



# Coastline

Texas Gulf Coast Chapter • 1400 Velasco Boulevard • Freeport, TX 77541 • (979) 233-1616 • Fax (979) 239-4386

*Associated Builders & Contractors  
of Texas Gulf Coast, Inc.*

*Contractors' Safety Council  
of Brazosport, Inc.  
&  
Merit Shop Training, Inc.*

*Cordially invite you to the  
Annual Christmas Social*

*December 6, 2011*

*5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.*

*Lake Jackson Civic Center, Terrace Room 1  
333 Hwy. 332 East, Lake Jackson, Texas*

## ABC CARES COMMITTEE

### Makes Clothing & Coat Donations to BISD Elementary Schools & Texas Port Ministry

With the school year in full swing, BISD is excited to see children eager to come to school and engaged in learning. For some, this time can be filled with anxiety about the next meal or the proper clothes to wear. With the support of community businesses like Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), it has been possible to help a few of these students with new clothes, easing some of the worry about a new school year. ABC graciously donated clothing and coats for children at Elisabeth Ney, Jane Long and Stephen F. Austin elementary schools. Brazosport ISD would like to thank ABC Texas Gulf Coast Chapter for making a difference and keeping our community linked together.

#### Tami Sophia

District Communications Coordinator  
Brazosport Independent School District  
(979) 730-7052 ext. 10155



#### BISD Elementary Schools

Elisabeth Ney Elementary  
Jane Long Elementary  
Stephen F. Austin Elementary



Mary Ann Silbas, Nurse from  
Jane Long Elementary



Laurie Groth, right,  
ABC Cares Chairperson, with Laura  
Nichols, Nurse from Elisabeth Ney



From Stephen F. Austin Elementary,  
Brent Smith with Laurie Groth,  
ABC Cares Chairperson

#### Donation of Men's Clothing & Coats to Texas Port Ministry –

ABC Cares Clothing Drive received additional items in October for donation to the community. Bobby Fuller of Texas Port Ministry (TPM) was contacted and he accepted clothing, coats & other accessories. These items will be stored at TPM's Blessing Room. As needs arise, clothing is given free of charge to seafarers, truck drivers and port workers.

For more information, to volunteer or offer support, contact Bobby Fuller, Director at Texas Port Ministry at 979.233.5641.



Laurie Groth with Bobby Fuller,  
Texas Port Ministry



ABC thanks ABC members and others for their  
support to assist many families within the community!





## ABC National Chairman, Michael J. Uremovich Visits Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

Michael J. Uremovich, president of Great Lakes Energy Consultants, LLC, Manhattan, Illinois, began his term as national chairman of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) January 1, 2011. Uremovich leads ABC's executive committee and board of directors, guides the association's national initiatives and serves as its spokesperson.

He previously served as ABC's Region 2 vice chairman representing members and chapters in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. In 2005, ABC presented Uremovich with its prestigious Grassroots Member of Year Award.

Uremovich is in the process of visiting every ABC chapter and recently met with the Texas Gulf Coast executive board members at Red Snapper Inn. Key issues discussed included:

- ◆ The National Craft Championships in 2012 and the impact on local training and workforce development
- ◆ The relationship between ABC National and our local chapter
- ◆ The continued importance of our local training efforts
- ◆ An update on national legislative issues for 2012

Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) is a national association with 75 chapters representing more than 23,000 merit shop construction and construction-related firms with nearly two million employees.

Visit the national site at [www.abc.org](http://www.abc.org).

Visit the local site at [www.abctxgulfcoast.org](http://www.abctxgulfcoast.org)



Michael Uremovich with  
Buck Blevins, ABC Chapter Chairperson



Michael Uremovich,  
ABC National Chairman



Buck Blevins, Michael Uremovich, Daryl Dauer,  
Lisa Bundick Woods, Mark Monical, Amando  
Gonzalez, Gerald Andrews and John Woods  
ABC Texas Gulf Coast Board Members

## FOOD & TOY DRIVE

Join ABC to share the goodwill  
this holiday season!



### THE FOOD & TOY DRIVE IS NOW IN PROGRESS

ABC Public Relations/ABC Cares Committee encourages your participation to help local families.

Your donations can be made at ABC events or dropped off at the ABC office.

See **Donation drop-off** (on left)

### FOOD DRIVE:

Help our local food banks and families in need.  
Donate 5 pounds of nonperishable food items or \$5.00 cash!

### TOY DRIVE:

Donation of new, unwrapped toys for children's Christmas gifts

### DONATION DROP-OFF

**ABC office**  
**1400 Velasco**  
**Boulevard,**  
**Building C107,**  
**Freeport, Texas**

**Hours:**  
**Monday to Thursday**  
**7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**  
**Friday**  
**8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**Questions:**  
Call the office at  
**979.233.0279** or  
**233.1616**

Or bring donation to:

**ABC, CSC, MSTI**  
**Christmas Social**  
**December 6th**  
**Lake Jackson Civic**  
**Center**

## FOOD & TOY DRIVE

**DONATIONS**  
**Accepted Until**

***Tuesday, December 6th***

P/R Committee will deliver donations  
within the week

***Helping hands working  
together  
make it happen!***

### ANNOUNCEMENT OF DONATION RECIPIENTS

As donations are made,  
the Public Relations  
Committee will publish  
information through  
the ABC newsletter and  
local newspaper.



Texas Gulf Coast  
Chapter



**“ABC CARES”**  
**Cares to Help Families in Need**

## ABC/MSTI Craft Training Program Registration for Spring 2012

Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas Gulf Coast, Inc. and Merit Shop Training, Inc. Craft Training Program offers training through Brazosport College in each of the following crafts:

- **Automotive Mechanic** ■ **Instrumentation**
- **Carpentry** ■ **Millwright**
- **Electrical** ■ **Pipefitting**
- **Engineering Graphics & Design**
- **Safety, Health & Environmental Management**
- **HVAC** ■ **Machine Tools** ■ **Welding**

### REGISTRATION SCHEDULE for ABC STUDENTS

Date: January 10, 2012 (Tuesday)

Time: 5:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

Place: Brazosport College

Room F-133 & F-135

Cost: \$60 per credit hour

( 3 hour class-\$180; 4 hour class-\$240 )

For new students only ( or those who have not been to the college within the last year ) : Must fill out an on-line application for admission to Brazosport College before registering for classes. To complete application go to

[www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)

**RETURNING STUDENTS MUST PHONE**

**OR INTERNET REGISTER**

Monday, November 14, 2011 - Friday, January 6, 2012

979-230-3660 or [www.brazosport.edu](http://www.brazosport.edu)

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## Classes begin Tuesday, January 17, 2012

If you have questions or if your company is interested in phone or internet registration for employees, please call Jane at the ABC office, 979.239-4372 or 979.233.1616.



Texas Gulf Coast  
Chapter

## ABC October Events . . .

### Featured a Supplier Member Showcase of Products and Services & Training for Your Employees

The ABC Suppliers' Council Committee hosted the Supplier/Member Mixer and Competent Person Excavation Safety training on Thursday, October 6th at the ABC facilities.



**Sparkling Clear Industries**



**Sunbelt Supply**

During this social, Michelle Minchew, Suppliers' Council Chairperson, announced door prize winners throughout the evening.

Prize Winners Were:

Artist Tribble  
Academy Gift Card

Lisa Matzke  
Klein Tool Organizer

Joseph Sobotik  
Target Gift Card

Tommy Miller  
La Casona Restaurant Gift Card

Joe Smith  
Pair of Portable Chairs

Mike Mathis  
\$100 Wilderness Gift Card

Kirk Woods  
Ice Chest on Wheels

David Niekamp  
2-Tickets for Texans vs. LA Raiders  
& Parking Pass

Grand Prize, Wii  
Won by Al Almaguer

### 2011 ABC Board of Directors

Buck Blevins

*Chairperson*

Gerald Andrews

*1st Vice Chairperson*

Amando Gonzalez

*2nd Vice Chairperson*

John Woods

*Treasurer*

Mark Monical

*Secretary*

Daryl Dauer

*Assistant Secretary*

Lisa Bundick Woods

*Immediate Past Chairperson*

### Directors

Steve Bundick

Clinton Farmer

Jim Heath

Mickey Lester

Mike Mathis

Jay Mejia

James Reynolds

Mike Scarborough

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Larry Labay

Lori Goucher

### Staff

Terry McAlister

*President & CEO*

Becky Rinehart

*Director of Education*

Ron Speir

*Operations Manager, CSC*

Ruby Pratt

*ABC Administrative Assistant*

Jane Brown

*Craft Training Coordinator*

Kay Farmer

*Skills Assessment*

*Coordinator*



**Summit Electric Supply**



**Expertox-All American Screening**

The Mixer offered great networking featuring the following

### **ABC Supplier Member Exhibits:**

**EXPERTOX—ALL AMERICAN  
SCREENING  
NATIONAL TRENCH SAFETY, LLC  
SPARKLING CLEAR INDUSTRIES  
SUMMIT ELECTRIC SUPPLY  
SUNBELT SUPPLY**

Appreciation is extended to these suppliers as well as to additional sponsors who also helped to make this event possible:

**EPSCO INTERNATIONAL  
MEJIA INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY CO.  
UNITED RENTALS TRENCH  
SAFETY**



## October 2011 Supplier Mixer & Training



### The next Mixer will be scheduled in the Spring of 2012.

Don't miss an opportunity for great networking with ABC Supplier members, contractors and other industry representatives. Excavation Safety training will also be provided at the next event.

ABC members are ready to assist you with your construction project needs.

### ***Appreciation is also extended to the Suppliers' Council Committee for organizing all details for these events:***

Michelle Minchew, Suppliers' Council Chairperson, EPSCO International; Jay Mejia, Mejia Industrial Supply; Jerry Wagner, United Rentals Trench Safety, Mickey Lester, Wholesale Electric Supply; Ruby Pratt, ABC Staff Liaison.

### Excavation Safety Training An added benefit for your employees

The Suppliers' Council Committee scheduled the Competent Person Excavation Safety Training prior to the Mixer.



A BIG "Thank You" goes to:

**UNITED RENTALS TRENCH SAFETY**

for providing this training.

## Tell Others About the Benefits of ABC Membership & Ask a Prospect to Join Today!

### Encourage prospects to:

- Visit the local website at [www.abctxgulfcoast.org](http://www.abctxgulfcoast.org) to learn about the services, programs, and networking opportunities or call the ABC office at 979.233.1616
- Visit the ABC National website at [www.abc.org](http://www.abc.org) & take a look at the many other benefits and resources available to ABC members. You may also view/print the ABC membership application.

**ABC MEMBERSHIP  
COMMITTEE**

**Lisa Bundick Woods**  
ABC Membership Committee  
Chairperson  
Tri-Construction Co., Inc.  
979.233.7211

**Terry McAlister**  
ABC President & CEO  
979.233.0148

**Jack Murphy**  
Wolfenson Electric, Inc.  
979.265.1831

**Laurie Groth**  
Performance Contractors, Inc.  
832.241.4404

**Ruby Pratt**  
ABC Staff Liaison  
979.233.0279 or 233.1616

### As your business partner, ABC provides:

- Business development tools to grow your business
- Management Education to enhance your professional expertise
- Craft training programs for your employees
- Safety programs to improve your company's performance
- Government affairs resources to make your political voice heard
- Legal services to protect your business
- Website tools to link you with construction resources on the Internet
- Networking opportunities to connect you with industry leaders
- Publications to inform you about industry news
- Insurance programs to help you attract and retain employees
- Business discount programs to save your company money
- Student outreach efforts to build the industry's future workforce
- 75 chapters to support your company locally

### Texas Gulf Coast Chapter Membership Goal

We are more than halfway to our goal with **nine new members to date!** With your support, we can reach the **goal of 12 new members for 2011.**

For additional assistance with membership recruitment, call the ABC office at 979.233.0279 or 233.1616. You may also contact any of the members serving on the ABC Membership Committee listed in this article.

***Your Involvement Helps ABC to Continue to Grow . . .  
More Members Means More Clout . . .***

### ***You Are Wanted By...The ABC Beam Club!***

Consider what makes ABC important to you: your personal beliefs in the right to free enterprise; the right to work together to solve workforce problems; and the merit shop philosophy.

ABC can protect your rights and provide the services your company needs because of one critical element: ITS MEMBERS. And to continue, ABC must grow and strengthen. That's why the Beam Club wants you. Beam Club members are the foundation for the future of ABC and merit shop construction. Members who sponsor new members are eligible to join the Beam Club. Annually, the Beam Club presents awards to those who sponsor new members at the local membership events.

***Keep your team strong — recruit a member today!***

# HUMAN RESOURCES



## September 2011

### Question & Answer Session

with chapter attorney  
G. Mark Jodon, Littler Mendelson, PC  
Scheduled quarterly—FREE for members only!



## October 2011

### HR Symposium

‘How LinkedIn Can Optimize Your Recruiting Efforts’  
with guest speaker Christine Hollinden, Hollinden Strategic Marketing Consulting



## HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Associated Builders & Contractors,  
Merit Shop Training, Inc., &  
Contractors' Safety Council of Brazosport  
will be closed:

Thursday, November 24, 2011 &  
Friday, November 25, 2011 in observance of  
Thanksgiving. We will reopen  
Monday, November 28, 2011 at 7:00 A.M.



Supporting our members and the Merit Shop  
Philosophy



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## Electrical Continuing Education Class

Thursday, Nov. 17th—5-9 p.m.

Meets TDLR requirement for 4-hour update for Master, Journeyman, and Apprentice License Renewal. Master Electrician is instructor.

\$40 ABC Member  
\$60 Non-Member

To Schedule:  
(979)233-1616 or  
[www.abctxgulfcoast.org](http://www.abctxgulfcoast.org)



### Industries Served:

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## You and ABC Can Make A Difference JOIN AN ABC COMMITTEE!

Serving on ABC committees makes for a winning team . . . working for the membership comes back to work for you. An important benefit of ABC membership is the opportunity to make a difference. You can help shape the construction industry by volunteering to serve on one of ABC's Texas Gulf Coast Chapter committees. **Doing so gives you the opportunity to address legislative, educational and policy issues that are of vital importance to the future of the construction industry.** Whether your interests lie in working on creating a drug-free workplace or in fighting specific legislation, there is a place for you on ABC committees. Listed below are the Committees of ABC and purpose of each for your review.

1. **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE** - Provide ABC members with information and training relating to improving their Human Resources functions with specific focus on employment law and procedures.
2. **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE** - Monitor, inform and recommend necessary action on legislative matters at the local, state and national levels.
3. **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** - Recruit, retain and involve member companies.
4. **POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE** - Analyze political environment in the chapter area and recommend political candidates for endorsement and/or financial support; obtain contributions from chapter members for the ABC PAC, and provide information to members on relevant political matters.
5. **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE** – Project a positive image of Associated Builders and Contractors to the general public to enhance the business opportunities for merit shop contractors, suppliers and their professional associates and continue donations to community charitable organizations.
6. **SUPPLIERS' COUNCIL COMMITTEE** – Improve Supplier/Customer relations.

If you are interested in joining a committee, feel free to go online at [www.abctxgulfcoast.org](http://www.abctxgulfcoast.org) to obtain a Committee Volunteer Form and return to ABC: P.O. Drawer 2650, Freeport, Texas 77542 or fax to 979/239-4386.

*You and ABC...  
Working together ...  
Serving the Brazosport Area*

## Employees May Not Be Disciplined for Social Networking Activity Protected by the NLRA

The National Labor Relations Board ("NLRB") has taken great interest in employee use of social media (i.e. Facebook) and employer responses to such use. In particular, the NLRB is concerned that employers are violating employees' free speech rights under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act ("NLRA"). Section 7 of the NLRA protects employees who engage in "concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection." Importantly, this federal statute does not just protect employees who engage in union activities or work in a unionized environment. It also protects other forms of employee conduct undertaken for their "mutual aid or protection" including, for example, a group of non-union employees complaining to management about their wages or working conditions, participating in a strike or work stoppage, or attempting to enlist public support to improve their terms or conditions of employment.

The NLRB's standards for determining whether an employee, or group of employees, is engaged in protected Section 7 activity have evolved over many years. With the explosion of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, questions have arisen as to the extent to which an employee's online postings fall under NLRA protection. Under the NLRA, conduct is considered "protected" and "concerted" where an employee: acts together with or on the authority of other employees; seeks to initiate, induce, or prepare for group action; or brings "truly group complaints" to the attention of management. Section 7 of the NLRA also protects an employee's activities if they are the logical outgrowth of work-related concerns expressed by employees collectively. Cases where an employee's online posts constituted protected, concerted activity have included the following topics: employee job performance; staffing levels; protests of supervisory actions; criticisms of an employer's promotional event that employees believed would negatively impact their sales commissions; and shared employee concerns about their employer's income tax withholding practices.

On the other hand, conduct is not protected, concerted activity if the employee is engaging in activity "solely by and on behalf of the employee himself." Employee comments that are "mere griping" as opposed to "group action" do not fall within Section 7. An employee, who complains about work on Facebook or Twitter, but only with family, friends, or other non-coworkers, is not engaged in protected, concerted activity. For example, in one case, a bartender who made negative comments on Facebook

about his employer's tipping policy was not engaged in concerted activity because he directed his comments to his relative and only made them by and on behalf of himself. Similarly, an employee who made inappropriate comments to her non-coworker friends on Facebook about her employer's mentally disabled clients was not engaged in concerted activity. In another case, a reporter's Twitter postings critical of his newspaper's sports department headlines and a local TV station did not relate to his or other employees' working conditions, nor did he discuss or seek to discuss his concerns with any of his coworkers. As such, these tweets were not "concerted."

The current Acting General Counsel of the NLRB is taking a very aggressive approach to employers' social media policies, attempting to find cases to present to the NLRB from which the Board can fashion specific rules and guidelines in this arena. In so doing, the Acting General Counsel appears to be expanding the law to give employees extremely broad latitude to use social media to communicate about their employers, supervisors, wages, and working conditions. Employers should continue to closely monitor legal developments in this area and review and, where appropriate, revise their social networking policies. If an employer's social media policy, or for that matter any personnel policy, work rule, or employee handbook provision, contains any language that could be construed to infringe on its employees' ability, during their non-work time, to communicate with their coworkers, a union, the public, or others about their wages or other terms or conditions of employment, the employer should revise the policy to make it clear it does not apply to activity protected by Section 7. In addition, before taking disciplinary action against employees because of their social networking activities, employers should consider whether the employees' activity constitutes protected, concerted activity under the NLRA.



G. Mark Jodon,  
Littler Mendelson, PC

G. Mark Jodon, a shareholder in Littler Mendelson's Houston office, is board-certified in labor and employment law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Mark serves as the chapter attorney for the ABC Texas Gulf Coast Chapter.

He can be reached at (713) 652-4739 and [mjodon@littler.com](mailto:mjodon@littler.com).



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## Meetings & Events for Nov & Dec ABC, CSC, MSTI

- Nov 8** BCPC Contractors' Comm. Mtg., 11:30 a.m., 104B
- Nov 17** MSTI Board Mtg., 3:00 p.m., 104B
- Dec 6** ABC, CSCB, MSTI Christmas Social, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Civic Center
- Dec 7** Construction Exhibition/Craft Championships Mtg., 3:30 p.m. 104B

## MSTI Classes and Training Opportunities

- Nov** CMA classes on Thursdays
- Nov 17** Electrical CE Class, 5:00 p.m., 104B

*ABC is an investment  
in your business!*

To succeed in today's diverse construction industry, a contractor must assume the role of businessman, lawyer, human resource expert, and accountant. He must be well versed in the legislative and regulatory changes that affect his employees. Most contractors, however, have neither the staff nor the time to properly devote to these functions. That's where ABC enters the picture. ABC accomplishes goals collectively for contractors who, on their own may not have the time, the energy, or the resources.

ABC works for our members—delivering pertinent information, providing opportunities for networking and business development.

Recruit a new member today!


***ABC Means Business!***

*Are you taking full advantage of the many opportunities and benefits that your membership affords you?*



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