

**Chairman of the Board**

Becky Ogg  
*Germania Insurance*

**First Vice Chair**

Shane Nelson  
*Bluebonnet Abstract & Title*

**Second Vice Chair**

Justin Colley  
*BIG - Brannon Industrial Group*

**Treasurer**

Joyce Dickschat  
*Brenham National Bank*

**Secretary**

Jolene Curtis  
*Texas Farm Credit*

**Immediate Past Chair**

Shay Morrow  
*Quest Specialty Corporation*

Blake Barnes  
*Baylor Scott & White  
Medical Center*

Eric Benitez  
*Cedar Frame Real Estate*

Justin Boone  
*Corrosion Resistant Alloys, LLC*

Kathrine Briscoe  
*Visit Brenham*

Myron Dippel  
*Blinn College District*

Gary Durrenberger  
*Bank of Brenham*

Carlos Garcia  
*Mariachi's Mexican Restaurant*

Clay Gillentine  
*Brenham Independent  
School District*

Al Patel  
*Holiday Inn Express & Suites  
'Formula Blue*

Lete Phillips  
*Lete Phillips Exercise Program*

Chris Ann Stroech  
*Washington County Landscapes*

Stephanie Wehring  
*Sterling Estate Solutions*

## Chamber/EDF Annual Banquet Awards and Highlights on February 1, 2024

Washington County businesses, elected officials, and residents gathered to honor the woman, man, businesses and non-profit of the year Thursday evening during the annual Washington County Chamber of Commerce & Brenham EDF Banquet at Fireman's Training Center in Brenham. This year's sponsors included: BIG Brannon Industrial Group, Blue Bell Creameries, Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, Brenham National Bank, Citizens State Bank, and Van Dyke Rankin Insurance.

The evening began with a social hour. Michael Groves with Mike Hopkins Distributing Company, Inc., served as the Emcee for the program. He welcomed the guests attending and invited to the stage, Reverend Randy Wells to give the invocation, Boy Scout Troop #742 presented the colors and was joined by the St. Peter's Episcopal Church Choir who sang the National Anthem. Lois Kolkhorst led the Texas and United States pledges, after which guests enjoyed a meal catered by Nathan's BBQ.

Dr. Frank Ashley III, the Acting Dean in the Bush School of Government and Public Service, was introduced as the Keynote Speaker. The speaker expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, emphasizing the community's vibrancy and rich heritage. He commended the Chamber's mission to promote economic impact and quality of life while preserving the area's natural beauty. Acknowledging the importance of public service, he encouraged community involvement and leadership, concluding with a poem titled "How do I live my Dash" as a call to make a positive impact.

Jamie Rankin, President & CEO of the Washington County Chamber, welcomed the attendees. She thanked Michael and Dr. Ashley for their examples in leadership and commitment to the community. The Chamber Staff was introduced - Sarah Hansen, Jane Hinze, Dawn Konieczny, and Mandy Beausoleil. "These ladies make up a dedicated Chamber Team, and I am proud to serve our members alongside them," said Rankin. She recognized the Chamber members in appreciation of their support. "The significant impact of supporting the Chamber of Commerce, emphasizes how such investment directly benefits both businesses and non-profits in the community by facilitating collaboration, providing resources for organizational sustainability, and offering professional development opportunities. It underscores the Chamber's commitment to fostering connections, promoting business, developing the workforce, and advocating for the community's quality of life, positioning itself as a leader dedicated to serving its members' needs in 2024 and beyond." said Rankin. "Their investment into the Chamber allows the Chamber to support and promote business, develop our workforce, and advocate for quality of life. I look forward to sharing with you our vision for 2024."

The awards portion of the program began with Blake Brannon, President of Brannon Industrial Group. Blake's leadership style for his role with the Economic Development Foundation can be summed up with one phrase - the right place at the right time - engaging when needed and allowing community

partners to work when they need to work. He recognized the current directors and outgoing EDF Directors, Barney Loesch and Mike Hopkins Jr., and thanked them for their service and dedication.

Incoming Chairman of the Chamber Board, Becky Ogg with Germania Insurance, recognized retiring Chamber Directors: Darron Smith with Brenham National Bank; Dan Blalock with Brenham Abstract & Title, Chairman of the Board, Shay Morrow with Quest Specialty Corporation; Jim Chisolm with Texas Star Winery; and Kara Matheney with the Washington County AgriLife Extension Service. "I want to extend my sincere appreciation to the Past Chairman of the Board, Shay Morrow, for her dedicated work with the Chamber." said Ogg. The 2024 Board of Directors was introduced.

Ogg called upon Jamie Rankin to announce the 2023 Board Member of the Year, Justin Colley with BIG Brannon Industrial Group. "Justin goes above and beyond in his service as a board member. We are appreciative to have him as part of the team and look forward to having him serve another year on the board with us," said Rankin.

Ogg continued, "Since 2014, the Chamber has sought nominations and presented the 'Small Business of the Year' award in Washington County. There are two categories of awards: Small Businesses with 1 to 25 employees and those with 26 - 100 employees. Businesses must be locally owned and operated, set an example of leadership for others to follow, display high professional and business standards, and participate in multiple ways in the community to make lasting contributions to the growth and well-being of Washington County.

"With Jamie's leadership, she recognized the need for a Non-Profit of the Year Award beginning last year. This year, she is introducing the New Business of the Year award to showcase a business that has outstanding efforts to grow their



(L-R) Darron Smith, Brenham National Bank and Treasurer: Dan Blalock, Brenham Abstract & Title. Also pictured (L) Becky Ogg: Incoming Chairman of the Board and (R) Chamber President & CEO Jamie Rankin. Not pictured: Chairman of the Board, Shay Morrow, Quest Specialty Corporation; Jim Chisolm, Texas Star Winery; Kara Matheney, Washington County AgriLife Extension Service

# Leadership Learns Emergency Management, hear from City and County Reps

Law Enforcement Day Showcases Commitment to Community Safety  
Law enforcement agencies in Brenham, Texas, opened their doors to the Washington County 2024 Leadership class for a special Law Enforcement Day event, offering a glimpse into the dedication and initiatives undertaken to ensure the safety and well-being of the community.

The day kicked off with a tour of the police department building, where the Leadership group had the opportunity to meet Training Officer Sergeant Eilert and learn about the department's mission and history. Acting Chief Lloyd Powell, who has served with the department for 27 years, highlighted the department's evolution from its humble beginnings operating out of a café in 1926 to its current status as an accredited agency with 40 officers and 5 civilian staff members.

Chief Powell emphasized the department's commitment to diversity, transparency, and community representation, stating, "Trust is earned." He outlined various initiatives, including dignitary protection, engagement with youth organizations, social events, and the implementation of crisis intervention training for mental health encounters.

One of the highlights of the event was the introduction of the Citizens Police Academy, aimed at fostering better understanding and collaboration between law enforcement and the community. Chief Powell encouraged residents to keep an eye out for the announcement of the academy's launch.

In collaboration with the Constable's Office, attendees also got an insight into the K9 unit's operations. Officer Brad Kuecker shared the rigorous training protocols K9 officers undergo, including narcotic detection and medical training. The Constable's Office, an elected position responsible for enforcing the law and serving civil papers, highlighted their role in maintaining peace and providing essential services to the community.

Chief Deputy Jay Petrash discussed the extensive duties of the Sheriff's office, in which they enforce criminal laws, supervise county jails, provide security to the courts, and enforce court orders in civil and criminal cases. Renee Mueller, County Attorney since 2013, detailed her office's responsibilities, which range from prosecuting drug charges to offering protective orders for victims of family violence.

The District Attorney's Office, represented by DA, Julie Renken and Asst. DA, Derek Estep, discussed their efforts in prosecuting felony cases, outlining the different levels of distinction, and combating issues like human trafficking.

The class participated in breakout sessions covering topics such as drug types and distribution methods, active shooter response training, and recognizing signs of potential threats. These sessions aimed to empower community members with knowledge and resources to contribute to public safety.

In closing, the day underscored the collaborative approach taken by law enforcement agencies and the community to address evolving challenges and uphold the safety and security of Brenham and its surrounding areas.

Law Enforcement Day served as a reminder of the dedication and professionalism exhibited by those who serve and protect, fostering a sense of unity and partnership between law enforcement agencies and the community they serve. The next class will form in July 2024. For more details or to view the application form, visit the "Leadership" page on [www.BrenhamTexas.com](http://www.BrenhamTexas.com).

Lunch was generously donated by Papa Johns in Brenham. Use the code CUBBAND to get 20% of your order and Papa Johns will donate 10% to the Cub Band.



LWC Class of 2024 at the Brenham Police Department

# Welcome New Members

**105 EXCHANGE**  
 Contact: Tonya Randio  
 1005 HWY 105  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 832-768-0105  
 www.105exchange.com  
*Antiques*

**CSI FORENSIC SUPPLY**  
 Contact: Chip Miller  
 1600 S. Day St.  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 800-227-6020  
 www.csiforensic.com  
*Wholesale Distributor*

**OPTIMUS FLOORS LLC**  
 Contact: Orlando Flores  
 902 HWY 105  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-203-7581  
 www.optimusfloors-brenham.com  
*Flooring Contractor*

**THE BOUGIE BEE MESSAGE THERAPY**  
 Contact: Bethany Hughes  
 1209 E. Tom Green  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-464-9775  
 www.messagebook.com  
*Massage Therapist*

**BERNEAKE GANTT**  
 Contact: Berneake Gantt  
 PO Box 156  
 Burton, Texas 77835  
*Chamber Friend*

**KELLI DOZIER, STATE FARM INSURANCE**  
 Contact: Kelli Dozier  
 306 South St. Charles Street  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-836-9301  
 www.myagentkd.com  
 Insurance  
*Financial Services*

**TERAH'S CLEANING SERVICE**  
 Contact: Terah Jackson  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-277-8256  
 terahscleaningservice@gmail.com  
*Cleaning Services*

**THE YARD**  
 Contact: Trisha & Leland Hartstack  
 1405 W. Main Street  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-203-4999  
*Entertainment/Recreation*

**BREHAM SCHOOLHOUSE HOTEL**  
 Contact: Jake Gumm  
 600 East Alamo  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-451-0593  
 www.kozerentals.com/en/the-brenham-school-house-hotel  
*Bed & Breakfasts*

**MOELLER PLUMBING, LLC**  
 Contact: Mitchell Davis  
 PO Box 988  
 Brenham, Texas 77834  
 Phone: 979-836-6263  
 www.moellertx.com  
*Plumbing-Services & Repairs*

**TEXAS LONE STAR TEAM-KELLER WILLAMS BREHAM**  
 Contact: Rebecca Cook  
 416 N. Park Street  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-251-1784  
 www.texaslonestarteam.com  
*Real Estate*

**WELLS INNOVATIONS**  
 Contact: Cody Shelton  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 281-451-3859  
*Utilities Construction*

**CHICK-FIL-A BREHAM**  
 Contact: Drew Allen  
 1161 US HWY 290E  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 979-353-0222  
 www.chick-fil-a.com/locations/tx/brenham-tx  
*Restaurants*

**NINE SEVEN NINE**  
 Contact: Andrea Bogert  
 210 E. Alamo Street  
 Brenham, Texas 77833  
 Phone: 281-770-5497  
 www.ninesevennine.net  
*Retail*

**TEXAS SIGNATURE ROOFING**  
 Contact: Shea Sikes  
 23969 HWY 6S  
 Navasota, Texas 77868  
 Phone: 979-220-5441  
 www.texasignatureroofing.com  
*Contractors-Roofing*



Jamie Rankin .....President & CEO  
 Jane Hinze.....Member Services Manager  
 Dawn Konieczny.....Communications Coordinator  
 Sarah Hansen.....Financial Coordinator  
 Mandy Beausoleil.....Events & Programs Coordinator

**BREHAM  
 CHAPPELL HILL  
 BURTON  
 INDEPENDENCE**

When you shop locally you support an entire community, not just a business.

**Edward Jones**

**Rachel E Nordt**  
 Financial Advisor  
 613 S Austin St  
 Brenham, TX 77833  
 979-836-1038

MKT-5894N-A > edwardjones.com

**SHOP Local**

**SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESS**

**HODDE**  
 REAL ESTATE CO.

WILLIAM "BOO" CHRISTENSEN  
 BROKER ASSOCIATE

112 WEST MAIN STREET  
 BREHAM, TEXAS 77833  
 boo@realtorboo.com

979-836-8532 OFFICE  
 979-277-8426 CELL

WWW.HODDERE.COM

**Five Star Financial Group**

**Ray L Weiss, CLU®, FIC**  
 Financial Advisor  
 ray.weiss@thrivent.com  
 connect.thrivent.com/five-star-financial-group  
*Million Dollar Round Table Top of the Table*

Office 979-836-0693 | 203 S. Jackson St.  
 Brenham, TX 77833

thrivent

**GROUP BUYING POWER**

Chamber members can now get major savings on credit card payment processing. Learn about our new member benefit program.

**infintech**  
 SMARTER PAYMENT PROCESSING  
 An i3 Verticals Company

Contact Will Watson at (979) 345-2988 • will.watson@infintechllc.com  
**www.infintechllc.com**

business locally, while contributing to the community in various ways. The selection process is based on the organization's impact on the community, its leadership example, its impact beyond the community, and its level of high standards," said Ogg.

The recipient of the 2023 Small Business Award with 1- 25 employees was Brenham Charcuterie Boards. As a small, family-owned business that opened with families and community in mind, they have a solid track record of community service in its short operation.

The second business recognized in the category of 26 -100 employees was Brenham Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. This organization has been serving the Washington County community since 1989. They have risen above tough and challenging times. But through it all, love and compassionate care abounds within the walls of this business.

A new category this year was the New Business of the Year award. This spunky business opened its official doors in Downtown Brenham in 2023. This husband-and-wife duo have embraced Brenham with every fiber of their being, radiating their infectious enthusiasm through countless volunteer initiatives. Congratulations to the New Business of the Year winner, Glamfetti.

Lastly, Ogg presented the last award, the Non-Profit of the Year Award to Gather N Grace. This organization has served Washington County for just a few short years, but the impact they have made is changing the community in powerful ways. They provide invaluable services to all by pouring their hearts, recipes, the love of Jesus, and time into the community. You can typically find them on Monday nights at Fireman's Park serving delicious homecooked meals.

Rachel Nordt, past president of the Blue Blazers came to the stage to speak about the awesome work this enthusiastic group provides for the chamber, having 60 ribbon-cuttings in 2023, exceeding in fundraising goals and introduced the incoming Blue Blazer President, Joyce Dickschat.

Jane Hinze announced the annual award that goes to a Blue Blazer who has gone above and beyond during the prior 12 months with his or her level of service. "This person is someone we can always count on to not only get a job done but do it with excellence and pride," said Hinze. "This year, I'm honored to announce the Blue Blazer of the Year award goes to Joyce Dickschat."

The evening concluded with this year's Man and Woman of the Year awards. The 2022 Woman of the Year, Alana Winkelmann announced Carol Hutchens as the 2023 Woman of the Year. "A fifth-generation resident of Washington County, Carol is celebrated for her lifelong dedication to serving her community. From

her involvement in various youth organizations to her leadership roles in civic and service groups, she embodies a "never say no" and "think big" attitude, fostering friendships and addressing the needs of organizations and neighbors. As a devoted mother, she continued her community service while raising her children and later expanded her contributions, particularly in supporting veterans and providing youth with meaningful experiences, earning her the title of the 2023 Woman of the Year.

2022's Man of the Year, Ray Weiss, introduced J.D. Young as the 2023 Man of the Year. "This individual has dedicated nearly 60 years to serving Brenham and Washington County, contributing to positive changes such as urban renewal and downtown revitalization," said Ray. "As a civic leader and devout Christian, he prioritizes serving others, mentoring young men, and fostering community development. Through his leadership of a local non-profit and various initiatives, he continues to impact countless lives, embodying a spirit of service and optimism that defines his life's mission."

Michael Groves returned to the stage to close out the evening. "What a great night! We would like to extend a huge thank you to our Chairman's Circle members and other Sponsors for their generous support of tonight's event. Special thanks go out to several special businesses and individuals listed on the back of the program. In the meantime, please stop by the Chamber and let us know how we can better serve you."



2023 Man & Woman of the Year – JD Young and Carol Hutchens

*Thank you to our 2024 Chairman's Circle members...*



*Thank you to our 2024 Presidential Level members...*



# 2024 Banquet Award Winners



2023 Blue Blazer President - Rachel Nordt



2023 Blue Blazer of the Year: Joyce Dickschat



2023 Board member of the Year: Justin Colley



(L-R) Brenham Economic Development Foundation Chairman, Blake Bannon recognizes retiring directors – Barney Loesch and Mike Hopkins Jr.; Chamber President Jamie Rankin.



2023 Business of the Year - Brenham Nursing & Rehabilitation Center



2023 Non-Profit of the Year – Gather N Grace



2023 Small Business of the Year - Brenham Charcuterie Boards



2023 New Business of the Year - Glamfetti

Thank You



2024 BANQUET SPONSORS



# HOW DO YOU LIVE YOUR DASH?

*(Anonymous)*

*I read of a man who stood to speak, at the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
From the beginning to the end.*

*He noted that first came her date of birth, and spoke  
the following date with tears,  
But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years.*

*For that dash represents all the time that she spent alive on earth,  
And now only those who loved her  
Know what that little line is worth.*

*For it matters not, how much we own... The cars...the house...the cash,  
What matters is how we live and love,  
And how we spend our dash.*

*So, think about this long and hard...Are there things  
you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left  
That can still be rearranged.*

*If we could just slow down enough, to consider what's true and real,  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel.*

*And be less quick to anger, and show appreciation more,  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before.*

*If we treat each other with respect, and more often wear a smile,  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while.*

*So, when your eulogy's being read  
With your life's actions to rehash...  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?*



## Stats – from the month of: January 2024

**Walk-In's**  
**Chamber of Commerce 311**

**Website – [www.BrenhamTexas.com](http://www.BrenhamTexas.com)**

**Unique Visitors 4,234**

**Total Pages 10,802**

## Washington County Blue Blazers

The Blue Blazers is a club with 20-25 members and more than 50 years of tradition. They support the mission of the Washington County Chamber. The volunteers in the club act as official greeters and hosts of our community. Their activities include monthly meetings, greeting at Chamber functions, recruiting new Chamber members, and conducting ribbon cuttings and grand openings.

**Courtney Blalock**  
Hodde Real Estate

**Tammy Jaster**  
City of Brenham-Blue Bell Aquatic Center

**Stephanie Newman**  
Two Peas Organizing Co.

**Christy Shelton**  
Brenham State Supported Living Center

**Justin Colley**  
BIG – Brannon Industrial Group

**Genna Lechler**  
Brand It Graphix

**Pita Pangan**  
Associated Credit Union of Texas

**Chris Ann Stroech**  
Washington County Landscapes

**Joyce Dickschat**  
Brenham National Bank

**Lauren Maass**  
Germania Insurance

**Linda Pipes**  
Retired-School Teacher

**Amy Supak**  
Kruse Village

**Brianna Edmunds**  
PLANNORTH Architectural Co.

**Kristie Marth**  
Brenham Iron Works

**Carl Prihoda**  
Citizens State Bank

**Barbara Wilganowski**  
Chamber Friend

**Tiffany Holmes**  
Bluebonnet Abstract and Title

**Courtney Mason**  
Brenham ISD

**Teresa Rosales**  
Brenham Washington County Economic Development

**Tiffany Howard**  
Glamfetti

**Sierra Miller**  
Brazos Valley Schools Credit

**Jeffrey Sadler**  
BRIANNAS Fine Salad Dressings



**Brooke Huckert**  
ValuePoint Wealth Management

**Rachel Nordt**  
Edward Jones

**Christy Schlottmann**  
Christy Schlottmann Farmers Agency

# Ribbon Cuttings



Nine Seven Nine - Andrea Bogert, owner  
210 E Alamo St., Brenham, (281) 770-5497, [www.ninesevennine.net](http://www.ninesevennine.net)



Brenham Floral Company, (979) 836-3566  
The Southern Folly, Sweet Ivy's Café (979) 551-6280  
Owners Lindsay Martin-Bilbrey, Levi Bilbrey, 209 S. Market St., Brenham,



Announcement of the 2024 Read Book Lifetime Learning: Once Upon A Wardrobe by Patti Callahan  
Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library, 100 Martin Luther King, Jr. Pkwy, Brenham, (979) 337-7201



The Bougie Bee Massage Therapy – Bethany Hughes, owner  
1209 E. Tom Green, Brenham, (979) 464-9775, [www.messagebook.com](http://www.messagebook.com)

## Adopt-A-Sign

Thank you to the following local landscape businesses who generously donate their time and resources to maintaining our iconic Welcome to Washington County signs:

**Glasco & Company**  
**PLM Texas**

**Washington County Landscapes**  
**Wise Landscaping**

# Get Noticed



The ChamberWorks newsletter is published inside The Banner-Press. Chamber members have the opportunity to advertise in this newspaper. Rates start at only \$25 per month.

If you are looking for a new opportunity to advertise, just call Jane Hinze at 836-3695.

Another great way to promote your organization is through targeted emails. The Chamber will forward your "e-message" to all members, as long as it meets certain criteria. For non-profits, it should not have a strong-sell for sponsorships or donations. The message should be newsworthy, typically about an upcoming event. For regular business, it should also be about upcoming special events, as long as there is no purchase required for the reader to experience the event.

E-messages are sent a maximum of once per quarter per member during each calendar year.



## SAVE THE DATES

FEB  
13

MEET THE CANDIDATES  
Brenham Senior Activity Center 8-9:30 a.m.

FEB  
15

CONNECT AFTER 4  
Washington County Expo 4 - 6:00 p.m.

MAR  
19

STATE OF THE COMMUNITY  
Washington County Expo 11:30 - 1:00 p.m.

APR

ADMIN PROFESSIONAL LUNCH  
Blinn College District

APR  
22

4TH ANNUAL CHAMBER CLASSIC  
Golf Tournament



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WASHINGTON COUNTY?

CHECK OUT ALL THE  
LATEST EVENTS  
HAPPENING IN THE  
AREA BY SCANNING  
OUR QR CODE



[WWW.BRENHAMTEXAS.COM/EVENTS/CALENDAR](http://WWW.BRENHAMTEXAS.COM/EVENTS/CALENDAR)

you're invited to



# CONNECT after FOUR

WASHINGTON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SPONSORED BY:



DAY: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

TIME: 4 - 6 PM

WHERE: WASHINGTON COUNTY EXPO

1305 E. BLUE BELL RD.

BRENHAM, TX 77833

BEVERAGES SPONSORED BY  
MIKE HOPKINS DISTRIBUTING

