



**Texas Midwest Day at State Capitol!** More than one hundred people (above) represented their city Tuesday, February 5, 2013, for Texas Midwest Day at the State Capitol in Austin. Tammy Thorn of Bronte joined other constituents of House District 72 for a photo with Rep. Drew Darby. Other cities represented in photo are Ballinger, Eden and San Angelo.



**Thorn attends Austin meeting**

Bronte EDC Executive Tammy Thorn joined more than 100 people representing cities in the Texas Midwest region in Austin on Feb. 5th participating in "Texas Midwest Day at the Capitol".

Texas Midwest Community Network sponsored its tenth biennial visit to the State Capitol during the Legislative Session. Highlights of the day included a photo session on the steps of the Capitol, a briefing on regional issues, visits to lawmaker offices and an evening reception sponsored jointly by TMCN and the Brownwood Chamber of Commerce.

"Texas Midwest Day provides an event for community leaders from our region to meet at the Capitol and have face to face contact with lawmakers," says TMCN President Kathy Keane of Eden. "Our presence in Austin helps legislators from our region send a message to urban and city lawmakers that concerns about water and transportation have special significance to us."

The message to lawmakers includes details that the regional organization covers 27 counties which are 10% of all counties in the state and the population is more than a half million people equal to the 7th largest city in the state.

State Senators for TMCN include Troy Fraser-Dist. 24, Robert Duncan-Dist. 28 and Craig Estes-Dist. 30. State Representatives include Harvey Hilderbran-Dist. 53, J.D. Sheffield-Dist. 59, Jim Keffer-Dist. 60, Drew Springer-Dist. 68, James Frank-Dist. 69, Susan King-Dist. 71, Drew Darby-Dist. 72 and Charles Perry-Dist. 83.

The 47 TMCN member cities are: Abilene, Albany, Anson, Aspermont, Baird, Ballinger, Brady,

Breckenridge, Bronte, Brownwood, Buffalo Gap, Cisco, Clyde, Coleman, Colorado City, Comanche, Cross Plains, De Leon, Dublin, Early, Eastland, Eden, Goldthwaite, Gorman, Hamilton, Hamlin, Haskell, Hico, Knox City, Menard, Merkel, Miles, Munday, Ranger, Rising Star, Robert Lee, Roscoe, Rotan, San Angelo, San Saba, Santa Anna, Snyder, Stamford, Sweetwater, Throckmorton, Tye, and Winters.

For more information about Texas Midwest Community Network visit the web site at [www.TexasMidwest.org](http://www.TexasMidwest.org).

**... Robert Lee VP**

*(Continued from page 2)* city and community revitalization services. He showed the group a slide presentation of some of his work and offered suggestions and ideas which could apply to us. He also had some advice concerning the apparent

approaching oil boom, such as zoning for the city.

On Saturday, February 9, a work day for VP was held downtown. Headed by Todd Smith and Marshall Millican, as well as several members and volunteers, they strung white rope lights on the windmill and the footbridge in the Memorial Garden. Dale Wojtek provided wiring and materials for the Christmas lights. That will be utilized for this project and switch mechanisms to turn them off in daylight hours. Judge Roy Blair has done most of the electrical work, aided by volunteers.

Come join us at our March 7 meeting and help make a difference.

**Applications for Conservation Programs being accepted**

Applications for funding opportunities with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program

(EQIP) are currently being accepted at all NRCS offices across Texas.

NRCS in Texas has received its initial allocation of EQIP funding for 2013 and will begin ranking and obligating EQIP contracts after February 15. All agriculture producers interested in submitting an EQIP contract application for 2013 should do so before this ranking deadline.

EQIP is a voluntary, continuous sign-up program that allows landowners or operators to apply for financial and technical assistance for the application of specific conservation practices; but the deadline for the first 2013 funding is February 15, 2013. Contracts are offered periodically depending on budgetary allocations. Applications made after the deadline will be considered in the next funding

cycle. Higher priority will be given to those applications that address national, state and local priorities and provide higher cost efficiency.

NRCS encourages any person interested in participating in their programs to contact their local field office, usually located at the county seat.

EQIP offers technical and financial help to install or implement structural, vegetative, and management practices that can benefit the soil, water, air, plants, livestock, and wildlife. Each county in the state is funded yearly to assist producers financially with these land management practices.

Last year, NRCS in Texas funded over 4,000 EQIP contracts with \$76 million to accomplish conservation practices such as irrigation efficiency, minimum till-

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