



Run for the Roses

THE SPRINGTOWN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

THURSDAY March 21, 2024



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Dr. Robert Moss presented former Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Amy Walker with a plaque in honor of her service at the chamber's March 1 Annual Awards Gala.

Springtown Chamber honors former director, city's 'cheerleader'

MADelyn EDWARDS
springtownreporter@tricityreporter.com

Former Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Amy Walker got her flowers at the chamber's "Run for the

Roses" Annual Awards Gala. Walker stepped down from her position in September to spend more time with her husband and grandchildren. "I just felt like it was time to focus on the family," she said in a previous Tri-County

Reporter article. Walker has lived in Springtown for more than 30 years. She loved the community so much she decided to get involved through

PLEASE SEE **CHEER** | C4



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The Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's former and current directors, Amy Walker, left, and Terri Toone take a photo together at the "Run for the Roses" Awards Gala.

Gala attendees enjoyed an evening of Kentucky Derby-themed activities



Attendees at the gala played the horse racing game

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Winner of the hat contest Jill Sebik

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Jennifer Conway appreciated for service as chamber president



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Outgoing Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce President Jennifer Conway embraces Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone. Toone recognized Conway's service at the chamber's March 1 Annual Awards Gala. "Personally, I would like to express my gratitude for your continuous support and source of encouragement from day one," Toone said to Conway at the gala. "Today, we honor her for her outstanding service. To celebrate her contributions, it is my pleasure to present this award as a token of our appreciation. Please join me in applauding Jennifer for her exceptional leadership, dedication and the positive impact she has had on our Chamber of Commerce."

Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce administrative assistant Dene Berry and Executive Director Terri Toone presented outgoing President Jennifer Conway, middle, with a plaque in honor of her service at the March 1 Annual Awards Gala. Conway has served as president since 2021 and has been on the board since 2014. Conway expressed gratitude for the board of directors and the chamber's former and current staff members. "Overall, I'm thankful for this amazing opportunity that I was given to serve as president of the board of directors of the Springtown Chamber of Commerce," she said. "It has been an honor and a privilege to serve my community in this capacity."



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BUSINESS OF THE YEAR The Corn Fed Club

The Corn Fed Club wins Business of the Year

MADelyn EDWARDS
springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

With the help of several staffers, The Corn Fed Club restaurant owners Trent and Jennifer Shaw served up plates of fried chicken, black-eyed peas and cornbread to attendees of the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.

Then, chamber leaders invited them to come out of the kitchen and up to the podium to accept the award for Business of the Year.

Prior to moving to Springtown in 2016, Trent and Jennifer Shaw had built careers unrelated to owning a catering service and eventually, a restaurant. Trent's connection with food stems from helping his dad in their family donut shop in the Midwest and being a self-taught home cook experimenting with different recipes, according to Corn Fed Catering's website.

"He's always been the chef for our family gatherings, and the running joke in the family has been, 'This is the best thing I've ever eaten. When are you going to put it on your menu?'" Jennifer Shaw said of her husband. "He was always like, 'You know, maybe this is something that I'd be really good at.'"

Years after moving to

Springtown, the Shaws left their careers to start Corn Fed Catering. Then in September, they opened The Corn Fed Club restaurant on the Springtown Square.

"On Sept. 7, 2023, The Corn Fed Club held its grand opening, is performing well and continues to bring in new customers from near and far every week. Trent and Jennifer continue to learn from their experiences and would love to see the square fully revitalized in the near future," the gala's master of ceremonies Brooklynn Hatton said at the event. "They never imagined they would be starting new career paths at this time in their lives, but they are sure glad they did. And can I tell you, on account of everybody in the room, that we are sure glad that you did."

Trent Shaw said receiving Business of the Year was an unexpected honor, especially because of how new The Corn Fed Club is. Shaw appreciates Springtown's support.

"It's a good feeling to know that the community feels that way about us," he said.

Getting that kind of recognition is validation of the hard work the Shaws put into opening a restaurant, Jennifer Shaw said. The Shaws have been preparing to open The Corn Fed Club for two years prior to September



The Corn Fed Club restaurant owners Trent and Jennifer Shaw take a picture with their staff to commemorate the restaurant's Business of the Year award at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's March 1 Annual Awards Gala.

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

2023. They spent a year renovating the kitchen and then another year getting the front of the house ready.

"One thing we knew coming into it is Springtown didn't have a really nice date night place, and that's right

up (Trent's) alley," she said. "We're just glad that our intuition paid off. It's always scary jumping in and not knowing what's going to happen and if the community is going to accept it, and so we're very thankful."

When the Shaws accepted their award at the gala, they brought their staff to the podium as well and included them in the celebratory photo. Trent Shaw said his employees are important to the restaurant's success.

"If they're gone, then it doesn't work," he said. "That's why I wanted to make sure that they were a part of everything and get recognized just as much because we can't do anything without our team."



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CHAMBER MEMBER OF THE YEAR Brookshire's Grocery

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Store director accepts award on business' behalf

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN —Store director Wes Richardson accepted the Chamber Member of the Year Award on behalf of Brookshire's Grocery. Brookshire's is a 95-year-old family-owned business based out of Tyler. The company currently operates more than 200 stores in four states — Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma — with four distribution centers and two corporate offices. Brookshire's has served the Springtown community since 2002.

Since 2018, the Springtown team has been led by Richardson, a 23-year employee-partner, who has served in several roles in stores across Texas, including cashier, grocery manager, produce manager and assistant store manager, and has served as a store director



Brookshire's Grocery store director Wes Richardson and family.

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

since 2010. Richardson accepted the award alongside loved ones

and beloved colleagues. "It's an honor and a privilege to serve the city of

Springtown for the last 20-plus years for Brookshire's and an honor for me to

serve the last five years," Richardson said. "I love it. We're a family atmosphere.

We're a family-owned company. It's awesome having us all there together."

CHEER

FROM PAGE C1

the PTA, the school board and of course, the chamber of commerce. She was also the Springtown Economic Development Corporation director and helped negotiate a

land deal that allowed for future growth, according to Dr. Robert Moss' speech honoring Walker at the gala. Walker has also won awards such as the chamber's Woman of the Year and the Texas Education Agency's "Heroes for Children."

Being the chamber director allowed Walker to interact

with and advocate for local businesses. Moss described her as being a "cheerleader" for not only the chamber but for the city as a whole.

"Just saying 'thank you' and 'we're so grateful for you' is not enough," Moss said. "But, at this point, we have to just say that we love you so much, and we're so thankful

for all the time and effort that you put into the chamber, to the city."

Walker wasn't expecting to be honored at the gala and said the gesture was sweet, especially because Moss was the one to present her with a plaque.

"Dr. Moss is just one of my most dearest, precious

friends, so it was pretty special," Walker said.

Walker's plaque was engraved with the image of a high-heeled shoe, which is representative of her style. But when the gala ended, Walker was carrying around a more comfortable pair of shoes to change into while she helped clean up after the

party. The option to not volunteer in the wake of having left the chamber's staff and getting an award didn't seem to occur to her.

"I got to get my flip-flops on and help," Walker said with a laugh.

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CITY OF SPRINGTOWN EXTRA MILE AWARD Josh Crager



Going the extra mile

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Josh Crager, who has filled several roles within the city's public works department since 2017 and currently works in the water department, was awarded the City of Springtown Extra Mile Award at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala. Crager said he is thankful for the award and tries to be helpful in his work. Public Works Director Joseph McCannless described Crager as a hard worker who often volunteers to stay late and works at the city's events. "It's the little things like that that make the biggest difference," McCannless said. "He's always willing to carry his fair share and then some of the load." Crager is pictured with City Secretary Christina Derr.



SPRINGTOWN ISD TEACHER OF THE YEAR Jenifer Jones



SISD alumna recognized as Teacher of the Year

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Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce named Springtown Intermediate School sixth grade science teacher Jenifer Jones as the Teacher of the Year. The last time the Teacher of the Year award was given was in 2019, Springtown Independent School District Superintendent Shane Strickland said. "I'm really honored to be able to be the first one since it's come back," said Jones, who is a Springtown native. Jones has worked in education for about 17 years, and this is her fifth year teaching in Springtown. Strickland said Jones promotes student-centered learning and professional development of educators. "Ms. Jones' dedication to innovation prepares students for the future, nurturing independent thinkers and learners," Strickland said. "Her passion for meaningful learning experiences and tireless work ethic exemplify the transformative power of dedicated educators." Jones is pictured with Strickland at the March 1 gala.

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HOMETOWN HERO AWARD

Bill Foster

Bill Foster recognized as "Hometown Hero"

Family of Springtown Santa receives posthumous award

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — A true friend to Springtown and its children, Bill Foster was posthumously recognized with the Hometown Hero Award at the 2024 Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala. Teacher, bus driver, administrator and longtime Springtown Santa Claus, Foster devoted his life to education and serving his community. It's said that if Bill Foster knew you, you knew you were loved and worth something. Foster was a parent, grandparent, great-grandparent and loyal friend to many throughout Springtown.

Foster was a committed member of the First Baptist Church and donated his year-

ly Santa earnings to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Foster's wife, Kandy Foster, and daughter, Rachel Moreno, accepted the award on Foster's behalf the night of March 1.

"It was an honor to accept the Hometown Hero Award, with my mother, on behalf of my dad," Moreno said. "He was a great man and served his community with everything he had for many years. We were, and are, proud of Poppy and everything he did to help others during his life. He was a man of service and had the heart of a servant. We are so proud of the man, husband and father Poppy was, and still is, to us in our hearts. We still see him everywhere; this award is a symbol of a lifetime of servitude he showed us every day growing up."



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Kandy Foster, left, widow of the late Bill Foster, and Rachel Moreno, the couple's daughter, accept the Hometown Hero Award on his behalf.




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THE NEWS OF AZLE, SPRINGTOWN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS



CITY OF SPRINGTOWN PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR Weldon "Chip" Procter

Procter honored as Springtown's top cop



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER
Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce honored Springtown Police Department's Cpl. Weldon "Chip" Procter as the City of Springtown's Public Safety Employee of the Year at the March 1 Annual Awards Gala. Deputy Chief Jamie Oliver said Procter began at the police department in October 2021. "We're trying to build a bigger, better department," Oliver said. "We want certain people to work here, and he's exactly the type of officer that we want in our city. You ask him anything to do, he's going to do it without question, and he'll do it right." Procter indicated his coworkers at the police department selected him to earn the honor. "I'm grateful; I'm happy," he said. "It makes me feel good that's how my peers and everyone else feels about me, that they voted me." In the photo, Oliver, left, congratulates Procter after presenting the award.

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ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown

Pastoral Fellowship graced with Organization of the Year award

MADELYN EDWARDS
springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce blessed the Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown with this year's Organization of the Year title at the March 1 Annual Awards Gala.

The fellowship is a group of "like-minded pastors from various denominational backgrounds" who support one another, serve the community and "share the light and salvation of Jesus," the gala's master of ceremonies Brooklynn Hatton said while introducing the organization.

Representatives from about nine churches, led by Walnut Creek Baptist Church Pastor Shane Scott, organize the annual New Teacher Luncheon each fall to welcome educators who join the Springtown school district's staff. The fellowship also hosts an annual back-to-school prayer rally.

Legacy Church Lead Pastor Gary Veazey accepted the award on behalf of the fellowship at the gala as many of the pastors couldn't attend the event. Veazey said receiving the award is an honor for the group.

"Our heart is to serve our community," he said. "We pray for our community. We have so many wonderful pastors, and their heart is not only for their church, but to serve the people in need. And then, we encourage and pray for each other, so it's a great fellowship to be part of."

Veazey said he has been part of the Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown since about the time he came to town in 1997.

"(Scott) is a great leader, and we have a great group of pastors," he said.



Representing the Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown, Legacy Church Lead Pastor Gary Veazey accepted the Organization of the Year award at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's March 1 Annual Awards Gala. Veazey is pictured with Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone.

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JUDY SMERUD SPIRIT OF SPRINGTOWN AWARD

Mistie Riviera

Rivera embodies Spirit of Springtown

Local roofer, sandwich shop owner recognized for community pride

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — Mistie Riviera, owner of Alvin Ord's Sandwich Shop and Rivera Roofing, was honored with the Judy Smerud Spirit of Springtown Award during the 2024 Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala March 1. The award is presented to the person who most displayed the overall sense of community pride over the past year. Judy Smerud was a long-time resident and chamber executive director who had a special spirit and love for the Springtown community. She led the Springtown business community through periods of growth and change for over 25 years. The award was created to honor an outstanding person and friend to the community.

"It is an honor and blessing to be any part of this community," Riviera said. "It feels really good to be able to

help. I know that without our community supporting our business we wouldn't be able to give back to other businesses. I am born and raised in Springtown. I love my community. I wouldn't be able to give back if my community didn't give to me first."

Rivera is proud to be able to raise her three boys in the town where she grew up. Recently, Rivera donated the labor needed to replace the roof of Springtown's local food pantry, Neighbor to Neighbors

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER
Mistie Riviera accepts her award with her husband, Gerardo "Lalo" Rivera, at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.



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Marcia Garcia honored for service to chamber



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER
 Marcia Garcia, who served as the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's administrative assistant for the past four years and has volunteered for the chamber for many more, was honored for her service at the chamber's annual awards gala. Garcia recently stepped down from her position at the chamber but continues to volunteer. She has also served on multiple nonprofit boards, including the Springtown Education Foundation. "I just love Springtown, and I like the people," Garcia said. "It just feels good to be helping everybody and to be involved." Garcia is pictured with administrative assistant Dene Berry, outgoing Chamber President Jennifer Conway and Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone. In a speech at the gala, Conway said to Garcia, "Thank you for your hard work, your dedication, your positive attitude, not to mention all the laughs."

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