

**BosqueFest &  
Bosque County  
Go Texan BBQ  
Cookoff**  
...see page 7



Bosque County Seat Est. 1854



**Meridian  
Chamber of  
Commerce**

Spring 2016

# News

## 2016 Chamber Board Officers:

*President:* Miriam Wallace,  
Wallace Sight & Sound

*Vice President:* Jason Hurley,  
Mustang Dental

*Treasurer:* Mandi Hardin,  
First Security State Bank

*Secretary:* Juanita Miller,  
Miller Septic & Port-a-Pots

## Directors:

Linda Calhoun,  
Main Street Antiques

Stefanie Cobb,  
Cobb Ranch Properties

Liz Davis  
Bosque Insurance Agency

Jimmie Lou Lewis  
Associate Member

Madelyn Rieke,  
RARE Motorsports

Kay Duke – Ex-Officio,  
Meridian Chamber of Commerce

## CHAMBER on the MOVE:

NEW MEMBERS: 4

## CHAMBER INQUIRIES (in the past 90 days):

OFFICE VISITORS: 151  
MEMBER REFERRALS: 51  
RELOCATION PACKET: 0  
TOURISM PACKET: 1

## 2016 Annual Chamber Banquet: “Help Us Raise the Barn”

Long ago when it was a common practice for all neighbors to help each other with their projects, one of the most common practices was for all of the community to get together to build a barn. Everyone would show up with tools needed and picnic baskets in hand ready for a full day of work. In a small community there is still a huge need to help each other achieve whatever goals they are working towards to make the community a better place to live.

The Meridian Chamber of Commerce invited all of the community to attend the annual banquet and help us “Build our Barn” or in other words “Build up Our Town.” There was a great group of people in attendance and everyone enjoyed a great tasting gourmet burger



Top: Miriam Wallace and auctioneer, Commissioner Ronny Liardon. Center, top to bottom: Chef Eric Kennedy; Sheri Davis serves pies; Stef Cobb of Cobb Properties and Rene Clayton of HOT Workforce.



cooked by Chef Eric Kennedy, owner of Morgan Street Burgers. To top off the meal there was a variety of homemade pies to from which to choose.

The Chamber staff and board of directors whole-heartedly thanks Chef Kennedy for all his hard work and donation of his valuable time; all the businesses who donated auction items; the bidders who bought them; and all those who attended and helped us get a little closer to building that barn!

## Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Meridian Chamber of Commerce is to promote expansion and growth of our businesses through commerce and tourism and to partner with other local organizations to promote civic programs designed to increase civic pride in our community to make Meridian a great place to live, work and play.





## Meridian Chamber of Commerce 2016 Awards

### Wesley & Shirley Gosdin: Lifetime Achievement Award Honorees

The 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award honorees were Wesley & Shirley Gosdin. Wesley & Shirley met in New Jersey while Wesley was in the Army just before being shipped to Korea for six months. After dating for a couple of months, they married and took the train back to Fort Worth and then on to Iredell, Wesley's hometown. They had only one more week together before Wesley had to leave for Korea. Shirley was left in the care of his parents who were very kind and caring country folks, but it was a bit of a culture shock for the city girl!

Upon returning from his stint in Korea, they started their family and were blessed with two boys and a girl. After a couple of jobs they decided to open a hardware store of their own in Iredell. They always worked together as a team. Wesley ran for school board and was



Patti Wagner (holding plaque) with Shirley and Wesley Gosdin, honorees of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

elected as his father had done before him. Serving the community ran in the family. Their business doing well, when the opportunity to purchase in Meridian they took it. Wesley and Shirley are members of the First United Methodist Church and Masonic Lodge. They love Meridian, love the people and it always showed.

### Meridian ACE Hardware: 2016 Business of the Year

The Business of the Year was chosen by the Meridian Chamber of Commerce members through nominations. It will not surprise anyone that Meridian Ace Hardware had the most nominations. When you stop in at the store you are always greeted with a smiling face. Everyone working in the store is people friendly, customer oriented and ready to help in any way they can. If they do not currently have an item in stock that is needed, they don't just say "sorry we don't have it," they will immediately order the item for the customer.

Meridian Ace Hardware can always be counted on to support the Chamber, community and local schools with donations of door prizes, auction and raffle items, or help in any way possible with events such as Christmas on the

Bosque, Jewels & Jeans and the National Championship Barbecue Cookoff. Meridian Ace Hardware has grown in size and inventory over the years as Dennis Clark has tried to meet the needs of the community around him. Owners, Dennis and Mary Lou Clark, are huge assets to our small

community. They treat their employees well and their employees represent them well with their smiling faces and great attitudes. The Chamber of Commerce was very pleased to present the 2016 Business of the Year award to Meridian Ace Hardware and its friendly owners, Dennis and Mary Lou. Congratulations guys!



**Congratulations Dennis & Mary Lou!**

#### **Bosque Connect... sponsored by the Meridian Chamber of Commerce**

Have you downloading our FREE "Bosque Connect" app? You'll have chamber member business listings at your fingertips including phone numbers needed while on the go. You can also stay up-to-date with chamber and community events.

You can download our mobile app by scanning one of our flyers around town or by visiting [http://www.apps-charts.com/app/Bosque\\_Connect/909524228/](http://www.apps-charts.com/app/Bosque_Connect/909524228/) on your smartphone or mobile device.





**Meridian Chamber of Commerce 2016 Awards-continued...  
Jan Goon: 2016 Volunteer of the Year**

While, the Business of the Year was chosen by nominations through chamber members, the Chamber Volunteer of the Year was chosen by the Board of Directors recognizing them for their outstanding assistance and participation with various activities throughout the years. This person goes the "extra mile" and is truly valued and appreciated by the board and staff.

A Chamber of Commerce is a volunteer-based organization so to be considered for the Volunteer of the Year Award the board of directors looks for those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in volunteer service to the Meridian Chamber of Commerce



and through his or her enthusiasm and dedication have set an example for future Chamber volunteers.

The current Chamber Board and office staff is excluded from consideration.

This year the Chamber Board chose Jan Goon as Volunteer of the Year. Jan Goon has

always been one of the first to say she will help at an event, bake desserts, donate door prizes for the luncheons or whatever is needed. She faithfully attends luncheons, ribbon cuttings and other special events throughout the year.

Jan Goon is a team player and, along with her husband Rick, is a huge asset to our chamber of commerce and town. Congratulations Jan!

**3rd Annual  
"Loving Life in Bosque  
County"  
Photo Contest**



"Plowman's Creek" by Heather Bachhofer

For the past two years the Meridian Chamber of Commerce photo contest has yielded some great scenes taken around the county. You will have another chance this year to submit prize photos that have been taken in Bosque County. We will again be looking for photos that feature a positive visual image



"Examining Worm" by Judy Walker

of Bosque County life, reflect what our beautiful area of Texas has to offer, and creates an image that depicts the essence of our community or what it means to live in Bosque County. If you are a camera buff and enjoy photography, we invite you to begin taking your photos now and don't forget to enter the contest when it officially begins.

Ready, Set, Go...start capturing those wonderful outdoor scenes in marvelously picturesque Bosque County. Watch for more information on the contest later in the year; the deadline to get photos submitted is August 12, 2016.

**Ribbon Cutting:**

**CARLISLE REAL ESTATE**



A new office Ribbon Cutting was held for Carlisle Real Estate on February 19th. Stop in and see Sidney, Wesley, Roger or Jessica at the beautiful new office located at 305 E. Morgan, Meridian, Texas, 76665. Phone: (254)435-3001; or you can view their listings and photos at [www.LandsOfTexas.com](http://www.LandsOfTexas.com)





*Thank You to these Members for their Special Investment  
in the future success of the Meridian Chamber of Commerce:*

**2016 Platinum Member:**



**Gold Members:**

**Brookshire Brothers Meridian EDC  
Meridian Tribune Rick's Plumbing Texas-New Mexico Power**

**Business Partner Members:**

**Best Western Velkommen City of Meridian  
Crossroads Bar & Grill Double B Foods First Security State Bank  
United Cooperative Services**

**Silver Associate Members:**

**Rick & Jan Goon**

**A huge Thank You ..to these Chamber Members who donated door prizes for the  
monthly membership meetings and luncheons, January through March:**

Briley Auto Supply, Debbie Mize – Mary Kay Consultant, Richard & Jane Creech, Rick & Jan Goon, Main Street Antiques & Interiors and Meridian Ace Hardware.

Thank you for all that you do to support the chamber and this wonderful community in which we live.

**Great Ways to Get  
Involved...**

**Monthly Chamber  
Membership Meeting:**

Second Thursday of each month:  
Informative Speakers, Good  
Community Fellowship, Great  
Meal. Call (254) 435-2966 for  
reservations.

**Committees:**

**Join One of Our  
Committees in 2016 &  
Help Make a Difference!**

By becoming active and involved,  
you help determine the direction the  
Chamber takes on issues that are  
important to the businesses and the  
community.

**2016 Scheduled Events:**

2nd Thursday: Membership Meeting & Luncheon;  
12–1pm Meridian Civic Center

April 15–16: Bosque County-Wide Garage Sale

April 23: Meridian Public Library–Jewels & Jeans Fundraiser

June 10-11: Chamber BosqueFest & BBQ Cookoff

June 11: TexAs Model A Ford Club; 53rd Model A Texas Tour

September 1: Annual “Loving Life in Bosque County” Photo  
Contest

October 8: Lords Harvest @ First United Methodist Church

October 21-22: National Championship Barbecue Cookoff @  
Bosque Bottoms

December 3: Christmas on the Bosque / Lighting in the Park

*Please mark your calendars & plan to attend these events.*

**For more information call the Chamber office at  
254-435-2966.**

*Mark your  
calendars!*

The Meridian Chamber Newsletter design and layout courtesy of Kimberley Smith of *Bosque Living Magazine*.





## 2016 Meridian Chamber of Commerce Members

### Welcome to Our Newest Members

B-Back Ranch  
Crossroads Bar & Grill  
Laguna Park Library  
Watson, W.H. & Sue  
Young Ranch Guest Houses

### Renewed Members

A Plus Loans  
Abuelita's Mexican Restaurant  
American Inn  
**Atmos Energy**  
Avirett Agency  
Bosque Animal Rescue Kennel  
B & B Band  
BCP Real Estate  
**Best Western-Velkommen**  
Bosque Cen-Tex Title  
Bosque County Cowboy Church  
Bosque Insurance  
Bosque Living Magazine  
Bosque Pest & Termite  
Bosque Valley Golf Course  
Bosque Veterinary Clinic  
Briley Auto Supply  
**Brookshire Brothers**  
Carlisle Real Estate  
Carter BloodCare  
CASA for Cross Timbers Area  
Cedar Country  
Center Pointe Barber Shop  
Citizens State Bank  
**City of Meridian**  
Cobb Properties  
Cooler Center  
Debbie Mize – Beauty Consultant  
Divine Living Assistant Services  
Double B Foods  
Edward Jones  
Faith Lutheran Church  
First Baptist Church  
First Community Bank  
First National Bank of Bosque County  
First Security State Bank  
First United Methodist Church  
First United Pentecostal Church  
Goodall-Witcher Healthcare  
Hardin Estate Sales

Highlander Spirits  
Hill College  
Hyde Farms  
Jackie's Antiques  
Jane Murphey P.C.  
Koehler Law Firm P.C.  
Lake Whitney Chamber of Commerce  
Lawson Funeral Home  
Lutheran Sunset Ministries  
Main Street Antiques & Interiors  
Meridian Ace Hardware  
Meridian Church of Christ  
**Meridian EDC**  
Meridian Frozen Food Locker  
Meridian ISD  
Meridian Lions Club  
Meridian Public Library  
Meridian State Park (Texas Parks & Wildlife)  
Michael Group Real Estate, The  
Morgan Street Burgers  
Mr. Ed's Country Feed Store  
Mustang Dental  
National Championship Barbecue Cookoff  
On Target  
Patton Land Company  
Radde Ranch  
RARE Motorsports  
Red Caboose Winery  
Richey Company, The

**Ricks Plumbing**  
Rivers Bend Doggie Drop Inn, The  
Rountree Appliance  
Rowland Realty  
Rusty Armadillo RV Park  
Screen Door Inn  
Smith & Bratcher P.C.  
**Texas-New Mexico Power**  
Treasure Chest, The  
**United Cooperative Services**  
Wallace Sight & Sound, Inc.  
Yellow Book USA  
Your Community Phone Book

### Renewed Associate Members

Brantley, Peggy  
Creech, Richard & Jane  
Duke, David & Kay  
**Goon, Rick & Jan**  
Griffiths, Donne & Sally  
Hardcastle, Paul & Pam  
Harville, Gene & Aline  
Hatley, Don & Jackye  
Jones, Joyce  
Jones, Mary  
Kerley, Sue B.  
Lewis, John & Jimmie Lou  
McMahon, Mark & Teresa  
Miller, Ray & Ernestent  
Staats, Robert & Teri

*Member*



**Spotlight your business by sponsoring one of the 2016 Membership meetings. \$50 includes:**

- Advertising in the next newsletter
- Lunch for 2 ▪ A five minute commercial
- Promotional materials placed on each table

*Call or email to reserve a month...  
6 meetings are still available.*

**(254) 435-2966**  
[meridian-chamber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:meridian-chamber@sbcglobal.net)





## 6 Simple Ways to Get Customers to Review Your Business Online

When you own a business, you know that online customer reviews are very influential. From Yelp to Healthgrades, Angie's List to Trustpilot, people are sharing their experiences on everything, and what they say has an impact.

These days, Google review can shape your business far more than a Google Ad. According to a Zendesk survey, 90% of participants claimed that positive online reviews influenced their buying decision, and 86% said their decision was influenced by negative reviews. It's a new era of marketing and service in which your brand is defined by those who experience it.

Many businesses worry about the one or two bad reviews, but the most effective way to combat a few negative words is to load up on the rave reviews. So ask your happy clients to take the time to write about their experiences. Here are six tips

to get you started:

1. Consider all the sites that are relevant to your business and set up profiles. Yelp, Angie's List, Google Local, Yahoo Local, LinkedIn, TripAdvisor, and CitySearch. Even if you don't think you are in a review-driven industry, review sites like TrustLink and Trustpilot are great.
2. The best way to increase reviews for your business is to just ask. Your customers know how important reviews are to your business, and as long as you provide a great product or service, they won't mind if you ask for a review but ask right away while it's on their mind. When a customer compliments you via email, phone, or in person, tell them you'd appreciate the same feedback in an online review on Trustpilot, Yelp, or the review site of their choice.
3. Unless someone has a nega-

tive experience to share, most customers won't look for ways to leave your company a review. That's why you need to ask them to post a review and make it as easy as possible for them to do so. Put direct links to your review profiles in multiple places; like in a follow-up email or on your website. Yelp offers downloadable "Find us on Yelp" banners that you can use on your website or print out for your store.

4. Incent, don't buy. Sometimes even your most satisfied customers need some extra incentive to take time out of their busy schedule to write a review. Small incentives are a good way to show appreciation. Just make sure your offer is for writing a review, not for writing a good review. Monthly giveaways, where you draw names of reviewers, are good ways to encourage reviews, and there's no hint of a transaction where you are paying for a review.
5. If the review site allows it, thank each person who reviews your product or service. You can even surprise a top reviewer by sending them a discount code or freebie. This simple act will turn a satisfied customer into an incredibly loyal evangelist.
6. Make sure your employees know the importance of reviews from the customers they work with. Given the importance of reviews in the customer decision process, this is one of the most effective ways to spend your marketing dollars.

*Forbes / Entrepreneurs, Nellie Akalp, Contributors*

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## BosqueFest and Bosque County Go Texan Barbecue Cookoffs June 10-11 at Bosque Bottoms

The Meridian Chamber of Commerce and the Bosque County Go Texan are looking for cooking teams to compete in their Barbecue Cookoffs that will kick off on Friday, June 10 at Bosque Bottoms. The BosqueFest Barbecue Cookoff sponsored by the Meridian Chamber of Commerce; is open to cooking teams residing in Bosque County and all the surrounding counties. The Bosque County Go Texan Cookoff is open only to residents of Bosque County.

someone you know, is interested in having a booth at Bosque Bottoms on June 11th please have them contact us. Local Churches, Non-Profits and school organizations are encouraged to reserve a spot to advertise or sell products for fundraisers so help us spread the word!

For more details, Cookoff entry forms or to reserve camping or vendor space, call Kay Duke or Teresa McMahan at the Meridian Chamber of Commerce office (254) 435-2966 or e-mail [meridian-chamber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:meridian-chamber@sbcglobal.net). For up-to-date information, download our free mobile app Bosque Connect or Like us on Facebook.

**The Texas Model A Ford Club's  
53rd Annual Texas Tour will  
visit Meridian!**

Other activities planned include children's activities, dunking booth, contests and music under the pa-



Photo©Kimberley Smith

Local teams may enter one or both of the contest; same rules and regulations will apply to both. There must be at least 10 entries to be a sanctioned cookoff. Cooking teams must be in place and fires started by 10:00pm Friday, June 10. Judging will begin for Chicken at 12:00 Spare Ribs at 1:00 and Brisket at 2:00. Winners will be announced at 3:00pm on Saturday, June 11 under the pavilion.

The Texas Model 'A' Ford Club will also be coming to Meridian on June 11th for their 53rd Model A Texas Tour! Approximately 200 cars are expected to be in town between 11:00am and 3:00pm. With this tour happening the same day as our event we are planning a larger event than in the past. We hope to have a large arts and crafts area for them to shop so if you, or

### Bosque Farmers Market

**Opening May 7!**

*Every Saturday, May – October*

*9am – 1 pm @ the Bosque County Courthouse Square*



**Check out the website [bosque.agri-life.org](http://bosque.agri-life.org) or call  
254-435-2331 for more information**

**More Bang for your Advertising Buck!**

*Distribution is in Bosque County and the surrounding five-county area including Waco!*

# BOSQUE LIVING

MAGAZINE

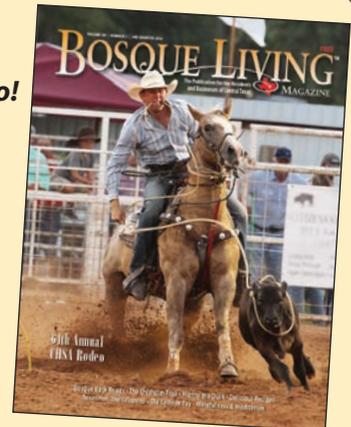
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**Contact us at number below or email**

**Kimberley at [design@studio2.net](mailto:design@studio2.net)**

**(254) 675-4222**

**[BosqueLivingMagazine.com](http://BosqueLivingMagazine.com)**





# Bosque County Child Abuse Prevention Community Awareness Event

Come learn how to fight human trafficking in our community from UnBound.

April 21, 2016  
6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Meridian Civic Center



CASA  
casacta.org



unboundhow.org

Questions? Contact [CASAAgainstTrafficking@gmail.com](mailto:CASAAgainstTrafficking@gmail.com)

## A Tool to Help Protect Your Business from a Potential Scam

The Better Business Bureau introduces Scam Tracker, an interactive tool people throughout the U.S. and Canada can use to find and report scams and fraud. BBB's Scam Tracker website enables BBB to collect and track that information in a meaningful way. Scams not only affect consumers but businesses can also be a target.

Common types of scams reported include debt collection calls, grants with fees, advanced fee loans, sweepstakes and IRS calls. To access BBB Scam Tracker go to: <https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker/austin>

Fraud is real...Hang up on Fraud! The U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration warns taxpayers not to fall for scammers who impersonate Internal Revenue Service employees in threatening phone calls that demand immediate payment. Don't give any information to these impostors! Just hang up.

## Discover More Life, Better Health.

**MORE**Life. **BETTER**Health. **TOTAL**Freedom.

How To Gently, Naturally and Organically Cleanse and Detox For More Energy and Improved Life Quality!

**Tuesday's**



**7 PM  
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You And A Guest Are Cordially Invited To Join Us LIVE For A Online Presentation Of The World's #1 Weight Loss Tonic.

- Be introduced to the worlds #1 cleanse and detox tea that rapidly restores your body to a healthy state of vitality and energy while eliminating the toxins and parasites that make you sick, tired and overweight.
- See results and testimonials from real people.
- Discover the income potential of helping others reach their health and financial goals!



Victoria Kimuyu

*We look forward to seeing you!*

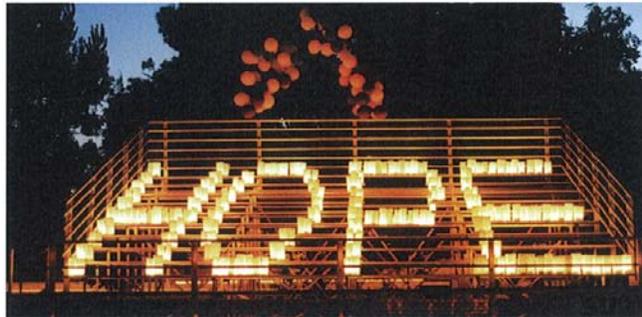
**REGISTER**

[www.BestDetoxTea.net/Webinar](http://www.BestDetoxTea.net/Webinar)





# AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE



## Relay For Life of Bosque County

*"Paint Your World Purple"*

June 11, 2016 • 6pm-12am • Clifton Cub Stadium, Clifton, Texas

For more information, please contact Ann Spenrath (Event Lead) at 254-253-0408 or Tara Krueger (ACS Staff) at 254-723-4244 or email [tara.krueger@cancer.org](mailto:tara.krueger@cancer.org)



**Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.®**

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▶ More info at [facebook.com/RFLbosquecounty](https://facebook.com/RFLbosquecounty)