
Duncan, Darby to take part in 2009 West Texas Legislative Summit

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Now in its sixth year, the 2009 West Texas Legislative Summit is scheduled from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, in the C.J. Davidson Center at Angelo State University.

The summit allows us to interact directly with two of our most important elected representatives who are co-sponsors and participants in the event: state Sen. Robert Duncan of Lubbock and state Rep. Drew Darby of San Angelo. We appreciate serving with them and their staffs in organizing the summit, and learning their thoughts on important issues. Topics in previous years have included water resources, energy, education, health care and transportation.

The 2009 West Texas Legislative Summit is focused on the current status and future opportunities in agriculture. Registration deadline is Tuesday, Aug. 11. The \$99 registration includes all sessions, breakfast, lunch, breaks and hand-outs.

Hosting the summit on the ASU campus, our other co-sponsor, allows us to promote the excellent facilities on campus, bringing influential citizens, community leaders and future parents of college students on campus. It should be noted that the summit takes place at an ideal time at ASU, following classes in the second summer term and prior to classes in the fall term, so parking adjacent to the C.J. Davidson Center is easy and convenient.

The West Texas Legislative Summit helps establish San Angelo as a center for culture, the arts, retail and service, tourism, medical, education and other facets of life in the minds of West Texas business and government leaders.

The chamber hosts speakers from the Texas House of Representatives, Texas Senate, state and federal government who might otherwise not be familiar with San Angelo, so when we call on them for assistance or referrals, they have an up-to-date familiarity and pleasant memory associated with our community.

Perhaps last on our list is the economic impact, both on the community and the chamber. Only a few of the registrants spend the night, though some shop or bring family members who do, and of course we hope for repeat visits from participants at other times. And yes, thanks to our generous sponsors, we hope to bring in more dollars from sponsorships and registrations than we pay to promote and host the event.

Not counting our Convention & Visitors Bureau and Economic Development Division, almost half of the chamber's income is derived from non-dues sources, including meetings, workshops and seminars, special events, fees for services, and so forth.

So yes, the chamber's Board of Directors, members and staff hope we accomplish a number of things with the summit.

We also covet your support of the event, be it in your personal attendance if you relate to the topic, or in a backup role spreading word about the event to your contacts, or even in your friendly welcome to our out-of-town guests in attendance.

At whatever level, we hope the West Texas Legislative Summit continues to represent San Angelo and the Concho Valley well, and that you will advocate the event in whatever role is appropriate.

For more information, please call the chamber at 655-4136. You may register online on the chamber's Web site, sanangelo.org.

Phil Neighbors is president of the San Angelo Chamber of Commerce.