

HEADLINES

Goes Digital!

Winter 2020

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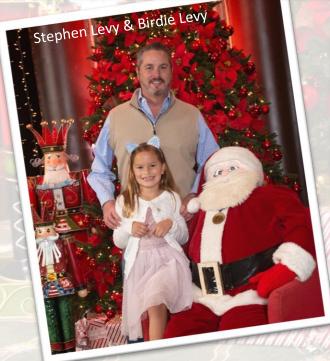
For the first time ever, *Headlines* is coming to you hot off the virtual presses and into your inbox.

Happy Holidays from your Fellow Headliners' Members!

The holidays might look a little different this year, but like all of you... Headliners is learning to navigate through these new challenges.









♦ HEADLINERS HOLIDAY PHOTOS



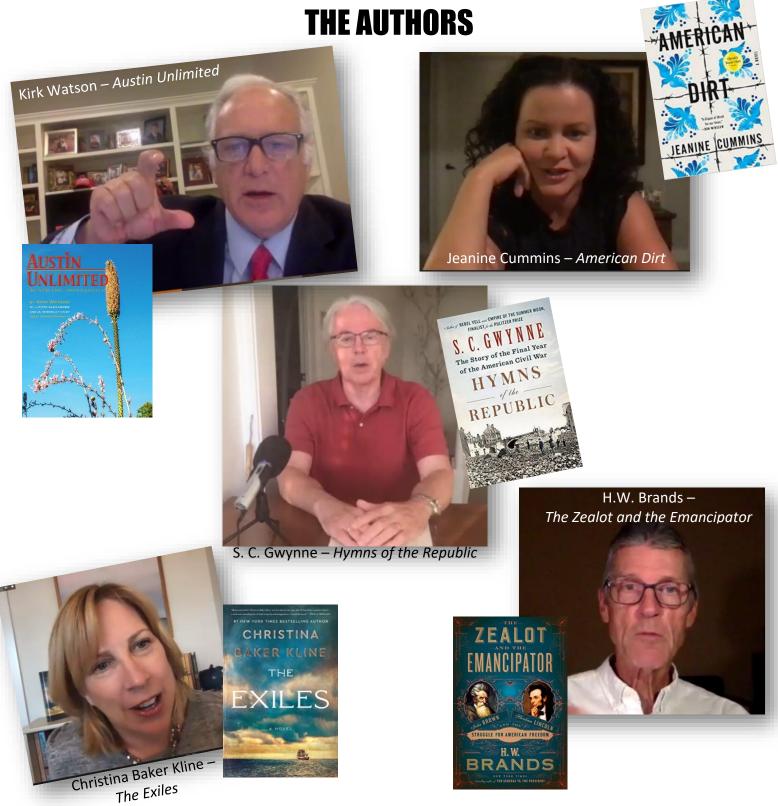






♦ HEADLINERS BOOK CLUB ♦

Thank you to **Rose Betty Williams**, chairman of the Book Club for continuing this incredible new club within the club. Book Club meets once or twice a month, depending on author availability. Headliners can sign up for each of the sessions as we announce them. Make sure to sign up right away when the invitations hit your inbox, these exclusive events are capped at 25 participants.



♦ HEADLINERS BOOK CLUB

THE PARTICIPANTS













♦ HEADLINERS BOOK CLUB











Carolyn Lewis

♦ HEADLINERS BOOK CLUB ♦







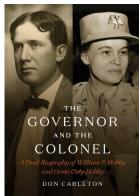
♦ HEADLINERS BOOK CLUB ♦





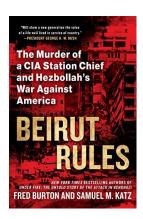
JANUARY 20 DON CARLETON

The Governor and the Colonel



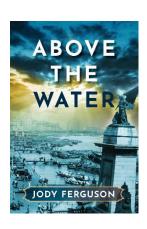
FEBRUARY 9 FRED BURTON

Beirut Rules



MARCH 2 JODY FERGUSON

Above the Water



PROJECT CONNECT – PART 1

September 28, 2020 Wade Cooper, Capital Metro Board Chair & Randy Clarke, President and CEO of Capital Metro

Project Connect: A Transit Plan Designed for Austin

New light rail line, an additional commuter line to Manor and Elgin, a downtown transit tunnel, expanded Metro Express and Metro Bus service – these are things of which transportation dreams are made.



September 28, 2020, Wade Cooper, chair of the CapMetro Board, and Randy Clarke, President and CEO of CapMetro, enthusiastically described what the future of Austin transportation could be with Project Connect.



Clarke, who has held key transportation positions in Boston and Washington, DC, spoke to plan, rather than Props A and B, which he punted to Cooper. For the light rail, there would be three lines, with 36 miles of track, 40 stations, and a transit tunnel. Metro Rapid would add seven new routes, stretching 74 miles, with 193 stations. Metro Rail (heavy rail) would add a line to Manor and Elgin. Metro Express would add 8 new routes and 24 new Park and Ride

locations. Metro Bus and Metro Access would be expanded. Sustainability? CapMetro would be an allelectric fleet.

Obviously, this is an expensive and time-consuming undertaking. Immediate costs for the first phase would be \$7.1 billion, with a perpetual increase in city taxes. Light rail would take about nine years, Metro Rapid four to five years, with a total estimated time of 13 years. The Austin Transit Partnership, a separate entity responsible for auditing, implementing design and construction would be created and estimates that, for every \$1 billion invested, there would be a return of \$1.38 billion in economic activity and 9,745 jobs generated.

After describing the scope of Project Connect, Clarke turned the lectern over to Wade Cooper, who addressed the need for Prop A. Early in the 2000s, TXDOT decided not to fix I-35, helping to lead to the

current conditions. Cooper presented a fourpronged approach to why Prop A is needed – congestion, affordability, sustainability,

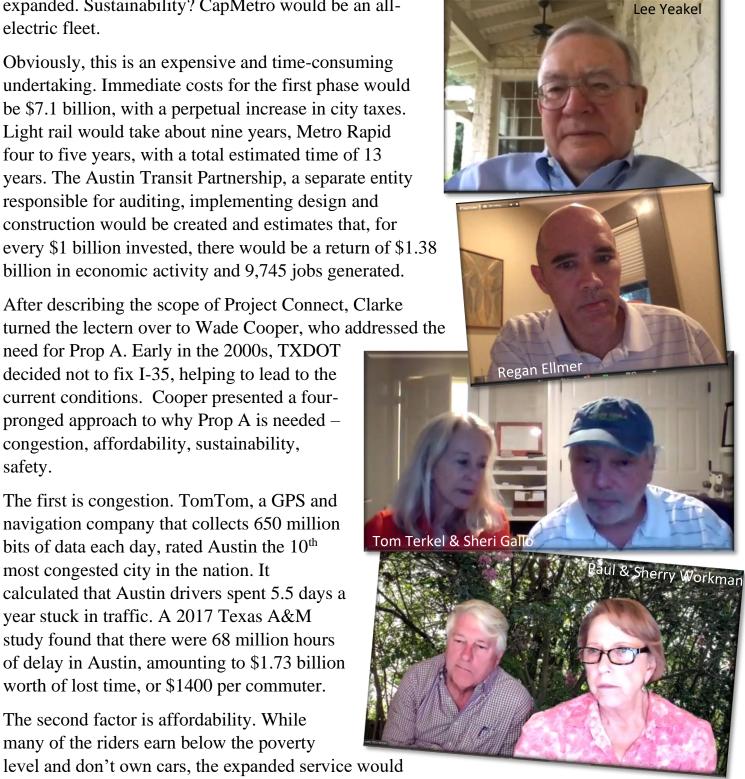
safety.

The first is congestion. TomTom, a GPS and navigation company that collects 650 million bits of data each day, rated Austin the 10th most congested city in the nation. It calculated that Austin drivers spent 5.5 days a year stuck in traffic. A 2017 Texas A&M study found that there were 68 million hours of delay in Austin, amounting to \$1.73 billion worth of lost time, or \$1400 per commuter.

The second factor is affordability. While many of the riders earn below the poverty

encourage more use of mass transportation. With Project Connect in place, all riders

could save \$9,000 a year in transportation costs.





Third, the project will provide sustainability. With an all-electric fleet and the reduced use of cars to commute, carbon emissions and other pollutants could be drastically curbed.

Finally, there's safety. With fewer cars on the road and the CapMetro's good safety record, there could be a significant reduction in traffic deaths and costly vehicle repairs.

Cooper is proud of CapMetro. It has no deferred maintenance and has won awards for its financial transparency. He stated that "this is not the CapMetro of 2008-2009."

Clarke and Cooper fielded questions from the members, which included details of the routes, the availability of federal funds ("be ready for a federal infrastructure bill"), and the inevitable taxation

issue.

John & Sally Strickland

Cooper rounded off the evening by saying "The easiest way to make this more expensive is to kick this can down the road. There is a cost to doing nothing."

- Kay Allensworth

*disclaimer: this article was written in anticipation of and prior to the election.

PROJECT CONNECT – PART 2



October 5, 2020 Gerald Daugherty and Roger Falk

On Monday, Oct 5, 2020 Zooming Headliners had a front row seat for the election battle over Proposition A involving the City of Austin's



new Project Connect, a transportation plan starring light rail. Prop A is on the ballot for Austin voters in the November election.

Gerald Daugherty, Travis County Commissioner for 14 years, and Roger Falk, member of the Our Mobility Our Future PAC, unleashed facts and figures and old-fashioned advocacy to

convince the attentive Headliners that Prop A is "bone-headed, crazy expensive, and the biggest mistake ever."

Daugherty and Falk made the following points against the proposition:

There will be an approximately 25% property tax increase by the City of Austin. This will be the largest tax increase in City of Austin history, and in the middle of a pandemic. The tax will be perpetual, whether anything gets built or not, and will compound with rising property appraisals. The tax will hit bruised homeowners and desperate commercial properties alike.

Approximately 80% of the money raised by the new tax will be spent on light rail. About a billion dollars of that money will be spent constructing a mile-long railroad tunnel under downtown Austin. The tunnel construction will disrupt downtown for years while dump trucks haul off debris, rocks. Daugherty and Falk call the downtown tunnel a "black hole for tax dollars."



The project will require the City to borrow in addition billions of dollars to complete and will additionally need uncertain federal funding.

Rick & Cathy Coneway

Stuart Shav

Daugherty and Falk also said that light rail is an obsolete technology. Austin itself is a technology leader; and Austinites want new transportation technology, like Uber.





They also say that very few people will use light rail. Daugherty recalled the 30-year history of Capitol Metro and said the ridership is flat because about the same number of riders use public mass transit in Austin as they did in 1990. The City's population has doubled in that same 30 years. He said that only about one percent of Austinites use mass transit and there is no proof that the number of riders will increase.

In fact, Austin leads the nation in telecommuting with twice as many people telecommuting as riding public transportation.

Dougherty also noted that the ballot language is misleading and does not inform the voters of what they are getting into. For example, the project will be administered by an unaccountable and unelected Austin Transit Partnership which will tax, have bonding authority,

as well as the power of eminent domain.

Dougherty wants Capitol Metro to spend money on a comprehensive road system, not to "break the bank on

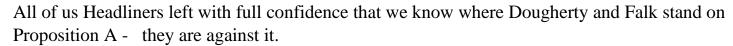
folly" and to "...know what people use, not what you want people to use."

He also had choice words for the promoters of Prop A accusing them of trying to win a jackpot of consulting fees.

Lastly, the proposed trains themselves will not be express trains and will share the road with traffic. With frequent stops, the proposed trains may not reduce the travel time of commuters.

The basic problem? Austin does not have the population density

that the Northeast does, so commuter rail is impractical.

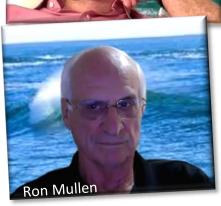


- Will Wilson

*disclaimer: this article was written in anticipation of and prior to the election.









ROBERT KAPLAN

October 6, 2020 Robert Kaplan, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas



At a virtual meeting on October 6, Headliners members were privileged to hear an economic update from Robert Kaplan, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. In a wide-ranging presentation, Kaplan explained that the US economy contracted 33% in 2020, bottoming out in

Laura Pinto

April, growing in May and June, and stagnating since July due to

resurgence of Covid. August and September saw low growth as the unemployment rate continues to decline, but at 7.5% remained much higher than pre-March levels.

On the bright side, Kaplan stated that recovery since March has been pretty rapid with a 30% annualized growth rate

between May and September, although that growth has only partially rectified the severe contraction following the spring shutdowns. He anticipates a sustained 3.5% anticipated growth rate in 2021, although the longterm prospects for the recovery are entirely dependent on our response to the virus. He is anticipating

the arrival of vaccines in 2021, but stresses that the recovery will be more robust if the virus is thoroughly eradicated and stresses the importance of continuing to wear masks and adhering to social distancing protocols well into 2021.



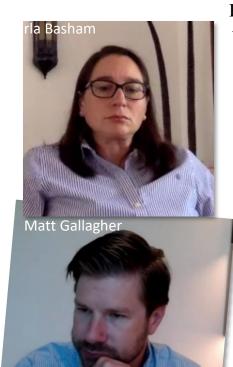
Tom Grange

Wick Alexander

Jason Becker

Ben Turner

From a macro perspective, Kaplan did emphasize that the economy stabilized after April, mainly because of solid fiscal policy and continued consumer spending in certain sectors of the economy. The spring federal stimulus package combined with fiscal policy to bolster the economy and allow it to regain its footing. According to the Mobility and Engagement Index (MEI), a Federal Reserve measure of credit card spending, consumer spending remained strong, but shifted patterns.



Restaurants, hospitality, and travel suffered terribly, but consumer spending shifted to home improvements and online shopping. Oil markets remain stagnant with excess inventory predicted until end of 2021. State and local

governments have been hit hard due to reduced sales tax collections, and will face layoffs without a federal stimulus package, which Kaplan anticipates will be forthcoming after the election. Interest rates will remain at or near zero percent until inflation reaches a

sustained 2% rate, probably through 2021. Such low interest rates are counterproductive and mean that retirement will be difficult, and that insurance companies will be compelled to raise premiums. He also stressed that the Fed is doing everything possible to mitigate the economic fallout, but reliance on monetary policy to sustain the economy will lead to fragility.

At the micro level, Kaplan noted that the pandemic recession has had a disproportionate impact throughout the economy. It has been disastrous for face-to-face industries like restaurants, brick and mortar retail, and the airline industry. However, college educated Americans were far less impacted than those without higher education. High school educated workers were far more likely to have their incomes reduced, so income and wealth inequality was exacerbated. This situation has revealed the importance of training and education, even for those with college



degrees. More help is needed to assist our at-risk populations, so the federal government needs to invest more heavily in the nonprofits and local governments that provide that direct support.

Despite the current setbacks, Kaplan stresses that the Eleventh Federal Reserve District, including Texas, is poised to BOOM once the pandemic passes due to in-migration. Because of the continued population increase, investment in education and infrastructure is needed.

In summation, Kaplan reiterated that the critical factor in turning around the economy and maintaining a strong recovery is Covid mitigation! "The most powerful economic tool in the USA is a mask! The quicker that we can get the pandemic under control, we'll have less need for fiscal stimulus, less need for restrictive monetary policy, and will have a shorter recovery period."

Sam Greer

2020 Election Preview – Texas Edition

October 19, 2020 Harold Cook and Matt Mackowiak



If there is one thing that overshadows even the COVID pandemic, it is November 3, 2020. Americans have been treated (dubious term) to a roller-coaster ride of epic proportions in the current election cycle. Polls jump back and forth; rhetoric is thrown



about with abandon. It appears that campaigning is done only at a shouting level. Thus, it was a pleasure for members to attend a congenial exchange between two of Austin's premier political consultants, Harold Cook and Matt Mackowiak, in a bipartisan discussion of what might happen on election night. Special Events Co-Chair Tim Taylor introduced the two, noting their impressive resumes, and commented that it was a balanced crowd politically.

Although this was the "Texas Edition", the presidential race has everything to do with what happens in Texas. When asked about that race, Cook stated that a "relatively unpopular president" makes the Texas races more interesting. He predicted a fairly close race. Mackowiak replied to the national question by saying that he always looks at the betting markets. On October 19, Biden was at -180 and Trump at +135, indicating odds favoring Biden. He stated that Biden had the financial advantage, which "certainly affects Texas, especially in the suburbs." So, they both predict, at this point, a Biden win.

On the Cornyn/Hegar race, Cook sees Hegar as slightly behind, but thinks that Cornyn is taking this race very seriously, since Hegar "has enough money to compensate." Mackowiak, however, said that "the only way Cornyn loses is if Trump loses Texas, and that's not going to

happen." He predicted that Cornyn will run better than Trump, since he has such low negatives and has run a serious race from day one. Hegar was handicapped by her run-off race, got in too late, and just doesn't have the traction.

Tim Taylor asked both which Republican senators are at

risk. Mackowiak mentioned Colorado, (Gardner -R v. Hickenlooper -D), Arizona, (McSally -R v. Kelley -D),

and Maine (Collins -R v. Gideon -D), and that all the Republicans could lose. Cook

Jan Pickle

mentioned the South Carolina race (Graham – R v. Harrison – D) as "one of the most interesting races I've ever seen. Harrison has raised an enormous amount of money, but Cook doesn't think that money will win it. "South Carolina Republicans don't switch," he stated. Mackowiak added, "It's unusual for Democrats for outraise Republicans, and they're doing it."

William & Kay Allensworth

Taylor then asked about the overall view of the Texas Congressional races. Cook replied that the Democratic Party targeted ten seats – however, they won't win them all and



J.B. Milliken

may not even win half of the races. He predicted that Jones (D) should win the seat that Will Hurd (R) vacated in the 23rd District, that the 22nd District (Ft. Bend County) "looks blue", and that Valenzuela (D) has a "good shot" against Van Duyne (R) in the 24th District. While not making a prediction about the 21st District (Roy - R v. Davis – D), he mentioned that Chip Roy almost lost two years ago and that Wendy Davis has "raised boatloads of money."

Mackowiak was less sanguine about Democratic takeovers in the 21st and 23rd Districts, saying



Bob McBee

that the margins were "razor thin." In the 10th District, he lauded McCaul for his campaign, and thought that he has run the "single best campaign in the country." Both Cook and Mackowiak predicted that Mc Caul would win. Mackowiak concluded that "how Trump runs is the key [to the Congressional races]."



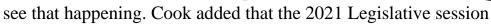
Moving on to the Texas Legislature, both Cook and Mackowiak think that the senate is stable. There is only one marginal race, the one between Flores (R) and Gutierrez (D). Mackowiak feels that Flores is the difference between a Republican majority and "not." If he loses, Dan Patrick may try to shove through a 60% rule on votes, which will anger the Democrats.

Looking at the Texas House, Cook

said, "I don't have a clue."

The Democrats won 12 seats in the last election, but would need to win nine more to get a majority. In a fit of optimism, he said that the races are being run well, and are well-funded, which gives the Democrats "a

chance." Mackowiak responded that the house (and the rest of the State) have been Republican since 2003, only switching twice in the last 100 years. He predicted that Democrats might get two or three seats, but not nine. He also asserted that the Texas House "matters the most", because of redistricting and budget issues brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. It would be chaotic if the house is Democratic and the senate Republican, but he doesn't





will be a very challenging one, no matter who wins. Both predicted "lots" of special sessions.

Two issues raised from the audience included the importance of TV in the era of social media and straight-ticket voting. Mackowiak commented that not having straight ticket voting "has effects we don't know about yet." Both Cook and Mackowiak felt that TV still mattered but that its importance would wane in the coming decade.

Without a doubt, the 2020 Election Preview, Texas Edition, was informative and friendly, but left little doubt that the election returns would produce many surprises as well as disappointments. This article is published after the election, so there will probably be direct, 20/20 hindsight discussions among the attendees, as well as prognosticators Cook and Mackowiak.

- Kay Allensworth

*disclaimer: this article was written in anticipation of and prior to the election.

2020 Election Preview – National Edition

September 28, 2020 Mark McKinnon & Evan Smith



Less than one week out from Election Day, Headliners Club members enjoyed a Zoom event of prediction, projection, prognostication, speculation and a variety of scenarios entertained by political strategist and former Austinite Mark McKinnon.

McKinnon -- the chief media advisor for five winning presidential primary and general election campaigns – knows firsthand how political campaigns intersect with political reality. He has worked for a variety of causes, companies and candidates on both sides of the aisle, including President George W. Bush, former Governor Ann Richards, Arizona Senator John McCain and Bono.



And he is not only a political advisor. McKinnon is the creator, executive producer and co-host of Showtime's political documentary series *The Circus*, which next month begins its sixth season. He's also a cofounder of No Labels, a nonprofit aimed at healing the country's partisan divide.

"This is an election that people will care

passionately

about on both sides, and so, I really think it's going to be record numbers," McKinnon said. "I do think we're going to have historic turnout. I think historic turnout on both sides."

He was right. The 2020 vote brought out nearly 160 million Americans voting

either early or on Election Day, with a 66.7% turnout rate --the highest turnout since the 1900 presidential election.

Fielding questions from Headliners' Evan Smith -- cofounder and CEO of the *Texas Tribune* -- and special events co-chair Tim Taylor, McKinnon had plenty to say about Texas' senate contest and others around the country. But the focus was never far from this year's

presidential contest and beyond.

On Biden's presidency: "It's going to be a very difficult four years... I think for anybody under any circumstances -- to

come out of the next four years very successfully."



Cindy Matula







On 2024: (Which he prefaced as a "nutty" and "wild prediction")" There is and will be a ton of discussion about who's going to inherit that Trump mantle because that's a brand and a core of constituents that's huge, organized, funded. And, you know, they're not going to walk away from that. But I think the guy who's really not going to want to walk away from it is Donald Trump. And I predict that Donald Trump will run for re-election in 2024...He's not going to be happy on the sidelines just watching Don Jr. or Ivanka or Ted Cruz or Tom

Cotton inherit what he believes

he's built so successfully."

McKinnon says the past few years have made us "understand why government is important."

"I'd say that this has been like a national civics lesson for all of us in the last few years...so, I think that as difficult as this has all been, it has reminded us why it's important to plug into government. It's why we see so many people voting."



Sharon Jayson

*disclaimer: this article was written in anticipation of and prior to the election.

U.S. Senator Ted Cruz

December 2, 2020

Long time Headliners Club member Senator Ted Cruz joined a Zoom call with members to answer Tim Taylor's questions about events that are front and center today. Senator Cruz sits on the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Committee on Foreign Relations and described his job as a big responsibility and an immense privilege to represent 29 million Texans.

When asked who won the presidential election, Cruz



replied that there was no doubt that Joe Biden was ahead, but that Trump's pursing litigation was a normal part of our political process. Al Gore did the same in 2000. Given Joe Biden's current lead, Senator Cruz noted that the upcoming Senate runoffs slated for January 5 in Georgia are high stakes contests—perhaps the highest in our lifetimes. To hold the Senate, and thus provide a check and balance on a Democratic controlled House and a Democratic President, Republicans must win one of the two runoffs.

Senator Cruz described two different worlds depending on whether the Republicans control the Senate. Because he believes that the extreme left heavily influences the national Democratic party, he noted a Democratic controlled Senate would likely result in an end of the filibuster, a massive tax increase, implementation of an economically damaging Green New Deal, amnesty and citizenship for 15 million undocumented immigrants, statehood granted for Washington,

D.C., and Puerto Rico with 4 new Senators, and increasing the Supreme Court from nine justices to 13. If the Republicans do keep control of the Senate, these things will likely not happen. This "check and balance" argument is powerful in Georgia, according

to Senator Cruz, and he is therefore cautiously optimistic.







am McIlhenn

On foreign affairs, Senator Cruz noted that while Iran and North Korea are both major threats, he views Iran as more dangerous. Kim Jong-un knows that if he attacked the United States or one of its allies, his country would be destroyed, and this is an unacceptable risk. Iran by contrast is run by religious zealots, who may well believe massive loss of life in their own country resulting from their aggressive strike would be an acceptable outcome.

Turning to China, Senator Cruz described that country as the biggest geopolitical risk to the United States over the next century, as they seek global domination. Taiwan and Hong Kong





are both threats to China, as they show the Chinese people that they can live in freedom and prosperity. Recall West Berlin provided that lesson to East Berlin and helped bring about the end of the Berlin Wall during the Cold War.

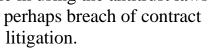


What about term limits for senators and representatives? Cruz supports them and will reintroduce a bill next year, though it is tough

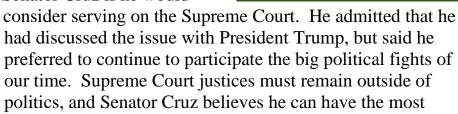
to find co-sponsors on either side of the aisle. He believes that the reason the national debt is so high is that the easiest way to get reelected is to load up bills with pork for constituents. In his views, two terms for senators and

three terms for representatives would be workable. However, he is not optimistic about being able to pass this bill.

When it comes to free speech, Senator Cruz believes the biggest threat comes from Big Tech, including companies like Facebook, Google and Twitter, which have a concentration of power never before seen. He noted that Twitter and Facebook blocked the New York Post story on Hunter Biden for 12 days. The solution is difficult but may lie in using the antitrust laws or



Finally, Tim Taylor asked Senator Cruz if he would



positive impact in the Senate.





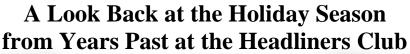
Throughout this event, Tim Taylor demonstrated his mastery of a wide range of critical issues and his ability to ask clear questions that allowed Senator Cruz to respond directly on point. It was the best of Headliners at Home.

-Pam McIlhenny









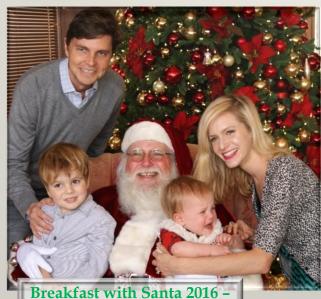








Martha Covert & Dorothy Nash, circa 1994



reakfast with Santa 2016 -Will & Jessica Burnett with Henry & Penny



Kids' Movie Night -Christmas Edition 2015



♦ NEW MEMBERS ♦

Dayna Blazey

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Mrs. Marci Henna

Author/Exec. Producer | Last Spoke Partners, LLC.

Mr. Louis M. Henna Jr.

Owner/ CEO | Henna Chevrolet, LP

Mr. Stephen Stout

Managing Partner | Proton Partners

Mrs. Kiki Lambden Stout

CEO | Mudcat Films

Mr. Samuel Richard Taylor

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Mr. Charles Timothy Frasier CDO | ZACH Theatre

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Texas' Best Journalists Share the Stories Behind the Stories







Dallas Morning News' Freddy Corchado,
Reporter of the Year, on covering the mass
shooting at an El Paso Walmart, Mexico-U.S.
politics, and immigration. Shown with
interviewer Mark Morrison, Chairman Emeritus
of the Headliners Foundation.

Mark Morrison with KUT Radio's Reporter of the Year **Mose Buchele** on finding the best stories and telling them in a compelling way for listeners.







Opinion Writer of the Year **Tim Archuleta**, editor of the *El Paso Times*, talks about the art of effective opinion writing and the challenges of leading a news organization to its award-winning coverage of the 2019 Walmart mass shooting and serving readers during COVID-19. Shown with interviewer **Mark Morrison**.





KXAN-TV's **David Barer** and **Jody Barr** on investigating questionable practices in Texas' prosecution of law enforcement officers accused of crimes.





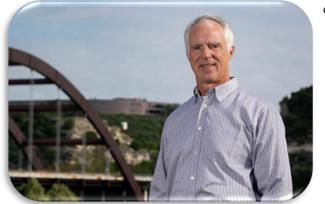


To see more interviews with award-winning journalists, please visit the <u>Learning Lab</u> section of our website at <u>www.headlinersfoundation.org.</u> Showcase Award entries are now being accepted for work produced in 2020. <u>Click here</u> to learn more and submit an entry.

♦ HONORS ♦

On September 24, Colorado River Alliance hosted their first ever virtual gala and most important fundraiser of the year: *Cocktails for the Colorado*! This year's special event was a live-streamed experience, giving donors

the opportunity to make a difference from the comfort and safety of their own couch or wherever in the world they were.



Tim Timmerman was the evening's honoree and received the newly renamed award, the John Lay River Hero Award. Tim was recognized for his dedication to our community and beloved river. Tim's commitment and efforts to protect the Texas Colorado River have impacted the river's longevity in a myriad of ways. His passion for the river stems from memories of spending time with his family on Lake Buchanan and his love of the outdoors as an avid fisherman and hunter.



KVUE's **Senior Reporter Tony Plohetski** and Chief Photographer Brian Bell, won a first-place National Headliner Award and a Lone Star Emmy for their series 'Left in the Dust'. The three-part KVUE series dug into the Texas Hill Country's booming rock-mining industry and found in many cases growth is outpacing state regulation.



♦ REQUIESCANT IN PACE ♦

Balie Griffith
Valerie (Mrs. Sam) Dunnam
Charlotte (Mrs. Marcel) Gres

Patty (Mrs. G. Harvey) Jones
Stan McLelland
John Mobley

Bob Honts

Thomas Reavley
Charlotte (Mrs. John) Sharp
June (Mrs. Jack) Spencer

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