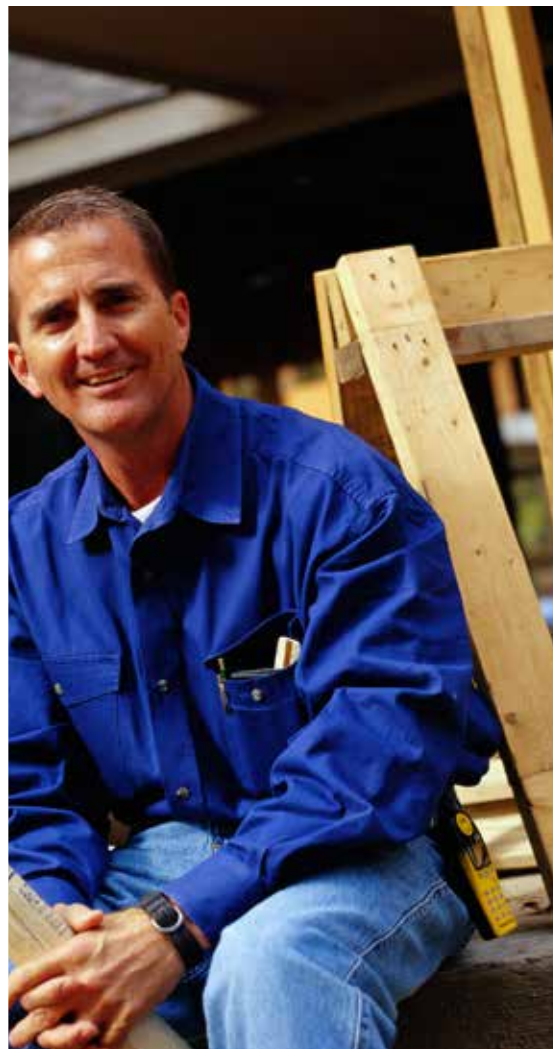


BOAT Bulletin

a publication by the Building Officials
Association of Texas



Are you prepared for winter?

Kurt Kasson provides a list of things to do to help prepare you for the season!
Read the list on page 4.

Message From the President



Happy Holidays!

I hope the Holidays have been enjoyable to all of our BOAT family and friends.

As you are aware, Texas remains in an economic boon in construction. It seems we are all busy and blessed with much economic development these days. BOAT also has a lot of work happening behind the scenes as we continue to make training and education one of our main activities for the chapter. In the last part of 2015 in September, we had the Central Texas BPI in Austin and soon after in October, our BPI in Brownsville. Both were well attended.

Texas is a big state; we all know that, but the effort of producing, teaching, setting up, phone calling, coordinating, delivering, and overall management of the Building Professionals Institutes is also a big job that nearly matches the size of Texas! We have some of the best people helping with all of these tasks and I am proud of all the great work they do to keep Texas educated and plugged into the latest in construction trends with courses that cover all subjects from fire, energy, and code enforcement to building safe commercial and residential structures and all the changes in between that occur in our ICC codes. This is no small task and it is smartly accomplished within our group's expertise, moderators, coordinators, teachers, instructors, and administrative staff. My hat is off to all of you for the great effort you've provided all year! Thank you!

Now it's time to prepare for 2016 and save those dates on your calendar!

- Houston - BPI - February 22 - 26, Double Tree by Hilton Houston Hobby Airport
- Arlington - BPI - May 18 - 22, UTA Campus
- Sugarland - BOAT Annual Conference – August 2 – 5 - Marriott Sugarland Town Square

You can keep track of future events by checking the BOAT website at www.boatx.org.

We need your help to keep all of our events successful. We can't do any of this without you, so please help us get the word out and let's make all our training and educational events effective and positive experiences for BOAT and all who participate.

As we finish 2015 and look forward to another year, I am hopeful you experienced a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

Selso Mata

Selso Mata, AIA, CBO
BOAT President
City of Plano

Traveling Can Make You Thankful

By Penny Peterson, CBO, City of North Richland Hills

During our everyday lives, we sometimes forget or don't realize how great our freedom is in this country. Sometimes it takes a trip outside of our country to bring a refresher course to our thinking.

I was fortunate enough to go on a cruise in early October. I had planned this cruise for months as a 20th wedding anniversary celebration. My husband and I were cruising to Jamaica, Grand Cayman, and Cozumel. We had not been out of the country for many years.

Our first stop was Jamaica. I heard there was some unrest there, so I planned for us to visit a secure resort for the day. We left the security of our ship and boarded a small bus to be transported to this secure location. We enjoyed our day. We boarded a different bus to be taken back to the ship. The bus hostess was very energetic, seemingly filled with complete happiness and joy. She asked for tips for herself and the bus driver as he made sure we arrived back at the port safely. I gave my husband a five dollar bill to give to her. In my mind, I was thinking \$2.50 for each of them. I exited the bus ahead of him and looked back when I realized he was not immediately beside me. I asked my husband if something was wrong. He said "no". When he gave the tip to the hostess, she was shocked that it was so big; she asked him if he was sure that he still wanted to give it to them. When he said yes, her eyes filled with tears and told him thank you multiple times.

Later, safely back aboard the ship, we learned from other passengers that the economy in Jamaica is very bad. Most of the common people are not allowed to make more than \$60.00 per week and must share their job with someone else. They cannot have a home unless they can



Thank you to all of those past and present that have served to protect our freedom.

pay for it completely. Thus most of the people are living in shanties and a few are fortunate enough to have a 500 square foot structure. Some of the locals look at tourists as being very rich and are very aggressive with their sales pitches. Yes, I can see why there is much unrest.

The next stop on our journey was Grand Cayman. It was quite the opposite of Jamaica. Here was excess. We had another great day. We swam with the sting rays and then walked the streets with exclusive, international shops. Shops that I could tell by looking in the windows were way beyond my personal bank account. After a while, tiring from the excess, we went back to our ship.

Our last stop was Cozumel. I was getting myself prepared for the hagglers which were in abundance the last time I was there in 2003. Wow, what a difference! They had just opened a new port with room for three major cruise liners. There was a new, very extensive, duty free shop on the pier. When you went through the gate from the port, there was a mini city of shops and restaurants, all before you go out onto the streets. No hagglers! Perfect, I thought.

Again, my husband and I boarded a van to be taken to our excursion. As we were driving down the street, I began seeing old buildings that were just a shell. You could see the

conduit hanging loose, no ceilings, no windows, piles of rubble. Every once in a while I saw a new structure. I learned that these buildings were remnants of hurricane Wilma in 2005. Quite a difference from what we saw at the port. It was sad to see the inequity in rebuilding.

Home at last! When we became reflective of our fantastic trip it was easy to see how it happened. This was a special trip for us - not one that we could do very often. The important part is that we CAN do this. We are allowed to travel, we feel safe in our homes and businesses. We are allowed to have jobs that can pay us well, have homes to live in. We have the freedom to think outside the box and then say it out loud. Some may say the United States is filled with problems, which may be so, but as Americans we have the power to solve them and move forward. We have the freedom to reject mediocrity and live to our highest potential.

All of these things have happened due to our veterans and the ones that stand behind them. Even though Veteran's Day has passed, I wanted to say thank you to all of those past and present that have served to protect our freedom. I see a bright future ahead. Freedom continues to ring! ♦



Things to do to get ready for winter!

By Kurt Kasson, CBO, City of Allen

Texas winters can get very cold. Here is a list of things to do to help prepare you for the season!

Adding a second layer of insulation to your attic can help keep your home toasty. R-30 insulation is considered the minimum. If your house is relatively new, it probably conforms. If not, consider adding insulation.

Caulk around window and door glass and trim, and all exterior trim. Install or replace weather stripping on all doors and windows. Check for cracks around pipes and electrical outlets entering or exiting the walls.

Install storm windows and doors if you have them. Consider purchasing storm windows if you have older windows that are not made from modern insulated glass.

Have your heating system checked by a licensed heating/air-conditioning professional. Most furnace manufacturers recommend at least annual inspections.

Check gutters and clean them if necessary. Clogged gutters can result in basement flooding when the snow melts.

Replace any roof shingles that are missing.

Have your chimneys inspected by a chimney service and, if necessary, cleaned.

Check the foundation for areas where water may puddle.

Trim trees away from the house. Have dead trees and branches removed by professional tree trimmers, or do it yourself.

Drain and shut off outdoor water faucets.

Insulate any water pipes that are exposed to freezing cold.

Replace the batteries in carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, and check to make sure these are all in working order.

Check fire extinguishers and charge and replace as necessary.

Make sure you are stocked with rock salt, sand, snow shovels, and any other items you will need during the winter. Actually the rock salt could be a double use for your margaritas here in Texas. ♦



When Disaster Strikes

By Mike Olsen, CFM, City of McGregor

On April 17, 2013, an ammonium nitrate explosion occurred at a fertilizer storage and distribution facility in the City of West. In May 2013, the Town of Cleburne was hit with a tornado. At both of these disasters, the Building Officials Association of Texas (BOAT) was asked to assist in disaster assessment. Jim Olk, former BOAT president and building official for the City of Garland, had a vision to start a disaster response team to assist the people of Texas with damage assessment when disaster strikes. In August 2013, BOAT hosted a two day training session to teach other building officials and code enforcement personnel the basics when doing damage assessment. Part of Jim's plan was to station trailers with equipment in strategic areas of the state to be deployed when we were called upon. These trailers would contain the minimum equipment needed to support the teams that would respond to an event.

I knew that he had a good idea but it was not a high priority for the BOAT board. That would soon all change with the events that took place in May 2015. Early in May, the City of Van was hit with a tornado that devastated the town. Jim, with about 10 volunteers, went to assist the city with assessing the damage. Later that month the entire state saw large amounts of rain and flash flooding. Jim got a call from Rich Emerson with ATS (the company contracted by Wimberley for building inspections) saying they needed help in Wimberley. I volunteered to go since I was just about an hour and a half away and Jim was coming up to lead the team. I contacted Jim the

day before I was to go down, and he said "Mo, I have a lot of flooding up here in Garland and I need you to be the lead for the Wimberley team." I was a little scared but agreed to run the damage assessment team. I felt I did a pretty good job but afterward, I reflected on our response and what might have been done better. What would make it much easier for teams when they showed up to support the community in need. That's when Jim's idea hit home and I finally understood his reasoning behind having trailers around the state equipped with supplies for response teams. In a disaster, many towns don't have the means or the equipment to print forms, issue PPE devices, or have a central meeting place with all that is going on.

At our annual conference in Texarkana this past August, the BOAT board added a line item to the

budget that would be used for disaster response equipment purchases. We also began the process of forming a committee that would outline the protocol and standard operating procedures for the response team. Jim and I started looking for the first trailer to be purchased for disaster response. In September, I located a trailer for a good price and with the board's approval, it was purchased. The trailer is tan in color, has a side access door, a rear fold down with lift assist, tie downs, and more. We have designed logos for the side of the trailer that identifies our association as we move around the state.

I would like to thank all of the men and women from the Cities of Jasper, Midland, Benbrook, College Station, Waco, and Hurst who volunteered in Wimberley. Without all of you, our relief efforts wouldn't have been possible. ♦



These trailers would contain the minimum equipment needed to support the teams that would respond to an event.

Introducing New Board Member – Michael Collier, CBO, CFM

By Michael Collier, CBO, CFM, City of Jasper

As a newly elected Board of Director at Large for the Building Officials Association of Texas, I would like to introduce myself. I am Michael Collier, Fire Marshall/ Building Official and Floodplain Manager for the City of Jasper. I have been employed with the City of Jasper since October 2009.

I began my municipal inspection career with the City of Silsbee in May of 2001 after 25 years as a building contractor. During the time as a contractor and into my inspection career, I served 28 years in the volunteer fire service. This service prepared me for my participation in the building damage assessment team. This team is a very important aspect of the BOAT organization. This team provides valuable assistance to the municipalities in the state of Texas in the event of a disaster.

I am certified with the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) as a fire prevention department head, fire inspector, and fire investigator. I hold state certifications as a TSBE plumbing inspector, TSDHS code enforcement officer, and TFMA certified floodplain manager.

On the building side of the organization, I am certified through ICC as a certified building official, ICC/AACE code enforcement administrator, combination inspector, building plans examiner, ICC/AACE property maintenance, and housing inspector.

I look forward to my term as a board member and hope to assist the organization in membership growth along with the executive board in continued growth and expansion of the Boat Officials Association of Texas. ♦

Introducing New Board Member – David Sartor, CBO

By David Sartor, CBO, City of Abilene

My name is David Sartor and as of last month I have the privilege of serving on the BOAT Board of Directors. I have been tasked with writing this article to introduce myself to the members. So, I suggest you save this article until a time when you're having trouble falling asleep. This should do the trick.

I serve as the building official for the City of Abilene. I am a plumber by trade and I was born and raised in Abilene. I am very proud of my community and enjoy serving my fellow citizens. I started with the City of Abilene as a mechanical/plumbing inspector in 1992, served as assistant building official from 2001 to 2003 at which time I was appointed building official. In the past, I served on both the ICBO and ICC plumbing exam development committees and served on the ICC plumbing code change committee in 1998 and 2006.

I consider myself to be extremely fortunate to have been hired by and worked with two highly knowledgeable and well-respected building officials, Bob Fowler and Cassie Hughes. Each of them inspired me to expand my goals and get involved with code development and committee service. I would not be where I am today without Cassie's help, tutoring, and the excellent example she set. I am eternally grateful to her.

I have found participation in the code development process to be extremely helpful in understanding how

codes are created and the rationale and justification used to gain approval. This knowledge better equips you to apply and explain the code, and on those occasions when thinking outside the box is required, to feel more comfortable with interpretations and alternate method decisions. I understand budget and time restraints when it comes to traveling to attend code change hearings, but with the web cast option you can gain the same insight with only an investment of time. The exchange of knowledge and ideas that come from participating in ICC and BOAT have been invaluable to me—as I know it has, or can be, for each of us. From the first time you interact with code officials from other communities and start discussing issues, you find you are not alone. The same problems and issues you are dealing with are the same ones each community deals with. There is a sense of relief and a bond is formed from the exchange of ideas and solutions which can assist us all in reaching our goals of serving our citizens.

So, I look forward to the opportunity to glean ideas and innovations from as many of you as I can, and I hope to be able to give back something of value. I look forward to contributing what I can in assisting BOAT in achieving our goals as we move forward. Thanks again for the opportunity. ♦

Introducing New Board Member – Jeffrey Widmer, CBO

By Jeffrey Widmer, CBO, City of Rockwall

It is an honor to serve as a BOAT board member. I intend to learn quickly, work hard, and serve the association well. I know the association has grown and has a great impact all over Texas due to excellent leadership. My hope is that the association continues to move forward in serving and making an impact in our great state. I feel grateful for the privilege to become a part of such a worthwhile cause.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about myself and my work experience. I began my municipal career in 1990 working as a building inspector for the City of Rowlett. In 1992, I was hired by the Town of Addison and worked in the dual position of building inspector/code enforcement officer. In 1998, I took the opportunity to work for the City of Rockwall where I continue to serve today. My current responsibilities include the building inspections, neighborhood improvement services, and health departments. I am also responsible for our board of adjustment, building and standards commission and construction advisory and appeals board. My past duties also included eight years of management of the city's animal services department and animal adoption center. A few years ago I had the challenge and pleasure of acting as the city's construction manager as we built our new animal adoption center. After performing the plan review and inspections functions for many years, it was very beneficial to work on the other side of a construction project and to actually build a substantial building. Working daily and closely with our general contractor gave me new insights and appreciation for the jobs contractors do within our cities and has resulted in our building inspections department being better prepared to serve those who build in Rockwall.

One of the areas I have focused on during my tenure in Rockwall has been to raise the level of customer service given by the departments I am responsible for. The city has applied and worked through the balanced scorecard and customer centered culture methodologies. Implementing those programs has definitely given us a greater

understanding of how we must always view our processes through the eyes of our customers. While it is true that residents and contractors are obligated to come to us to obtain building permits for their projects, it is incumbent on us to serve them well and to ensure that we make their experience in dealing with our cities a positive one. The retail industry understands they must focus on this in order to become successful businesses. Those of us working in the municipal/regulatory field can lose sight of the fact we too should work diligently to make our customer's experience a very positive one.

Another area where the city has made great strides is the way we perform the code enforcement task within our city. Over the last couple of years, we revised and enhanced the way we perform code enforcement. We began by rebranding our code enforcement department to our newly named neighborhood improvement services department. One of our goals was to soften our image and to make sure our residents see us as their partners who are here to help them solve problems. In order to engage at the neighborhood level we held numerous neighborhood cookouts and meetings throughout the city. We sent out invitations letting our residents know we wanted to focus on what matters most to them. The cookouts were a great opportunity for the department to spend time with our residents in a casual setting listening to them, answering their questions, and learning what their priorities are for their neighborhood. We definitely built and strengthened many relationships. As a result of these events as well as customer service surveys we conducted, we have been able to produce neighborhood specific goals and are now more capable to offer our residents the levels of service that they have asked for.

I certainly look forward to serving each of you in my capacity as a newly appointed BOAT board member, and would like to offer my assistance to help you any way that I can. Please don't hesitate to contact me. ♦



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