Why is ARCIT membership important to your community?

You can choose to become a member of number of organizations and an even larger number of organizations will accept your donation. So why should you become a ARCIT member or renew your membership, spending your community’s hard earned revenue?

Every time ARCIT sends out membership renewal notices or asks new entities to become a member, we want to make sure the member gets added value in return. Asking you to become a member of ARCIT is about much more than the membership cost. ARCIT membership is about identity, feedback, support, and strength.

ARCIT is truly dedicated to supporting rural and small communities. ARCIT offers a strong voice and resource to the Texas state legislature, Texas state agencies and the federal government to promote the best practices of policies and programs for rural and small communities, while enhancing the quality of life for all Texans within a rural or small community. ARCIT works with members of the legislature to ensure these issues impacting its membership is being discussed with key legislative leaders and remains in the forefront.

A strong membership base keeps ARCIT close to the community it supports. ARCIT does not exist without its members, the community, and that is reflected throughout the association. Being supported by our community is built into ARCIT's DNA, it is our identity.

ARCIT members provide a vital connection to the governance process. We listen intently to what you say and we use this information to gauge our effectiveness and to constantly review our strategy. If ARCIT is effective, you (our members) will continue to support us; if we slip we know your community will find a better organization to support. ARCIT will always work hard to maintain your trust and support. A strong connection to our community maintains an effective feedback loop. Our members are the face of ARCIT. You are the community. You are the reason people join ARCIT.

ARCIT is here to support your efforts as members and extend your reach. A strong membership base helps amplify your message by demonstrating that the whole ARCIT community is robust, healthy, and growing. As the saying goes "there is strength in numbers" and we use those numbers to demonstrate the power of the ARCIT community at the Capitol and among state agencies.

Each membership provides a valuable revenue source for the association, but each member is seen as much more than a financial transaction. As a member you have become a closer part of the ARCIT family, someone that might have come for the representation, but stayed for the community.

It is imperative to have active participation by all rural and small communities in Texas to ensure success for our communities. As a leader of your community, your voice is crucial in enhancing the quality of life for all rural Texans. Please take a moment and join the other community leaders whom have chosen ARCIT to help represent their community and their community’s needs.

Be on the lookout for your 2016 membership renewal notice!
On November 11-12, 2015, under the direction of new executive director, Kara Mayfield, The Association of Rural Communities (ARCIT) held its annual conference at the Hyatt Lost Pines resort in Bastrop, Texas. This annual conference was unlike any before it, featuring a two-day schedule packed with speeches by state officials, discussion sessions with members about rural issues, presentations from industry experts, and more!

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Glenn Hegar, Representative Drew Springer, and Assistant Commissioner Dan Hunter each spoke to attendees about the issues facing rural and small communities in Texas. Each speech was followed by in-depth question and answer sessions during which attendees were granted the rare opportunity to ask these policy makers specific questions about their concerns for their respective communities.

Over the two-day conference community leaders from across the state convened in intimate groups with representatives from relevant state agencies like TCEQ, Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas Department of Transportation, The Governor’s Economic Development and Tourism Department, and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to discuss state programs and policies most relevant to the concerns of our member’s communities.

In addition to the busy conference agenda, there was also plenty of fun to go around. Attendees networked over delicious meals, enjoyed a cocktail reception hosted at the hotel, and anxiously waited to see if their name would be called for one of the many raffle prizes given throughout the two-day event. ARCIT staff and members alike had a blast at this year’s event, and are already working to make the 2016 ARCIT annual conference even bigger and better than this one!

A special thank you to all those that attended the conference!  
Your attendance and participation made it a huge success!!
Election Filing Deadline Buzz...

The window for candidates to file for the March 1 primaries closed Monday evening on December 14, 2015.


- Railroad Commissioner David Porter decided not to seek re-election. Four Republicans announced plans to run for the position, including former state Rep. Wayne Christian, R-Center, longtime Austin attorney and lobbyist John Greytok, Gary Gates, a wealthy real estate agent and cattle rancher in Richmond and Cypress engineer Ron Hale. There was some speculation that former Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson may enter the race however he announced that he was not going to run for the open seat.

Several Texas Senate and House races will see rematches:


- In House District 58, representative DeWayne Burns (Cleburne) will again face construction company owner Philip Eby (Clifton) who he defeated in the 2014 primary.

- Newly elected Senator José Menéndez (San Antonio) will once again run against Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer (San Antonio) in February, Menendez beat Martinez Fischer in a special election runoff to replace Sen. Leticia Van Putte, who resigned to run for mayor of San Antonio.

- Senator Carlos Uresti (San Antonio) will face off against Helen Madla (San Antonio), the widow of Frank Madla, who Uresti unseated in 2006.

- Representatives Bryan Hughes (Mineola) and David Simpson (Longview) have both entered the race for the open Senate Seat in District 1, leaving their House seats up for grabs. Hughes and Simpson will be facing off against two other Republicans for the Senate seat vacated by Sen. Kevin Eltife: James “Red” Brown (Tyler), a major general in the U.S. Army, and Mike Lee (Queen City), a retired Navy Pilot.

- In House District 5, four Republican candidates have surfaced to replace Hughes (Mineola), who was first elected in 2002. Randy Davis, a Texas State Guard officer, businessman Jay Misenheimer, Philip Hayes, a former Senate staffer, and Cole Hefner, an insurance salesman and former Upshur county commissioner.

- Longview Mayor Jay Dean and businessman David Watts have both filed for Simpson’s seat in District 7.

- State Rep. John Otto, (Dayton) announced in July he would not be seeking re-election to the House District 18 seat he has held since 2005. Since his announcement, five Republican candidates have surfaced to fill his seat. Former Huntsville Mayor J. Turner, businessman Ernest Bailes, business attorney Keith Strahan, Liberty County Attorney Wesley Hinch and Van Brookshire, former San Jacinto County Republican Party chairman.

- Five candidates have emerged to fill the District 33 seat, vacated by Rep. Scott Turner, R-Frisco. Three Republicans have filed for candidacy, Heath Mayor Lorne Liechty, businessman Justin Holland and Army veteran John Keating. Cristin Padgett and Karen Jacobs are both seeking the Democratic nomination.

- Rep. Elliot Naishtat (Austin) confirmed he would not run again for the seat he first won in 1990. Five Democratic candidates for the House District 49 seat have surfaced including Austin ISD Board President Gina Hinojosa, legislative staffer Huey Fischer, defense attorney Matthew Shrum, personal injury attorney Aspen Dunaway, attorney Blake Rocap and University of Texas law professor Heather Way.
Both Republican and Democratic candidates have filed to appear on the primary ballot for the House District 54 race to replace Rep. Jimmie Don Aycock (Killeen). Killeen Mayor Scott Cosper, optometrist Austin Ruiz and Army veteran Larry Smith are vying for the Republican nomination while Lan Carter and Sandra Blankenship will fight for the Democratic nomination.

Republicans Rick Hagen, a criminal attorney, Lynn Stucky, a veterinarian, and Read King, a commercial real estate agent have all filed for Rep. Myra Crownover’s seat, as well as Democrat Connor Flanagan for House District 64.

Five Republican candidates have surfaced to run for Rep. Susan King’s vacant seat, including Abilene ISD School Board trustee Isaac Castro, attorney Chris Carnohan, Stan Lambert and Stacey Scaief. Democrat Pierce LoPachin has also filed.

in House District 120, five Democratic candidates have emerged – former city councilman Art Hall, Bear County Justice of the Peace Byron Miller, insurance agent Lou Miller, former city councilman Mario Salas and Barbara Gervin-Hawkins. Rep. Ruth Jones McClendon, D-San Antonio, announced in September that she would not be seeking re-election.

Rep. Susan King filed for the Senate District 24 seat on Monday, which was vacated by Sen. Troy Fraser (Horseshoe Bay). Five other Republican candidates have entered the race for the seat including physician Dawn Buckingham, businessman Jon Cobb, former San Antonio City Councilman Reed Williams, Ryan Downton, president of Little River Health Care and Brent Mayes.

Among Congressional contests …

Most of Texas’ incumbents in the U.S. House are running unopposed in their primaries.

The race to replace retiring U.S. Rep. Randy Neugebauer (Lubbock) is set to be among the most crowded on the GOP ballot, with seven candidates having filed.

At least six Democrats filed for the seat currently held by U.S. Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, (Edinburg), who is retiring.


U.S. Rep. Marc Veasey (Fort Worth) will face a primary rival in Carlos Quintanilla (Dallas).

Don’t forget that as an ARCIT member you have access to a range of programs and services available to your community. Please contact ARCIT at (512) 788-1819 for more details or visit the ARCIT website at www.arcit.org.
Welcome New Members for 2015!!!

- Aransas County
- City of Berryville
- Big Lake EDC
- City of Bishop
- City of Blue Ridge
- Brazos County
- Burleson County EDC
- City of Carmine
- City of Cisco
- City of Coolidge
- De Leon
- De Leon Industrial Corp
- City of Diboll
- City of Eagle Pass
- Goliad County
- Gonzales EDC
- City of Granbury
- Grand Saline EDC
- Groesbeck EDC
- City of Hughes Springs
- Jack County
- Jacksboro EDC
- City of Jewett
- City of Josephine
- La Grange EDC
- Leon County
- City of Oak Ridge
- City of Perryton
- Rockwall EDC
- City of Sealy
- Shamrock EDC
- City of Smithville
- City of Somerville
- Hopkins EDC
- Tatum EDC

2015 ARCIT Board of Directors

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The Honorable Byron Ryder, Leon County
The Honorable Jimmy Sylvia, Chambers County
The Honorable Lee Norman, Garza County
Carolyn Gibson Baros
Robin Betts, Fire Chief, City of Atlanta
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