

# Coastline

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

*December 7, 2010*

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



*Tis the Season!*

*And we hope you are planning to join us....*

*It will be a 'Fa La La Jolly' time!*

*ABC, CSC, and MSTI*

*Annual Christmas Social*

*&*

*A Celebration*

*of ABC's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

*Please let us know if we can expect to see you there!*

*Ruby@abctxgulfcoast.org or 979.233.1616 or 979.233.0279*



*Lake Jackson Civic Center,  
Terrace Room 1*

*Bring a new toy for a child or canned food for  
the Food Pantry.....Santa will thank you and  
ABC Cares will too!*

# Membership



## Renew Your ABC Membership for Free!

When you join Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), you become part of the nation's leading association for merit shop construction and construction-related firms.

### Your Discounts Offset the Membership Fee

Every business is different, but every contractor has expenses. Here's how much a typical contractor with 15 employees can expect to save in one year with just a few of the ABC member business discounts.

#### Example of Company Savings in 2009

Product or Service		Savings
Chevrolet Cargo Van	1 vehicle	\$1,000
FedEx Shipping	2 envelopes/week	\$628
Verizon Wireless Service	7 cell phones	\$980
Aramark Apparel Rental	8 rentals/week	\$850

**Total Savings for Year: \$3,458**

"Our construction business has 18 employees. Currently, we're saving \$4,176 with two of ABC's discount programs, which more than pays for our membership dues."

—Pamela Volm  
Annapolis Contracting, Inc.

#### Saving You Money\*

Tap into exclusive discounts for ABC members and save on business services and products you're already purchasing.

- **General Motors** – Save up to \$1,000 per vehicle on top of other incentives
- **Verizon Wireless** – Save up to 20% on mobile phone plans
- **FedEx** – Save 29% on overnight delivery services
- **Ford** – Save up to \$2,500 per fleet vehicle on top of other fleet discounts
- **Aramark** – Save 20% on safety apparel
- **And More!** – See all the vendors and get the most current program updates at [www.abc.org/discounts](http://www.abc.org/discounts).

\* Vendors and discounts subject to change.

#### Building Your Business

Take advantage of great resources and programs to grow your business.

- **Find A Contractor** – Lists your business on ABC's online member database with powerful search tools
- **Accredited Quality Contractor** – Shows prospective clients that you have achieved a high level of corporate responsibility
- **Safety Training Evaluation Process** – Improves your company's safety practices and can lower your workers' compensation insurance rates
- **Excellence in Construction Awards** – Showcases your company's best projects
- **Networking Events** – Connects you with contractors and leaders in the construction field
- **Peer Groups** – Share experiences with contractors from across the country

#### Keeping You Informed

ABC provides resources to help you stay current with the information you need to make better business decisions.

- **Construction Executive** – The magazine for the business of construction
- **ABC Newsline** – Weekly electronic newsletter for merit shop contractors
- **Local Newsletters** – Print and electronic publications of regional interest
- **Legal Resources** – Get help on labor and construction law issues
- **Construction Economic Update** – Stay current on news that impacts your business

Learn More Today! Find the ABC chapter in your area.

Online: [www.abc.org/join](http://www.abc.org/join) — Email: [members@abc.org](mailto:members@abc.org)



## Loyal Texas Gulf Coast ABC Member Renewals received as of November 30, 2010

Andrews, Myers, Coulter & Hayes PC  
Axion Logistics, LLC  
Bobby Ford, Inc.  
Brazoria Valve & Fitting Co.  
Brazosport College  
Brazosport Tire  
Civil Mechanical, Inc.  
Coastal Switchgear  
Contractors' Safety Council of Brazosport  
D-Electric Co.  
Dennis Bonnen, State Representative  
Detail Products, Inc.  
Enduro Systems, Inc.  
EPSCO International  
Equipment Depot  
Evco Industrial Hardware, Inc.  
Expertox dba All American Screening  
The Facts  
First State Bank  
Freeport LNG Development, LP  
Freeport Welding & Fabricating, Inc.  
Gulf Chemical & Metallurgical Corp.  
ICS, Inc.  
JIT Distributing, Inc.  
JV Industrial Companies, Ltd.  
Killum Pest Control  
Landmark Business Strategies, Ltd.  
Leo Martin Chevrolet  
Lone Star Resin Systems, Inc.  
Matheson Tri-Gas  
Mejia Industrial Supply Co.  
Merit Shop Training, Inc.  
Mustang Rental Services  
Non-Destructive Inspection Corp.  
Norrell Construction, Inc.  
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Right Click Technology  
S&B Engineers & Constructors, Ltd.  
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Southern Technical Services  
Summit Electric Supply  
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Texas Gulf Bank, NA  
Thermon Heat Tracing Services  
TnT Crane & Rigging, Inc.  
Tri-Construction Company, Inc.  
Turner Industries Group, LLC  
Victory Insurance Agency, Inc.  
Wells Fargo Bank of Texas, NA  
Wholesale Electric Supply Co., Inc.  
Williams Diesel Parts & Service  
Wommack Law Firm, PC

12/23/10

*The Board of Directors of ABC Texas Gulf Coast wishes to thank all those who renewed their membership for 2011.*

*Working together....Serving the Brazosport Area*

# Leadership



## 2011 BizCon™

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Chief Economist,  
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and Contractors



Andrew Zolli  
Expert in Global  
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and Innovation

**ABC Members can save \$200 with Early Bird Registration!!!**

Register by December 17th - Registration form available on ABC National Website: [www.abc.org](http://www.abc.org)

### **Texas Gulf Coast Chapter—35 Years Strong Behind Active Leadership**

Incoming Chairperson Buck Blevins, Infinity Construction Services, and Lisa Bundick Woods, Texas Gulf Coast Chairperson and CFO of Tri-Construction Co, Inc., are both long time members and supporters of ABC and the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter. Buck and Lisa, along with President Terry McAlister recently attended the ABC National Board Meeting and Leadership Conference in California. Because of a legacy of strong leadership and long-time membership, the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter is 35 years because of our leaders. Many thanks to both for their many hours of service to the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter.



*Blevins and Woods attend ABC National Board Meeting and Leadership conference in Rancho Mirage, CA, in November.*

## Managing Employee Performance Problems Through Better Documentation



G. Mark Jodon, a shareholder in Littler Mendelson's Houston office, serves as the ABC Gulf Coast Chapter's labor and employment attorney. Mark can be reached at (713) 652-4739 and [mjodon@littler.com](mailto:mjodon@littler.com). Please email Mark if you would like a checklist on documenting employee performance problems.

We're good at documenting many things. In football we document yards per carry for running backs, completion percentage for quarterbacks and takeaway statistics for defenses. In baseball, there are records for the most homeruns hit in a season, on bat hitting percentage with runners in scoring position and earned run averages for pitchers. But when it comes to documenting employee performance, we are not so good. Poor, incomplete, dishonest and inaccurate documentation is the single most common reason that employees file and win employment related lawsuits. Fortunately, with just a little effort, we can improve the quality and content of our performance documents that will result in better employee relations and fewer lawsuits that cannot be successfully defended.

Let's start with "coachable moments" – those times that present us with opportunities to teach and correct behavior that may be heading down a path leading to a more serious problem and discipline. This is a classic case where supervisors completely fail to document the situation. Although the coaching session was not technically "disciplinary" action, the session may form the basis for future disciplinary action if the employee does not alter or improve his performance after receiving the benefits of some coaching or additional instruction.



Take time to explain why the behavior is inappropriate or incorrect and advise methods for correction.

The "verbal" warning is another area where we tend to completely fail to document the performance problem. Even though it seems like an oxymoron to have a written verbal warning, documenting the event is an HR must. Like the coaching session, the verbal warning is a chance to correct unacceptable behavior before it's too late. A paper trail documenting coaching sessions and verbal warnings will make HR's job much easier if a written warning is later needed to be issued. Documenting the coaching sessions and the verbal warnings leading up to the more formal written disciplinary action will lend credibility to the company's position and most likely diffuse any confrontation with the employee since the employee will have been on notice from the prior sessions regarding his performance.

The content of the documentation is as important as the fact of the disciplinary action. Many times the documentation is inadequate due to some very obvious omissions of fundamental items. For example, the document should identify the date, location and time of the event that resulted in a coaching session or the disciplinary action. It should also reflect the date that the discussion with the employee took place and identify who was present during the meeting with the employee. The document should include a place for the employee to acknowledge that the meeting occurred and it should be signed by the employee. A copy of the document should also be given to the employee.



Employee should acknowledge the meeting regarding any conversation or disciplinary action.

Frequently, the documentation is too vague or incomplete to be of value later when it may be needed. Documentation that merely states that "the employee violated company policy" is unacceptably vague if it does not specifically identify what policy was actually violated. This documentation could further be improved by detailing exactly what the employee did that violated the identified company policy. Statements such as "not a team player" or "not a good fit" or "unreliable" are subjective and meaningless unless adequately explained and supported by objective examples.

It is not enough to point out the problem behavior. The documentation should include the required course of action to correct the behavior, including clear instructions as to

*Continued next page*

# Human Resources



what needs to be changed or accomplished. The documentation should include a timetable for achieving the desired results and a clear explanation of the consequences for failing to improve.

In the case of a written disciplinary warning, be sure to include references to any past coaching sessions and verbal warnings related to the present conduct. The written warning should include the actual dates of the prior discussions with the employee.

There are some things that you do not want to include in the written documentation. Avoid personal opinions, gossip and rumors. Avoid basing the warning on second and third hand information. Avoid using legal conclusions. For example, if an employee is being disciplined in connection with a sexual harassment complaint, do not state that the employee engaged in sexual harassment. Instead, describe the employee's behavior as unacceptable. By stating a legal conclusion, the documentation may be used against the company as an adverse admission in a subsequent sexual harassment lawsuit.

Finally, we frequently miss the mark when it comes to documenting follow-up with the employee who is the subject of a disciplinary action. It is imperative that we make sure that we are monitoring any corrective action plan outlined in the disciplinary document. Each follow-up should be memorialized with a note to the file. If progress is observed, it should be noted in the file. Likewise, if no progress is noted, there needs to be a record that the employee was placed on notice of this fact.



Document progress ( or lack of) as well as the initial problem.

Most documentation can be written in a matter of a few minutes. Those few minutes may be what saves the company from costly litigation with a problem employee. Supervisors can be trained on better documentation techniques in less than an hour. The average, run of the mill employment discrimination lawsuit can cost a company over \$100,000 where supervisors fail to take the time to document performance problems. How would you prefer to spend your time - an hour in training or a year in litigation?



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## 2010 Craft Championships Results Are In!

Local Millwright from McGill Maintenance Partnership, Ltd. qualifies to carry on long tradition of ABC Texas Gulf Coast representation at ABC National Craft Championships in Spring 2011.

Since 1995, the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter has participated in the ABC National Craft Championships in support of training for a skilled workforce. Over the years, this chapter has been fortunate to bring home many championship medals. Merit Shop Training, Inc., the educational affiliate of ABC Texas Gulf Coast, and Brazosport College have worked diligently over the last fourteen years to provide quality craft training. In those fourteen years, more than 30 craftsmen from this area have competed on the national level. In addition to six 1<sup>st</sup> Place winners, this chapter can boast a total of 15 craftsmen who placed at the national level.

This year's local competition was held October 28, 2010 at Brazosport College as part of the 2010 ABC Construction Exhibition. This year's winner was Denton Smith of McGill Maintenance Partnership, Ltd. He joins a long line of McGill millwrights who have represented the Texas Gulf Coast Chapter at the National Competitions. As a local first place winner, Denton takes home \$250 and a plaque from ABC. He also has also earned a fully expense paid trip to the national competition in San Antonio in April. Denton will compete against the nation's best during the national competition and we wish him luck!

Those wishing to participate in the local competition must have completed most, but not all, of the courses required for the MSTI certificate and must not be classified as a journeyman. Our local competition mirrors the national event. Competitors take a written exam based on NCCER curriculum for their craft and participate in a performance exam that requires application of their knowledge. The written exam constitutes 25% of the final score while the performance test constitutes 75%. MSTI guidelines require that a participant's total score be 65 or better to place locally.



Smith during competition October 28 at Brazosport College.

Hugo Guel, UEI, presents Denton Smith, 2010 Craft Championships Winner, with plaque and check for \$250.



ABC and MSTI would like to thank Brazosport College coordinators, judges, and local contractors who made the competition possible. Hugo Guel, Construction Exhibition Co-Chair served as chairman for our local competition. Guel, with UEI, is a long-time supporter of craft training and this competition.



Local ABC Craft Championships Winner and Representative for Texas Gulf Coast Chapter: Denton Smith with instructor and college Coordinator Jim Slick.

*Of notable significance, Slick's Machinist and Millwright program is nationally recognized and has produced a total of 10 medals since 1995 at the ABC National Championships, 5 of which are Gold! We wish Jim, Denton, and McGill Maintenance much luck this year.*



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WINNING FORMULAS

## ABC Human Resources Committee

... at work for the membership

### A REVIEW OF PROGRAMS IN 2010:

The BIG C: "Effective Communications with Employees"

"Electronic Information Sources for HR Professionals"

Workforce Solutions: "A Resource for Texas Employers"

Question & Answer Sessions offered twice a year,  
for ABC members only, at no cost, includes employment law update.

Question & Answer Sessions facilitated by  
Mark Jodon, attorney with Littler Mendelson



Louis Guidry (on right), HR Committee Chairman, pictured with some of the committee members.



Symposiums: 2-hour programs include featured speakers, lunch and course materials.



ABC Human Resources programs are one of many ways ABC serves its members by offering information & training to enhance expertise as well as presenting legal updates to protect your business.

*New programs are already scheduled for 2011!*

*Don't miss them!*

### ABC HR Committee Members:

Louis Guidry, Chairman  
McGill Maintenance Partnership, Ltd.

Mike Scarborough, Board Liaison  
Miken Specialties, Ltd.

Mark Jodon, Vice Chairman  
Littler Mendelson PC

Rhonda Hall  
Dow Chemical

Loretta Anderson  
Expertox - All American Screening

Wendy Mazurkiewicz  
Freeport LNG Development, LP

Angela Young  
Freeport LNG Development, LP

Elizabeth Castle  
Gulf Chemical & Metallurgical Corp.

Dixie Higgs  
Kelly Services, Inc.

Stephen Davis  
TIC Energy & Chemical, Inc.

Darrell Dixon  
McGill Maintenance Partnership, Ltd.

Michelle Hickner  
Shintech, Inc.

Karen Gillenwaters  
Texas Gulf Bank, NA

# Membership



## New Member Feature:



Locally, Verizon joined the ABC Texas Gulf Coast Chapter at the September 2010 Membership Event and participated in the recent Supplier Member Mixer.

Louque Currie, our local Verizon representative, will be happy to help with any communication needs. Contact him at 713.219.8285 or [louque.currie@verizonwireless.com](mailto:louque.currie@verizonwireless.com).

Verizon Wireless and ABC have teamed up to provide special discounts and offers to **ABC member contractors**. This program's exclusive discounts apply to **monthly calling plans** for existing subscribers and new lines of service.

ABC members also will have access to Verizon's construction-specific applications featuring cutting-edge wireless technology developed to help contractors improve project management practices and increase productivity on the job.

**ABC member contractors** are eligible for these exceptional benefits:

- Save with exclusive discounts on monthly calling plan fees and accessories.
- Apply the discounts to existing contracts with Verizon Wireless -- with no changes to current contract terms.
- Apply the discounts to new lines of service.
- Enable employees to receive discounts on their new and existing personal lines.
- Access an easy-to-use online enrollment process for corporate and employee subscribers.

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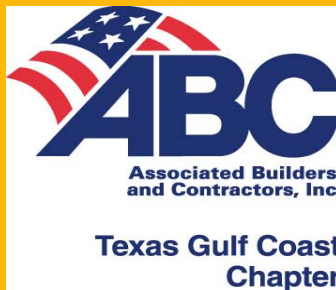
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# Chapter Services

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and families in need.  
Donate 5 pounds of  
non-perishable food items  
or \$5.00 cash!*

**TOY DRIVE:**  
*Donation of new,  
unwrapped toys for  
children's Christmas gifts.*



Texas Gulf Coast  
Chapter

**Working to meet the needs of our members  
and our community**

**ONLY 1 Electrical Continuing Education Class Set for Month of December! Register NOW!**

Saturday, December 11th, 8:00 a.m.-Noon

**4-Hour Update: includes State Law, NEC Code Updates, Safety**



Meets TDLR requirement for 4-hour update to renew electrical licenses in the state of Texas:  
Master, Journeyman and Apprentice License Renewal. Master Electrician instructs the class.

**2010 Pricing (Prices subject to change in 2011)**

\$40-ABC Members    \$50 Non-ABC Member

**Call to schedule: 979.233.1616**

## *ABC/MSTI Craft Training Program Registration for Spring 2011*



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**

**Carpentry**

**Electrical**

**Engineering Graphics & Design**

**HVAC**

**Instrumentation**

**Machine Tools**

**Millwright**

**Pipefitting**

**Safety, Health & Environmental Management**

**Welding**

### REGISTRATION SCHEDULE for ABC Students

**Date:** January 11, 2011 (Tuesday)

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

**Place:** Front entrance Brazosport College—F133 & F135

**Cost:** \$60 per credit hour (3 hour class-\$180; 4 hour class-\$240)

**New students or those who have not been to the college within the last year:** Complete 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.**

**November 15, 2010—Friday, January 7, 2011**

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

**Classes begin Tuesday, January 18, 2011**















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.

Training is the cornerstone of a highly skilled workforce. Do you have young employees who are ready to take the next step? ABC, MSTI and the Brazoria County Petrochemical Council (BCPC) support your efforts to provide outstanding craftsmen. Your trainees can benefit from the training provided at Brazosport College by taking advantage of funding for tuition and fees available through ABC and Merit Shop Training Inc. and supported by BCPC.

**ENROLL NOW—it's never too early (or late) to train.**

# Exclusive Discounts for ABC Members! Redeem Now – Save Over \$5,000!

New Member  
Special Savings

 <p><b>Save 20%</b></p> <p>ABC contractor members save 20% on new and existing wireless calling plans Avg. savings = \$140 per line</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/verizon">www.abc.org/verizon</a></p>	 <p><b>Save up to \$1,000</b></p> <p>Members save an additional \$500 - \$1,000 on GM trucks, vans, SUVs and passenger vehicles</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/gm">www.abc.org/gm</a></p>	 <p><b>\$50 off</b></p> <p>ABC's Construction Safety Manual CD Redeemable within 12 months of join date</p> <p>Contact: <a href="mailto:safety@abc.org">safety@abc.org</a></p>
 <p><b>Save up to \$1,750</b></p> <p>Members save an additional \$500 - \$1,750 on Ford vehicles on top of Ford's standard fleet discounts</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/ford">www.abc.org/ford</a></p>	 <p><b>FREE module valued at \$750</b></p> <p>Receive a free executive management module with any accounting package</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/foundation">www.abc.org/foundation</a></p>	 <p><b>Save up to 29%</b></p> <p>Save on overnight envelopes, packages and shipments</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/fedex">www.abc.org/fedex</a></p>
 <p><b>Save an average of \$600</b></p> <p>Average based on 3% member discount for 6 vehicles at 20,000 miles annually for each</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/shell">www.abc.org/shell</a></p>	 <p><b>Save an average of \$850</b></p> <p>Save up to 20% on work apparel and uniform services. \$850 is based on an average of 8 rentals a week</p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/aramark">www.abc.org/aramark</a></p>	 <p><b>Free portal valued at \$400</b></p> <p>ABC members receive three months of our Virtual HR Assistant (Portal website) for free. Redeemable within 12 months of join date</p> <p>Contact: <a href="mailto:MeritChoice@abc.org">MeritChoice@abc.org</a></p>
 <p><b>One Free Webinar of Choice</b></p> <p>Valued at \$99 Redeemable within 12 months of join date</p> <p>Contact: <a href="mailto:webinars@abc.org">webinars@abc.org</a></p>	 <p><b>Valued at \$199</b></p> <p>Complimentary <i>Employer Guide for Diversity &amp; Inclusion</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.abc.org/shopABC">www.abc.org/shopABC</a></p>	 <p><b>Valued at \$29</b></p> <p>Complimentary <i>Freedom in the Workplace</i> book. Redeemable within 12 months of join date</p> <p>Contact: <a href="mailto:piper@abc.org">piper@abc.org</a></p>

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# Membership

## ABC Board of Officers and Directors

### Officers

**Lisa Bundick Woods**

*Chairperson*

**Buck Blevins**

*1st Vice Chairperson*

**Gerald Andrews**

*2nd Vice Chairperson*

**John Woods**

*Treasurer*

**Mark Monical**

*Secretary*

**Daryl Dauer**

*Assistant Secretary*

### Directors

Alan Archer

Steve Bundick

Clinton Farmer

Amando Gonzalez

Jim Heath

Mickey Lester

Mike Mathis

Jay Mejia

James Reynolds

Mike Scarborough

Richard Stoffel

### ABC Advisors

Larry Labay

Lori Goucher

### ABC Staff

**Terry McAlister**

*President & CEO*

**Becky Rinehart**

*Director of Education*

**Ruby Pratt**

*ABC Administrative Assistant*

**Jane Brown**

*Craft Training Coordinator*

**Gloria Lara**

*Skills Assessment Coordinator*

**Debora Riley**

*Accounting Manager*

## Events and Meetings for December 2010

- 12/1 Construction Exhibition & Craft Championships Committee Meeting, 11:00 a.m., 104B
- 12/7 ABC, CSC, MSTI Christmas Social & 35th Anniversary Celebration, 5:00 p.m., LJCC-Terrace Room I
- 12/9 MSTI Board Meeting, 3:00 p.m., 104B
- 12/15 CSC Board Meeting, 12:00 p.m., 104B
- 12/23-24 ABC Offices Closed in observance of Christmas Holidays

## Classes and Training Opportunities

- Tuesdays: CMA Project Management, 6:00 p.m., 104A
- Thursdays: CMA Project Supervision, 6:00 p.m., 104B
- 12/11 Electrical Continuing Ed., 8:00 a.m., 104B
- Daily Study Hall: Self-Study for NCCER Craft Assessments
- M, W, F NCCER Skills Assessment, 8:00 a.m.
- T, Th NCCER Skills Assessment 1:30 p.m.

### **SAVE the DATE for the NEW YEAR!**

*First 2011 ABC Membership Event and Luncheon, Wednesday, January 19, 2011, RiverPlace Convention Center, Freeport - 11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.*

## ***Are You Coming? We hope so!!!!***

*December 7th marks not only our annual Christmas Social in honor of our members, but also marks Texas Gulf Coast Chapter's 35th Anniversary. Please join us!*



*Food, Fellowship, Music, & Fun—a time to celebrate!*

*Ruby@abctxgulfcoast.org or 979.233.1616 or 979.233.0279*