

[Shannon Lackey](#)

Education Chair

- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison

- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor

- [Jenise Miller](#)



As we move into our next election cycle I pray that each of you were able to take some time for yourself during the holidays and the beginning of the year.

The Legislative Committee has been hard at work preparing for the upcoming Legislative Session. There have been over 150 election related bills filed to date. TAEA will have a strong presence at the Capitol. We will need your input on bills as they come up for testimony. If you feel strongly about a bill we would be happy to have you join us at the Capitol.

At the Mid-Winter Conference, we voted to have a committee review the Bi-laws. If you are interested in serving on this committee please email me. I will be appointing those members soon. I would like for the committee to have time to review and be ready to make any recommendation for changes to the Bi-Laws at our summer meeting.

If you know counties that are not members of TAEA please reach out to them. Encourage them to become members. In light of the scrutiny our profession has been under we need to all come together. Support each other and insure that we are all doing everything possible to foster support from our communities.

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice President

Working....

- Heider Garcia





Capitol Reception

with
County and District Clerks' Association of Texas
and Texas Association of Elections Administrators

Please join us to unwind and network
with your constituents.
Marvel over a display of elections equipment from
years gone by. And view Texas historical government
records preserved by county clerks for future
generations to learn about our great state.

March 22, 2023
6-8 p.m

Capitol Extension Building
Capitol Legislative Conference Center
Room E2.002



88th Legislature Regular Session
Texas Legislature Online



Pictured left to right: Chris Davis (Williamson County), Heather Hawthorne (Chambers County), Secretary Jane Nelson, Jennifer Doinoff (Hays County)

Trudy, Heider, Shannon and I are already working on Mid-Winter 2024 planning in Amarillo. I'm not going to be a spoiler, but I know you'll not be disappointed in the itinerary so far. I'm looking forward to exploring this area of the state at our next conference. It will be a great slow down for many of us in the "Yellow City" with the slogan of "Neighbors serving Neighbors: The Amarillo Way"! Great food, entertainment, and atmosphere!

I spent time at the Capitol on Tuesday (2/21) with Heather Hawthorne, Chris Davis, Cary Roberts, and Jay Williamson. We got a lot accomplished with an introduction meeting with the new Secretary of State Jane Nelson and talking about priorities this session with the new election committee members. From what we can tell, our priorities are already in the works in written bills that have already been filed. This is good news for election professionals. We also met with Keith, Christina, and Kristi Hart to talk about legislation and poll book and equipment certification. They asked anyone having problems with their voting system (or poll book) performance to please contact them. They want to have feedback before the next certification, which will be again later this year. We also met with Ruben Garcia with TASB (Texas Association of School Boards) about bills that would eliminate schools as polling places. We look forward to working with him and legislators on this issue.

Regional Groups are off to a great start. I have been informed that Region 1, Region 3, Region 6, Region 7, and Region 8 have either planned a meeting or are in the process of planning their 1st quarter meeting. SOS says that they have been contacted to participate in some of these meetings. Our friends at the Secretary of State's Office are willing and excited to get out and talk with your groups on topics that concern your area of the State. Thank you to the volunteers that stepped up to lead these groups. You will see a positive impact in our elections statewide, because of your efforts. I'm excited to watch this program grow over the next couple of years.

Wishing you all a wonderful May election!

– Jennifer Doinoff

Secretary

Hello All,

The May elections will be held in a little over 2 months! It is crazy how quickly the time goes by. If you haven't done so yet, I would encourage each of you to reach out to all of the entities in your county and make sure that there are no hidden surprises lying in wait for you concerning the May 6th election. In my opinion, conducting the local city/school elections are as stressful as conducting a presidential election. These elections involve people that you interact with on a daily basis. This can have an effect on your day-to-day life. The outside world labels this an off year. If you are new to Election Administration, you need to know that there is no such thing! Every election requires that all i's are dotted and every t has been crossed. Proof.... proof.... and proof again.

I would encourage each of the to go to Texas Legislature online (MyTLO) and sign up for notifications on election related bills. You can receive a daily email that will list the bills that were filed the previous day and you can read the text of the bill. It is helpful to know what is being put out there so we can start thinking about how this will impact each of us.

It was brought to my attention that our membership numbers are down from last year. I would ask that if you or your neighboring county has new staff members to reach out to them and encourage them to join our group. We are stronger together.

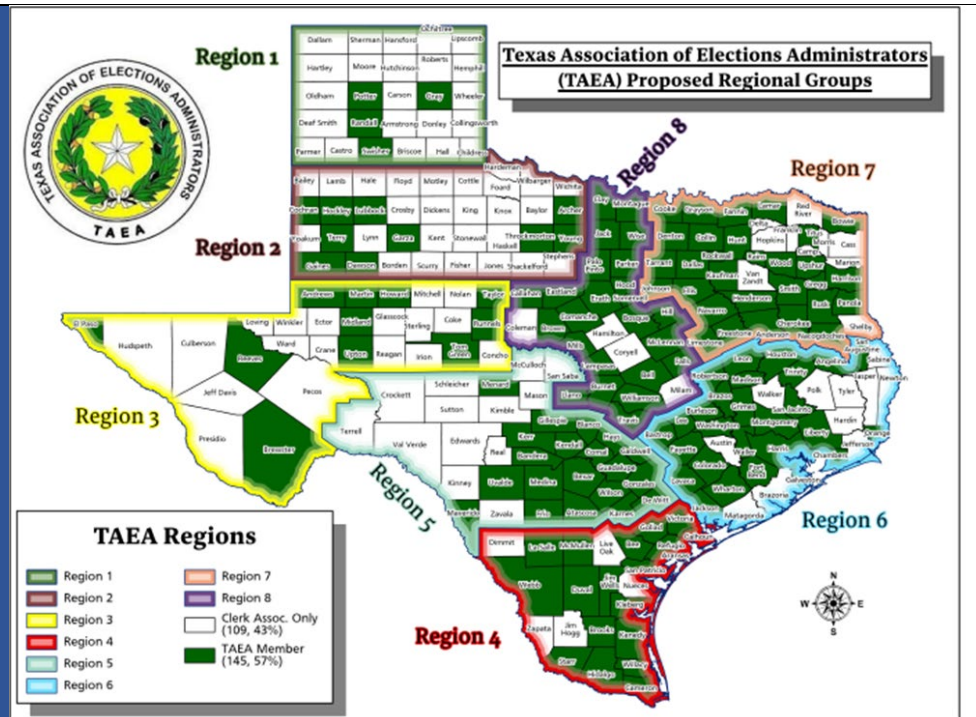
Remember, you can reach out to any of us if you have questions or concerns.

- Shannon Lackey

Education Chair

Nothing to report at this time.

- John Oldham



**Regional Groups –
Contact person,
email and phone
number**

Region 1 – Shannon Lackey – Randall County 806-468-5510

Region 2 – Jody Rose – Hockley County

Region 3 – Vona Hudson – Tom Green County 325-659-6541

Region 4 – Remi Garza – Cameron County
Pam Hill – San Patricio County 361-364-6121

Region 5 – Staci Decker – Kendall County 830-331-8701

Region 6 – Kristine Mills – Bastrop County 512-581-7160

Region 7 – Laura Wise – Wood County 903-763-2400

Region 8 – Chris Davis – Williamson County 512-943-1630

**Legislative
Chair**

The Senate State Affairs Committee

<https://capitol.texas.gov/Committees/MembershipCmte.aspx?LegSess=88R&CmteCode=C570>

House of Representatives Elections Committee members

House Committee on Elections (C240)

Legislature: 88(R) - 2023

Appointment Date: 2/8/2023

Position

Chair:

Vice Chair:

Members:

Member

[Rep. Reggie Smith](#)

[Rep. John H. Bucy III](#)

[Rep. Dustin Burrows](#)

[Rep. Giovanni Capriglione](#)

[Rep. Mano DeAyala](#)

[Rep. Christian Manuel](#)

[Rep. Eddie Morales](#)

[Rep. Valoree Swanson](#)

[Rep. Hubert Vo](#)

- Remi Garza

Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

MARCH 15, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 3

President
- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President
- [Heider Garcia](#)

Treasurer
- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Secretary -
[Shannon Lackey](#)

Education Chair
- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison
- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor
- [Jenise Miller](#)



We are in the midst of the Legislative Session. The Elections Committee will be meeting on Thursday mornings. Your Legislative Committee is working hard to insure we have adequate representation at the Capital. Our plan is to testify at the Committee hearings to enlighten the committee of the problems of bills and to support any bills that we can. If you feel strongly about a bill please reach out to [Chris Davis](mailto:cjdavis@wilco.org) (cjdavis@wilco.org) or [Remi Garza](mailto:Remi.Garza@co.cameron.tx.us) (Remi.Garza@co.cameron.tx.us). They are Co-chairs of the Legislative Committee. There may be times when we reach out asking for information on the financial impact a bill may have or unintended consequences of a bill, it is imperative that you respond. We need as much information as we can gather when testifying. We want to represent you as best we can but will need your help. Friday (February 10th) was the final day to file a bill.

TAEA and CDCAT are holding a Legislative Reception on March 22 at the Capital at 6:00 pm. We hope to be able to talk candidly with those who have filed bills as well as their staff.

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice President

Working....

- [Heider Garcia](#)

Capitol Reception

with
County and District Clerks' Association of Texas
and Texas Association of Elections Administrators

Please join us to unwind and network
with your constituents.
Marvel over a display of elections equipment from
years gone by. And view Texas historical government
records preserved by county clerks for future
generations to learn about our great state.

March 22, 2023

6-8 p.m

Capitol Extension Building
Capitol Legislative Conference Center
Room E2.002



88th Legislature Regular Session Texas Legislature Online

Shout out to Chris Davis and Heather Hawthorn for a great job done representing the TAEA at the House Elections Committee hearing at the State Capitol. To listen to the hearing, click on the links below:

[Texas Secretary of State \(Keith Ingram\) Testimony](#)

[DPS Testimony](#)

[TAEA \(Chris Davis\) Testimony](#)

[CDCAT – County Clerk Association \(Heather Hawthorn\) Testimony](#)

Senate State Affairs Hearing

March 13, 20223

Chris Davis does a great job on breaking down all of the hearings on elections. Thank you for taking the time to make this easy for all of us. This was shared on list serve by Chris, but in case you missed it.

[Hearing Notice](#)

SB 747: [Text](#); [Layout and Testimony](#)

SB 921: [Text](#); [Layout and Testimony](#)

SB 221: [Text](#); [Layout and Testimony](#)

SB 1052: [Text](#); [Layout and Testimony](#)

SB 825: [Text](#); [Layout and Testimony](#)

SB 175: [Text](#); [Layout and Testimony](#)

<p>Treasurer</p>	<p>Spring is among us...</p> <p>Most of us are busy preparing for May elections. Hays County is preparing to do Logic and Accuracy/Hash Validation Testing next week.</p> <p>The Legislative Committee is off to a good start. Thank you to Chris Davis and Heather Hawthorne for their great testimony last week. We owe these two so much gratitude for the time and effort they spend on our legislative priorities.</p> <p>Hays County is the lucky participant in a Department of Justice polling location assessment during the May election. So, we're busy dealing with this new form of inspection that we will be undergoing.</p> <p>We've had an untick in membership in the past couple of weeks, since Trudy sent out a letter to members that dropped off from last year. Also, the regional groups have gotten off to a great start. Hope everyone has a great May election. Let me know if you if you have any questions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">– Jennifer Doinoff</p>																								
<p>Secretary</p>	<p>Spring is right around the corner.... hopefully! Things are busy around here. The pre-LAT is finished, the ballots have been printed and are ready to go in the mail.</p> <p>I know that this won't work for everyone, but we put a reminder note in every November mail ballot envelope that reminds the voter that their application will expire at the end of the year and to call us after January 1 if they would like a new application. This helps with the frantic last-minute calls as the deadline nears.</p> <p>Remember to take some time for yourself. Enjoy the longer evenings and reach out to a fellow election official to vent, problem solve and just have some peace of mind.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Shannon Lackey</p>																								
<p>Senate State Affairs Committee Members</p>	<p>The Senate State Affairs Committee https://capitol.texas.gov/Committees/MembershipCmte.aspx?LegSess=88R&CmteCode=C570</p> <p>Senate Committee on State Affairs (C570) Legislature: 88(R) - 2023 Appointment Date: 1/11/2023</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Position</td> <td>Member</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chair:</td> <td>Sen. Bryan Hughes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice Chair:</td> <td>Sen. Angela Paxton</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Members:</td> <td>Sen. Paul Bettencourt</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Brian Birdwell</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Morgan LaMantia</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. José Menéndez</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Mayes Middleton</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Tan Parker</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Charles Perry</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Charles Schwertner</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sen. Judith Zaffirini</td> </tr> </table>	Position	Member	Chair:	Sen. Bryan Hughes	Vice Chair:	Sen. Angela Paxton	Members:	Sen. Paul Bettencourt		Sen. Brian Birdwell		Sen. Morgan LaMantia		Sen. José Menéndez		Sen. Mayes Middleton		Sen. Tan Parker		Sen. Charles Perry		Sen. Charles Schwertner		Sen. Judith Zaffirini
Position	Member																								
Chair:	Sen. Bryan Hughes																								
Vice Chair:	Sen. Angela Paxton																								
Members:	Sen. Paul Bettencourt																								
	Sen. Brian Birdwell																								
	Sen. Morgan LaMantia																								
	Sen. José Menéndez																								
	Sen. Mayes Middleton																								
	Sen. Tan Parker																								
	Sen. Charles Perry																								
	Sen. Charles Schwertner																								
	Sen. Judith Zaffirini																								

House of
Representatives
Elections
Committee
Members

[House of Representatives Elections Committee members](#)

House Committee on Elections (C240)

Legislature: 88(R) - 2023

Appointment Date: 2/8/2023

Position

Chair:

Vice Chair:

Members:

Member

[Rep. Reggie Smith](#)

[Rep. John H. Bucy III](#)

[Rep. Dustin Burrows](#)

[Rep. Giovanni Capriglione](#)

[Rep. Mano DeAyala](#)

[Rep. Christian Manuel](#)

[Rep. Eddie Morales](#)

[Rep. Valoree Swanson](#)

[Rep. Hubert Vo](#)

Education
Chair



"SPRING IS THE TIME
OF PLANS
AND PROJECTS"

- Leo Tolstoy

- John Oldham

Legislative Chair

In some ways this legislative session has started as expected and then again not as expected. There is a distinct difference on how our TAEA representatives are being received by the legislative committees now that they are formed by both houses. I want to thank everyone who reached out to their local representative to talk about the Write Once Read Many (WORM) issue. For those of you that don't remember it was a technology requirement included for 2026 election systems that doesn't exist. You could tell that members of both houses were aware of the impact it would have if it stayed as is and the way they reacted whenever it was brought up. It looked like they understood the issue and responded pretty quickly to accept solutions proposed.

It is hard to summarize everything that is happening, but if you see an email asking for a fiscal note or a call to action when specific bills are going to be discussed please respond to it. I can say that our committee is meeting almost weekly. We still lean heavily on certain members to testify but I think the House Elections Committee and the Senate State Affairs Committee are going to see a lot of new faces this year. But it is your voices on the local level that can have the greatest impact before the hearings are even held.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email one your board officers or reach out to [me](#) or [Chris Davis](#).

- Remi Garza

Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

APRIL 14, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 4

President

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President

- [Heider Garcia](#)

Treasurer

- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Secretary -

[Shannon Lackey](#)

Education Chair

- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison

- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor

- [Jenise Miller](#)



The Legislative session has been very busy. The Legislative Committee and our lobbyist meet at least once a week to discuss the bills that are up for a hearing in both the Senate and the House. We discuss the good, the bad and the ugly about each bill and decide a stance for TAEA. Then a volunteer appears for the hearings and testifies. It has been an honor to testify on behalf of TAEA before the House Elections Committee on two different occasions. Once the bills are voted out of their respective committee they will go to the other side for a hearing. We will again voice our opinions in those hearings. If you have any strong feelings on legislation you can contact [Remi Garza](#), Cameron County, or [Chris Davis](#), Williamson County, our legislative committee chairs.

I know a lot of you are preparing for the May 6th Election. Good luck and praying things go smoothly for you.

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice President

I was thinking this week a lot about the word compromise. A word used so often when people want to present themselves as wise and fair, but so lacking when they want to show strength. It's amazing how people will flip on the spot. And that lead me to think about integrity, and how we constantly need to uphold integrity while looking for compromise.

For the last two and a half years we have been pressured, over and over, to compromise. We have been asked to do things that are unnecessary, that impose a burden and additional expenses on our offices, and to prove ourselves innocent time after time. And boy have we. We have put every ounce of effort into finding ways to build bridges, to be transparent, to educate, to fight misinformation... a lot of euphemisms for proving our innocence. Ironically, that has made us stronger, both factually and morally.

I am proud of all of you, for putting your ethics and values first. Looking ahead, 2024 is not going to be a walk in the park. We will be challenged, we will be pressured, we will be asked to compromise and do more (a lot of times with less). Never budge, not an inch, form what is right. Those who have tried to please the madness have faced the consequences, like the [poll worker who plugged an USB device into a poll book](#), or [the County Clerk who is facing charges for equipment breach](#).

Compromise when you can, but never on integrity.

Love y'all.

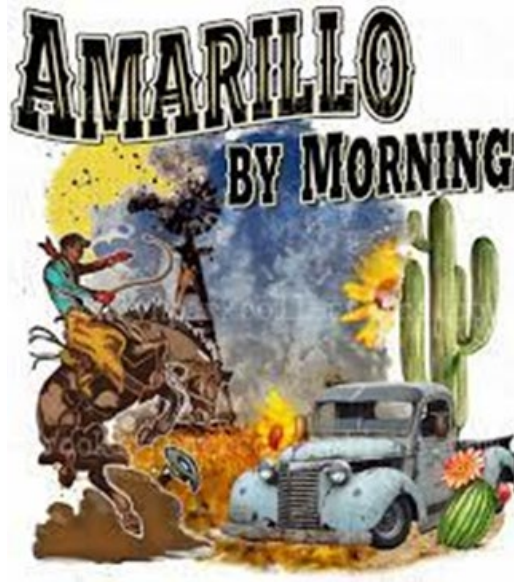
- Heider Garcia



88th Legislature Regular Session
Texas Legislature Online

LIFE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT

To be wonderful



Hello Fellow Election Officials –

It's hard to believe we are almost in May of 2023. Time is flying by this year. I hope everyone's May election planning is smooth.

The Texas Association of Counties Education Committee just completed its 2nd Annual Texas Election Academy, and it was a huge success from the surveys and comments convey. There were around 200 attendees. The agenda was full of best practices and practical implementation of standard election processes that we should all be completing. If you missed it this year, please consider joining us next year.

The conference in Amarillo is well underway, and we are quickly filling the agenda with informative panels and speakers that are sure to be entertaining and informative. You won't want to miss out on the festivities.

The 88th Legislature is hard at work discussing the shape of elections in the future. We do see a pattern of desire to standardize some of the processes we use conduct Texas elections. We are focusing on some of these changes in our agenda planning for the Amarillo Conference. We'll keep you updated.

All but two of our regional groups have met and reported successful meetings for the first quarter. I look forward to hearing from the leaders of the groups at the Secretary of State Annual Law Conference this summer. It's becoming more and more apparent that these groups will be instrumental in future continuing education efforts. Thank you to the leaders of these groups for pulling it together and making it happen. You're all truly amazing!

Good Luck in May everyone and if you have any questions or concerns, reach out to one of your fellow election officials for help!

– Jennifer Doinoff

Secretary

Spring is finally here, even in the Panhandle! I hope everyone has a chance to enjoy the weather before early voting begins. I was able to attend the TAC election academy that was held at the first of the month. It was very informative and well done. Hats off to the TAC education committee. I would encourage each of you to attend next year. This was the second year for the academy but the first time that was done in person. Last year was virtual. This will be a great avenue for education for our staff as well as ourselves, in the future.

We are all continuing to monitor legislation. That's all that I have to say about that!

I want to wish everyone an uneventful, smooth early voting period and Election Day. My motto is, "we don't care who wins as long as they win big!"

- Shannon Lackey

Senate State Affairs Committee Members

The Senate State Affairs Committee

<https://capitol.texas.gov/Committees/MembershipCmte.aspx?LegSess=88R&CmteCode=C570>

Senate Committee on State Affairs (C570)

Legislature: 88(R) - 2023

Appointment Date: 1/11/2023

Position

Chair:

Vice Chair:

Members:

Member

[Sen. Bryan Hughes](#)

[Sen. Angela Paxton](#)

[Sen. Paul Bettencourt](#)

[Sen. Brian Birdwell](#)

[Sen. Morgan LaMantia](#)

[Sen. José Menéndez](#)

[Sen. Mayes Middleton](#)

[Sen. Tan Parker](#)

[Sen. Charles Perry](#)

[Sen. Charles Schwertner](#)

[Sen. Judith Zaffirini](#)

House of Representatives Elections Committee Members

[House of Representatives Elections Committee members](#)

House Committee on Elections (C240)

Legislature: 88(R) - 2023

Appointment Date: 2/8/2023

Position

Chair:

Vice Chair:

Members:

Member

[Rep. Reggie Smith](#)

[Rep. John H. Bucy III](#)

[Rep. Dustin Burrows](#)

[Rep. Giovanni Capriglione](#)

[Rep. Mano DeAvala](#)

[Rep. Christian Manuel](#)

[Rep. Eddie Morales](#)

[Rep. Valoree Swanson](#)

[Rep. Hubert Vo](#)

Education Chair

- John Oldham

Legislative Chair

Committee action is heating up but not too many fireworks so far. I am sorry for the length of this month's submission. To begin, of the over three hundred bills filed dealing with Elections just under thirty are taking steps out of committee or being passed out of one of the two houses. So about 10%. Bills that seem to have the most traction deal with increased punishment of violations of the Election Code, providing a mechanism for the Secretary of State's Office to insert themselves in the operations of an Elections Office, increasing the frequency of Audits, abolishing certain Elections Administrators Offices (SB 1750), and changes to how voter registration applications are reviewed and accepted. There are a few that look to address issues that take steps to help voters and the administration of elections such as the clearing up the cure process for ballot by mail, including synchronizing deadlines, deal with the technical limitations imposed by last terms Senate Bill 1 on the equipment (Write Once Read Many Bill) and clearing up conflicts on when ballots become accessible to the public. Of particular interest are SB 1052 and HB 703 which provide for additional compensable time for the judges and clerks by adding an hour before the polls open. These are companion bills. The senate bill and the house bill were both voted out of the House Elections Committee.

Those that have moved out of the House Election Committee include HB 67 (Relating to early voting by mail by any qualified voter and to the repeal of certain criminal offenses concerning the solicitation and distribution of an application to vote by mail), HB 357 (Relating to the requirements to access the online tracker of an application for a ballot to be voted by mail), HB 380 (Relating to the secretary of state posting on the secretary of state's Internet website databases containing certain information about elections), HB 386 (Relating to accommodating a voter unable to enter a polling place), HB 703 (Relating to the compensation of an election judge or clerk), HB 1003 (Relating to ineligibility to serve as a poll watcher), HB 1848 (Relating to a study by the secretary of state on the feasibility of central counting stations complying with federal standards for facilities that contain sensitive information), HB 2133 (Relating to authorizing certain political subdivisions to change the date on which the general election for officers is held), HB 2351 (Relating to renewal of an appointment as a volunteer deputy registrar), HB 2800 (Relating to meetings of a county election board), and HB 3046 (Relating to the omission of a deceased candidate from the ballot in certain elections).

On the Senate side of the house things have been a lot more active with bills being voted out of committee, some making it through the Senate chamber and a few being heard with companion bills in the House Elections Committee. Voted out of the Senate State Affairs Committee include: SB 220 (Relating to the enforcement of laws relating to elections), SB 260 (Relating to confirmation of a voter's residence by a voter registrar), SB 823 (Relating to the suspension of a county elections administrator), SB 1599 (Relating to ballots voted by mail), SB 1600 (Relating to a person submitting proof of citizenship to verify eligibility to vote in Texas), SB 1750 (Relating to abolishing the county elections administrator position in certain counties), SB 1909 (Relating to the administration of a temporary restraining order under the Election Code), SB 1933 (Relating to the randomized audits of elections in certain counties), SB 1993 (Relating to the authority of the secretary of state to order a new election in certain counties), and SB 2451 (Relating to personal information entered on the carrier envelope of a ballot to be voted by mail).

The Senate Bills making more headway and that have either been received by the House or referred to the Elections Committee include: SB 2 (Relating to conduct constituting the criminal offense of illegal voting; increasing a criminal penalty), SB 221 (Relating to requirements for certain petitions requesting an election and ballot propositions and to related procedures and provisions), SB 825 (Relating to the deadline for submitting certain recount petitions), SB 921 (Relating to the determination of a majority vote in certain elections), SB 1052 (Relating to the compensation of an election judge or clerk), and SB 1910 (Relating to access to certain election records under the public information law).

To read the text of these bills you can go to the Texas Legislature's website at [TLO \(texas.gov\)](http://TLO.texas.gov) and look them up by their bill numbers. Just type in the search bar either HB (for House bills) or SB (for Senate bills) along with the number in which you are interested. It would look like HB 1933 or sb 220. In the alternative you can shoot me an email at remi.garza@co.cameron.tx.us and I will try to answer any questions or get a committee member to reach out to you to fill you in.

- Remi Garza

Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

MAY 18, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 5

President

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President

- [Heider Garcia](#)

Treasurer

- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Secretary -

[Shannon Lackey](#)

Education Chair

- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison

- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor

- [Jenise Miller](#)



It has been a crazy year so far. A lot of you are wrapping up May elections. Hoping everything went smoothly. This Legislative Session has been pretty crazy. I have learned a lot about the process but still feel like I have a lot to learn. I am so thankful for Chris Davis and his knowledge and leadership in this arena. I am praying any special session does not include elections but we still have some work to do. Our lobbyists are at the Capital daily trying to get as much information as possible so we are not blindsided. There are some bills we are still watching. If SB990, the bill to ban vote centers, receives a hearing in the House we will need to mobilize and contact as many Representatives as possible with information on how detrimental it will be to our voters to go back to precinct-based voting.

Heider Garcia's departure from Tarrant County will leave an opening on the TAEA Board. Our bi-laws state that "Vacancy in the Office of Vice-President shall be filled by the Treasurer..... Vacancy in the Office of Secretary shall be filled by the appointment of the other three members of the Board." The Board meet on May 16th and voted to appoint Lisa Hayes, Elections Administrator for Guadalupe County, as Secretary. Her tenure as Secretary will be short as she will move up to Treasurer at the Summer meeting in August. If you would like to run for Secretary at the Summer meeting we will begin taking nominations in July. There will be more information in the June newsletter on how to nominate someone.

Have a wonderful and blessed summer.

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice President

As my therapist says, “one has to respond, not react”. That is the challenge we constantly deal with, isn’t it? It feels like a great part of our job has become this act of patience with the taunting, the accusations, the insinuations... all looking for us to snap and be the bad ones. There’s a lot to be said about what happened with me, but it will be said the right way, not in a circus-like exchange on social media. For now, and until June 23, I am the EA for Tarrant, and I chose to put the dignity of this office and this county above everything else.

I’ve said this a lot, and I will say it again and again: I owe all of you so much. From you I learned a lot about Texas Elections; and in you I found an amazing group of selfless professionals who always put voters first. Your care for following the law has been inspiring, your dedication to integrity above all has been motivating and your undying commitment to what’s right ahead of what’s easy is admirable. Each of you is part of the best Texas has to offer, and to be honest with you, you are all, in great part, the reason I want to stay in Texas. I am proud of everything we have done, and I’ll be proud to watch you guys continue to do great things for all voters in Texas.

Never forget that most of your voters trust you and believe in your work. They are worth the effort. Don’t let anyone tell you that you must be silent, never settle for good enough, and never be afraid to do what is right. I promise you; God is watching and will make note of your choices. I told my County Judge in our first conversation after he took office to always tell me things straight up, that we needed to have honest conversations for things to work. And when he responded “I’m trying to find the right words” I said “Judge, always tell me things unfiltered, because if I ever hear something I don’t like, I also have a choice, I can choose to leave”. And that day came, I resigned, it was my choice and I sleep better at night after making it. Remember that you always have a choice, and the choices you make define who you are.

I’m not sure what is next, but I do have a feeling I’ll be seeing you in the not so far future. My family and I really like Texas, we feel at home here, my wife and I want to raise our kids here. So, this may be my last newsletter for TAEA, but it will not be my last interaction with *all y’all*.

God bless all of you. Now go out here and keep making Texas batter.

- Heider Garcia



88th Legislature Regular Session
Texas Legislature Online



As Memorial Day approaches...please remember those that who are serving and the ones that lost their lives. God bless all of you for your selfless service and sacrifice.

Our summer meeting is approaching fast, and we have so many changes to our board occurring with the resignation of Heider Garcia our Vice President. I personally want to thank Heider for his service to TAEA and Tarrant County. Heider has been an amazing election official, leader, and friend. I feel like we will be seeing him around the election community in another capacity. I wish him much luck with his future endeavors!

Regional group leaders should be planning their second quarter meetings. I know the Secretary of State's Office has been conducting regional trainings and would be willing to do so if you reach out and request this for your group. Other ideas are asking your vendors to come in for specific training and best practices related to your voting systems. Thank you all for helping this program get off the ground. I will have the leaders of the regional groups speaking at the Mid-Winter Conference in Amarillo about meetings and successes of their groups. If you haven't had a regional group meeting, or heard from your regional group leader, please let me know at jennifer.doinoff@co.hays.tx.us. Ensuring the opportunity for more educational resources is something I'm passionate about providing through TAEA. I want to make sure our groups are meeting and thriving in advance of the Presidential election year. The training and communication will be essential to our success in 2024.

We have so many new events planned in Amarillo. We will have the hotel and registration information coming out soon. Additionally, we plan to have another amazing keynote speaker. Our vendors are excited about sponsoring the conference, so please thank them for all they do to make our conference successful. We are working to up our game with each conference, so that we can keep members interested and engaged. We plan to include some of you in our programming, as well as in the opening ceremonies. I'll be reaching out to several of you soon to request your assistance in some of these activities. As always if there is something specific that you would like to see included in the agenda for the Mid-Winter, please reach out at the email listed above. This is your association, and we want to make sure we are providing useful programming that addresses the areas of interest of our members.

Thank you all for all of that you do to serve your counties and the voters of Texas!

– Jennifer Doinoff

Secretary

Hello all!

I hope that each of you had a smooth May General election. We are lucky enough to get to do a Runoff election. After all, this is what we do.

I want to wish Heider Garcia all the best as he moves on to his next endeavor. He has truly been an incredible spokesperson and advocate for Texas elections. We are all better because of his time with Tarrant County.

Budget time..... This is one of my least favorite things about being an Elections Administrator. In addition to budgeting for the supplies required to perform your daily tasks, don't forget to budget for training. This is equally important. Even though continuing education hours are not required for Election Administrators, I would encourage you all to budget for and be prepared to defend the need to attend as many conferences as possible. We are all better when we are informed. There will no doubt be many changes in our processes after the legislative session ends. Each conference is unique and full of information. I hope that each of you will plan for the Midwinter Conference in Amarillo. The REO classes will be held January 8-9 and the conference will begin on Wednesday, January 10. We are booked at the Embassy Suites hotel in Amarillo and the rooms are \$149 per night. This includes breakfast each day.

Enjoy your spring!

- Shannon Lackey

Senate State Affairs Committee Members

The Senate State Affairs Committee

<https://capitol.texas.gov/Committees/MembershipCmte.aspx?LegSess=88R&CmteCode=C570>

Senate Committee on State Affairs (C570)

Legislature: 88(R) - 2023

Appointment Date: 1/11/2023

Position

Chair:

Vice Chair:

Members:

Member

[Sen. Bryan Hughes](#)

[Sen. Angela Paxton](#)

[Sen. Paul Bettencourt](#)

[Sen. Brian Birdwell](#)

[Sen. Morgan LaMantia](#)

[Sen. José Menéndez](#)

[Sen. Mayes Middleton](#)

[Sen. Tan Parker](#)

[Sen. Charles Perry](#)

[Sen. Charles Schwertner](#)

[Sen. Judith Zaffirini](#)

House of Representatives Elections Committee Members

[House of Representatives Elections Committee members](#)

House Committee on Elections (C240)
Legislature: 88(R) - 2023
Appointment Date: 2/8/2023

Position

Chair:
Vice Chair:
Members:

Member

[Rep. Reggie Smith](#)
[Rep. John H. Bucy III](#)
[Rep. Dustin Burrows](#)
[Rep. Giovanni Capriglione](#)
[Rep. Mano DeAvala](#)
[Rep. Christian Manuel](#)
[Rep. Eddie Morales](#)
[Rep. Valoree Swanson](#)
[Rep. Hubert Vo](#)

Legislative Chair

The Legislature is heading into the final days of this Session, with a Special Session already being discussed. There are a few bills that are still making headway through the system that would be cause for concern on how they will impact elections in Texas.

While it is hard to say which would have the greatest impact, the most concerning is SB 990, which would eliminate the use of County-Wide voting locations on Election Day. The bill has been approved by the Senate and has been referred to the House Elections Committee. I think it is important for us to express to our local representatives the dire effects that would have for so many of our counties. Large or small the option has been well received by voters and proven to be effective in reducing voter confusion on election day when looking for their ballots. It can help control costs and eliminate wasteful spending on unused ballots, extra personnel and equipment. Even if your county does not use county wide polling right now, you should consider preserving the option for future elections.

As to how the State provides oversight to elections, SB 1933 has just taken a significant step forward. It already passed the Senate, and has just been referred to the House Calendars Committee after getting voted out of the House Committee on Elections. It is poised to move forward to the House floor. SB 1933 allows for the Secretary of State to order administrative oversight of a county office administering election or voter registration in the county under certain conditions. It further authorizes the Secretary of State to enter a written order to terminate the employment of a county elections administrator in a county that has the position. This would happen if there is a recurring pattern of problems that is not rectified or continues to impede the free exercise of a citizen's voting rights in the county.

HB 4780 relating to early voting by mail and the cure process has been referred to the Senate State Affairs Committee for public hearing. This bill amends the Election Code to provide for a signature sheet contained in the official carrier envelope of a mail-in ballot to replace the form incorporated into the carrier envelope of such a ballot as the document on which certain voter information is entered.

There are few other bills pending and I list them here in case you are interested in following their progress: SB 1039 which would require explanations to questions to the satisfaction of petitioners. It could go the Secretary of State is there is not an adequate response and result in an audit. SB 1661 fixes the Write Once Read Many issues raised by Senate Bill 1 for voting equipment by 2026.

These final days will be fast paced and you may receive an email asking you to reach out to your local representative to let them know how legislation will impact the operations of your office. You may want to reach out to your county leadership and let them know the cost associated with some of the changes above. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Officers, Chris Davis or myself and we will try to help.

- Remi Garza



- John Oldham

Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

JUNE 14, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 6

President

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President

- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Treasurer -

[Shannon Lackey](#)

Secretary - [Lisa Hayes](#)

Education Chair

- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison

- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor

- [Jenise Miller](#)



Hoping everyone is getting to enjoy some summer activities before all the craziness starts. Take time and make some memories this summer. Once we start on November things will not stop until after November 2024.

TAEA will be having a Welcome Reception at the SOS Election Law Seminar. It will be on Monday evening beginning at 5:30 pm in the San Antonio Room on the lower level of the hotel. VistaSG is sponsoring the reception and will have a couple of raffles. Come, enjoy drinks and appetizers and catch up with old friends. It is a great time to network or just chill out.

At the luncheon on Tuesday we will be voting on a new secretary. Remember, this is a four-year commitment. You move up through each office. Nominations will open on June 16th and will be accepted until July 16th. That will give us time to prepare a ballot. Send nominations to Lisa Hayes at lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us. Names will appear on the ballot in the order they are received. Remember, you can nominate yourself or someone else.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Austin.

- [Trudy Hancock](#)



Happy Father's Day to the dads among us! Thank you for all you do for your kiddos. It's a big job and we are grateful for the love and effort you put in to prepare your children to be the next generation of leaders.

45 days until the Secretary of State's Annual Law Seminar in Austin. There are so many changes coming down the pike for all of us. Although the impact of this last session is minimal to most providing no special session is called to focus on elections, the landscape of proposed laws shows that lawmakers want more control over local elections than ever before. They also want consistency among our processes. Keep this in mind as you meet with your regional groups and during agenda planning for your meetings. In many ways, the Secretary of State's Office is looking at our processes to formulate a standardized way of doing things among the 254 counties. Thanks once again to Chris and Heather for being available to go to the Capitol on a moment's notice, testify, and meet with legislative staff to mitigate the impact of the bills that did pass. Also, TAEA's legislative priorities were met successfully due to their efforts:

1. Write Once/Read Many (WORM) was corrected
2. Corrective Action Forms – Ballot by Mail
 - a. Voters can submit Corrective Action Forms by mail
 - b. EVBB can meet 21 days before the election.
 - c. Ballot Tracker Information has been simplified for voters tracking/curing their information online
 - d. New path for corrective action on ABBM's (Applications for Ballot by Mail)
3. Schools are still able to be used as polling locations

I've been working on the agenda for the Mid-Winter in Amarillo. The Board has come up with different speakers/panels that will pique your interest as we move into the Presidential Election year. The 2024 Mid-Winter is slated to have a phenomenal keynote speaker that you won't want to miss. There are many new Elections Administrators/Officials that should plan to attend the Election 101 course, where we will focus on the Primary Election processes that you will need specific to that election. Although you will get the legal aspects for Primaries at the conference in Austin, our course will focus on the practical implementation of the law where we will provide examples of processes, check lists and documents that you can modify for your offices. Also, please plan to attend the REO (Registered Election Official) Courses, or renewal course that will be held at the conference host hotel Monday, January 8th through Wednesday, January 10th. I hope everyone is enjoying their "down time" during these summer months. I'd love to have some of you do an article for our next newsletter highlighting some of the memories you've made on vacation this summer. I want to hear from you!

– Jennifer Doinoff



Job Openings:
Wichita County Elections Administrator – just created
Tarrant County Elections Administrator
Nacogdoches County Elections Administrator

Treasurer

Hello All,

I hope that you all are able to take some much-needed time off and are able to relax and enjoy summer time. This is my favorite time of year. Our office is getting closer to achieving this goal. We are currently conducting early voting for a runoff election.

To say that this has been a crazy month in the Texas Panhandle is an understatement. Like many of you, we have been in extreme drought conditions for an extended period. Not anymore! We are grateful for the rain that has fallen BUT we would have liked to have the 20+ inches that have fallen, spread out a little more. Much of the panhandle is under a disaster declaration due to flooding. On a positive note, the grass is green and the burn ban has been lifted.

The regular legislative has ended. This session, like others in the past, leaves us all with questions and concerns. You are not alone. I believe that I can speak for all of us when I say that I am anxiously awaiting the advisory(s) from the SOS office. I have learned many life lessons during my time as an Elections Administrator, one of them is to adjust to the unfamiliar, embrace change and make it work. There is no doubt that we will adapt!

I hope that everyone plans to attend the SOS conference this summer. This will be my 17th SOS conference and I learn something each time. I look forward to seeing each of you. I know that budgets are tight, and the next fiscal year will be expensive but attending the conferences is an investment that pays for itself. Knowledge and networking opportunities are so valuable to each of us. The more we know the bigger the return for our voters, our county, and our State! Remember to budget for the 2024 Mid-Winter Conference in Amarillo. We are excited to have you all here as we all band together to prepare for the 2024 election cycle.

Happy Father's Day! Enjoy your weekend.

- Shannon Lackey

Secretary

I just wanted to take a moment to say thank you to the Board for appointing me to the position of Secretary. I have mixed feelings about taking on this role; I am sorry for the event that led to the opening, but I am excited to have this opportunity and I promise to do my best. For those of you who don't know me, I've been in Elections for 20 years and the EA of Guadalupe County since 2015. One of my favorite things about being a part of this group of Elections professionals is the strong sense of community we share. I look forward to continuing my relationship with those of you I already know and building a relationship with those of you that I will be meeting as a TAEA Board member.

- Lisa Hayes

"Having a positive mental attitude is asking how something can be done rather than saying it can't be done."

Bo Bennett

**Legislative
Chair**

In case you haven't taken a look at the TAC list serve, the 88th Legislative Session is over, well the regular one anyway. The Governor called a special session to address tax reform and it hasn't been going well. At least we are in the clear until those issues get resolved. All in all, based on how you look at it, it could have gone a lot worse. At least two major pieces of legislation were avoided; the elimination of county wide voting and restricting the use of school campuses as polling sites. On the other hand, two bills could be seen as accomplishments in getting passed; the fix to Senate Bill 1's restrictive media requirement on re-usable media and the adjustments to the corrective actions available to the Early Voting Clerks and the ballot by mail voters.

I will not go into detail on some of the other bills signed into law, as I don't want to spoil the upcoming Secretary of State's conference, which will include legislative updates or the Advisories that will undoubtedly follow. But expect changes to the number of hours a poll worker can work and be paid for (I don't know about you, but I have always paid them anyway for the extra time), the new meeting requirements for your County Election Board (don't confuse it with County Election Commission), expansion of population restrictions on combining precincts at a polling location (hint: it doubled), the return of certain unopposed candidates to ballots because they can no longer be declared elected to give voters what they have always called for the chance to vote for people who literally can't lose (read vanity of politicians: of course no one is surprised) and finally the elimination of a certain Elections Administrator position in a county of certain size. More to come in Austin, so don't miss it.

Finally, I want to say a few words about the Legislative Committee. I cannot fully express the enormous debt we all owe them. They took time to talk through the proposed legislation, made their way to Austin to represent us, suffered the attacks of legislators for daring to speak up and express the possible impacts of their proposals, suffered unwarranted negative attacks in their home counties for having the courage to speak truth to power, did everything they could behind the scenes to work the halls of the Capital to minimize the impact of some wildly inspired bills and more than anything else raised the level of respect not only our organization holds but for those that work on elections. A task I might add which was no small feat given the environment in Texas these past years.

We could not ask for a stronger, more passionate voice than we have in Chris Davis. He along with Heather Hawthorne, Jennifer Doinoff, Trudy Hancock and Heider Garcia, to name a few, were the embodiment of our association in Austin. They are all the more courageous for holding the line when faced with committee members who turned a blind eye and deaf ear to the issues they were trying to bring to their attention. I am proud of their efforts on our behalf and prouder to call them friends.

To everyone who reached out to their representative when we needed you to, I say, "Thank you!" Your quick response saved our bacon more than once. We may not have always liked the end result, but you have no idea how bad it could have been. While there is still a chance the Governor may call a special session that includes elections as a subject matter, it is unlikely as the announced priorities were achieved by the powers that be in the first one. I hope everyone has a cool summer and a warm winter. See you in Austin!

- Remi Garza

Education

Chair

As I begin writing this, my In Box is being flooded with messages from fellow election officials struggling to find rooms in Austin for the SOS Election Law Conference, which is our major educational event. This exercise has only become more painful over the years. The first few years I was in Texas the SOS conducted 2-day Seminars on two successive weeks. One session was related to Elections and the other to Voter Registration. That worked for Clerks and Tax Collectors, but it meant two trips to Austin for Election Administrators. I liked the move to a one week, 3-day seminar. However, the current situation is ridiculous. I know that the State was locked into a multi-year contract with the Renaissance, but hopefully they are looking at moving us back downtown where there are several thousand hotel rooms within walking distance of the Convention Center. Ironically, we just experienced a similar problem while trying to schedule two of our staff for Election Center classes in Milwaukee. The host hotel was full and all the other downtown hotels had rates between \$450 and \$900 per night. Milwaukee is an ok place, but seriously?

Hopefully, the legislature is done for this year. If so, all of us, except for Harris County, have escaped relatively unscathed. At least we fared better than we did two years ago. Chris, Trudy, Jennifer, Remi, and others who lobbied and testified for, and against, election bills, deserve our thanks, as do our lobbyists Carey & Jay. Without their hard work, our jobs could have become much more difficult. The Governor needs to sign SB 1661, and there are a couple, I wish he would veto. One of those he did sign relates to training. HB 1632 will require the SOS to enhance their on-line training programs and materials for Election Officials, Judges, Clerks, Ballot Board members, Central Count personnel, etc. The bill that passed is an improvement over the one that was introduced, but it could also pose problems, if it does not allow us to conduct our own poll worker training. Hopefully, between now and the September 1 effective date, we will get more information about how this will affect us and our workers.

- John Oldham

41st Annual Election Law Seminar for County Elections Officials

[Online Registration Open Now](#)
[Hotel Reservations](#)



Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



TAEA Newsletter

Texas Association of Elections Administrators

JULY 18, 2023

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 7

President

- [Trudy Hancock](#)

Vice-President

- [Jennifer Anderson Doinoff](#)

Treasurer -

[Shannon Lackey](#)

Secretary - [Lisa Hayes](#)

Education Chair

- [John Oldham](#)

Legislative Liaison

- [Remi Garza](#)

Newsletter Editor

- [Jenise Miller](#)



Hello All, I hope everyone has been able to enjoy a break during the summer. Once we get into election mode for November we will roll right into 2024.

TAEA will be hosting a Welcome Reception on Monday July 31st beginning at 5:30 pm in the San Antonio Room on the lower level of the hotel. The reception is being sponsored by Vista SG. We will be serving drinks and appetizers. Come, chill out and catch up with friends. If you want to bring a guest there is \$25 fee. Cash or check made payable to TAEA.

We will also be holding our summer meeting at the luncheon on Tuesday. We have some business to attend to so be sure make the luncheon. If you are interested in putting your name in for Secretary please send your nomination to Lisa Hayes at lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us

This is my final article as President of TAEA and I would like to say it has been an amazing four years. I have to say that I am honored to be a member of Texas Association of Elections Administrators. I have never been part of a more professional and caring group. Most people wouldn't put professional and caring in the same sentence but that is what makes all of us so good at what we do. We go above and beyond, not just for our own communities, but for each other. I have relied on many of you throughout my career as an Elections Administrator and I hope that I have been able to help some of you along the way. I expect that we will be put to the test in 2024 but I have no doubt we will come out the other side. Remember to be patient and rely on those around you for guidance and help. Thank you again for the support in my four years on the board. It truly was an honor to serve.

- [Trudy Hancock](#)



SUMMER....is here and living up to its reputation here in Texas. It's almost that time of year again to join each other in Austin for the Annual Secretary of State's Law Seminar. This has been a tremendous legislative year with a lot of changes among our counties and state. We have a lot of new Election Officials, and this seminar will be very helpful for you in the upcoming November and Primary Elections.

If you have someone in mind that would make a great Secretary, please nominate them. We are excited to seat the next group of leaders to continue the good work of our departing board members. This is a time to build upon in preparation for the upcoming Presidential Election year. Please nominate a colleague that you feel will benefit the organization and help add value to our members. We have so many wonderful professionals throughout the State. It doesn't matter how long you've been an Election Official. Everyone has a unique perspective and will prosper in this role.

Shannon and I toured the 2024 Mid-Winter Conference and dinner sites in Amarillo this past Monday. We're very enthusiastic about the planning thus far. I know everyone is going to enjoy the conference and we're looking forward to sharing the preliminary information with you at the Tuesday meeting in Austin. You won't want to miss out on hearing some of the exciting topics and events that we have planned!

See you all in Austin!

– Jennifer Doinoff



Job Openings:

[Nacogdoches Elections Administrator](#)

[Wichita County Elections Administrator](#)

Treasurer

Hello All!

I hope that each and every one of you are taking some time off and are able to enjoy this summer. Our office has finished all Runoff Election related tasks and we are using this time to reorganize the warehouse and take inventory, just in time to start all over again!

I'm excited to get to see everyone at the SOS conference at the end of the month and anxious to learn about the new legislation that was put into law. I would like to offer a piece of advice to any new Elections Administrators that will be attending the conference for the first time. It can be overwhelming. The presentations probably won't be available until a couple of days before the conference starts, be patient. Take a lot of notes, be prepared to hear a lot of acronyms and make new friends.

Remember that we will have a welcome reception on Monday, July 31, 2023 at 5:30. Vista Solutions Group has graciously offered to sponsor this event. I've heard that there might be door prizes! We will hold our summer meeting on Tuesday during lunch. We have some exciting things to discuss. Please plan to attend.

Jennifer Doinoff came to Amarillo last week for a site visit at the Embassy Suites and our venue for dinner for the 2024 Mid-Winter Conference. There will be more information coming soon! See you in Austin!

- [Shannon Lackey](#)

Secretary

I hope everyone has had the opportunity for some rest and relaxation this summer. Between contracts & cost estimates for November and what I expected to be "easy" summer projects, it feels like the time has flown by without as much down time as I was expecting. On the up side, I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the SOS Election Law conference in a few weeks – I know the conference is an educational opportunity, but I always come away from this conference feeling personally renewed from spending time with an amazing group of election professionals who, oftentimes, feel more like family than peers.

Please don't forget that we are still taking nominations for Secretary and the nomination period has been extended through July 21st. Think of it this way, it's not a job, it's an adventure!

Nominations can be submitted to me at lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us or [Trudy Hancock](#). Don't wait – nominate today!

We will be doing something a little different this year, in regard to the election for Secretary. Elections Administrators will be receiving their ballots via email. Print your ballot out, bring it with you to conference and cast your ballot at the business meeting. Please remember that only Elections Administrators are eligible to vote on association business. See you in Austin!

- [Lisa Hayes](#)

Deadline to Nominate someone for TAEA Secretary

NOMINATIONS

July 21st

Email [Lisa Hayes](#) or [Trudy Hancock](#) with your nomination

Education Chair

I look forward to seeing everyone at the upcoming Election Law Conference. It should be a good learning experience. These types of events allow us to receive valuable information from the SOS, our vendors, and from one another.

Last month we attended a regional TAEA meeting hosted by Brazos County. Trainers from the SOS provided valuable information about the hash validation process and the TEAM system, and representatives from our voting system vendors also held workshops on the hash validation process. These types of workshops only take a day from our schedules, and are relatively inexpensive to attend. Kudos to the organizers of these events.

We have had a number of events held, or scheduled, in Fort Bend County related to election integrity. Late last month two public events were held featuring so-called nationally renowned Election Experts who claim they can prove manipulation of votes in electronic systems. I choose not to attend these types of events so not to add credibility to their programming. I also don't trust myself to keep my mouth shut. The day after, the second event, two of the three "experts" paid me a 2-hour visit. They were polite and respectful, but wrong.

Today I received an invitation to a program that will be held in four locations next week entitled "Hand Count Road Show". Two more "experts" will be conducting these presentations, and I won't be attending these either. I have counted ballots by hand in the 1980's and been involved in many subsequent hand recounts. There is now doubt that hand counting is the most expensive, inaccurate, and slowest way to tabulate. Anyone who thinks otherwise has never counted actual ballots. It is also the most likely to invite fraud, especially when counted at the precinct level by partisan Judges & Clerks. The Election deniers may make an argument that there could be manipulation of votes in electronic systems. That is all theoretical. However, there are real world examples of counting mistakes and fraud during hand counts.

- John Oldham

Legislative
Chair

Adventure isn't hanging on a rope off the side of a mountain. Adventure is an attitude that we must apply to the day to day obstacles of life.

John Amatt



- Remi Garza



41st Annual Election Law Seminar for County Elections Officials

Preliminary Agenda

Just a SPECIAL NOTICE for the recipients of the newsletter. The association newsletter is intended for members and associates of Texas Association of Election Administrators. Those individuals who are not members or associates of the association may be removed at any time.



THIS MONTH WITH THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATORS

Volume 23 | Episode 8

August 15, 2023



Jennifer Doinoff, President
janderson@co.hays.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

IT WAS GREAT to see everyone at the Annual Law Conference a couple of weeks ago. I was very impressed with the topics and agenda layout. I hope everyone got as much out of it as I did. A few things to mention, Laura Warnix of Bee County has agreed to take over the upkeep of the Texas Association of Elections Administrators website. My staff has updated it and refreshed the look already to help her in the transition. A big thank you to Laura for stepping up to take over this important task. Please go to the page from time to time to see the changes. We are interested in your input on information you would like to see on the website. Also, Andrea Wilson, Llano County, has offered to take the Region 8 Chair position and Co-Newsletter Editor. I know Crickett will gladly accept the help. These are two important resources for our association, and we look forward to watching the progress as they're updating the format and content. Andrea, thank you for offering your leadership to the regional group and the newsletter.

Our profession has had it's share of disappointment with some of our colleagues/friends leaving the election world over the past few months. Keep your chin up, no one ever strays to far in this industry. You're sure to see your friends again in another election related role. On that note, I'm not the best at monitoring the ListServ, but I'm always available to help answer questions by email, or phone. I can be contacted at jennifer.doinoff@co.hays.tx.us, or (512) 468-2952 – Cell. Please don't hesitate to reach out for any reason. We are a professional family and I'm here to help in any way I can.

The agenda for the January Mid-Winter in Amarillo is coming together. The Board has so many great ideas for topics. We have updated the website with hotel and membership registration information for your convenience. Hope everyone is staying cool this summer!

STAY INFORMED

[Membership Information –
New Membership Form](#)
[Education](#)
[Resources](#)

Lubbock County Elections Office to host Pawpalooza – what a neat idea. Kudos to Lubbock County!

MEET THE NEWEST ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS



Wichita County Election Administrator - Robin Fincannon

The Texas Association of Elections Administrators
would like to welcome you!





Shannon Lackey,
Vice President
shannon.lackey@randallcounty.gov

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VICE-PRESIDENT

It was so great to see everyone in Austin at the SOS conference. The turnout was phenomenal. I've always believed that there is strength in numbers and your attendance proved that we are all eager to learn, help each other and do our best!

Thank you to everyone that attended the TAEA luncheon/summer business meeting. I was able to speak with Andria Perales, Special Projects Coordinator at the SOS and we are committed to making our TAEA business meeting better for everyone moving forward. Congratulations to Kristin Miles, our new TAEA Secretary.

I hope that each of you will plan to attend the 2024 Mid-Winter Conference in Amarillo. Please look at the preliminary agenda (attached to email) to plan your trip and make your reservations at the Embassy Suites located at 550 S. Buchanan, Amarillo, TX. (Hotel Reservations [Hilton](#) or [Hilton](#) – they are the same hotel, just two different links – either one should work)

Hopefully, you all saw the email that I sent in regard to our TAEA website. I want this site to be useful to each of us. This is a work in progress. Please visit the website (<https://www.taea-elections.org/>) to update the information for your county. Go to the OFFICERS AND MEMBERS tab and click on Elections Administrators. You will find a Google Docs spreadsheet. Make any corrections so we can all access the most current information. I must admit, our county's information was very outdated.

I can't let this article pass without mentioning the recent resignation of Chris Davis from Williamson Co. He will be truly missed in many ways. His knowledge of the Election Code and his ability to play the devil's advocate to see unintended consequences, is irreplaceable. I know that he will be great at whatever path he chooses. This election community of ours is so special that when one of us moves on, I feel the loss even when I know that it was the best decision for that person. I had already planned a day off when I got the news that Chris had resigned. I spent the day with my grandsons. It was the best medicine because it reminded me of my "why". Why do we do this often thankless, extremely stressful job? No one grows up and wants to be an Elections Administrator, right?? Each of us has our own "why". I encourage each of you to find yours. I have so much respect for our profession and an equal amount of respect for those that have given it their all and know when the time has come to move on.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!



Lisa Hayes, Treasurer
lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR TREASURER

I've always considered myself to be an introvert. I often struggle when meeting people I don't know, but I had an epiphany on Sunday when I checked in for the SOS summer conference. I was happy. Happy to be reunited with friends I hadn't seen in a long time and happy to meet those of you that are destined to be new friends. It did my heart good to spend time sitting through classes with you, comparing notes with you, commiserating over trials, and celebrating successes. So, I wanted to say thank you to all of you. Thank you for doing a job that most people will never understand, never mind appreciate, and thank you for reminding me that some wealth cannot be measured in gold.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Runnels County Elections Administrator



Kristin Miles, Secretary
elections@co.bastrop.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SECRETARY

Bio of Kristin: Born and raised in Bastrop County, I began working for the Elections Department in October of 2009 as a Voter Registration Clerk. I have worked in every position in the Elections Department throughout the years. I was appointed Elections Administrator in September of 2019. It is a pleasure to serve as the Bastrop County Elections Administrator and I look forward to serving not only the voters of Bastrop County but the voters of the State of Texas in my new role as Secretary.



Trudy Hancock,
Legislative Chair

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

As I sit here thinking about my 20+ years in elections, I think about the changes that I have seen in that time, the friends I have made and the profession that I love. It is hard to put into words why we do what we do. It is a passion, a calling. Or maybe we are just crazy. We have overcome so many challenges in our field. We keep proving that no matter what you through at us we will come out on the other side. I have seen friends retire before they were really ready. I've seen friends resign because they have too much integrity to bow to the political pressure. We have pulled off one of the largest successful presidential elections in history during a pandemic. I think we have proven ourselves. No, I know we have proven ourselves. But there are still those that attack us. They have their own agenda. I would like to encourage you to stand strong and know that no matter how loud the "noise" gets I believe in you. We are a family and family gives you the roots to stand tall and strong. Lean on each other.



John Oldham,
Educational Chair

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDUCATIONAL CHAIR

Hello All.



EDUCATION
REO PROGRAM
CERA CERTIFICATION

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE
2024 Mid-Winter Conference will be held in Amarillo, Texas.



REGIONAL GROUP INFORMATION

Region 2 - It has been a busy summer for the Region 2 Election Offices.

The region's first regional training meeting was held on June 29th in Lubbock at the Lubbock County Elections Office. Thanks to Lubbock County Election Administrator Roxine Stinson and her staff for assisting in organizing this meeting. We had 4 counties represented at the meeting. An in depth discussion was held concerning HB 1217, which deals with the extended hours required of all counties in state and federal elections.

We also held a round table discussion and Q & A session concerning different election scenarios and got ideas from other counties on how to handle certain situations.

Hockley County Election Administrator, Jody Rose and Lubbock County Election Administrator, Roxine Stinson has worked with the Secretary of State Training Division to organize a tabletop vote exercise to be held on Thursday, August 17th at the Lubbock County Election Office beginning at 11:00 am. We are excited to have over 15 counties who have confirmed they plan to attend this meeting. The meeting is expected to run from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm and snacks and drinks will be provided. Attendees are also able to bring their lunch with them. We will continue to look for different training ideas and continue to hopefully host a meeting each quarter as time allows. Any county in Region 2 who needs more information please email Jody Rose at jrose@hockleycounty.org.

Region 3 - I was not able to organize the first meeting of region 3 until June 20th. I was very surprised when I started the process that it was difficult to track down the person I should contact to attend the meeting. Several were in the process of resigning, new positions were created, and with the counties that were county clerk or county/district clerk, to identify the person to invite. I also decided it would be best to mail a packet to the name I had which included information about the region. I don't think all of the packets reached the correct person. Several folks from the counties have asked to be included so we are allowing anyone that wants to attend, whether staff, voter registrar, or election administrator to come.

Being an EA, I am having to shift my mindset to remembering that those that are not EA's have so many other duties and schedule requirements. For example, when I scheduled the meeting, I didn't know the date I picked was the same date as the County and District Clerk's Association meeting. This meant that some of the folks couldn't attend our meeting.

We set the meeting up as in-person in the Tom Green County office and virtually using TEAMS. 16 attended in-person and 8 via TEAMS. We started at 9:30 and ended around 3:30.

Our agenda included: getting acquainted, our goals, security, voting equipment, legislation, poll workers, and 2024 concerns. I enjoyed getting to hear all the different dynamics of the different size counties, the different ways elections are handled, etc. There was some discussion about voter registration as well. True to form, everyone was so great to share their information and ideas. Our next meeting has not been scheduled but a lot of the members are coming to the Table Top exercise we are hosting on 8/16.

We are also scheduled to have a Risk Limiting Audit exhibition on 9/7. Since so many of the region are traveling for these events, I suspect we will forgo another regional meeting this quarter. And as all of you know, we might be getting busy soon on a little thing like an election.

I am privileged to get to know the members of this region and so impressed by them and I am grateful to my staff for all their help in hosting these meetings.

Vona Hudson
Region 3 Director

Continued to next page

Region 5 - As we gear up for the 2023 November Election and look ahead to the 2024 primaries in Texas, We had the United States Postal Service (USPS) present our Region 5 election officials a valuable tool at our disposal that can significantly enhance the integrity and efficiency of the electoral process: USPS Informed Visibility (<https://iv.usps.com/>).

What is USPS Informed Visibility?

USPS Informed Visibility is a cutting-edge service offered by the United States Postal Service (USPS) that provides real-time tracking and reporting capabilities for mail and packages. This service grants both senders and recipients the ability to track their mail items as they journey through the USPS network, enabling a deeper level of transparency and confidence in the mail delivery process.

Benefits for Election Officials:

1. **Enhanced Transparency:** Informed Visibility offers real-time tracking updates on the movement of Election Mail. Election officials can monitor the status of mail ballots and related materials as they are processed, providing a transparent view of their journey through the USPS network.
2. **Proactive Issue Resolution:** In the event of any delivery delays or problems, election officials can promptly identify and address issues and take corrective actions. For example, if a batch of mail ballots is stalled at a USPS facility, election officials can intervene to ensure timely processing.
3. **Efficient Resource Allocation and Operational Efficiency:** By anticipating the arrival of mail ballots, election officials can allocate resources more effectively. Being able to anticipate the arrival of mail ballots, allows for more efficient processing and preparation. This is particularly valuable during high-volume periods, such as the lead-up to elections streamlining the processing and preparation stages.
4. **Enhanced Communication:** If there are any discrepancies or delays in the movement of Election Mail, election officials can use Informed Visibility data to communicate more effectively with USPS representatives to resolve issues. Sharing tracking information allows election officials to keep voters informed about the status of their mail ballots, reducing voter concerns.
5. **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** After an election, election officials can review the tracking data to assess the overall performance of the mail delivery process. Analyzing tracking data enables election officials to identify delivery trends and patterns, helping inform future logistical planning. While also serving as an additional layer of accountability for mail handling and delivery. It provides an audit trail that can be reviewed if any questions or issues arise.

Overall, Informed Visibility tracking can empower election officials in Texas to provide a more transparent and efficient voting process for voters using mail ballots. It enhances communication, accountability, and operational efficiency, ultimately contributing to the integrity and success of elections. As we work to ensure the success of the 2023 November Election and prepare for the 2024 primaries, leveraging USPS Informed Visibility offers a strategic advantage.

If your Jurisdiction is experiencing Election Mail service issues, you can report them using the form on www.electionmail.org. Information provided on this site will feed directly into the USPS reporting system.

Region 6 - Region 6 has been off to a great start this year. We have met twice in person for quarterly meetings. Once in Grimes County at their beautiful historic courthouse and once in Brazos County. Thank you, Rachel Walker, Grimes County, for hosting our very first meeting. We have had great participation from not only our member counties but from our presenters as well. We have had presentation from the Texas Secretary of State as well as our voting system vendors. In addition to our quarterly meetings, Bastrop County hosted Region 6 at our Pilot RLA and Brazos County will host Region 6 at the upcoming Table Top the Vote exercise. Huge thanks to Trudy Hancock, Brazos County! Training and collaboration are extremely important in our field and together we can make a difference!



2022-2023 Board Members with
outgoing President Trudy Hancock
Left to Right: Shannon Lackey, Jennifer
Doinoff, Trudy Hancock, and Lisa Hayes

Outgoing
Legislative Chair,
Remi Garza



2023-2024
New TAEA Board
Left to Right: Jennifer Doinoff, Shannon
Lackey, Lisa Hayes, Kristin Miles



THIS MONTH WITH THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATORS

Volume 23 | Episode 9

September 15, 2023



Jennifer Doinoff, President
janderson@co.hays.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

I hope you're all faring well as you prepare for the upcoming Constitutional Amendment election.

Mid-Winter Conference Update

The [links to sign-up](#) for REO classes and to book your rooms at the Embassy Suites Amarillo Downtown have been placed on the TAEA website.

January 8th – January 9th from 8:15 AM – 4:00 PM

Course 4: The Law of Elections

Course 6: Administering Transparency/Transparently

Course 7: Requirements for Precincts and Polling Places:
Management Issues/Serviceing Voters with Special Needs

Course 8: Managing the Voter Registration/Election Office

Renewal

January 10th from 8:15 PM - 11:15 PM

Course 9: Managing Absentee/Voting by Mail

We have some important items to be discussed at the Mid-Winter Conference. The Board has been working on several things that we believe will strengthen our association and enhance the quality of services we can offer our members. Some of these items have been long in the making and have included participation from a couple of our previous board officers. We're excited to introduce these new concepts to you. Also, I have an activity planned for this conference that will begin as you arrive on Tuesday evening. This activity will be informal, as well as, entertaining and will be the topic of one of our panels during the conference. You won't want to miss it! The agenda is almost finalized, and I hope to release that to you in the next newsletter. As always, please call me at 512-468-2952, or email me at jennifer.doinoff@co.hays.tx.us if you have questions or you need to be added to the Listserv.

STAY INFORMED

[Membership Information –
New Membership Form](#)
[Education](#)
[Resources](#)

NEWS

[Election Line](#)

[Election Center TAEA Call](#)

We are inviting all TAEA members to join in a virtual meeting with Tammy Patrick with the Election Center for an informative discussion on future opportunities to partner with them. This is related to the discussion that Remi presented at the conference in Austin.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Topic: Tammy Patrick's Personal Meeting Room

Friday, October 20, 2023 2:00 PM-3:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8674243088?pwd=VS82ajFjUUF5bEF5SMG9acEhZK0Jldz09>

Meeting ID: 867 424 3088

Passcode: 3dzs7H

MEET THE NEWEST ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS



Runnels County – Kelley Berry

The Texas Association of Elections Administrators
would like to welcome you!

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

2024 Mid-Winter Conference will be held in Amarillo, Texas.

[MID-WINTER Conference REO Classes](#)
[2024 TAEA Membership Application and Conference Registration](#)
[Reservvation links - Embassy Suites Downtown Amarillo](#)





Shannon Lackey,
Vice President
shannon.lackey@randallcounty.gov

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VICE-PRESIDENT

Hello from Randall County! I hope all of you are enjoying some cooler weather. We have finally gotten a break from the heat; however, I am always sad for summer to end. We are busy updating forms, signage, conducting VDR training sessions and getting the mail ballots ready to go out next week. Remember that the FPCA deadline is Saturday September 23, 2023.

I was able to attend the Election Center's 38th Annual National Conference in Orlando, FL. I always enjoy the CERA renewal classes. They make me think outside of the box. I find it very interesting to learn about how other States conduct their elections and I always come away with the reminder that we, Election Officials, have so much in common regardless of which state we reside. It was good to make new friends and to catch up with some old ones. I must admit that I left a day earlier than planned. This panhandle lady didn't want anything to do with Hurricane Idalia.

The new budget year is right around the corner. I would encourage each of you to go ahead, renew your TAEA membership and register for the Mid-Winter conference now. We all will be busy throughout the rest of the calendar year. We will be working on the mass mail out and preparing for the Primary season as soon as the Constitutional Amendment election is over. Don't forget the holidays, too. The next 3 months will fly by. We will be finalizing the agenda soon. We are working hard to make this a great conference. Please let me know if you have any issues booking your hotel rooms. You can find registration forms and hotel information on the TAEA webpage. www.taea-elections.org.



Lisa Hayes, Treasurer
lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR TREASURER

Maybe it’s just me, but I always struggle with this transition from “waiting on ballot data” to “a hundred miles an hour with my hair on fire and I feel behind!”. It happens every year at this time and it always takes me a bit to remember that I’ve been here before and it’s going to be ok. This year, I guess I felt the need for an additional challenge, because I kicked off the inaugural session of our recently developed Citizens Election Academy during this busy time (which was a tremendous success, but also quite a bit of added pressure). And guess what? It was ok and we are going to be fine. So, while I know you are all probably feeling this election pressure too, I just want to encourage you to remember to take time for yourself occasionally. Take a couple deep breaths and remind yourself that you aren’t alone – you have all of us on your side. Hang in there! Also, think of the great stories we will have to share with each other at the TAEA Midwinter Conference. I hope to see you there!

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Taylor County Assistant Elections Administrator-attached to this email

- [Williamson County Elections Administrator](#)
- [Runnels County Elections Administrator](#)
- [Hunt County Deputy Clerk](#)



Kristin Miles, Secretary
elections@co.bastrop.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SECRETARY

Not sure how it is September already! Our office is busy reviewing updated forms and procedures from the recent legislative session while moving full steam ahead with election preparations for the upcoming Constitutional Amendment Election. 2024 is just around the corner and while I do not wish for that to be here any sooner.... I am eagerly awaiting the arrival of cooler weather! Good luck to everyone in their election preparations. Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions or need assistance.



Trudy Hancock,
Legislative Chair

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

What a summer! I hope everyone made time for relaxation this summer. It has gone by so fast. Seems like it was just January and we were looking ahead to a new year.

I am still collecting data showing the impact of SB 924 on the counties. So, if you are having to add locations due to this bill I would appreciate it you could send me the costs associated with adding those locations (equipment, location rental, payroll, supplies, etc). We are wanting to put something together to hopefully impact a change in the future. Please send the information to me at thancock@brazoscountytexas.gov.

I am also working on collecting data of the impact of HR 1217 for the smaller counties that were affected. Over the next several elections please track the increase in payroll costs and number of voters who voted during the additional hours. We would like to be able to show that increased hours does not necessarily mean an increase in turnout. I will be asking for this data at a later date.

Good luck as we head into the November election cycle and remember to rely on your elections community. We've got your back.



John Oldham,
Educational Chair

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM JOHN

A democracy with this effort by its people must and can face its problems, that it must show patience, restraint, compassion, as well as wisdom and strength and courage, in the struggle for solutions which are very rarely east to find." John F. Kennedy
Profiles in Courage



EDUCATION
REO PROGRAM
CERA CERTIFICATION

REGIONAL GROUP INFORMATION

Region 3

It feels like Region 3 has been very busy in the last few months.

There are 29 counties in our region. It is amazing to see how many have attended our meetings. Even though there are multiple people from one county that attend, it is evident that several counties are participating. Many others indicate they would attend except for the fact that we have members that are County and County/District Clerks and have schedule conflicts. There are also several counties where the original member has or is resigning so I am excited that so many are willing to participate.

At the first quarterly meeting, there were 15 counties with 24 participants. Tom Green County hosted a Table Top exercise in September with 12 counties and 29 attendees. On October 7th, we had a Risk Limiting Audit that included 11 counties and 26 participants. So exciting to see that the regional group dynamic is so valuable.

I hope that the attendees for these events are finding value in what they are having an opportunity to learn and share.

With the upcoming election and the fact that so many have traveled to attend the last two meetings, I don't think we will be able to work in another meeting but there are so many topics to cover that I am hopeful one can be arranged.

I encourage anyone that does not know what region they may be located in to reach out and find out so that they have a chance to participate in these types of meetings. We are all struggling with the new forms, laws, requirements, etc. and these groups can help us all get new information and ideas.

Vona Hudson - Director

Region 6

Regional meetings in Region 6 have been a huge success and our participation continues to increase each meeting. We held our 3rd quarter meeting earlier this week where we discussed updated forms as well as election website best practices and required postings. Regional meetings build relationships and make networking and collaboration possible throughout the year. I hope that our participation continues to increase as we move into the 2024 election cycle. I encourage Regional 6 members to reach out via email, elections@co.bastrop.tx.us, or phone, 512-581-7160, if they have any questions or would like to recommend future meeting topics. If you have not yet been able to attend a Regional meeting, please consider doing so. It is crucial that we all work together to ensure that we make 2024 a successful election cycle.

Region 8

Life has been a whirlwind since returning to the office after the conference in August. Orders and Notices and writs, and ballot prep and on and on. This is such a crazy time. Region 8 was left with a big hole with the departure of our colleague, fearless leader, and mentor, Chris Davis. I took a page from Chris's book and stepped up to the plate. As I told the group, I will never be able to deliver on the memes the way he did but I will do my best to provide valuable content for our meetings.

Region 8 will have its quarterly meeting September 19 with Lee Otten, Protective Security Advisor, Region VI, Central District Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency presenting a De-escalation Series for Critical Infrastructure. We will also discuss and share about chain of custody within our individual offices. This meeting is being held virtually and I believe we can host a few more people in the space.

Contact me at elections@co.llano.tx.us if you are interested in learning more. -Andrea



THIS MONTH WITH THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATORS

Volume 23 | Episode 10

October 16, 2023



Jennifer Doinoff,
President
janderson@co.hays.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

I know we're all busy preparing for the upcoming Constitutional Amendment election in November. Our election offices have also been moving into our new building this week. It's exciting, but also overwhelming during election season.



I've been working on finalizing the agenda for the Mid-Winter Conference. Membership and Sponsorship Forms have been rolling in and we're excited to head into 2024 with some new changes on the horizon. If you haven't sent in your membership forms yet, please do that as soon as possible to avoid any delays. I know everyone is busy with the upcoming election, but please make some time to join us for the meeting with the Election Center on October 20th at 2:00 p.m. The timing of the meeting was unavoidable, but we want to inform our members of a very beneficial opportunity that the Board is exploring. The details are listed below:

Topic: Election Center Pilot Program

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8674243088?pwd=VS82ajFjUUF5bEF5SMG9acEhZK0Jldz09>

Meeting ID: 867 424 3088

Passcode: 3dzs7H

As always if you have questions, or need information, please give me a call at 512-393-7310.

STAY INFORMED

[Membership Information –
New Membership Form](#)
[Education](#)
[Resources](#)

MEET THE NEWEST ELECTION ADMINISTRATORS



The Texas Association of Elections Administrators would like to welcome you!

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

2024 Mid-Winter Conference will be held in Amarillo, Texas.

[MID-WINTER Conference REO Classes](#)

[2024 TAEA Membership Application and Conference Registration](#)

[Reservation links - Embassy Suites Downtown Amarillo](#)



Shannon Lackey,
Vice President
shannon.lackey@randallcounty.gov

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VICE-PRESIDENT

Fall is in the air. The temperatures have fallen drastically in the Panhandle. It was 37 degrees when I drove to work this morning. We are putting the final touches on Early Voting and Election Day equipment and kits; making the lists and checking them twice or three times.

For those of you that are brand new EAs, or even those of you that have a couple of elections under your belt, you are not alone. I still get anxious before each and every election. The “what ifs” are the things that make me lose sleep.

Please consider taking a minute to fill out the membership/conference form for 2024. The form is available on the TAEA webpage. You can also find the link for your hotel reservations.

Please reach out if I can be of any assistance. Have a great Election!



Lisa Hayes, Treasurer
lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR TREASURER

I know everyone is really busy right now getting ready for the upcoming election. Please take a moment to send in your 2024 membership dues and Mid-Winter Conference registration. We are looking forward to spending 2024 with you and hope to start the year off together in Amarillo in January!



Advice from a PUMPKIN

Be well-rounded
Get plenty of sunshine
Give thanks for life's bounty
Have a thick skin
Keep growing
Be outstanding in your field
Think big!



Kristin Miles, Secretary
elections@co.bastrop.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SECRETARY

Early voting has come at last, and I know you are all busy with preparations for a successful election, as my staff and I have been! I hope everyone gets through this November election effortlessly and efficiently! I also want to add a quick reminder to you all to renew your TAEA membership if you have not already and to register for the TAEA 2024 Mid-Winter Conference. We have finally made it to cooler weather, and to follow will be the holidays we eagerly anticipate all year long! As always, if anyone has any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me!



Trudy Hancock,
Legislative Chair

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

Good morning all! Hope this article finds everyone ready for the November election. Praying everyone has a smooth one leading into next year.

I am collecting data on SB 924's impact. If you are a county that is having to increase the number of locations due to this bill, please send me information on the fiscal impact it will have on your county: the number of locations you have to increase by, the number of workers and costs, as well as the cost of purchasing additional equipment. This information is important because TAEA is meeting with law makers to show the impact financially to the counties.

Good luck going into next week.



John Oldham,
Educational Chair

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM JOHN

“We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate.” Thomas Jefferson

One of the remarkable, if not discouraging, things we see in elections is the vast difference in participation. This November we will be conducting elections not only to approve proposed constitutional amendments, but to approve, or disapprove, a host of tax and bond questions that will impact our daily lives. Unfortunately, those decisions may be made by just 5-10 percent of our voters. To add insult to injury, the cost to administer a low turnout election is pretty much the same as one with 60% participation.



REGIONAL GROUP INFORMATION

Region 3

Wow, the November election arrived, with the cold, really fast! I do not envy the Secretary of State's office having to implement the new laws and forms, prepare for seminars, hire staff, answer questions about the hand-counted paper ballot option, etc. That said, it has been hard to schedule and prepare for the upcoming election training and paperwork with the information delivered to us so late in the game.

I attended the county chair seminar. It was great to see other election troopers there. Much of it was a repeat; however, the last session, presented by Christina Adkins, geared towards hand-counting of paper ballots was PHENOMENAL as far as I was concerned. It is now been posted on the SOS website, in the county chair seminar section, titled *Promoting Accountability and Transparency in Elections*. It is not as good to read it as it was to hear, but it is full of good information. I don't know if you got the note from Andrea Wilson of Llano County that included the recording of the session based on this presentation, but it covered quite a bit of the presentation.

I was disappointed to see that there were conference attendees that were not persuaded that hand-counting ballots would not be the easiest thing to do, but those that were there cannot say they were not given the education they need to go into the process well-informed. I spoke to Kristi Hart and told her that I thought it would be good to make this presentation available via web training for election officials so that we could hear the same information.

As far as the region is concerned, I sent e-mails to the region members to try to get updates, but I suspect they are struggling to get ready for November amongst all the other duties they have, like us all. I have gained further respect for those that are county and/or county/district clerks who have to manage courts, juries, required training – with limited staff – as well as elections. My hat is off to them! I did hear from a few and those notes are below.

Brewster County/District Clerk Mozelle Carr survived her election contest, thank goodness. She started the year with zero employees and has added three new staff members – Joy Stevens, County District Deputy Clerk; Liza Montano, County Chief Deputy Clerk; and Marcela Renteria, Deputy County/District Clerk.

Martin County Election Administrator Helen Floyd lost her part-time clerk, so she is managing the upcoming November election with the help of several dedicated volunteers. She is trying to get a new employee hired.

Pecos County Deputy Clerk Sophia Franco reports that effective 1/1/24, Pecos County/District Clerk will be implementing the position of Election Administrator.

Runnels County has a new EA, Kelley Berry. Melissa Infante submitted her resignation in August.

Midland County EA Carolyn Graves retired at the end of September. Rosa Olgin has taken her place.

Several other counties have reported staff comings and goings but I do not have the specifics of employee names for who left and who has replaced them.

I am not sure when or if we will be able to get another meeting in this year but we will do our best.

I hope and pray that you all have a successful, stress-free November election!

Vona Hudson
Region 3 Director

Region 6

Things are rolling full steam ahead for Region 6 as we gear up to face the November 2023 Election. We have been working hard to lend a helping hand throughout our region as we all work to implement changes from the 88th Legislative Session. Finally getting a break from the scorching Texas heat has been a nice change of pace – and boy are we thankful for the rain!! Recently we held an Election Security Toolkit Workshop at both Brazos County and Bastrop County. David Velez-Perez, SOS Elections Division-Elections Security Trainer, gave a very detailed presentation on the implementation of WISP. We are looking forward to our next regional meeting where we will discuss preparations for the primary election. If you have any suggestions for our next meeting, please contact elections@co.bastrop.tx.us.

-Rachel Walker

Region 8

How do you free yourself and let go of the day when you go home? I just read an article from Harvard Business Review that said work-life balance is a cycle and not an achievement. Their research suggests *"that this is not a one-time fix, but rather, a cycle that we must engage in continuously as our circumstances and priorities evolve."* In elections we understand cycles; odd years vs even years. We are moving into a difficult, or busy, cycle. As we plan for next spring's election cycle I challenge you to also plan for how you will free yourself and allow yourself to rest with so little time in the day to actually take care of you. Find a book to read, a friend who will listen without judgment; plan a time each day for space to connect, even if it's just for 10 minutes, with what's important to you that isn't work.

-Andrea Wilson



THIS MONTH WITH THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATORS

Volume 23 | Episode 12

December 15, 2023



Jennifer Doinoff, President
janderson@co.hays.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Finally, it's December and we are only 3 weeks out from the 2024 Mid-Winter Conference in Amarillo. We have so much planned for this conference and we're excited to see everyone! We anticipate a larger turnout than we thought, and this will be a very memorable conference. We have speakers planned on topics that have been requested by many of you, such as Partial Manual Count, Recount, and Public Information Act requests. We will have election officials sharing their best practices in these areas, as well as experts in the field of Public Information answering your questions.

The Embassy Suites is full. The Courtyard by Marriott, 724 Polk Street, Amarillo, TX 79101 has been selected for overflow. If you have rooms booked that you don't intend to use, please consider putting those on the listserv for others to utilize.

Please remember to bring your door prize. We will collect them at the Registration Desk throughout the conference.

For those arriving on Tuesday night, we are planning a "movie night" to view the documentary *No Time to Fail*. This viewing will be followed up by a panel discussion on Wednesday that will be moderated by Natalia Contreras with Vote Beat.

Look forward to seeing everyone!

STAY INFORMED

[Membership Information](#) –
[New Membership Form](#)
[Education](#)
[Resources](#)

NEWS

[Election Line](#)

Remember - Door Prizes for TAEA Mid-Winter Conference



Shannon Lackey,
Vice President
shannon.lackey@randallcounty.gov

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VICE-PRESIDENT

2023 is quickly coming to a close! I don't know about you, but this entire year has flown by.

I hope to see you all in January for our TAEA Mid-Winter Conference in Amarillo. I'm looking forward to welcoming you to our city. The Embassy Suites in completely booked. The overflow hotel is Courtyard Downtown Amarillo, 724 S. Polk Street Amarillo. We've asked for a booking link, unfortunately the Marriott IT department has encountered an issue so we haven't received that as of today. I will share the booking link as soon as it's available. You can call the hotel directly and let them know that you are with TAEA and receive the rate of \$149 per night. This is the same as the host hotel. The Courtyard is waiving their parking fees. This hotel is approximately 5 blocks from Embassy Suites.

If you will be paying for your hotel stay with a county check, please send the check a week in advance to avoid any problems during your check in process.

I want to share some information about what to expect. First, bring a coat! The majority of the conference will be inside the Embassy Suites hotel. Thursday evening's dinner will be at *Hodgetown Baseball Complex* in the Club house. I promise that it is indoors! The stadium is across the street from the hotel, .2 of a mile, a 5 min walk or less. Again, **bring a coat**. We will have great food, drinks, and live entertainment. Some of you may recognize a couple of the band members that will be providing the entertainment. We will do the 50/50 raffle during dinner.

We would invite each of you to attend the showing of the film *No Time to Fail* on Tuesday evening. We will provide light hors d'oeuvres and there will be a cash bar available. I hope that each of you will attend. The film is showing from 5:30-7:00 pm. in the *Yellow Rose Ballroom*. There will be a panel discussion on Wednesday. You won't want to miss it.

Parking: Embassy Suites offers valet parking for \$32 per day. There is a city parking garage across the street from the property that offers parking for \$17 per day. You can bring your ticket from the parking garage to the hotel for validation and receive unlimited in and out privileges and the charge can be added to your room. There is free parking available at the Civic Center every day. The Civic Center is located across the street to the east. The City of Amarillo has parking meters downtown that require you to use an app to pay. The city recently voted to abolish those parking meters. You are NOT required to download an app or pay to park on the street. The only parking enforcement will be in areas that are marked for timed parking. Downtown Amarillo has many one-way streets.

We will be giving away door prizes again this year. There aren't any rules for these. Anything that you want to bring adds to the fun! It's always great if you can bring something that is special to your area of the State. The more door prizes that we have, the better the chance that you get to take one home! You are not required to bring a door prize.

On Friday morning we will ask for anyone that is interested in hosting the 2026 Mid-Winter conference to be prepared to give a short presentation to the members. We will vote on the site selection at that time.

Lastly, I want to wish each of you a **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!** See you in Amarillo and **BRING A COAT!**



Lisa Hayes, Treasurer
lisa.hayes@co.guadalupe.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR TREASURER

I hope everyone is having a great holiday season so far and that everyone has a Merry Christmas. Our midwinter conference in Amarillo is almost here, and the checks and membership forms keep coming in! If you are planning to go to the conference and haven't sent your registration form or payment yet, now is the time. If you could email me your registration forms as a placeholder while we wait for your checks to arrive, that would really help us get an accurate head count for the conference.

You can either mail your checks to me at 215 S. Milam St., Seguin, Texas 78155 or bring them with you to the conference. It's going to be a great conference and I can't wait to see everyone there!

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Are you seeking the perfect candidate for a position in your staff? Contact us to post it in our monthly newsletter!





Kristin Miles, Secretary
elections@co.bastrop.tx.us

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SECRETARY

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Amarillo next month! I hope you all have a safe and happy holiday season.



Trudy Hancock,
Legislative Chair

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



John Oldham,
Educational Chair

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDUCATIONAL CHAIR

As we rapidly approach 2024 many of us in Elections fear that 2020 will pale by comparison. It would be nice if the holiday spirit could remain in our hearts and in the hearts of those we will have to deal with throughout the 2024 election cycle. Although Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ, it is also a time when we hope for peace and civility in our lives and our nation. Two of my favorite Presidents expressed this well:

“Christmas is not a time nor season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy is to have the real spirit of Christmas. If we think on these things, there will be born in us a Savior and over us will shine a star sending its gleam of hope to the world.” Calvin Coolidge

“On Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Christ in prayer, feasting, and great merriment. But, most of all, we experience it in our hearts. For, more than just a day, Christmas is a state of mind. It is found throughout the year whenever faith overcomes doubt, hope conquers despair, and love triumphs over hate. It is present when men of any creed bring love and understanding to the hearts of their fellow man. The feeling is seen in the wondrous faces of children and in the hopeful eyes of the aged. It overflows the hearts of cheerful givers and the souls.” Ronald Reagan



REGIONAL GROUP INFORMATION

Regions 1, 2, 4, 5, & 7 – No new information.

Region 3 – Our region has not been able to meet this quarter. It is hard to find time to get everyone together with the election, holidays, etc. I wonder if it is because we are so large territorially or if it is because of the differences in the group with regard to the types of offices that conduct elections, i.e., clerks versus election administrators, etc. I envy the groups that are able to meet often because I know the benefit of sharing ideas and procedures.

Trying to schedule around different meetings that some members of the group have to attend, court schedules that some have to work around, budgets that we are all dealing with, lack of support from our counties -the list goes on and on – are intimidating to me.

There have been changes in personnel as well and while we are all in training mode due to constant changes in law and processes, I have to remind myself that all I have to deal with is election/voter registration law. Those that are county/district/combo clerks are learning laws and procedures for the other jobs, often with small to no staffs which is mind boggling to me.

In the last week, I have had conversations with a couple of small counties that are struggling. They have lost trained personnel and are trying to learn what they need to know with very little support. The people that preceded them did not share their knowledge or allow others to perform the work which would have helped them when they were placed in the position of doing the job. In one case it was due to death of the previous voter registrar.

They did not have resources that would allow them to attend SOS training and were not getting responses to phone call questions they submitted. Email response was better but still a little lacking. I spent time trying to provide ideas on things that might be helpful – after all, I still learn from all of the folks across the state because everyone is so willing to share their ideas, knowledge, and experiences.

I worry about communication – are they getting emails from the state, are they on the list serve, do they know about the association – what opportunities do they have to learn and grow? The diversity of the group known as “administrators of elections and voter registration” is so drastic. I continue to learn about the challenges that other counties experience. I have not arrived at an answer of what can be done better to help us all but I feel there is some work to be done.

It is not practical but when I hear of the challenges of the clerks, I think “if all counties had an election administrator maybe that would work better.” I am grateful that I am an election administrator allowing me to have elections and voter registration together, to have for the most part the staff and resources that are needed and not to have to split my work among so many areas.

So, on that note, to all of those that work in our business, I salute the work you do, the integrity you have, and with a grateful heart, I thank you all for what you share.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
– Vona Hudson, Region 3 Director

Region 6 – Proposed meeting dates for 2024 are March 24th, June 20th in Washington County, September 12th and December 12th in Lavaca County. We are still looking for counties to host the meeting in March and September.

Region 8 – Andrea Wilson, Region 8 Director | elections@co.llano.tx.us