



YEARS

**TEXAS REAL ESTATE
RESEARCH CENTER**

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The First 50 Years

A History of the Texas Real Estate Research Center at Texas A&M University

By David S. Jones, communications director

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Foreword

According to the U.S. Census in 1900, there were 2,498 persons actively engaged in the real estate business in Texas. California and Michigan were the first states to pass laws licensing real estate “dealers.” That was 1919.

By 1930, Texas had 10,070 real estate agents on record. State regulation of the real estate occupation came with the Real Estate Dealers License Act passed by the 46th Legislature in 1939. The act was intended to regulate dealers and “salesmen” who worked for them. All a person needed to get a Texas license back then was \$3 and three friends to vouch for the applicant.

During the following years, licensure requirements increased as education and residency requirements were added. Real estate exams for licensure did not begin until 1955. As the 1970s began, more than 100,000 Texans held a real estate license.¹

That is where our story begins.

Heck of an Idea

Several people might claim the title “Texas Real Estate Research Center founder.” But on any list, Julio Laguarta would be at or near the top. During his career, Laguarta reached the pinnacle of success in his professional association. He was president of the Houston, Texas and National Associations of Realtors. As such, he was in position to hear about the best ideas from around the United States.

In 2007, Laguarta was interviewed at his home in Port O’Connor. He explained where the idea for a real estate center for applied Texas research originated.

“In the late 1960s, I was an instructor for the Realtors National Marketing Institute,” said Laguarta. “While teaching a CCIM course in Atlanta, Ga., I met Howard Benedict, a CCIM from Connecticut. I was impressed by the detail in the overhead slides he used. I asked where he got his data.”

Laguarta’s question would change Texas real estate forever.

“He was giving credit to something called the Connecticut Real Estate research institute,” said Laguarta. That evening over dinner Laguarta asked Benedict to tell him more about the Connecticut connection.

Laguarta recalled Benedict saying the organization was created through the Connecticut legislature to work for the industry and for various state agencies and provide an un-

impeachable source of data and information. The Center for Real Estate and Urban Economic Studies is in the University of Connecticut business school.

Laguarta thought the concept was “a heck of an idea” and asked to hear more about it.

Avoiding Appropriations Fight

Upon his return to Texas, Laguarta began work on a plan to create a Texas institute. Laguarta and other Texas Association of Realtors (TAR) leaders went to the Texas Legislature and presented an idea for a research center that real estate licensees themselves would finance with an increase to their own license fees. No appropriated money would be used to operate the Center.

It was a gamble. Adequate funding was dependent upon the number of licensees increasing at best and decreasing at worst.

“Whatever the amount was, it would be the funding for the institute,” said Laguarta. “So, we didn’t have to go and fight people for appropriations and that sort of thing.”

The idea seemed to be a win-win for everyone. Programs and products would be produced for licensees and the public, and the state would not have to pay a dime for them. There was another benefit few people discussed outside the halls of TAR.

“We were looking for ways to decrease the number of licensees. We felt that by raising the bar economically that we would begin to eliminate people that didn’t have any business with a license,” said Laguarta. “They didn’t use it or didn’t use it properly.” Real estate leaders were concerned about long-time licensees with grandfathered licenses, people licensed when anybody could get one.

“So that was the catalyst for the institute. We had the bill prepared by TAR’s general counsel, and then went to meet with the governor, lieutenant governor and speaker of the house. They gave it their blessing, and away we went.”

‘Skunk at a Picnic’

The next decision was where to locate the new institute. Everyone assumed it would be at the University of Texas (UT). The Connecticut institute was at the University of Connecticut.

“The natural thought was, well, we have the legislature and the capital in Austin. TAR’s office is in Austin. Many of the state associations, home builders and real estate-related organizations are in Austin. UT was the logical choice.”

In the interest of complete disclosure, it should be noted that Laguarta received a degree in business administration from UT, where he majored in real estate.

"We were all proud to go over and meet with the people at the UT school of business," said Laguarta. "We thought the idea would be a slam dunk.

"Well, we felt as welcome as a skunk at a picnic. They didn't like the idea of real estate, period, especially in the curriculum at the UT business school. They just let it be known, not in a direct way but in such a way it didn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out, that they were not going to be receptive to housing the Center."

Marriage Made in Heaven

"So that left us places like Baylor, SMU or A&M," recalled Laguarta. "Tony Meeks, director of education at TAR, was a friend of mine and knew Dr. A.B. "Pat" Wooten at Texas A&M. Tony had worked with Wooten with various educational programs for TAR and other organizations."

In the 1960s, Meeks and Wooten collaborated on a farm and ranch appraisal seminar for TAR.

"This was the first time the industry had ever worked with a university," said Wooten. "We set up the entire three-day program, and about 60 attended. The content was wide-ranging, including such topics as water, plants and conservation. TAR liked the program and, as a result, others would follow."

Wooten and Meeks maintained contact during the ensuing years. One day Meeks called Wooten and asked about the feasibility of a research center in Texas real estate. Meeks wanted Wooten's suggestions on everything from organization to funding to a research agenda.

"What we didn't know at the time," said Wooten, "is that the same request had been asked of several other universities: UT – Arlington, Texas Tech University and Southern Methodist University."²

Laguarta recalled, "Tony said, 'Why don't we go over and talk with Dr. Wooten?' I thought, well, I'm not real keen on this A&M thing, but okay, let's go."

Laguarta remembers his first meeting with Wooten in detail. Dressed in his finest business attire, Laguarta was unprepared for his visit.

"Wooten sat at a gun metal desk with chairs to match," said Laguarta. "His office had few appointments. Wooten wore old, beat-up cowboy boots; a white, long-sleeved shirt; and khaki pants. From his pocket dangled a string. I quickly learned it was his bag of Bull Durham tobacco; he proceeded to roll a cigarette."

Laguarta said he remembers thinking, "What in the world are we doing here with this A&M rube? We need a sophisticated academic.

"When I met Pat Wooten, I had an arrogant attitude about myself. I have always wondered if he was testing me to see if I could get off my high horse and not allow appearances to poison the well. I guess I passed because we had a great relationship. He was a compelling person — intellectually and personally.

"My first impression of Wooten was the complete antithesis of what he really was. I quickly learned he was a visionary. He was a very astute real estate professional, and he got the picture."

The TAR representatives brought a draft of a proposed bill to establish a real estate research center in Texas. The conversation was broad, including whether Texas A&M would be interested in housing such an organization.

Dr. Wooten, Agricultural Economics Department Head Dr. Tyrus Timm, Dean of Agriculture Dr. H.O. Kunkel and Texas A&M President Dr. Jack K. Williams liked the idea.

Years later, Laguarta called the meeting "a marriage made in heaven."

From Dream to Reality

Finding a university to house the Center cleared a big hurdle. Those who envisioned a Center could see many advantages in joining with Texas A&M, the state's first public institution of higher learning. It was the state's land-grant university and had a 100-year-old track record of turning test tube theories into practical applications. And applied research was exactly what Texas real estate leaders wanted the new research Center to conduct.

The next big decision was to find a home within the university itself.

"We told them such a Center should be located within a college," said Wooten. "We were concerned that it would not be properly administered if left on its own."

Eventually, the Center would become part of Mays Business School. But in the beginning, it was in the university's College of Agriculture.

In 1971, the College of Business Administration was just three years old and had not yet been accredited by the American Assembly of College Schools of Business. The College of Agriculture, on the other hand, had been around since day one. In fact, for decades business education at Texas A&M was intermingled with agricultural programs, including double-entry bookkeeping, creamery management, and farm and ranch management. Agricultural administration offered several business courses.³

"We knew it would be supported by the College of Agriculture, and that's where we recommended it be placed," said Wooten. There were many who questioned why the Center was not in another college – such as business.

"We considered all the options," Wooten said. "But upon close examination, we found real estate did not fit any better

into the narrowly defined areas of finance or marketing. In fact, it was more closely aligned with the broad area of study encompassed by agricultural economics.”

The Center was not placed in the Agricultural Economics Department, said Wooten, because the Center was not an academic unit.

Many of the Center’s early staff members were accomplished lecturers and professors before or during their tenure with the Texas Real Estate Research Center.

Overcoming Opposition

“There were only two real foes to the bill creating the Center,” said Laguarta. “One was the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC), the other the home builders.”

Opposition to the Center within TREC came primarily from Andy James, the administrator. He almost succeeded in derailing the idea before it left the station.

According to Laguarta, James was “livid” about the proposed Center. “When we went through the legislative process, he was doing everything in his power to kill the bill. He knew it is a lot easier to kill a bill than it is to pass one.”

Proposed legislation creating the Center sailed through the Texas Senate, thanks to sponsorship by Sen. William Moore of Bryan. Colleagues and constituents referred to Moore as the “Bull of the Brazos.” It was no accident he was selected to sponsor the Center’s bill in the senate.

“You did not want to cross swords with Bill Moore,” said Laguarta, “particularly when A&M was involved. That was like sticking your head in a buzz saw.”

The Texas House was another matter. The bill there was held up in committee. That’s when Robert Cherry, assistant to the Texas A&M University president, was called on.

“Bob Cherry was an unassuming person who did not fit the lobbyist mold,” said Laguarta. “He did a heck of a job. The committee reviewing the bill was chaired by a legislator from Port Arthur.

“Cherry had a relationship with the house member who had the Center bill bottled up. Apparently Cherry explained to him that there were many more big players loyal to Texas A&M than there were to the home builders. The Port Arthur legislator could count, and knew it was not wise to stand in the way.”

Sign Here, Governor

On March 16, 1971, State Sen. William T. Moore of Bryan introduced Senate Bill 338 (see Appendix A), calling for the creation of the Texas Real Estate Research Center (TRERC) and placing it in the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University. The bill passed and went to the House of Representatives.

Rep. Delwin Jones of Lubbock introduced the House version of the bill; it passed on May 6. Four days later, the Senate agreed to the House amendments.

Gov. Preston Smith signed the legislation on May 18, 1971, and the TRERC was born. The legislation became effective Aug. 30, 1971. The May 18 signing is used as the Center’s official birth date. However, Center operations did not begin for another year because there was no funding until then.

Flanking the governor at the signing were Ervin W. Luedtke of Austin, TAR executive vice-president; Laguarta of Houston and chair of the TAR legislative committee; Robert Hale of Austin, TAR director of governmental affairs; and Rep. Jones. Also present were TAR President Lawrence “Bud” Miller Jr. of Dallas; Dean Kunkel; Sen. Moore; Dr. Wooten; and Cecil Culpepper representing the Bryan-College Station Board of Realtors.

Broad Mandate

The law establishing the Center gave the staff a broad mandate. For example, the law specified the Center was to “conduct studies in all areas related directly or indirectly to real estate and/or urban or rural economics”

The law also required it to publish and disseminate the findings and results of its studies. Other objectives focused on helping teaching programs at Texas colleges and universities, awarding scholarships and establishing real estate chairs, and supplying material for the Texas real estate exam “when requested to do so” by the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC).

The law also called on the Center to develop materials for use in real estate extension courses, assist TREC in developing standards for accrediting vocational schools and study and to make recommendations regarding state law and city ordinances. At the same time, the law expressly prohibited Center staff from “directly contacting legislators or locally elected officials except to provide a factual response to an inquiry. . . .”

The budget, staffing and activities of the Center were required to be approved by the Texas A&M University System Board of Directors (now The Texas A&M System Board of Regents).

On Feb. 11, 1972, Dean Kunkel recommended to Texas A&M University President Williams that Wooten be named the first Center director. The Board made the appointment official on Feb. 29, 1972.

“I had no intention of being the director of TRERC,” said Wooten. “I already had the best job on campus – a tenured, full professor with just the right balance of teaching and research. But the advisory committee was adamant that I take the job, so I did.”⁴

In the Center’s first annual report, Wooten wrote, “All of us associated with the Center at Texas A&M University feel highly honored at the confidence shown in us by industry

leaders and the legislature and accept the challenge to develop a Center that will earn state and national recognition as a leader in the real estate field.”⁵

The first operating program and budget was approved on June 16, 1972. Armed with his marching orders, Wooten spent much of the next several months recruiting a staff.

Open for Business

The first Center offices were located on the second floor of the Halbouty Geosciences Building on the main campus. But as fiscal year 1972–73 began, the growing staff required more space.

Some offices were located for a while in the Richardson Petroleum Engineering Building next door. Eventually, space was rented off campus at 707 Texas Avenue. The research and education staffs and student workers were in the latter and administration and information services in Halbouty. The Center would be eight years old before the entire staff worked under the same roof.

Advise and Consent

Senate Bill 338 also created an advisory committee to approve an annual research plan of work, all research results prior to release and the annual budget. The nine-member committee represents various subsets of the real estate profession. There are six real estate brokers and three public members. Three brokers represent residential, commercial and industrial properties; three others represent real estate brokerage, construction and finance. One member is not appointed by the governor but rather is an ex-officio, nonvoting representative of TREC.

The Center was allowed to receive funds from sales of publications, gifts and grants. But the primary source of revenue would be Texas real estate licensees. Brokers filing an original application or renewal application paid \$10, and \$5 was added to each salesperson’s original and renewal application. The fee structure was changed in 1975 to \$15 for brokers and \$7.50 for salespersons. In 2009, the legislature revised the fees to \$20 per year for every licensee, regardless of classification. Also, a \$50 annual fee paid by brokers to the state for “education” was redirected to the Center.

The Originals

Gov. Smith appointed the Center’s initial advisory committee early in 1972.

Two-year terms

- Joe W. Loper, San Antonio
- Glenn W. Justice, Dallas
- Chester W. Kyle, Kingsville

Four-year terms

- Katherine Boyd, Arlington
- Walstein Smith Jr., Waco
- John A. Worley, Dallas

Six-year terms:

- George O. Yamini, Dallas
- Julio S. Laguarta, Houston
- R.L. Pardue, Houston

Representing TREC was Chairman Lawrence “Bud” Miller Jr. of Dallas.

The Center’s initial organizational chart showed the advisory committee reporting directly to the university president. The first advisory committee meeting was called by Texas A&M President Williams for 10 a.m., Wednesday, May 17, 1972.

Laguarta was named the committee’s first chairman. The term “chairman” was used from the outset and made official years later by a unanimous vote of the members. Dr. William G. Adkins, a research economist for the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), was elected committee secretary. Not long thereafter, Adkins was hired to lead the Center’s research effort.

Ready, Set, Research

“The organizational structure of the research center was based on the traditional land-grant concept — research, education and communication,” said Wooten. “It was a model that was proven to be successful, and it fit our legislative mandate exactly.”⁶

That is why the Center was organized initially into three divisions: research, education and information, and support services. On June 16, 1972, 11 months after the governor signed the enabling legislation, the Center had four employees. When the fiscal year ended two months later on Aug. 31, 1972, the staff had grown to 18. Forty-five years later, only 21 full-time employees work for the Center.

Four research projects were approved initially by the advisory committee: a study of the Texas housing inventory, a survey of the then more than 66,000 Texans with real estate licenses, development of a real estate research problems outline and development of a three-year research work program.

The staff knew requests for research would soon be arriving. They needed policies and guidelines in place for evaluating outside requests, especially those involving research grants. The first year of Center operations was spent setting the stage for what was to come.

The sociology and anthropology department at Texas A&M was first to receive Center funding — a grant to study housing diversity in the state’s metropolitan areas. Numerous other requests and inquiries for research financial aid were reviewed and evaluated the first year. It was apparent early on that the Center staff needed to ensure high probabilities that both the Center and real estate licensees would benefit from any research.

Agricultural Roots Run Deep

Many thought the land-grant status of the university was the reason the legislature put the Center in the College of Agriculture. Some assume the location was because of the relationship of land to real estate (NAR's motto at the time was "Under All is the Land"). Of course, there was much more to it than that.

The Center was made part of the College of Agriculture because the Department of Agricultural Economics was in that college. And "ag eco" was where many of the first staff were working when the idea of a real estate center surfaced. After being turned away from other universities, the founders were eager to find a home, and when doors began to open, they eagerly entered.

Ties with agricultural economics led to a graduate real estate program under the Master of Agriculture. Wooten called the graduate real estate program the most successful master's degree among those offered in the college.

"These students left Texas A&M and formed a network of well educated leaders of most of the state's important real estate related organizations, such as the Veterans Land Board, the State Property Tax Board and others," said Wooten. "This has paid big dividends for the Center, Texas A&M and the real estate industry of Texas."

The word "rural" has been an integral part of the Center's vocabulary since day one. Former students gave Center staff a statewide network of experts upon whom to call. And over 40 years, untold numbers of graduate students pored over numbers and helped research and co-author a library of titles related to Texas land.

Other researchers contributed to the rural land catalog as well. Some 118 titles directly dealing with rural land have been written to date. Another 11 have been written on land titles and liens, 24 on water rights, 13 on easements, 11 on landowner liability, 19 on oil and gas leasing and 12 on private rights to property.

In 2011, around 435 attended the Center's 21st Annual Outlook for Texas Land Markets, a conference providing information on a variety of legal, economic, social and natural resource issues influencing current land market dynamics. The conference has been held in San Antonio since 2007, when it was moved from the campus of Texas A&M because of growing attendance.

No Data, No Databases

For the new Center, the next order of business after a staff was hired focused on finding data with which to work. Initially, the staff had none. Some Multiple Listing Service (MLS) data was obtained by talking to the various MLSs statewide. Some MLS members liked sharing their data; others did not.

But as more MLSs signed on, it became something of a status symbol to be included in the Center's printed quarterly report.

Gaps in the MLS data were bridged using a three-month average.

In the late 1970s, the Census Bureau would provide building permit data to only one entity per state. In Texas that was UT, which published the numbers in a magazine. When the Center staff learned UT was abandoning publication of the data, they asked for it and got it.

Panels of Knowledgeables

Overnight the Center became the primary source of building permit data in the state. The Census Bureau provided the Center with an advance copy of monthly building permit authorized data — about 300 pages. Center staff analyzed and condensed the data into two tables. The tables were published monthly and provided to subscribing firms and libraries.

The Center produced a series of major metro-by-metro studies of the 1960–70 Texas housing inventory. In 1975, the last of the 29 reports was published. As a result, the Governor's Special Advisory Council on Housing heard testimony from a Center researcher, the first such documented testimony by a staff member.⁷

In 1974–75, research resulted in major reports on second and rural homes. Working with TREC, a profile study of the 84,000 Texas licensees resulted in two other reports. In all, six research reports and papers came from studies of household formations.

Panels of real estate "knowledgeables" were formed to help the Center staff identify research and education needs. Initially organized to identify emerging trends, this model eventually also became the backbone of a network reporting rural land values from Texas and other states. In 1973, the Center issued its first report on rural land values in Texas, Oklahoma and Arizona.

The Center began to publish rural land data from four states — Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The data were collected for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in response to the meltdown in rural land prices in the early 1980s. USDA had contracts with various land-grant universities nationwide.

The rural land panels were primarily professional appraisers and real estate brokers. Rural land contacts in title companies, banks and other related entities reported to the Center as well. In the real estate crash of the mid-1980s, many appraisers and brokers changed occupations. The panel method of collection continued until about the year 2005 when rural land activity peaked, and many panelists did not have the time to fill out Center surveys.

At the same time, the Texas Chapter of the American Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers began producing an annual report that essentially filled in the gaps in rural land sales needed by the Center. A partnership between the two organizations provided a reliable annual source of rural

land data and enabled the Center to replace the semiannual surveys.

Actually, the Center has rural land data older than the Center itself. Wooten and Dr. Ivan Schmedemann, founder of the Land Economics and Real Estate Program at Texas A&M, established a rapport with industry sources to send the Center information.

“Technically, we have Texas rural land data all the way back to 1963,” said Research Economist Dr. Charles Gilliland, “but the first three years of data are not very reliable, and we just use data collected as of 1966. That project was funded originally through the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (TAES). In the late 1960s or early 1970s, they decided they would no longer fund the land-values research, and the Center took it up.”

In 1975, MLS data reporting was refined for a quarterly report. The Center began to analyze the data for the Houston Board of Realtors annual housing survey. Eighty-two presentations were made to boards of Realtors and other off-campus groups in 1974–75.

Two reports based on farm and ranch land market studies were produced in 1972–73 in cooperation with TAES. Also during this time, the Center published its first study on population and housing in Texas.

Grants Bridge Gap

Producing research results with a small staff in a short time was a tall order. The Center turned to other experts on campus and provided grants to them for real estate related projects.

The 1972–73 annual report reported on the grant-funded research. One project was published in a professional journal, another was “to be completed after the grant period;” one was used to help a student fulfill requirements for a Ph.D. One was not mentioned again after it was scheduled for submission as a draft report in September 1973. Draft of another was due Oct. 1, 1973, to be distributed by the Center. In fact, there is no record that the Center ever published any of this research.

These unproductive experiences with outside researchers would be repeated over the years. In the first four decades, a succession of Center directors and chief economists came to realize the most dependable research was the kind done “in house” by the Center staff.

Research Takes Hold

As FY 1972–73 ended, a three-year research program had been developed. A seminar on land resources was conducted with the advisory committee in June 1973. The goal was to define the Center’s research role under pending state and federal land-use policy legislation. The consensus was that the Center should investigate real estate related land-use research (as in the rural-urban fringe) and conduct feasibility

work relating to land resource data storage and a geographically based retrieval system.

Eight research papers were completed by end of the fiscal year. Six major papers were presented at seminars and real estate industry group meetings. In a preview of what would eventually become a major distribution mode, ten speeches were given to various groups, including Realtor boards and civic clubs.

Researchers also attended annual meetings of the National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAREB), the forerunner to the National Association of Realtors. In 1973, the staff and advisory committee returned to the University of Connecticut to see for themselves the center that had inspired the founding of the Texas Center.

Anyone Need a Speaker?

Today the Center research staff is in high demand as speakers nationwide. Such was not the case in 1971. In an effort to stir up interest in what the staff had to say, a letter was sent to all 105 Texas boards of Realtors asking if they would like to hear a program on the Center’s objectives, organization, activities and future plans. Nearly half the boards responded positively, and by the end of FY 1973–74, presentations had been made to some 50 boards.

While courting Realtors, the staff also solicited speaking engagements to mortgage bankers, savings and loan associations, home builders, appraisers — pretty much any related industry group that would listen.

In the early years, the staff relied heavily on TAR to disseminate research results, especially in the *Texas Realtor* magazine. A series of educational and information pamphlets were designed to explain basic real estate concepts. These included leverage, discounted present values, approaches to appraisal, components of land syndication and development, owning versus renting, buying recreational properties and major factors to consider when buying a house.

Over the Hump

With the formative years behind, the Center staff entered the mid-1970s with a better understanding of what it could and could not accomplish. In 1974, a scholarship program was introduced for students in four-year, junior and community colleges across Texas. A year later, the Center helped organize the Texas Real Estate Teachers Association (TRETA).

The year 1977 was a year of firsts. The Center sponsored the first real estate conference for four-year college and university deans. The first associate director joined the staff; the first real estate professorships were funded, and the first issue of *Tierra Grande*, the Center’s flagship quarterly magazine, was published.

In 1978, the Center sponsored the first conference of Texas real estate proprietary schools. Also that year, the largest press run for a Center brochure occurred; the Center

published 100,000 copies of a color brochure on “Building a Future in Real Estate.” The brochures were intended for agents to hand out at events such as high school career days.

That same year, The Texas Aggie magazine for university former students ran an article “At Texas A&M . . . Realty Research for Real” highlighting Center accomplishments to date.

Legislature Takes Note

A few years after its founding, the Center was beginning to get noticed, not only among licensees and the media but in the halls of the state capitol. The enabling legislation prevented the Center staff from contacting legislators except when asked to do so.

The first legislative request on record came in 1978 when the Texas Legislature asked the Center to research the effects of property tax reform. The report, Preliminary Investigation of Proposed Property Tax Reform in Texas, was provided to the House Ways and Means Committee. Preliminary results were made available during a special session of the Texas Legislature.⁸

Reading, Writing, Real Estate

The education division was organized initially “to assist in the training of men and women in real estate fundamentals at the college and university level and improve the knowledge of those already in the industry”

As with research, education had a broad mandate. The Center’s first annual report even included student job placement assistance in its mission to assist colleges and universities. Activity the first year included helping the Texas A&M agricultural economics department establish a graduate program in real estate economics. Earning a Master of Agriculture required 36 hours of course work in agricultural economics and in the College of Business. The degree program included an internship in the real estate industry.

Another significant educational event was the December 1974 “Texas Assembly on Land Use.” More than 100 selected Texans representing a cross-section of the population met for three days. They developed a land-use policy for Texas, which was widely disseminated.

The “assemblies” model proved successful and was replicated in other cities over the coming years. The “Pattern for El Paso’s Tomorrow” assembly held in 1979 focused on water conservation. It was followed by a request for a program in the Brownsville-Matamoros area in 1980.

The assembly program was aimed at establishing priorities and helping cities implement viable urban growth. It was patterned after Columbia University’s American Assemblies program in which local leaders reach a consensus on major issues facing the area.

“Land use control was a big subject in the early years of the Center,” said former education division head William D. ‘Doug’ Moore. “The whole concept of private property needed to be reviewed. The assembly format we followed included a book heavy with the history of private property. It got the right people here and got Texans to talk about the subject.”

Wooten’s agricultural contacts were instrumental in getting the Center a passport into the 13 experiment stations in the Texas A&M University System. The agricultural experiment station would use the media to publicize the event and draw a crowd. A team from the Center would plan the conference, fly in on the university airplane, give a program and move on to the next stop. Among the cities visited were Amarillo, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Lubbock, Midland, Tyler, Weslaco and Wichita Falls.

In response to its legislative mandate to serve consumers as well as practitioners, programs such as “How and When to Sell Your Land” and the “Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974” were held.

Cooperative ventures were essential for the new Center. Many of the staff held dual appointments with the Center and other agencies and departments. With the passage of a new real estate act, the Center and the Commission teamed up to conduct educational meetings in medium-sized urban centers across Texas. Copies of the new act were distributed in fall 1975.

Apples for Teachers

A major accomplishment for the education division in 1972–73 was the selection of real estate program academic coordinators at several Texas colleges and universities. The coordinators worked with junior and community colleges to ensure first- and second-year level courses were transferable to four-year universities while maintaining two-year occupational competency. Coordinators administered scholarships, internships and placement programs.

A statewide real estate course inventory surveyed 60 four-year universities and 54 Texas community-junior colleges. The Center’s education staff also worked with the Texas Education Agency, the Texas College and University Coordinating Board and junior colleges’ real estate curriculum developers.

Texas Real Estate Research Center staffers have taught many courses at Texas A&M University over the decades. The first recorded classroom instruction was during the 1973–74 school year when the education division taught Finance 440, “Fundamentals of Real Estate.”

Also in 1973, the Center held its first prototype investment seminar in Dallas. Held in conjunction with TAES, “Investing in Land and Other Real Estate Under Urban Encroachment” was hailed as a success, and plans were drawn for similar programs in other Texas metros. An “Investing in Land

and Other Real Estate" program was held later in the year at Weslaco and focused on forces affecting land values and investment opportunities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Responding to a request from the Texas Association of Assessing Officers, TRERC developed an educational program for the state's tax assessors. The first courses were held in Midland in May 1973.

The Center counseled students pursuing a Master of Agriculture in Real Estate Economics and helped them secure internships and job placement. The first such degree was conferred in 1972. Eventually, the program evolved into the Master of Land Economics and Real Estate (LERE) degree and then to the Master of Real Estate (MRE). Hundreds of graduates from this program spread throughout the world into the highest levels of government, business, banking, real estate, law and other professions.

First Homebuyers' Clinic

The Center's first homebuyers' clinic was held in the Bryan-College Station area. It was designed to give local realty professionals a better understanding of market conditions. The clinic also gave consumers an opportunity to learn about the steps in finding and buying suitable housing. Similar clinics would be held across Texas in the decades that followed. The Center and TAES worked together on the 2½-hour clinics aimed at prospective homebuyers.

The Center and the Texas Education Agency sponsored a real estate workshop for community college educators. Held at Texas A&M, the workshop supplied information on real estate trends. More than 10,400 Texans were enrolled in real estate classes in 1972.

In 1974, the Center held its first regional real estate education conference. Participants came from universities, junior colleges and industries throughout the Panhandle and South Plains. In 1974, the education division began holding workshops for real estate instructors in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency. One-day workshops for junior and community college real estate teachers were held in Dallas, Odessa, Houston, Tyler and Pasadena.

As part of the College of Agriculture, the Center focused on rural land research and education early and has continued that research to the present. In April 1974, the Center cosponsored a two-day program with TAR for farm and land brokers.

By 1977, vastly strengthened educational requirements in the Real Estate License Act of 1975 were being felt. A generally stronger Texas business climate called for better trained and educated real estate professionals. With the help of the Center, Texas colleges and universities answered the call. Eight four-year universities offered programs taught by qualified lead real estate teachers. Others offered real estate concentrations. An additional 20 offered from one to three courses. Three offered graduate programs.

At the two-year level, 35 community colleges offered the associate of applied science degree in real estate. Almost every Texan was within commuting distance of one of 19 proprietary real estate schools.

Fears that new license requirements would cause a shortage of salespersons were unfounded. The overall population was becoming better educated, and more college-educated persons were entering the profession. Even better, the number of licensees was growing four times faster than the general population. In 1977, 46,000 students were enrolled in real estate courses in 82 Texas colleges and universities.

Soaring With Eagles

The biggest educational undertaking in the history of the Center began May 20, 1974. That was the beginning date for the first School of Advanced Real Estate Subjects (SOARS). Later, the word "Studies" was substituted for "School" in the title. The two-week program was held in the university's new Rudder Tower. Between 400 and 500 real estate professionals were expected to attend the program for three summer sessions to graduate.

Regarding SOARS, U.S. Senator Ralph W. Yarborough (D-Tex.) wrote to future advisory committee member Michael Beal of Bryan in May 1974.

"Warmest congratulations on your success in having been accepted in the School of Advanced Real Estate Studies sponsored and directed by the Texas Real Estate Research Center at Texas A&M University. This is a great opportunity for you and, as I understand it, it is something equivalent to the Wharton School of Business Administration at Harvard University," wrote Yarborough.

In 1975, TAR President Laguarta addressed the association's 23 spring meetings. Among his talking points, he proudly spoke of a "Texas first," the SOARS program sponsored by the Center. SOARS was an advanced real estate education plan, a first in the nation.

SOARS was designed to provide a formal education experience to supplement many short-term training programs common in the industry. It was a stage on which state-of-the-art technology and thinking would be introduced as practitioners learned new ways to communicate with younger, college-educated colleagues. The first class graduated in 1976.

"SOARS was a university experience for the broker who had been out there humpin' it and trying to make a sale," said Doug Moore. "Some university graduates in attendance thought we should be giving tests all the time. We had to run SOARS when Texas A&M students were not on campus. But the summertime was a hard time to recruit real estate professionals because that was their prime selling season. But it was a good time to get instructors, most of whom who were Ph.D. level people from other universities."

SOARS attracted students from many states and Canada. In 1979, it was redesigned to an eight-day format instead of two weeks. Optional evening sessions allowed students to apply concepts learned during class to real world challenges. SOARS moved at a brisk pace with sessions from morning through afternoon and some optional evenings. It also included a two-hour physical education program.

“SOARS was and is an experiment — a prototype,” said Director Richard L. Floyd in 1982. “Educational theories and methodologies are generated, which are then tested in the classroom . . . Our failures as well as successes in instruction contribute to knowledge of adult instruction. The graduates of SOARS are intensely loyal, and many have used their SOARS education as a springboard to greater professional heights.”⁹

During the annual program, many Center resources were devoted to SOARS. As times changed, so did the real estate profession. The Center followed suit, and after a run of ten years, SOARS was discontinued because of waning attendance and shrinking Center resources. For many participants, the Center and SOARS remain synonymous.

Information, Support Services

Initially, the information and support division was given two major duties. One was to conduct a literature search and determine secondary data to be included in the Center’s storage and retrieval system. The other was to establish communication between the Center, industry and public. The division began operations in mid-August 1972.

By law, the Center must disseminate its research findings. It was soon apparent, however, that the staff was unclear which audiences needed the information.

The Center’s audience consisted of several different groups. The count of Texans directly involved in the real estate industry was large, with approximately 66,000 holding a salesman or broker’s license. The number of people interested in the industry probably was in the millions.¹⁰

In those early days, it was assumed the Center would use services of Agricultural Communications or the Texas A&M University System Information Office to disseminate information to the media because those groups had the personnel and mailing lists to do so.

It soon became apparent, however, that the university sought a balanced program of news dissemination. They were not willing to send out as much real estate information as the Center wanted and, eventually, the Center adopted the do-it-yourself model for media relations and communication.

Determining which publication was printed first was not easy. Center archives list “Senate Bill No. 338,” published in 1973, as publication number one (see Appendix A, *Establishing and Governing the Real Estate Center*). However, logic would indicate the 1972 Statistical Summary of Texas Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen was chronologically first; it even

has “TRERC-IS-72-1” printed on the cover, indicating it was published in 1972 and was the first publication.

In the beginning, only major reports were numbered. Today, all titles are, including videos, pamphlets, brochures, newsletters and individual magazine articles in *Tierra Grande*.

When a numbering system that included all publications, periodicals and other products was introduced in 1975, 40 titles had already been released and were post-numbered. Four and one-half decades later, we had more than 2,100 titles (see Appendix B, Real Estate Center Master Publications List).

The first periodical published by the Center was *The Educator*. Billed as a monthly forum of ideas for real estate educators, the first issue was in 1972.

The second periodical, *Progress Report*, began publication a year later. It was a bimonthly newsletter highlighting Center activities in research and education plus introducing the advisory committee and staff. The first issue was dated June 15, 1973.

The first issue of *RealEstateMent* was published in 1973. These were as-needed publications on short subjects. Many on the staff wrote them. Among the first were “Why Prepay the Home Mortgage?” and “A Proposed Change for Real Estate Tax Shelters.” Other *RealEstateMents* covered subjects as diverse as “The Texas Land Boom,” “Adding to a Home” and “A Household Formations Boom.”

The first Center audiovisual program was released in 1973. It was a slide show designed to be shown at high school career days. Slide shows with accompanying cassette tapes gained in popularity in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Center programs included, “Real Estate: An Opportunity for the Small Investor,” “Pattern for El Paso’s Tomorrow” and “Energy Conservation in the Home.”

The last *RealEstateMent* was published in 1978. Two things contributed to its demise: the formal research report format and *Tierra Grande* magazine, which began publication in 1977.

The quarterly newsletter *TREND* (Texas Real Estate News and Developments) was created disseminating our findings. Vol. 1 No. 1 was published in April 1973.

TREND morphed from one configuration to another over the years. First it was a four-to-six-page newsletter. In fourth quarter 1982, however, it was dramatically overhauled and emerged as a 50-page quarterly report mailed free to requesting subscribers. The new format allowed greater analysis of data, including rural land prices.

In June 1978, *TREND* would take on yet another look, a monthly eight-page newsletter on residential, rural land, urban land, retail, nonresidential, commercial and industrial data. There was no analysis — just tables of data. It would be published in that format for the next 11 years.

The final chapter of *TREND* began in 1980 when *TREND* was incorporated as a column in *Tierra Grande* magazine. Eventually, researchers were writing more articles than could be published in the magazine's 32 pages. The two pages that had been *TREND* were needed for other articles.

Presidential Challenge

"We want closer contact with the industry," Texas A&M University President Jarvis Miller told members of the Center's advisory committee in 1977. "The administration of Texas A&M is responsive to the needs of the industry, and I hope you will feel free to make suggestions to us."

The new university president told the committee he hoped they would continue a long-range view of real estate problems to anticipate future needs.

"The Texas Real Estate Research Center is truly a cooperative effort with other institutions. It has helped establish relations with other institutions and is an example of how broad objectives of serving the state can be met."¹¹

It Began With 'Trash 80'

"Evaluating Computer Systems" was published by the Center in 1978. It looked at the broad view of the use of computers in real estate. Later that year, the Center entered the computer age with the purchase of a Radio Shack TRS-80 Level II microcomputer system, which was disk and cassette driven. The basic system had a 132-character line printer, a video display board and an expansion interface.

The system was used for statistical analysis of several research projects. It also was used for preparation of mailing lists. Soon the Center staff wanted to write real estate computer programs.

The Center's first computer resulted in cost and time savings. Soon Center staff began writing programs with real estate applications. The first programs focused on compound interest, Ellwood appraisal, after-tax investment analysis, internal rates of return, depreciation and mortgage schedules.

Computer programs were field tested before being distributed on cassette tape for a nominal cost. The staff wrote the Center's first original computer software in 1980. The "Investment Analysis Package" was written in MS-DOS and compiled in BASIC. It was available on 5¼- or 3½-inch disks for \$20.

But computerization of the Center was not an easy road.

"The first use of a personal computer at the Center was a lone Radio Shack TRS-80 (affectionately referred to as the trash 80) and kept in a back room with the tech geeks," said retired Research Economist Dr. Jack C. Harris. "This wonder had almost as much computing power as a modern point-and-shoot camera, could do most anything if you knew how to program it, and the programs and data had to be stored on a clunky tape recorder. The only Windows these machines knew were the ones that frustrated users threw them out

of. Needless to say, there was no line forming to access this piece of equipment.

"That changed somewhat when someone discovered an early video game called 'Donkey Kong' could be played on the TRS-80. The machine was suddenly amazingly popular. Evidence of its popularity appeared in the wear spots on the two cursor control buttons (the finish was completely gone). As I recall, this continued until the computer gave out.

"Later, personal computers became a bit more useful with the introduction of user-friendly word processing and spreadsheet software. By that time, PCs came with decent memory and hard drives, paving the way for the way we do things today. Based on past experience, it was thought that a handful of machines would suffice for the entire staff. After all, no one fought over the TRS-80 (even if they had a hankering for a game of Donkey Kong).

"The PCs were put on portable desks, and you would wheel one into your office when needed," said Harris. "Unfortunately, the PC had become a status symbol by that time, and there was no possibility of sharing. Fortunately, they (the computers) became relatively cheap and, even on our meager budget, could be lavished on everyone. Even lowly student workers got their own hand-me-down computers eventually.

"Incredibly, it all started with the trash 80," said Harris.

Computerization Goes Personal

FY 1983–84 might be called the "Year of the Computer" at the Center. The Center took delivery of 21 personal computers, and that put one within reach of every staff member.

Of course, transferring data stored on other systems to the new computers was a major undertaking. Then came the requests for additional software that had to be evaluated. By year's end, however, the clicking of the computer keyboards and the staccato of the high speed printers had all but replaced the familiar tapping of the typewriter.¹²

"We did not know what the impact of such a sudden change (having computers) would be," said former director Dr. Richard L. Floyd. "But the transition went surprisingly well. There was minimal disruption of products and a definite increase in morale and creativity."

All Hands, Man Your Research Stations

When designing its annual plan of research, the Center staff leaves some wiggle room. Normally, about 60 percent of the year is scheduled. The remaining time is set aside for short-term research on emerging problems.

For example, in FY 1977–78, two projects required researchers to drop everything and swing into immediate action on unplanned research. One was a request from the legislature to investigate the impact of proposed property tax legislation on property owners.

The other was to examine the impact of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act on the real estate brokerage industry. This required a statewide survey, presentations to licensees and development of a slide-audio cassette presentation aimed at salesperson orientation.

Former Students Organize

In 1979, the Association of Texas Real Estate Economists (ATREE) formed. Schmedemann was instrumental in the student organization.¹³ The new association held its first meeting in Wimberley, elected officers, named a board of directors, adopted a constitution and established a scholarship fund. They voted to give \$500 to deserving graduate students in the Texas A&M real estate program.

In the early 1990s, the organization was renamed the Society of Texas A&M Real Estate Professionals (STAMREP). When the organization unveiled its new website in 2011, it was called the Aggie Real Estate Network (AREN). Members say the new moniker was more of a dba than a name change.

Publishing Takes Off

In FY 1975–76, the Center produced 50 individual publications having a combined press run of 552,000. In the next five months, the presses really rolled as 20 publications with a total press run of 588,800 were printed.

While those publications were being “pushed” primarily to some 40,000 real estate brokers (salespersons were not yet on the mailing lists), a March 1976 publications catalog generated orders for 11,100 titles within six weeks of mailing. Between Sept. 1, 1976, and Feb. 28, 1977, the Center filled special orders for 23,582 publications. Almost all were sent free.

Despite the infancy of the Center, it was apparently already making a difference in the profession. Each publication printed in those days contained a “Your Opinion, Please” postage-paid questionnaire. Some of those original reply sheets are still being returned three decades after being mailed.

Respondents said the one reason for an order for a Center publication in 1976–77 was “to aid in the conduct of a real estate business.” Second was “to help an instructor teach a class in real estate at a college or university.”¹⁴

Things would change in coming years. Salespersons had their own Center publication beginning in 1984, but it would be 1995 before they began receiving *Tierra Grande*. Two years later, inactive licensees began receiving the magazine as well.

Not only was the Center reaching more Texans but the quantity and the quality of publications improved steadily. In 1979, only two years after its first issue, *Tierra Grande* won a Gold Quill Award of Excellence as the best nonprofit magazine in the world from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). It won a second Gold Quill two years later.

Cash Registers Ring

Initially, every Center publication was free for the asking. As requests mounted, that was changed to a limit of five per order. Wise consumers, however, merely copied order forms, and the requests became a deluge. When a charge was implemented, the requests peaked but continued at a high rate.

In 1974, single copies of *RealEstateMents* were free, pamphlets were 50 cents and research reports as much as \$2.50.

Total requests for printed reports continued to grow, and a full-time support person was hired just to handle orders. In 1981–82, more than 92,600 requests for publications were processed by the publications room staff. Total sales that year topped \$20,000.

In the 12 years from 1981 to 1993, nearly 650,000 publications were ordered from the Center, and total sales topped \$610,000. While fewer than 45,000 titles were mailed in 1991–92, sales that year set the record at \$80,508.

Eventually, however, the advent of the Internet made it possible to distribute publications electronically at little or no expense, and today almost everything published by the Center is available online at no charge. Of course, sales income is far from the 1992 peak.

In FY 2009–10, only 580 publications were mailed, and sales totaled less than \$6,000. That in no way means people have lost interest in Center research. During that same year, more than one million unique visitors came to the website and viewed and downloaded tens of thousands of pages of news, information and data.

Field Offices Fizzle

In 1978, the Center had plans to establish a field office in Dallas. The purpose was to help people in the Dallas area with urban real estate needs. The Dallas position was seen as a forerunner to similar offices in other Texas metropolitan areas. However, the job was never filled.¹⁵

A year later, a field office was opened in San Antonio. It was staffed by former SOARS coordinator Harold Jambers. He worked with local real estate groups, community leaders and the public to help maintain a healthy real estate market in communities in the area. Eventually, however, that office was closed when Jambers returned to Three Rivers, Tex., to run the family ranch.

The Floyd Years

Many knew that Wooten’s health was not good, but they did not know just how sick he was. Wooten joked that every time a doctor told him he would have to give up cigars, he found another doctor.

When associate director and attorney Don Levi left the Center for the University of Missouri, Wooten asked Floyd if he “would have any interest in being my associate.”

“I asked what his plans were,” said Floyd. “He swore that it would be at least five years before he retired. I became associate director in 1980 and became director a year later.”

Wooten had heart problems, which was not common knowledge. That was one reason that just minutes before a scheduled staff meeting in 1981, Floyd was informed by Wooten of his pending retirement.

An hour later Wooten concluded what until then had been a routine staff meeting saying, “the Center is in fine shape; we have been through Sunset; the industry is behind us; and I think now is a good time for me to retire. Meeting adjourned.”

“He was a full professor of agricultural economics, and that is all he wanted to do. He was the true professor and the students loved him,” said Floyd.

A few days later, Floyd met with the dean. “He asked me, ‘what are you going to do in four years?’ He made it clear I had four years to be successful,” said Floyd.

Floyd was appointed interim director shortly thereafter and the Center’s second director soon after.

From the outset, Floyd said the Center’s three major objectives were unchanged. They were to:

- add to the body of real estate knowledge with an emphasis on pragmatism,
- disseminate the results of research to all interested parties and
- assist in the development of a statewide system of real estate education.

Floyd said Center operations would be based on the institutional and management philosophies of democracy, capitalism, academic freedom, the land grant system and “loose herding.”

Floyd believed minimum supervision of a professional staff was required to manage the Center and ensure creative, quality programs were forthcoming. That’s what he referred to as loose herding.

“Management is . . . a support activity, which husbands necessary resources and acts as a steward of public funds,” said the new director.

Floyd acknowledged that some believed the Center had an identity crisis. He agreed that greater awareness of Center programs and products was a highly desirable goal.

Floyd said that, by nature, both audiences and their needs are evolving and ever changing. He said the identification of audiences and audience needs, as well as priority placed

on such, was the major challenge of the Center’s advisory committee.¹⁶

The Sun Also Rises

Being unique is not always a good thing. In 1977, the Texas Legislature created the Sunset Advisory Commission to eliminate waste, duplication and inefficiency in state government. The Center was the only component of The Texas A&M University System deemed to be subject to the Texas Sunset Act. The commission reviewed more than 150 state agencies and questioned whether they were necessary. After public input in hearings, the Sunset Commission recommended whether the agency should be continued.

In most cases, agencies under Sunset review were automatically abolished unless legislation was enacted to continue them.

In October 1979, the Center filed a self-evaluation with the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission. That was the first step in a two-year state review to determine if the Center should be continued. Over the next year, Sunset staff examined the Center’s operations and interviewed the staff and stakeholders at Texas A&M University and in Austin. Despite overwhelming support from all quarters, there still was an air of apprehension at the Center waiting for the final results. It was a year of uncertainty. The results were released a year after Floyd became director.

In remarks to the Commission at a public hearing held June 19, 1980, then-retired Center Director Wooten emphasized the influence of real estate on the lives of Texans.

“According to the latest estimates, there are more than 7.5 million parcels of real estate in Texas, not including those parcels owned by government and nonprofit organizations, having a value of more than \$300 billion,” he said. “Five to 10 percent of our labor force is employed in some phase of the industry.”¹⁷

Texas A&M University System Chancellor Dr. Frank W.R. Hubert also spoke on behalf of the Center, saying the Center “reflected the consistent high standards of research and education of Texas A&M University.”¹⁸

In addition, the Texas A&M University Board of Regents passed a resolution on July 10, 1980, stating that the board “reaffirms its belief that the Texas Real Estate Research Center serves the public interest of this state and hereby expresses its desire to have the Texas Real Estate Research Center continue as a part of Texas A&M University with its role, scope and fund procedures unchanged.”

In 1981, Center staff learned there would be a sunrise after a sunset. The commission certified to the Texas Legislature that the Center was indeed worthy of continuance. Legislation to continue the Center was introduced. During the legislative session, the bills weathered several committee hearings. Wooten testified before five and credits the sponsors with getting the legislation passed.

Newly appointed Director Floyd was quick to point out the role TAR played, calling it a “yeoman’s job of educating legislators” on the need to continue the Center.

Legislation recreating the Center was signed into law by Gov. Bill Clements on June 18 that year, exactly one year after the first Sunset Commission public hearing. Without positive legislative action, the Center would have ceased to exist on Sept. 1.

The Sunset report stated the Center generally met the objectives of efficient management and responsiveness to the real estate industry. In particular, the report lauded the Center’s role in real estate education saying, “Real estate education in the state has expanded greatly since the creation of the Center.

“In 1972, only four community colleges offered a two-year associate degree program in real estate; today 45 junior colleges offer this degree. Over 39,000 students take one or more subjects in the field of real estate in community colleges around the state.

“Forty-three senior colleges and universities offer real estate courses to over 11,800 students. (Center) scholarships have assisted in encouraging the study of real estate as a career opportunity.”

The Sunset report also praised the SOARS program and the establishment of TRETA.

Sunset legislation gave the Center another 12 years. It would be the last time the Center would ever go through Sunset as changes to the license law in later years would remove the Center from the process.

In his years as director, Floyd saw the Center grow, prosper and face its biggest financial crisis and legislative challenges to date. Floyd said the Sunset process served to reaffirm the Center’s role as an appropriate steward of public funds functioning in accordance with the high standards of Texas A&M University.

Calm Before Storm

One of the more popular publications of 1980 was a Spanish-language version of the Homebuyers Guide. The Spanish version was free. Subsequent updates to the guide did not include a corresponding Spanish version.

The complete staff moved to the Academic and Agency Building (later named the Blocker Building) in 1981. It was the first time the Center’s staff had worked in the same building since the first employees were hired in 1972.

The Center shared space on the top floor of the six-story building with elements of the Texas Transportation Institute and the College of Business.

In 1981, the Center sponsored the first-ever meeting of the nation’s real estate directors. Apparently the meeting was a resounding success. Soon after the meeting, the National Association of Real Estate Center Directors was formed.

That same year the Alvin B. Wooten endowed scholarship was established by LERE graduates. The Center conducted its first homebuyers’ survey. And the first “review and outlook” was published. This feature would become a standard feature in the January issue of *Tierra Grande* magazine for decades to come.

What’s Good for Longhorns, Good for Aggies

The Center funded \$100,000 endowed professorships at the University of Texas at Austin (William Jennings Professorship) and at Texas A&M University (Julio Laguarta Professorship in Mays Business School) in 1981.

The rest of the story is that the advisory committee initially voted only to fund the professorship at UT. Floyd recalled that, “Dr. Wooten put his foot down and said, ‘We aren’t going to do one if we can’t do them both.’”

“The objective of establishing the professorship is in keeping with the mandate . . . to work with colleges and universities in Texas,” said Dr. Wooten. “It’s only appropriate the professorship (at Texas A&M) be established in Laguarta’s name because he has been a strong supporter of real estate education for many years.”

On Oct. 24, 1977, Texas A&M University System Chancellor Jack K. Williams signed a memorandum of agreement with UT Austin’s College of Business Administration. He signed it as a representative of the Texas Real Estate Research Center.

“Our Advisory Committee recommended approval of your request for a real estate professorship at UT Austin,” Williams wrote. “I join the committee as well as TRERC’s staff in congratulating your college for its fine work in real estate education.”

According to the document, the stated purpose of the professorship was to “attract, develop and retain an outstanding lead teacher/program developer.”

The memorandum clarified that, although the legislation establishing TRERC used the word “chair” rather than “professorship,” the terms were synonymous as far as Williams was concerned.

The document contains some interesting caveats, assurances and requirements. Texas A&M made it clear that it was not giving UT a blank check.

“As you know, we are highly interested in the flow of benefits of this professorship,” wrote the Texas A&M chancellor, “hence we have every intention of fully funding it. However, since we operate on a year-by-year funding basis, completion of the professorship funding is contingent on our available funds.”

The memorandum outlined Real Estate Center expectations for UT once the money began to flow.

The initial interagency contract was for \$50,000 and effective for the fiscal year beginning Sept. 1, 1977.

And just in case Texas A&M had forgotten to include something, Williams added, "Since such contracts are for 'services delivered,' an annual review of program benefits from expenditures of the income from the professorship endowment will be expected.

"As we proceed toward execution and review of the professorship, the need for other provisions may become apparent. These seem to be the major ones, which will permit us to proceed."

UT continues to name a holder of the Jennings professorship, although the university's real estate programs are greatly diminished from what they once were. Texas A&M also has a professor named to the Laguarta professorship, but the Masters of Real Estate degree program in Mays Business School remains strong.

On The Air

In response to its mandate to assist the public, the Center launched "The Realty Report," cassette tapes with one-minute, consumer-oriented radio spots to 81 subscribing Texas radio stations. Each monthly tape had 20 programs, one for each work day.

Production of the radio program was done in Assistant Editor Wendell Fuqua's office, the walls of which he had covered with empty egg cartons for sound-proofing. Even then, recording had to be scheduled around a class held on the floor above his office. Otherwise, chairs scraping on the uncarpeted floor added unwanted sound effects to the program.

Not Idle Brag

In November 1981, Laguarta had the opportunity to view first-hand the Real Estate Center he envisioned a decade earlier. He was at Texas A&M being honored with a Center-funded professorship named for him.

"We Texans are known for our boastful nature," he said. "So when we tell someone we have the biggest and the best, it's only natural that they are a bit skeptical. It's not idle brag, however, when we say the Texas Real Estate Research Center is second to none.

"It has become even more than the founders envisioned. It has surpassed our expectations. And for Texans that's saying quite a lot. . . ." ¹⁹

Bust Bursts Center's Bubble

Anyone who has been in real estate a long time vividly remembers the early 1980s. Those were bad years for real estate. Texas was hit particularly hard. After years of boom times, a foundering oil industry caused the real estate industry to decline.

A down job market and the resulting unemployment sent home prices into a nose dive; the inventory of unsold homes skyrocketed. The precipitous drop in sales caused many to give up their real estate license and look for greener pastures.

For the first time since the Center's founding, the number of Texas salespersons began to decline. Fewer licensees meant less operating funds for the Center. The Center went into survival mode; clearly something or someone had to give.

While Texas A&M University in general continued to prosper, give raises and hire new staff and faculty, the Real Estate Center director and advisory committee were forced to make some hard, cost-cutting decisions. Floyd was the first (and to this point, the only) director forced to reduce programs and people for budgetary reasons.

The Texas real estate economy did not improve in 1982, and Center funding continued to decline. In an effort to streamline operations, the Center's organizational structure eliminated the three separate divisions. In doing so, all staff positions related to the educational function were eliminated. The total staff dropped from 33 to 16.²⁰

Vast Untapped Resource

The Center's tenth anniversary celebration drew national media attention. In July 1982, the cover of Dallas Realtor magazine carried both the old and new Center logos on the cover. The inside article was titled, "TRERC: A Vast Resource Waiting to be Tapped."

The accompanying editor's note said, ". . . the Texas Real Estate Research Center remains something of a mysterious entity to most Texas Realtors. As a result, the wealth of real estate related educational and business-aid materials this vital and continuously active organization has developed goes virtually unnoticed by the majority of the state's real estate practitioners.

"We thought it was time to shed a little light on the TRERC and the valuable things it does for the Texas real estate industry. . . ."

In its fall issue of 1982, the *Journal of Real Estate Education*, a publication from the National Association of Realtors, ran an article titled "The Texas Real Estate Research Center."

Also in 1981, the Texas Legislature asked the Center for help. As a result, the Center delivered an Analysis of Property Tax Shifts Resulting from Reappraisal to the Texas House of Representatives.

Reorganizing for Future

In FY 1983–84, the Center was reorganized based on the strategic planning conference held with the advisory committee and using a real estate environment study.

The administrative structure was revamped. Each Center employee began submitting a written plan of work for the coming year. Formal job descriptions were created, and employees were evaluated using a comparison of their plans of work with their end-of-year accomplishments.

By the time FY 1983–84 concluded, the Center had its first mission statement.

“The mission of the Texas Real Estate Research Center is to conduct real estate related research based on needs of the Texas citizenry and disseminate results and findings.”

The new mission came with several embodied precepts.

- Research will be specific to Texas.
- Knowledge disseminated will stress application.
- Enhancement of individual decision-making ability will be emphasized.
- Information will be without political advocacy.
- Greater understanding of private rights to property, free markets and individual freedom will be fostered.
- High standards of scientific inquiry befitting Texas A&M University will be maintained.²¹

New Products Debut

Eventually, the funding level lost in the licensee decline would return. In the meantime, however, the remaining staff continued to introduce new ideas and programs.

The popularity of the Center continued to grow within and outside Texas. Some enterprising entrepreneurs even went so far as to take Center materials, remove all Center identification and sell the information as their own. To counteract this and to help the staff better understand who and where Center materials were being used, all Center products were copyrighted beginning in 1982.

The communications team also launched the Leadership Information Series (LIS) in 1982. These were prepared presentations with scripts and accompanying slides designed for use by real estate leaders who needed factual, up-to-date information and statistics for presentations to civic clubs, boards of Realtors and other organizations. The LIS was followed two years later with the introduction of Teacher Instructional Packets (TIPS). These research-based presentations were designed for use by real estate instructors.

Two periodicals were introduced in 1984. Executive Newsletter was designed to give readers a Kiplinger-style publication (incomplete sentences separated by ellipses and categorized under subheads.) The newsletter was published nine years.

Because *Tierra Grande* magazine was only going to Texas brokers at the time, something was needed to communicate with licensed salespersons. The solution was *Center Digest*, a quarterly newsletter summarizing *Tierra Grande* articles in just four pages and in only two colors. The newsletter was discontinued in 1995 after 42 issues when salespersons began receiving the magazine.

The 1984 Texas Realtor Board Presidents Convocation featured Dr. James W. Christian, chief economist with the U.S. League of Savings Institutions, as its keynote speaker. Christian would speak to TAR again in 1993 but as director of the Center. His second presentation was less well received than the first. That story continues later.

Voters Call to Action

A presidential election in November 1984 also involved a vote on HJR 19, an amendment to the Texas Constitution, designed to ensure necessary and equitable funding for all state-supported institutions of higher education. In an unusual twist, the Real Estate Center was deeply involved in getting the bill, better known as Proposition 2, passed.

At the request of Texas A&M University officials, the Center prepared a speaker's packet and slides to be used to educate voters on why they should support the amendment. The amendment was approved by 72 percent of voters, and much of the credit for its passage went to the Center.

Senior Editor David Jones worked with Jerry Cooper, editor of *The Texas Aggie*, to produce a special pull-out section in the magazine on Proposition 2, an amendment also supported by TAR.

“Thank you and . . . Texas A&M for the excellent speaker's packet you have prepared on the Education Assistance Fund,” wrote Priscilla Detweiler, executive assistant to the UT-Dallas president. “It is exactly what is needed for presentations to service clubs and similar audiences.”

“Because of the assistance you provided — the seminal copy prepared for various articles ultimately carried statewide, the speaker packets and slides — we were able to educate others across the state about the issues involved. Texas A&M has become a great university because of people like you,” wrote Texas A&M Chancellor Dr. Arthur G. Hansen and President Dr. Frank E. Vandiver commending the Center for work on the speaker packets. “Please accept our personal thanks and appreciation for going the extra mile.”

Allen Joins Team

When Dr. Jack Friedman became the Julio S. Laguarda Professor in Real Estate in 1985, the roles of chief economist and senior research economist were divided. Dr. John Allen was hired as senior research economist. His job was to coordinate the Center's overall research program. He remained a professor of economics at Texas A&M.

Allen was the former associate director of the Center for Education and Research in Free Enterprise at Texas A&M. He was head of the economics department from 1969 to 1974.

“My official role was to offer advice and counsel on research projects and to help identify areas of research,” said Allen. “I very much enjoyed my association with the Center staff.”

In 1987, Allen authored the Center book *Private Rights to Property: The Foundation of Freedom, Prosperity and Harmony*. In it, he explored the fundamental tenets of real estate ownership and private property rights. He examined how property values can be altered by changing the bundle of rights.

“Part of the rationale for dividing the roles of chief economist and senior research economist was to improve the scientific methodology employed by the Center so as to gain greater

credibility in the academic environment,” recalls current director Gary Maler. “Still emphasizing the applied nature of our reports, then-director Floyd wanted to be sure our methodology stood up to scrutiny. He was not comfortable before John added his reviews and comments.

“I would say John’s greatest contributions were the book and his helping to raise the Center’s standards for methodology to another level. Although his time was limited, I recall quite rigorous reviews with the research team challenging them to redouble their efforts.”

Allen left the Center in 1989. He taught microeconomics, principles of economics, money and banking, industrial organization and regional and urban economics at Texas A&M until retiring in 2011.

Speeding Up Delivery

To combat complaints that *Tierra Grande* magazine delivered research results too late to be of use, yet another newsletter, this one a front-and-back Kiplinger-style periodical called Research Report began in August 1985. The newsletter was designed to give readers a look at research findings in advance of their official printing in *Tierra Grande*. Nine or ten items were covered in each issue.

In 1985, the Center unveiled the Real Estate Executive Lecture Series (REELS). This series of audio cassette tapes was produced to provide research results in a format users could listen to while driving. The Center distributed its annual report that year on cassette tape, the first time the report had not been published in printed form. REELS were either 30 or 60 minutes long and frequently dealt with the market outlook in several counties.

Tackling Tough Questions

Times changed. After 15 years, Center researchers had different questions to answer because the market of 1986 was different from that of 1971. It was a challenge welcomed by Director Floyd.

“I want it . . . so that when you have a question about real estate in Texas, the first thing that comes to your mind is ‘I’ll call the Real Estate Center at A&M,’” Floyd told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. We want to be recognized as the experts in Texas real estate. We want to be the focal point of research and information in Texas.”²²

Research Economist Dr. Arthur Wright recalled the staff’s early warnings to the industry in the early 1980s regarding overbuilding.

“We were just ignored,” said Wright. “They would say . . . things are going so great, you must be wrong.”

Chief Economist Dr. Jack Friedman echoed that sentiment.

“People were buying real estate based on the rear-view mirror idea that it has been appreciating in the past, and it’s going to appreciate in the future. I asked people to question that assumption in 1981.”²³

Identity Crisis Confronted

TAR, TREC, TRERC. Three totally separate Texas real estate organizations that licensees and the public continually confused with one another. At trade shows, the staff would ask, “Are you familiar with the Texas Real Estate Research Center?” Typically the answer was “no.” But when shown a copy of *Tierra Grande* magazine, they would say they “read it every month.” Not very convincing considering the magazine is published quarterly.

One member of the advisory committee told the director, “The Center is the best kept secret in Texas.”

To counter this lack of awareness of the Center, in 1986, the words “Texas” and “Research” were dropped from the name. Henceforth, the organization was simply known as the “Real Estate Center.” TRERC was gone. In its place was “the Center.” “At Texas A&M University” often is added to the name so audiences know where the Center is located. But we never refer to ourselves in the possessive form “the Texas A&M Real Estate Center” because our enabling legislation calls on us to work with all Texas institutions of higher learning.

A year later, the name of every periodical was changed to include the words “Real Estate Center.” For example, Center Digest became Real Estate Center Digest. *Tierra Grande* became Real Estate Center Journal.

Because magazine recipients claimed that they still did not know which organization was mailing their *Tierra Grande*, beginning in 1987, each magazine had two covers — a color cover and an outside plain cover with only the publication name, contents and publisher. The double covers were used until 1990.

Letter of the Law

Another periodical, *Real Estate Center Letter of the Law*, made its debut in 1986. It contained references to case law, statutory law and regulations that potentially affected the practice of real estate. Center attorney Judon Fambrough wrote articles each quarter. Subscriptions were free.

By 1997, the newsletter was being sent to all licensees. The name was shortened to *Law Letter*, and it was an insert in *Tierra Grande* magazine. The newsletter was discontinued in 1999.

Digital Age Entry

The Center entered the digital age in a big way in 1987 when it purchased the first “desktop” computer on the Texas A&M campus.

The accompanying scanner was the size of a desk and had a large red button next to the sliding table top. When editors asked what the button was for, the installer said it was an emergency stop button required by OSHA in case the user’s clothing got caught in the moving flatbed.

From Agriculture to Business

After 16 years in the College of Agriculture, the Center moved to the Lowry Mays College & Graduate School of Business, now known simply as Mays Business School.

"From an academic standpoint, moving the Center from agriculture to business went very smoothly," said Floyd. "That is rare at a university, especially a major one.

"We found the odd moment in time when it worked," he said. "There was an interim dean of business (Dr. Don Hellriegel) who had wanted the Center in the college for a long time. At the same time, the dean of agriculture (Dr. Harry Kunkel) who had been there 18 years was retiring and saw the Center he helped create might have greater potential by moving. The timing to make it all happen was quite amazing."

An agreement approved by all parties in 1987 made the move official. It stated, "The Center will operate independent of the academic departments of the College." It noted the Center director would be the president's designated representative in dealings with the advisory committee, report to the dean of the College of Business Administration (Dr. Benton Cocanougher) and serve on the College's Executive Committee.

A second agreement effective September 1987 clarified the Center's new affiliation with the College of Business, referring to the "unique status" of the Center.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Director Floyd thought the Center was on track. The staff agreed. People who knew us said so. But Floyd wanted these opinions confirmed by an unbiased, outside panel. A team of consultants was convened in 1987. The university and industry officials were tasked to answer several questions. What is the Center doing that it should not? How effectively is the Center performing? How effectively is the Center using its resources? Should certain programs or products be eliminated? What opportunities is the Center missing?

In its report, the review team said the documents and interviews substantiate that "the Center is effectively performing the tasks it has set out to accomplish."

Furthermore, the review team "could find no evidence to suggest the Center is now or has in the past undertaken any activity that falls outside the mandate stated in Senate Bill 383."²⁴

When the Realtors Land Institute (RLI) approached the Center to design, write and present the 1988 RLI "Land University," a significant bridge was built between academia and the industry. The week-long courses were held in San Antonio under the auspices of the Center for Executive Development in Mays Business School. Dr. Schmedemann coordinated course development and instruction.

Also in 1988, the Center's real estate computer software directory caught the eye of NAR. NAR and the Center surveyed

960 real estate firms nationwide and published an updated directory, which was distributed free to all NAR members — around 60,000. The directory included 582 real estate software packages from 269 companies.

By the time FY 1988–89 rolled around, the big question facing the Center was, "Where do we go from here?" Licensees faced a new challenge. More people were leaving Texas than moving in. The state did not lose population, however, because there were more births than deaths recorded. Unfortunately, babies do not buy houses.

Hispanics were a major contributor to the state's population growth. Meanwhile much of the existing population was becoming middle-aged, and older adults created demand for more owner housing and fewer rentals.

Goodbye Scholarships, Hello News Releases

In 1988, the Center gave a record 35 scholarships to students at Texas colleges and universities. Because of declining revenues, however, the scholarship program was discontinued the following year.

FY 1988–89 was a record breaker, with 354 news releases distributed. In the previous year, only 21 releases were distributed. The 1988–89 total broke the 1985 record of 232.

Also that year the *Austin American-Statesman* published a multipage article on Real Estate Center research in the Capital City. It was the most extensive coverage ever given the Center by a single issue of a periodical.

Play It Again

In 1988, Wendell Fuqua, the Center's videographer since 1977, moved out of state, and video production was discontinued. With Fuqua's departure, the Center's video studio equipment was transferred to the Texas Transportation Institute, a component of The Texas A&M University System.

That would not be the closing chapter for videotapes at the Center, however, as both video production and Fuqua would return in 1998 for another three years. From 2001 to 2010, Randy Birdwell was the audiovisual coordinator. Birdwell was essentially a one-man band who wore many hats, including producer, director, narrator, cameraman, video editor, driver and more.

Both videographers received help from other Center staffers when they were available for a shoot. It was not unusual to see the videographer behind the camera, the senior editor running the teleprompter, the graphic artist holding the boom mike or running a second camera, or an editor helping with makeup or following the script. And, of course, help carrying equipment was always appreciated.

Customers Always Write

More than 600 letters arrived at the Center from across the country requesting a 1989 Center report on evaluating an income property. The Center was no longer "the best kept secret," as some had once called it. Brokers, salespeople,

doctors, lawyers, homemakers and others coast-to-coast were discovering what many Texas licensees already knew.

"Expanded interest in the Center's work results from an overall plan to bring fresh solutions to Texas real estate problems," said Director Floyd. "The infusion of new ideas fuels a strong research effort. If researchers remain in their offices, they not only investigate phenomena too late, they often just chase fads. Research looks for the lasting truths, not the passing fancies."²⁵

TAMU Welcomes IPT

In 1989, the Institute of Property Taxation (now Professionals in Taxation) asked the Center to evaluate its property taxation courses. The Center not only did the evaluation, it helped IPT develop new courses. Eventually, IPT began holding its annual education program at Texas A&M University.

Executives responsible for millions in corporate taxes came to Texas A&M searching for new and better ways of doing their job. The Center for Executive Development in Mays Business School worked with the Center on a joint proposal to bring IPT to Texas A&M.

Jones Named Chief Economist

Dr. Ted Jones became chief economist in 1989. He has the distinction of being the only chief economist who has worked with or under every Center director. In other words, he has a long history with the Center — back to 1977 when he was in the LERE program working on his master's degree.

As a graduate research assistant, he helped research energy issues. That was pretty cutting-edge research more than 30 years ago.

Director Floyd brought Jones back to the Center in 1983 by offering him a position on the staff as researcher. But there were strings attached. Jones had to pursue a Ph.D. Jones jokes he is still uncertain who got the better end of that deal.

"While serving as chief economist, we placed a renewed emphasis on applied research that allows Texans to make better informed decisions," said Jones. "We cleaned up all of the Center's data series — perhaps the biggest accomplishment that still allows long-term analysis and research into what have been economically difficult times in recent years."

Jones took the Center's motto, "Solutions Through Research," seriously as he allocated resources to projects reflecting both audience diversity and real estate cycles. In 1993, Jones authored the *Real Estate Applications Software Directory*, which had more than 1,000 entries from 470 companies. At the same time, the Center's own software became a best seller.

The research staff traveled widely to deliver research results. When not conducting research or giving speeches, researchers were teaching classes, leading seminars, planning and conducting meetings, providing expert testimony, writing white papers and serving on committees — pretty much a description of any of the Center's first 45 years.

"The accomplishments from the Center at that time still benefit Texans," said Jones in 2011. "Just look at the research and survey work we did that led to allowing cash out refinances in Texas, provided that the homeowner maintained at least 20 percent equity in their home. Now try to estimate how many Texans still owned their homes that otherwise, without such requirements, would have been part of the national record foreclosure rates in the United States in recent years."

"I learned early on in my career that what distinguishes the successful applied researcher from any other is simply stated as 'the ability to commence'," said Director Floyd. "That is, the ability to define researchable problems given the scarcity of data and lack of precise match of observable to measurable behavior."

"Jack Friedman had that ability. He could listen to a discussion then translate questions into a researchable problem. When he left, that was the number one qualification for a replacement. Fortunately for me, I found that person readily available."

"Ted Jones had the same ability, which he used with great success when dealing directly with real estate industry professionals and the public they serve. The fact he was a great communicator, solid writer and enthusiastic leader obviously helped, but it was his contributions to problem identification and let's-compare-these-data-sets that gave him the edge."

New Decade, New Challenges

The decade of the 1990s brought challenges to the Center that could not have been predicted even a year earlier. The savings and loan debacle, environmental issues, creation of the Resolution Trust Corporation, mandatory continuing education, new leadership in liaison groups, turmoil in the oil industry, and a shrinking Center staff and budget were among the concerns.

Floyd confronted the challenges head on, pledging to serve the needs of Texans and disseminate unbiased, usable results. The Center continued to broaden its knowledge base. For example, urban land data became a priority, and one full-time researcher was assigned to it.

Technological innovations included computer links to local boards of Realtors. Quick access to significant numbers made research timely. Ideas were constantly exchanged through a network of counterparts nationwide at research centers, universities and professional societies.

The Center continued work on a realty management project for The Texas A&M University System. A procedural manual for managers of large real estate holdings was part of this undertaking.

In 1990, the Center designed the annual report for the Texas A&M Lowry Mays College of Business Administration and Graduate School of Business. Business Dean Cocanougher called the report "a very attractive document" and told the Center team who worked on it, "Your efforts are what made it possible to document a very impressive year. . . ."

Market Diversity Yields Glossary

The Center published the first edition of the *English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary* in 1991 with definitions, importance and Spanish translations of 249 terms.

“Some people misunderstood the purpose of the glossary,” explained Senior Editor David Jones. “It was designed to help English-speaking professionals communicate with Spanish-speaking clients.”

The glossary’s debut was preceded by the largest print news release campaign in Center history. Some 2,800 releases were mailed announcing the booklet. In the years since, ten more editions have been published, including one on CD (2005). The 2011 version has nearly 800 terms. It is available free on the Center’s website (recenter.tamu.edu).

Authored by the Center’s two Jacks — former Chief Economist Dr. Jack P. Friedman of Dallas and now-retired Research Economist Dr. Jack C. Harris, the glossary has proven a popular product, especially with title companies. In 1995, NAR incorporated the glossary into its Certified International Property Specialist designation course.

From 1991 to 2003, more than 30,000 copies of the glossary were sold.²⁶ As this history was being written, the staff was preparing to sell the glossary on Amazon.com to Kindle users, another first for the Center.

Staubach Scores With MCE Video

FY 1991–92 had a celebrity feel. Former Dallas Cowboy quarterback and president of The Staubach Company Roger Staubach appeared in a Center video. Staubach shared his insight in a program on “Winning at Tenant Representation,” one of three MCE videos produced cooperatively by the Center and TREC that year.

The 50-minute programs premiered at the 1992 TAR mid-winter convention.

Old Name Returns, RECON Born

In 1993, the Real Estate Center Journal was returned to its original name *Tierra Grande*.

A year later the Center began an online bulletin board called RECON, an acronym for Real Estate Center Online News. Initially, the bulletin board was periodically updated by a student worker. RECON eventually (1997) became a popular twice-weekly electronic newsletter.

In 2011, RECON had more than 40,000 subscribers.

New Digs

In 1995, the Center and College of Business moved into the E.L. Wehner Building on the west campus. A year later, the college was renamed the Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business. In 2002, the college was renamed again — Mays Business School. The \$23.5 million structure was home to the Center for 14 years.

Christian’s Short Tenure

Dr. James W. Christian was named the third Center director effective May 1, 1993, after Floyd accepted another position at Texas A&M. Christian came with an impressive resumé. He owned a national economic forecasting firm. From 1980 to 1991, he was chief economist and senior vice president for the U.S. League of Savings Institutions in Washington, D.C.

From 1976 to 1980, Christian was with the National Savings and Loan League. He was former director of the international division of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. Christian also had been a professor of economics at Iowa State University.

Director Christian worked hard to improve every research manuscript produced during his time at the Center.

He wrote in *Tierra Grande* about his vision for the Center.

Our work . . . must focus on current, bottom-line issues and their implications for the future of the real estate industry. . . . You’ll see expressions of our analytical interest in the factors that enhance the growth of Texas commerce and industry. . . . In a world in which technology is expanding the range of choice at a bewildering pace, every community — large and small — battles to secure its economic base and preserve its vitality. We’ll try to tell you what seems to be working.

Every business day is one of transition from yesterday to tomorrow. We’ll do our best to ease that passage, to prepare you for the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead.

While he wrote well, Christian was unable to connect with industry leaders. Dean Cocanougher created a committee to interview staff, TAR leaders, others in related industries and the public regarding the state of the Center. Their report was submitted in September 1994.

Basically the report said things were not as good as they could be within the Center. The report uncovered discontent among Center staff and TAR membership unhappiness with the direction the Center was headed, especially considering there was a pending request for an increase in Center funding. TAR leaders said they could not support a funding increase if the Center continued operating as it was.

On the day before Christmas break, a copy of the report was given to Christian. The dean asked him to be prepared to discuss it after the holidays.

On Jan. 2, 1995, Christian met with Associate Dean of Business Dr. Gary Trennepohl. Thirty minutes later, the Center director left the building for the last time. Just hours into the New Year, the Center was without a leader.

Making the day-to-day decisions that kept the Center moving forward fell to Assistant Director Gary Maler. Chief Economist T. Jones, Maler and Dr. R. Malcolm Richards of the May’s finance department began damage control. Christian had received what amounted to a “vote of no confidence”

from the industry, and TAR had tabled its approval of the Center's request for additional funding.

If TAR would support the Center's funding request, Center leaders agreed *Tierra Grande* magazine could be sent to all licensees, including salespersons. That sealed the deal, and the Center's funding was increased with new licensee fees of \$17.50 for salespersons and \$20 for brokers. It was the first funding increase in 20 years.

Richards Takes Reins

Cocanougher met with Richards within a few weeks to discuss the need for a new Center director.

"Malcolm, you wanted the Real Estate Center as part of the business school" (referring to the move from the College of Agriculture), Richards recalled the dean saying. That was followed with, "What are you going to do with it now?"

"He was not asking a question," said Richards. In mid-January 1995, Richards became the Center's fourth director.

"Change is coming at the real estate industry quickly, and what the Center does is help real estate professionals adapt to this change," said the new director. "The industry faces many changes today: the make-up of the population, technology, market changes and competition. If we can help them better adjust to these emerging trends, then we play an important role."

"The licensees in Texas feel as though they know the people at the Real Estate Center," said Richards. "Another of the keys to the Center's success has been the Center's ability to remain objective — and be perceived about the state as being just that. TAR and the local boards have worked hard over the years to avoid asking the Center to champion a particular cause or proposal if doing so would jeopardize the Center's reputation for objectivity."

Richards gave a lot of credit to the contributions made by advisory committee members. Their stature within the industry has contributed in important ways to the Center's credibility.

"I remember discussions I had with Rick Floyd during the time he was Center director," said Richards. "I was always telling him that the Center belonged in the School of Business — and he would remind me that the college turned down the opportunity to house the Center when it was created."

"I still remember the day Rick reminded me of those discussions and indicated that we had a moment of opportunity to move the Center. I believe that move has, over the years, been good for both Mays Business School and for the Center."

Richards' tenure as director was marked with an explosion of information. The Center became widely known within Texas and far beyond. The Internet made the Center accessible to anyone with a computer any place in the world.

Weaving First Website

The Center's first website (<http://recenter.tamu.edu>) began operation in December 1995. In the first two months, 1,404 visitors logged 7,389 page views. In the first full year of operation, 39,440 visitors were attracted to the website developed by Mark Baumann, associate research scientist and information technology director.

The website offered 25 years of data on major Texas real estate markets, which was unavailable anywhere else at the time.

Some 900 data pages were on the original Center website. That number grew rapidly to more than 7,000 by summer 1996. Eventually website pages peaked at nearly 30,000.

The International Real Estate Directory (IRED) named the Center's website one of its "Top 10 Hot Picks for August-September 1996" out of more than 7,000 real estate websites listed.

"The Real Estate Center offers more information in one place than any entity we have seen," said an IRED editor.²⁷

Many of the features offered on the original website are still available today. These include real estate data on Texas' largest markets, the publications catalog, *Tierra Grande* reprints and news. But today's version of the website offers viewers much more than did the original.

'Doc' Tells What's Up

Dr. Ivan Schmedemann, better known as "Doc," retired May 31, 1996. Schmedemann developed the Land Economics and Real Estate program in 1970 and had been the program's only coordinator.

More than 400 students earned master's degrees under his tutelage.

Celebrating 25 Years

A 25th anniversary celebration was held by the Center in 1996 on the campus of Texas A&M. Speaking at the Feb. 22 luncheon, Director Emeritus Wooten told assembled staff and guests, "You continue to serve the state well."

In addition to Wooten, speakers at the event included past director Floyd; Robert L. Pardue, an appointee to the original advisory committee in 1972, who served 12 years; Conrad Bering Jr., 1986 advisory committee chairman; Benny McMahan, TAR executive vice president and former advisory committee chairman; and Center Director Richards.

"Out of the last 25 years have come some things that are priceless," said Bering. "You established a standard of quality and productivity that becomes a challenge for the next 25 years. The next 25 years must be for us a pledge to continue the quality of product, staff and dedication to ensure that licensees — the first line of support — get the benefits and realize the Center is here for them."²⁸

Richards noted how real estate had changed in the 25 years since the Center began.

"Radon gas, asbestos, wetlands, endangered species, hazardous waste, ozone depletion, the Resolution Trust Corporation, the S&L crisis, computers, faxes, pagers, cellular telephones and cyberspace weren't even in our vocabulary in 1971," he said.

Magazine for Inactives, Too

After inactive licensees were added to the mailing list in 1997, *Tierra Grande's* circulation hit 110,000.

"Once we passed 100,000 circulation, we were able to move off the slower and more expensive sheet-fed presses to less costly web presses," said Senior Editor Jones. As of 2011, the cost of a single copy of *Tierra Grande* (including postage but excluding staff salaries) was 50 cents. And by sending the magazine to all licensees, the Center was able to reduce costs by eliminating *Center Digest*, the newsletter specifically for salespersons.

Dotzour Named Chief Economist

Dr. Mark G. Dotzour became chief economist in 1996. He previously was on the faculty in the Department of Finance and Real Estate at Wichita State University. From 1978 to 1981, Dotzour was president of Dotzour Realtors in Wichita, Kansas. He also previously was president and co-owner of Gleneagles Development in Wichita.

"When we knew Ted Jones was leaving for Stewart Title, it was a very anxious time in the director's office," said former director Richards. "Ted was very well respected everywhere, including at TAR, and we knew replacing him would not be easy."

"It was a time when manuscripts were scarce for *Tierra Grande*, and we solicited manuscripts from outside authors to help fill in the gaps," said Richards.

Ted Jones returned from a meeting of the American Real Estate Society. Among the papers he brought back was one by Dotzour. Jones and Richards invited Dotzour to campus, officially to discuss publishing his paper in *Tierra Grande* but unofficially to check him out as a candidate for Center chief economist.

"I did not see Mark moving from Wichita," said Richards. "He had deep roots there, including involvement in his family real estate business. But after meeting with Ted for two hours, they came to my office, and Ted tells me 'We have a new chief economist.'"

Actually, the Center's relationship with Dotzour predates him joining the staff.

In the early days of the Center, Dr. Charles Wurtzebach, associate professor and real estate director at the University of Texas, lead SOARS instructor and good friend of the Center's, called Director Floyd. Wurtzebach was asking for a letter of permission to spend some of the funds generated by the

professorship funded by the Center. Floyd asked if there was anything else the Center could do to help the UT real estate program.

Wurtzebach said there was a Ph.D. student who could use some financial assistance. The young man's name was Mark Dotzour. So years before he would officially be on the payroll, Dotzour was helped financially by the Center. No one would deny that was a good investment.

After Dotzour graduated, the Center tried to get him to join the staff, but he went back to Wichita to help with the family business.

Under Dotzour, the research effort flourished. Dotzour became well known through his many speaking engagements. In 2007, Dotzour appeared on PBS' "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer." He has been quoted in many major newspapers and news magazines in the United States. In 2008, he spoke to the 100,000th person who had heard him speak personally since he came to the Center two years earlier.

Ideas Flow at Tapatio Springs

A Center strategic planning meeting was held in April 1997. Center senior staff, advisory committee members and industry representatives discussed past, present and future research and products. They tackled such questions as, "Looking back, what has the Center done that stands out as something that was of real value to you and your members?" There was much talk about the future, especially as it related to technology.

Attendees said the Center should "anticipate . . . look over the horizon . . . be at the cutting edge . . . extrapolate."

TAR CEO Benny McMahan said technology had transformed the industry from one that was people intensive to one that was capital intensive.

Affordability From All Angles

Back in the day, the staff realized affordability was an important indicator of the economic condition of a real estate market.

The Texas Housing Affordability Index (THAI) was created 1979 by Dr. Wright. The index, which indicated how interest rates and home prices affected the ability of a typical household to buy a home while providing an interesting housing market measurement, remains popular today with the press and real estate professionals (especially when the market is relatively affordable).

When Wright left the Center, THAI reporting lapsed for a few years until Research Economist Dr. Jack Harris revived the effort. After a few tweaks to the formula, it was back on track.

"At the time," said Harris, "the Center had this unique database crafted from sales information collected from local Realtor boards. That gave us home prices for most of the local markets in Texas. Income data was supplied by a commercial firm through the Survey of Buying Power. It was a simple task to fashion an affordability index based on the method used by NAR."

When Dr. Jim Gaines joined the staff in 2005 as a research economist, he revised the THAI to be more consistent with other published indices and reduced the complexity and subjectivity of the analysis that goes into the computations. The revised THAI is comparable to those created by NAR and other researchers.

Gaines also took over the First-Time Homebuyers Affordability Index (FTHAI), begun by Harris in 1998 to track the ability of would-be homeowners to buy into the market.

The Texas Real Estate Confidence Index (TRECI) began in 1998. Dr. James Leigh of the marketing department in Mays Business School developed the index. Each quarter, Leigh polled panels of residential and commercial Realtors, lenders and home builders to provide information in six key areas. Leigh compiled the data into tables reflecting how “confident” each panel was in the short term about Texas real estate.

“Our research projects are a direct response to the needs of our constituents,” Dotzour said in the 1998 annual report. “While data providing statewide averages are interesting, the averages really apply to no one. People want to know what is happening in their town specifically.”

Annual Report’s Many Facets

The law establishing the Center says it has to publish an annual report, but it does not say it has to be printed. The communications section prided itself on producing reports with unusual themes and formatting surprises. One year, for example, it was printed as a newspaper and delivered inside a clear plastic bag. Annual reports continued as printed versions until 1985 when the Center issued it on a cassette tape. That was just the beginning of some outside-the-box delivery methods.

The cassette tape idea even generated a 1985 handwritten note from the White House. Fred McClure, special assistant to the President for legislative affairs, wrote Center Director Floyd.

“The annual report was outstanding,” said McClure. “I can see it now . . . after a couple of seasons, you’ll want to go to video or compact disc even. Seriously, it was a job well done. I immediately popped it into my tape player this morning when it arrived in the mail. I’m convinced that, as has been the case in the past, TRERC will set new standards!”

McClure was not exactly unbiased in his praise. He worked for the Center as a student worker and was the first black to be elected student body president at Texas A&M University. He later served on the advisory committee and on the Texas A&M University Board of Regents.

In 1998, the Center did what McClure predicted and issued its annual report on videotape. By far, however, the most popular version has been the annual report-calendar combination.

“It occurred to me that if we wanted to give our annual report shelf life, a good way was to print a calendar as part

of it,” said David Jones. “Apparently it is working. We started doing the combination in 2000 and have stayed with it ever since. A readership survey showed that more than 90 percent of recipients keep the annual report a whole year just so they can have the calendar. I wonder how many CEOs can say that about their annual reports.”

Legal Commercial Connection

In fall 1998, the Center cosponsored a commercial real estate course with the South Texas College of Law. So much positive feedback was received that the two organizations agreed it should be an annual event. It has continued until the present.

About 400 attend the Houston course, which offers MCE credit for both the Texas Real Estate Commission and State Bar of Texas. Members of the Center staff speak at the conference, and the director co-chairs the planning committee.

West Texas Broadcasts

In 1999, the Center sought to address the problem of sparse mandatory continuing education (MCE) opportunities in West Texas. With centers of population many miles apart, few providers thought it economical to bring educational programs to the vast Texas prairies.

The Center experimented with four programs beamed live via TTVN from a studio on the Texas A&M College Station campus to licensees in Abilene, Amarillo, Midland-Odessa and San Angelo. TTVN is the wide area data and interactive communications network serving campuses in The Texas A&M University System.

Live audiences in College Station participated in the broadcasts that featured Center experts. Boards of Realtors registered and monitored attendance at the West Texas sites. The speaker could respond to questions from any location.

New Millenium Brings Change

The first year of the new century was a record-setter for the Center on many fronts.

- New research reports totaled 42, thanks primarily to the series of Market Reports produced by Dr. Jennifer Cowley, assistant research scientist.
- Newspaper clippings mentioning the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University hit a high at 1,524.
- 357,063 individuals visited the Center website and logged 4.6 million page views

Also in 2000, the Center rebranded itself once again. This time it introduced the new “key” logo, a door key with the upper part in the shape of Texas.

That same year, the Center presented its only “Lifetime Achievement Awards.” One went to Ebby Halliday of Dallas and founder of the real estate brokerage firm that bears her name. The other was presented to George P. Mitchell of

Houston, founder of Mitchell Energy & Development Corp. and developer of The Woodlands. These were the only two such awards given by the Center in its first 40 years.

The Center began its 30th year of operation in 2001. Printed news releases became passé that year when the Center distributed its first electronic press release to some 400 media outlets. Later that year, seven Texas Public Broadcasting System stations aired a Center video on the affordable housing crisis. Broadcast from the studios of KAMU-TV on the Texas A&M campus, the video was transmitted nationwide via satellite and stations across the country were able to record the program for rebroadcast.

The number of website visitors continued to climb, hitting 77,000 per month in 2002. And the global influence created by the website was underscored that year when a delegation from China visited the Center to learn about U.S. real estate.

A monthly review of the Texas economy was introduced online in 2003. Authored by Dr. Ali Anari and Dr. Dotzour, the report covers the latest employment numbers, notes which industries are gaining or losing jobs and how Texas metros are faring.

Also that year, the *English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary* was expanded but with a twist. The new version came in both a print and CD format. The latter provided an audio pronunciation of the term in Spanish. In 2001, the software directory was posted on the website, marking the first time it was available as a free download.

Ethnic Study Scores Big

When the National Association of Real Estate Editors held its annual meeting in Houston in 2004, they were given a copy of one of the most significant research products in Center history — the *Home Buying Among Ethnic Groups Survey*.

Texas' changing demographics prompted the study. More than 4,000 Texans participated in the telephone survey. This included 880 white non-Hispanics; 1,870 Hispanics; 772 African-Americans and 481 Asians.

In the process of delivering results of the survey, Center staff created or renewed relationships with the organizations representing the groups surveyed. Survey results garnered statewide and national media coverage.

High Marks for Center

In 2004, the Center was rated "very good — one of the best programs in the nation" by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Research Assessment Program.

Gaines Hits Ground Running

Dr. James Gaines, former director of the Rice Center, joined the Center research staff in 2005 as a research economist following the retirement of Dr. Harris. Specifically, Gaines' work focused on Texas housing markets and demography.

According to the *Dallas Morning News*, Gaines is the "most quoted real estate expert in Texas."

Maler Named Director

Richards left the Center in December 2005 to become dean of business and management at American University in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

Gary Maler moved from the associate director's office into the director's. Since 1978, Maler had served as coordinator of development programs, senior operations officer, assistant and associate director. During some of that time, he held an appointment as assistant to the Texas A&M University vice chancellor for research park development.

When asked what his biggest challenge has been to date, he answered without hesitation, "finding the Center a new home when the Mays Business School needed our space in the Wehner Building. The process of getting that done took 2½ years. It was difficult for the university as it wrestled with what to do with the research park. It was just fortuitous that a tenant moved out when it did, or we would have had to relocate off campus."

As part of the process of moving to the research park, Maler had to make a presentation through the university president to The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

"As far as I know, that's the first time the Center has ever had to appeal to the regents for anything," said Maler.

Getting permission to relocate was one hurdle. Funding was another.

"From the time I became director, the writing was on the wall. Licensee numbers were declining, and so was our funding. Our staff worked up several scenarios in case additional funding was needed. The whole process took about five years," he said.

Having a director with a degree in architecture has come in handy on many occasions but never more so than when the Center moved to new spaces, first the Blocker Building, then the Wehner Building and most recently (2009) to 1700 Research Parkway in the Texas A&M Research Park.

Although no longer physically housed in the same building with Mays Business School, the Center remains part of the college. The big change after the last move was that the Center had to pay rent, something it had not done while on the main campus.

The same year Maler became director marked several other Center milestones. *Tierra Grande* posted a record circulation at 140,000. June 2006 visitors to the website reached 2.2 million, and page views set a record at 20,506,387. The Center's staff gave 130 presentations to audiences nationwide totaling 10,000.

When asked what he believed have been the Center's top five accomplishments to date, Maler listed these.

- A reputation so strong that the Center's research and extensive communication of those results actually influence behavior of investors and real estate markets in Texas and perhaps beyond.
- The breadth and depth of strong relationships with respected trade, business and other organizations span the spectrum from commercial real estate (BOMA, NAIOP), to the Urban Land Institute, to the Associated General Contractors, and the American Association of Business Economics (just to name a few).
- The rural land database and analysis are without peer in the nation.
- Other states look to this Center as the best example of a research center, and many wish we would do for them what we do for Texas.
- The Center is respected throughout state government as an unbiased source of information and analysis; relied upon by Comptroller Susan Combs and the governor and is requested frequently to appear before legislative task forces, councils and subcommittees for expert testimony and opinion. We influence public policy in Texas.

Word Spreads Worldwide

In 2007, videos were added to the Center's website and averaged 8,000 hits per month. That same year articles mentioning the Center reached 150.6 million households worldwide. RSS feeds for both RECON and Market News (renamed NewsTalk Texas in 2010) began in 2008.

Much of the notoriety given the Center was a direct result of the housing crisis. It seemed the media's appetite for news, especially the bad kind, was insatiable. In 2008 alone, Center experts were quoted in *Time*, *Forbes*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times* CNN and MSNBC, to name a few.

Social Media Immersion

While understanding that not everyone has embraced social media, in 2009, the Center opened new communications doors by disseminating research news and information through its podcast, called the Real Estate Red Zone, via Twitter, on Facebook and videos on YouTube.

Face-To-Face Feedback

For years Center staff had conducted focus groups and strategic planning for other organizations. But not until 2009 did the staff conduct focus groups specifically to determine what Realtors thought about the Center, its staff and the quality of work produced.

Focus groups were held at the TAR convention in Dallas in 2009 and at the same convention in Galveston the following year. Another first occurred that year when the TAR staff came to College Station for a briefing and tour of the Center's new facilities.

Rewarding Idea

In 2009, the Center's newest researcher, Research Analyst Gerald Klassen, quickly caught the attention of NAR.

NAR awarded Mays Business School \$10,000 for Klassen's work on an ongoing plan for national policies regarding restructuring the nation's financial markets.

Crystal Ball Gazing

From the earliest days, Center researchers understood the need to look into the future and make predictions. There were early attempts to prognosticate. But it would be decades before the staff had access to the data, computer technology and the experience to make the leap from telling mostly what happened to almost entirely predicting what is going to happen.

One of the first efforts at predicting was *Texas Real Estate — 1985*, a technical report published in 1976. The outlook was prepared by the Center to assist TAR's long-range planning committee and other interested groups.²⁹ More than 45,000 copies of the report were distributed to the industry.³⁰

Themes in the 1985 predictions were revisited and supplemented in a 1980 forecast, *Texas Real Estate 1990*. More than 55,000 copies of the latter were mailed to Texas brokers and media. The study examined changing consumer behavior, increasing population, higher incomes, inflation, rising interest rates and legislation.

By 2011, some 60 Center articles and reports have been published dealing with various aspects of future events.

For many years, the January issue of *Tierra Grande* magazine carried a feature dedicated to examining the year just passed and looking at what might occur in the coming 12 months.

In 1981, the Center conducted the first-ever Brazos Valley Outlook Conference. The annual event continues under sponsorship of the local Chamber of Commerce but always featuring at least one speaker from the Center. Now, the Center conducts real estate outlook conferences in East and West Texas with another being considered for South Texas.

"They (audiences) want us to tell them what's going to happen and how to prepare for it," Maler said in 1998. "In some cases, they want us to tell them what to do. But that's not our role. They have to make their own decisions. We tell them what to consider in the decision-making process."³¹

By 2010, the staff was into predicting in a big way. They were making projections almost daily. That was not the case in the early days when the staff was much more reluctant to do so, for obvious reasons. Data were sparse, and the confidence level of new staff members was still developing.

In 2011, Maler told the advisory committee how much has changed in 40 years. "We are doing almost 100 percent forecasting now," he noted, "and not (just) reporting history is a big shift culturally for the staff."

Keeping Tabs on Trends

Since its inception, a key ingredient to the Center's success has been liaison and affiliations with local, regional, state, national and even international groups. The number of formal and informal relationships precludes us from even attempting to list them. Center staff have spoken at countless meetings of these groups over the last 40 years. Dotzour alone gives at least 100 speeches a year. Often he is booked a year in advance.

Not only do Center staffers attend meetings of these groups, they serve on their various committees, conduct focus groups for them and help with their strategic planning. These contacts enable the staff to keep tabs with emerging trends and concerns affecting the real estate industry.

In December 2009, the Center replaced Rice University as the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Houston chapter's academic partner. Maler began serving on ULI Houston's executive committee. More than 500 attend the annual conference cosponsored by ULI Houston and the Center.

"The partnership will be valuable to the Center as it will allow for closer relationships within the development community," he said. "It also will provide ULI with the latest market research."

Redesigned Web

A completely redesigned Center website was unveiled Nov. 1, 2010.

The website was designed by Graphic Specialist JP Beato III and IT Director Mark Baumann. The website can be found at recenter.tamu.edu.

Texas, TAMU Contributions

In 2010, Texas A&M President Dr. Bowen Loftin asked for some information regarding the importance of the Center to the university and state. Director Maler and Mays Business School Dean Dr. Jerry Strawser and Executive Associate Dean Dr. Bala Shetty responded.

Their reply noted that the Center is a totally self-supporting organization costing the taxpayers of Texas and the University nothing. It is funded almost entirely by a portion of real estate license fees. The Center never has nor does it now receive any appropriated or formula funds, and the Center is not subject to the appropriations process.

The fact that the Center is accounted for as a special item on the University's budget is a bit of a quirk. The Center is not a special item in the truest sense because it operates from a special dedicated fund for the Center's exclusive use.

The Center leases space from a private developer and pays all costs for salaries, operations, rent and utilities.

REC in a Nutshell

The Center supports the mission of Mays Business School and the University by adding to the body of real estate knowledge through its research activities, supporting the Master of Real Estate program with scholarships, linking students to large numbers of real estate professionals and business owners, and thus providing real world classroom instruction and job opportunities upon graduation.

The Center provides students job experience while in school and fulfilling a vital role in educating students in the program through its research staff who serve on the finance department faculty.

In the higher education triumvirate of research, teaching and public service, the Center is one of the most visible, highly relied upon and respected publicly funded research and public service entities in the nation. The Center's research staff are some of the most oft-quoted experts on campus and in the state, being frequently and prominently featured in the media at local, state and national levels.

The Center established a comprehensive real estate management plan for Texas A&M, assisted the University in the formative stages of the research park, funded and established professorships in finance in Mays Business School and assisted the University in numerous ways during the Center's 40 years of existence.

Center's Importance to Texas

The Center's data, unbiased research, analysis and expert testimony are widely relied upon by the Texas Legislature, the governor, comptroller and local governments when formulating public policy. Key members of the legislature have said the Center and its information are indispensable to them in their deliberations.

Center data have been used by federal entities and authorities to establish loan guidelines (HUD FHA loan limits, for example) as well as other regulations.

The Center's data and Market Reports on 25 Metropolitan Statistical Areas are used by councils of government, businesses, global investors, investment advisors and economic development agencies to identify and create job opportunities and make better decisions. These same resources are used by the public to make better real estate and personal business decisions.

Virtually all of the Center's research results are available free on its website. *Tierra Grande* is the only magazine sent to all Texas real estate licensees. Reader feedback indicates RECON is one of the most popular products in Center history.

NewsTalk Texas is a daily update of state real estate news and national events of importance to Texans. Initially, Dotzour had students preparing files on any Texas city where he might possibly be asked to speak. Information came primarily from local newspapers. When a researcher was asked to speak in a particular city, they only had to pull the file for that city to

become quickly aware of the real estate trends and issues of that area. On the surface, it looked like busy work, but the overall impact was significant.

Several other states have sought out the Center's expertise and advice as a model for establishing something similar beyond the state's borders. To date, none have succeeded.

"The real estate industry is a critical component of the Texas economy," points out Maler, "accounting for nearly 9 percent of the state's gross domestic product in 2008. For every \$1 million in real estate revenue, 5.16 jobs are created in real estate and related fields and another five jobs in other industries. Taxes paid by the real estate industry account for 18.7 percent of business taxes collected. The Center's data and expertise are critical to the real estate industry. The real estate industry is critical to the future of Texas."

Double, Triple Dips

A hallmark of the Center over the years has been to make research results available in multiple formats. Maler calls the spin-offs "double and triple dips." By law, the Center is required to disseminate its findings, but the methods have changed with the passage of time.

For example, a set of research results might first be published as a white paper or research report. From that would emerge a *Tierra Grande* article, presentations and possibly a news release. The age of social media expanded the Center's reach even more. That same research might appear on Real Estate Center Online News (RECON), the Red Zone podcast, Twitter, YouTube, RSS feeds, in a video or on Facebook. Of course, virtually everything goes on the Center's website and is available for free.

Most seminars conducted by the Center are based on recent research and offer attendees MCE credits. In 2011, two Center courses were offered online for credit as well.

Fifth Decade Begins

In April 2011, Center senior staff, the advisory committee and Dwight Hale from TAR participated in a strategic planning retreat at the Hyatt Lost Pines in Bastrop. Some 20 major initiatives were identified. Among these was to step on to a more influential stage by having a greater impact in state and regional economics and policies.

"The process . . . identified truly major strategic initiatives that will guide the Center for the long term while the staff's ideas not only confirm those initiatives but make them actionable and operational," wrote Maler after the meeting.

Stepping out on a bigger stage in 2011 included speeches to the national convention of the Institute of Real Estate Management in Philadelphia and the Society of Industrial and Office Realtors World Conference in Scottsdale, Ariz.

The *English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary* morphed from its print-only format into online interactive and Kindle formats. In the first, users could select any of 800 common real estate

terms to find English and Spanish definitions. To hear how the term is pronounced in Spanish, they could select the audio player.

The glossary was the first Kindle book from Texas A&M University to be available on Amazon.com.

An endowed scholarship was created at Texas A&M in 2010 to honor Roy G. Martin Jr., senior vice president for ad valorem tax at Valero Energy. The Center got the scholarship rolling with a \$25,000 contribution.

The Center's commitment to educating real estate leaders was emphasized with the awarding of two \$5,000 scholarships to Masters of Real Estate students in Mays Business School.

Blog, Market Data, Videos

The Center entered the blogosphere in 2011. Chief Economist Dr. Mark Dotzour adapted well to the opinion-based format and would author 179 posts over the next four years.

Six weeks after the inaugural post, nearly 5,000 readers had sampled 'The Blog.' The Aug. 4, 2011, post was republished in NAR's "Commercial Connections," a newsletter for 40,000 commercial Realtors.

With Dotzour's retirement in 2015, and the introduction of a new website in 2015, the blog was rebranded as "Mixed Use."

The Center's popular Market Reports underwent a major overhaul in 2013. The once-a-year reports were redesigned to be updated throughout the year. The new product was a compilation of hundreds of Internet links to valuable data sources.

FY 2012–13 set a record for production of Center videos. Photographer-videographer JP Beato III produced a bumper crop of 11 new videos.

Big Data, Big Expectations

In 2014, the Center began building one of the most advanced data warehouses and business enhancement technical platforms on the Texas A&M campus.

"It's a game-changing strategic initiative for us and for our stakeholders," said Director Gary Maler. "What has not and will not change is our commitment to excellence, scientific methodology and speaking frankly and openly about what we observe in the analysis of our 'untortured' data."

To lead this \$1 million-dollar effort, Gerald Klassen returned to the Center in a position new to the Texas A&M campus — research data scientist.

In partnership with TAR and all Texas Multiple Listing Services, the Center unveiled new statistical reporting products under the banner of the Texas Realtor Data Relevance Project. The culmination of the effort was designed to keep Realtors and the Center relevant by publishing the most accurate

housing statistics available. The new data was available on the Center website in February 2016.

Digital First, New Website

After a year of development, a new Center website was unveiled Sept. 10, 2015. The mobile-friendly website featured the first geo-coded Center newsfeeds.

The new website also marked the debut of “digital first,” meaning news and research results were posted online, even prior to publication in *Tierra Grande* magazine.

James Gaines, New Chief Economist

Fiscal year 2014–15 closed with a big change in research staffing. On Sept. 1, 2015, Dr. James Gaines became chief economist, succeeding Dr. Mark Dotzour who retired. Gaines was the sixth person in the Center’s 44-year history to hold that position.

“For years, Jim Gaines has been one of the most experienced and insightful voices I’ve turned to to help me and my readers navigate Texas real estate markets,” said *Dallas Morning*

News real estate editor Steve Brown. “He’s never shy about telling us what he thinks about the economy and where it’s headed. And he never pulls any punches regardless of whether the prospects for real estate are positive or negative.”

Fed Talks

The arrival of Dr. Luis Torres in 2012 ushered in a new era of REC-FED cooperation.

The first-ever conference co-sponsored by the Center and the Dallas Fed was held Feb. 12, 2016. “Finding Shelter: Assessing Texas Residential Real Estate Amid the Oil Slump” followed a year in which seven Fed economists spoke to Center staff. Economists from both organizations had been collaborating on a number of projects, including development of a coincident index for the multifamily and construction industries.

For a timeline of the Center’s history, see Appendix C.

Quotes of Note

A collection of tall tales, recollections and 40th anniversary remembrances

Day One at the Center

On April 1, 1972, I went to work for the Texas Real Estate Center. That first morning I walked into the office, it was empty with the exception of a gray metal secretarial desk and chair. On the desk was a lonely coffee pot and typewriter, two main essentials for running an office. I peeked into Dr. Wooten's office, and he was there to greet me. He also had a gray metal desk and chair typical of state furniture. After talking for a while and discussing the Center, I was still not sure just what the Center was all about, but that soon changed.

The next moment, Dr. Wooten told me to take a letter, and I looked all around and finally said, "With what?" I finally scrounged a pen from my purse and found a piece of scrap paper from inside the secretarial desk. After that letter, I made a fast trip to "stores" for office supplies.

The following days were a constant blur. A program of work was typed, staff positions set up and an accounting system put into place. During this time, my desk was positioned where the entrance to the office was located, which meant the door had to be closed and an opening placed on the other side of the room. As I would be typing and making phone calls, the workmen would tell me to duck my head as they would be coming through with boards, doors, etc., so I would duck and keep right on working. The construction noise, along with the sawdust and paint fumes, lasted for several days, but the entrance was finally completed. Next was the laying of carpet. By this time, other staff was hired, and the Center was running almost full speed.

Dr. Wooten was such an inspiration and taught a wonderful philosophy on life. When one was down, he knew just the right things to say to get one up and going. He was dedicated to his staff and to the Center.

I must say, in all my professional career, I never dreaded going to work and, if I had to be out of the office, I could hardly wait to get back. I was so fortunate to have worked for Dr. Wooten and the Real Estate Center. — Alice Cardwell, regarding Center's 25th anniversary in 1996

Biggest Hurdle

The biggest hurdle I've faced to date is getting the Center physically relocated to the University Research Park. The process took 2½ years to maneuver through the red tape. It was a very difficult time as the university itself was struggling with what to do with the research park. It was fortuitous that Hewlett-Packard vacated its space in the park about the time we needed a new home. Otherwise, we would have had to find space off campus. I had to attend a meeting of the Texas A&M University Board of Regents to explain the plan.

Finding a new home for the Center was only part of the battle. We had to go back to the legislature to ask for ad-

ditional funding because, for the first time in Center history, we were going to be paying rent. From the time I was named interim director until the legislation passed was about five years. Once we saw licensee numbers starting to decline, Jim Gaines and Mark Dotzour and our whole team started building a case that the time was coming when the Center would need additional funding.

The highlights of my time as director have been the contributions of the staff. Mark Dotzour has put the Center on the map nationally; he's a household name now thanks to the some 100 speeches he gives annually. Another big success is the Center's new relationship with the Urban Land Institute Houston Chapter. ULI asked us to be their new academic partner replacing Rice University. Having that audience elevates us to a whole new level and audience we previously had little contact with. — Director Gary Maler

Kick in the Shins

In the second year of Center operations, TRERC Administrator Andy James got himself appointed as the ex-officio member to the advisory committee. He came up with some proposal that was clearly shifting the responsibility, expense and effort for a project from the Commission to the Center.

It was obvious Andy was trying to pull a fast one. Pat could tell I was agitated. When I got ready to say something, Pat kicked me under the table, and I shut up. Pat smiled and said, Andy that's an excellent idea. Let me check into it, and I'll get back to you.

Of course, that meant it was dead. — Julio Laguarta, Texas real estate icon and father of the Center

Maler's Initiation

Don Stebbins, Jim Stribling, Rick Floyd and Gary Maler were on road trip to Lubbock. Maler was the only nonsmoker in group.

"Someone had a box of the ugliest, longest, greenest cigars I had ever seen. They had to be an inch in diameter. And the three of them proceeded to smoke the entire seven-hour drive. I was greener than the cigars," said Maler. I don't know why we did it, but Stribling was laughing the whole time. It was Maler's initiation. — Dr. Richard L. Floyd, second director, retired

Happy 40th REC

My perception of the Real Estate Center today is that it has an excellent national reputation as a provider of useful information important to the real estate industry, not only in Texas but globally through the Internet. I am forever grateful for the opportunity that Dr. Pat Wooten and Dr. Bill Adkins and the licensees of the State of Texas provided me the chance to

establish a career in the real estate academic arena. — Dr. Roger Sindt

UT Says 'No' to 'How To'

Once the idea for a Center got the okay from state leaders, we realized there had to be an academic venue to make this thing work at all. We could not create a research entity from scratch, but following the Connecticut model at a state university made sense.

We met with legendary Dr. George Kozmetsky, then dean of business at UT. That meeting lasted about 20 minutes. He made it very clear that the direction he was pointing the UT business school was not in the direction of 'how-to' programs, like automobile repair and real estate.

I thought it was very shortsighted, especially knowing that the courses I took to get my UT business degree — with a major in real estate — were almost irrelevant to real estate. So, we were very upset. That is when Tony Meeks called me and said we should see Dr. A.B. Wooten at A&M. Tony was a big admirer of Pat Wooten. — Julio Laguarda, Texas real estate icon and father of the Center

Discovered the Center

I manage a small real estate investment business involving the purchase of large nonimproved tracts and then subdividing these tracts into smaller 10- to 20-acre parcels for resale on owner-financed notes. The scope of my duties includes purchasing negotiations, surveying, and advertising and selling the parcels, drafting all instruments (Sale Contract, Promissory note, W.D. and the DOT).

My EE degrees from UT Austin (1956 and 1961) were not very helpful in this business; only as a pittance of seed money. For years, I struggled with the legal aspects of this business: preparation of the documents, foreclosures, relief from bankruptcy stays, ad nauseam. Then I discovered the Mays R.E. Center and all of the papers published by your staff, with particular appreciation for the papers written by Judon Fambrough of Pumpkin Center, Tex. I am very grateful for the services offered by the Center. — Bill Cooper

Reads Every RECON

Not knowing much about the history of the Real Estate Center, I can however, tell you how I use the RECON news.

I read each one, then highlight aspects when they pertain to a particular client. I then email the client with the heading Tidbits and attach the information giving full credit to the RECON site. In fact, I just used part of the current RECON 12/17/10, to share CURB APPEAL IS KING, NAR STUDY FINDS, with a client who just replaced windows and siding in The Woodlands, Tex. I would like to thank the staff for all the hard work they put in to each issue! — Laura Coplin

Appreciates Useful Resource

As a LERE student I would always pass by Real Estate Center and see the student workers reading the different daily newspapers from around the state. I guess that was research, but to me at the time it looked like they were half-a** employees.

But on a more positive note, I have enjoyed many of the publications produced by the center and vividly remember Dr. Etter referencing a few of the publications in the classroom. Today I can appreciate what a useful resource the Real Estate Center is as I use the data at work often, and I guess I owe it all to Dr. Etter. — Jonathan Woodruff, '98

Courage to Forecast

One of the big new trends at the Center is the fact that we are doing almost 100 percent forecasting. Not just reporting history is a big shift culturally at the Center. The research staff having the courage to do that was a really big shift for us. — Director Gary Maler

Canteens and Cocktails

During an appraisal class, a student asked the Center's first director Dr. Pat Wooten why anyone would buy land in West Texas where it was so dry "the jackrabbits have to carry canteens."

Removing the ever-present unlit cigar from his mouth (try that today in a politically correct university setting), Wooten responded, "That's cocktail land . . . land you buy so that when you are at cocktail parties, you can talk about your ranch in West Texas." What an incredible education we received. — Dr. Ted Jones, former Center chief economist, now chief economist for Stewart Title in Houston.

'C' was Game Saver

I earned an undergraduate in agronomy from A&M in December '87, then LERE in August 1990. Technically I should have graduated LERE in December '89 but I made a "C" in Dr. Etter's class during my first semester, fall 1988.

Interestingly, that "C" in Dr. Etter's class was a game-saver. I had to repeat the class the next year, so it threw me off from graduating in three semesters like my classmates. Yet that one semester delay (plus a summer for a reason I cannot remember) enabled me to graduate after the Appraisal Institute adopted the LERE curriculum as an acceptable substitute for AI coursework necessary to earn the MAI designation.

Fortunately I had my perspective in order next time around and made an "A" in the re-take of Dr. Etter's class. — Darin Andrew Dalbom, Tulsa, Okla. fee appraiser

Everyone So Nice

At the time this center was set up, I recall several others across the country coming into fruition. None has been as successful as this one. Not only is this Center full of research

and information that is a huge help to all Texas real estate practitioners and educators, but it is easily available and understandable. As a lifelong member of TRETA, this resource has been invaluable.

One other thing . . . and I don't know how to quantify this . . . Everyone I have ever met at the center is so nice, friendly, easy to talk to, responsive, and has a great sense of humor. I have always felt comfortable there, and that is a very special quality. Congratulations! — Charles J. Jacobus, Bellaire attorney

A Bargain for Sure

In the beginning, I remember the statistical data re: Texas real estate market as a whole with comparisons by metro areas as well. Always interesting information that would have taken countless hours to compile for an individual. Various legal updates were always great!

Mark Dotzour's reports/observations about economy are always a "must read" for any Realtor. Charles Gilliland's reports feature quick updates via graphs. Early on, members received "the written word" from Center via mail; then came email. Presentations to local associations indicate broad representation by the staff.

I joined LAR in 1970 and think the late Harold Chapman may have chaired or at least been on TREC when the Center was authorized. He emphasized how important this entity could be to TAR membership and the public as well. Of course, the gorgeous photos in magazine offer an "art show" amidst timely news! Here we are in the high-tech world with two reports via email every week! A bargain for sure! — J. Ernesteen Kelly

This Little Piggie

After being hired, my first official meeting with (Director Pat) Wooten was held under Kyle Field. Wooten was taking a load of pigs to market. He was driving a pickup truck pulling a trailer. We met under what is now The Zone.

Wooten apologized for having to meet me with pigs in tow, but he said they were as fat as they would ever be, and he had to get them to market right then.

Back in the office, Wooten gave me my first assignment. Wooten said, "Doug, we do a lot of things here that just have to be done. Mr. Jack Culpepper has a check for \$5,000 for us, and I want you to go pick it up." — W.D. Moore, former head of Center education division

Here's Your Beef Wellington

Floyd graciously appointed me chief economist. Talk about an incredible opportunity. Here you had Judon Fambrough — probably the best real estate attorney now in Texas that never goes to court (because his reviews and research keep you out of court) — Dr. Charlie Gilliland (the premier expert

on rural land values and one of the leading experts on property taxes in the country), and other great researchers. How could you fail with a brain trust of these individuals?

But what I learned at the Center was that you can indeed make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. No matter how good the researchers are, without appropriate editing, graphics, delivery and distribution, the world's best research does not count. David Jones and his staff take the blood and guts from researchers and deliver you beef wellington.

Perhaps Mark Twain said it the best in "History may not repeat itself, but it certainly does rhyme." And thanks to Mark Baumann, as he put the Center on the Internet making these unique data available to the world 24-7. The challenge for the Center in the coming decades? Keep on doing what they have been doing for the past 40 years — yet even better. — Former Center Chief Economist Dr. Ted Jones, now with Stewart Title in Houston

Profession of Faith

Wooten had this in his soul: you cannot make a trade group into a profession without the help of major universities. — William D. Moore, former head of Center education division

Data Collection Shout Out

For the last 15 years I have relied on REC's MLS data report chart and graphs to help me help my clients understand the market, particularly on market balance citywide, and their specific property. For a short while back in 1996 I was the local point man to answer questions from REC on MLS.

Today, I feature a link on our website directly to the El Paso data area on your website. We use MOI as a part of each market analysis we do, and I have boat loads of success stories. From '96 onward, I have made regular use of your website stats and my own MOI formula.

Major accomplishments? Certainly the data collection for each city. I can see back to January 1990 (if I wanted to, but I really don't) but more often make use of the most recent 24 months when looking for trends.

Tierra Grande is always welcome. — Rick Chumsae, managing member, Skye Brokerage LLC, El Paso

Can't Imagine Life Without RECON

When I was in the process of getting my real estate license my instructors kept talking about how we needed to continue to learn about what was going on in the world of real estate. When I learned about the Real Estate Center I knew I had found an excellent source for up-to-the minute information about real estate in Texas.

I cannot imagine life without my two RECONs each week. — Richard James Weeks

Exciting Future

The new data we are getting, such as the GIS work with Gerald Klassen, makes the Center's future especially exciting. — Director Gary Maler

Priceless Education

Working with the first Center director Dr. Wooten, Dr. Ivan Schemedemann (essentially the godfather of the Master's program in real estate at Texas A&M — and without question the best land economist in the country).

Don Levi and Judon Fambrough and a cadre of talented individuals was an educational experience you could not afford had we been charged what it was worth. — Dr. Ted Jones, former Center chief economist, now with Stewart Title in Houston

Behind the Scenes

My main duty at SOARS was not SOARS itself. Behind the scenes, I was to try out and model university-offered schooling in which real estate — or some phase of it — was included. — William "Doug" Moore, former education division head.

A Fabulous Resource

I really enjoy the quarterly magazine that the REC sends out for free. The articles are very timely and benefit me, a Realtor, a great deal.

It's nice to have good research and legal explanations on current hot topics from the REC's staff. There are also a lot of good references on your website. I always find new and interesting things to learn from the site. I really like the annual MSA data for Texas that REC puts out each year.

Your weekly RECON letter is very useful to me, as it summarizes very well what's going on in Texas real estate (residential and commercial).

Overall, I'm extremely happy with the free services that REC provides. I congratulate the staff for the high standards and for winning some recent award for the magazine. Please keep up the good work! I'm sure that many of us in the real estate industry recognize the value that the TAMU REC provides for the state, and the region. Thank you again for the fine efforts (past, present, and future). You are a fabulous resource! — Two-Chi "Rachel" Wang

City Uses Data

As an urban planner for the City of Fort Worth Planning and Development Department, I have used data (especially residential sales) from the Real Estate Center for various projects that look at trends and comparisons of Fort Worth data with comparable cities. Overall, we have used the data due to the reputation from the Real Estate Center. — Patrina Newton, Fort Worth

SOARIng by Chopper

I was the luckiest guy in the world when Wooten said to me, Doug select one new real estate idea that we should focus on and let's have a program on it here (in College Station). I contacted George Mitchell and he sent his designer of The Woodlands here to give a presentation. During the first SOARS class, we wanted to have a field trip. I arranged with George Mitchell for his pilot to bring his helicopter here to ferry students to The Woodlands site. — William 'Doug' Moore, former head of Center education division

Premiere Center

When I was chief economist at the Real Estate Center, it was the premiere real estate center in the country. It still is. Today, as chief economist of a NYSE-traded company that does title insurance in every state and multiple countries, I wish all had Centers just half as good. — Dr. Ted Jones, Stewart Title, Houston

Danger Sign

There is a point in every professor's life when he truly can profess. They have mastered their discipline and have enough knowledge of history to pull from many different kinds of information sets to make a real contribution to the advancement of knowledge. What's happening at the Center is that many of the staff have reached that level where they feel comfortable. It is also the biggest danger sign for the Center because it means the staff is aging. — Former Director Dr. Richard Floyd

Attorney's Incredible Starting Point

I'm a first-year real estate attorney and have relied on the Center's publications as a reference guide for some research assignments. The Center's publications are well written and well researched — an incredible starting point for any attorney. Thanks for your work! — Rocio Garcia

Makes Me Look Good

I've been a licensed real estate agent since 1985, and I have found the Real Estate Center a great source of information allowing me to stay abreast of industry trends. When first establishing my real estate practice, it provided a level playing field of information to a newbie that I could use when speaking with potential clients. I like any organization that makes me look good!

I found the information in the various publications to be first class and I'm able to use this information to keep my staff well informed of real estate events and trends. *Tierra Grande* is absolutely a winner of a publication!

As an instructor of MCE classes, I have been able to use the Center's resources to get timely and quality information to practitioners. Being able to use top notch information, including the Center's video collection.

When I was teaching a property management class using the Center's video "Norman's Introduction to Property Management" as an intro, the class was delighted to see the Center has a few good actors!

The Center's main accomplishment has been to inform and educate real estate agents about all aspects of our industry. For that I say, thank you! — Rick Ebert

More Should Discover Center

The Real Estate Center has always been my "go to" source for real estate information and statistics. The professionals at the Real Estate Center have always proven to be very professional and knowledgeable.

I enjoy their presentations when they are in my area. I have traded emails with some of the professionals at the Center over the years and have enjoyed the discussion. I particularly like poking around on the Real Estate Center website when I have a chance. I am always able to find a new tidbit of information and some interesting statistics.

I truly believe that the Real Estate Center is a very valuable commodity and is definitely worth the investment. More real estate professionals should discover this resource. — Mike Dallas, Mike Dallas Properties, Austin

Unrivaled Breadth, Depth

Although I have not had a direct association with the Center, I have been a very frequent and devoted user of the Center's real estate data and news reports for over ten years. The undeniable comprehensiveness of the Center's information is what caught my attention in my early years as a commercial real estate broker and consultant.

The Center's databases have been an invaluable, one-stop source of critical metrics for my engagements. The news database that covers every major, tertiary and rural market in Texas has been critical in allowing me to make quick and detailed assessments of a market's hotel development momentum.

In addition, the archive of presentations delivered by the Center's outstanding professionals to audiences across the state has been very useful as well.

Texas projects are my primary focus. But I have also executed engagements for hotel projects in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Ohio and Alabama. I have never been able to locate a comparable commercial real estate data bank in any of the non-Texas states I have worked. The breadth and depth of the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M is unrivaled.

Please accept my sincere appreciation for the success you have assisted me to leverage on behalf of my clients. — Robert DeShay, real estate licensee

Will Incorporate Your Ideas

I can only aspire to offer the real estate licensees of Washington a portion of what you have done. I can assure you the next generation of our site will incorporate some of the tremendous ideas from your site. — Glenn Crellin, director, Center for Real Estate Research, Washington State University, 1999

Felt Right at Home

My first impression of the Center: "Busy! A gracious welcome from the staff to a new member made me feel right at home." (The Center is a) "modern, up-to-date facility, which (regrettably) is somewhat under used by licensees. Those who know about it have nothing but praise for the Center. I am pleased that more commercial real estate information is now available." — Tom Wilder, Tarrant County district clerk and advisory committee member 1987–94, including chairman 1991–92, commenting on the Center's 25th anniversary in 1996

Winging It

We had flown to Midland to give a program. While the university airplane was taxiing down the runway, our wing clipped another aircraft. So I had to stay overnight. — W. "Doug" Moore, former education division head

Making a Difference

I hesitate to mention names because there are so many, and you always overlook some who were important to you. Having said that, people like Conrad Bering, Benny McMahan (when he was on the advisory committee), Joe Adame, Gloria Van Zandt, John Schneider, Doug Schwartz, and Adrian Ariaga come to mind. There have been many others who have played influential and valuable roles.

I think of the impact of the Center's publications and data over the years. These products have made a difference to so many people — both licensees and consumers.

One of the objectives when the Center was created was that it be an entity that would enhance the stature of the real estate sector in Texas and beyond, and I believe this has happened. The Center's activities have helped to professionalize the role of licensees and real estate practitioners.

How many people over the years have listened to Bill Adkins, Jack Friedman, Ted Jones, and Mark Dotzour, the Center's chief economists, and benefited from their insights about real estate markets in Texas? Who would more than dabble in rural land markets in Texas without referring to the work of Charlie Gilliland? Or who would consider legal issues without reading the work of Judon Fambrough?

Another important factor in the Center's success has been the ability of people to write at a very basic level — to write material that is easy to read. The communications staff deserves

considerable credit for their persistence in working with manuscripts and researchers to produce this outcome.

The Center has benefited from the willingness of higher level university administrators to leave the Center alone and let it do its work. Harry Kunkel, Benton Cocanougher, Jerry Strawser, and the higher level administrators have contributed to the Center's success by providing valuable support without undue, restrictive interference.

I remember the day that David Jones indicated that he expected to work another five years. My concern was always to have him around and in charge of communications until after I was gone! Thankfully he stayed put all these years—that has made an important difference.

I think of the success the Center has had with programs like the property tax seminar, the rural land seminar, and the joint legal program the Center operates with the South Texas College of Law. These long-running programs have benefited so many people over the years.

The TAR conventions were something that I always looked forward to attending as they afforded an opportunity to interact with so many of our good friends. — Former Director Dr. R. Malcolm Richards

A Great Supporter

I have been associated with the Center since its organization. Dr. Wooten was a good friend of my father, Jacob Beal, and when the Center announced the formation of the first SOARS class, I signed up. Having been a part of that class in 1974 and graduating in 1976, I am a great supporter of the Center's activities. As a former student of Texas A&M and a professional real estate broker, I am very proud of the kind of work the Center does and its continued association with Texas A&M.

The Texas Real Estate Research Center has been the pre-eminent Center of its type in the nation since the '70s and remains so today. It is my opinion that we have the best staff and leadership in the nation. The real estate community in Texas has recognized the Center's commitment to excellence and demonstrated their support by spearheading legislation for additional funding for the Center's work. — Comments on Center's 25th anniversary by Michael Beal, former advisory committee member 1992–97.

Invaluable Support to Licensees

(The Center is) "Great!" An "invaluable support to licensees." Publisher of the "only free publication sent to all licensees." — Jay Brummett, former administrator, Texas Real Estate Commission, regarding Center's 25th anniversary in 1996.

War Stories

One of my favorite classes at A&M was Judon Fambrough's oil and gas law. Having been through the A&M corps of

cadets, I appreciated Mr. Fambrough's service history in that war as an enlisted fellow doing an officer's job. As a LERE student, I'd always pop my head into his office at the Real Estate Center for a quick hello or sometimes sit and talk for a few minutes. We appreciated his keen law acumen and engaging lecture style, especially his personal warmth and disarmingly unpretentious candor.

During one of those Center office pop-in visits, Mr. Fambrough shared a longer-than-usual story about his time in Vietnam. Sometime during his tour, he used a tape player to record songs that were broadcast from a non-military-sanctioned, or "bootleg" radio station located in "Rocket City" — so named due to its propensity for frequent attack and shelling. As an artillery forward observer directing his personnel carrier crew, then Sergeant Fambrough could record the music while in range of Rocket City, then play it back for he and his crew later when operating outside broadcast range.

As the story goes, one day that radio station got attacked and overrun. In their surprise and haste, the broadcasters did not go off air. Mr. Fambrough happened to be in range and recording that day, so his tape player recorded the event, start to finish: sounds of guns firing and men shouting during the 10 or 15 minute attack, then silence once they jumped on a tank and sped away. He told me that someday he would bring that recording to the office so I could hear it too.

One day I had a job interview at the Center, and as usual, the visiting firm's interviewer was seeing students in the Center conference room next to Mr. Fambrough's office. While waiting my turn for the 30-minute interview, I knocked on Mr. Fambrough's door to say hello and visit a bit. Ironically, that just happened to be the day Mr. Fambrough brought that recording of the bootleg radio station attack.

He and I were both excited to hear it, and knowing my familiarity with some of the weapons and jargon, pointed out things happening as the recording played out: "Ok, first you'll hear mortar rounds going off... now you'll hear them shout for someone to bring the 50 [caliber machine gun]... now you'll hear the ammo box slam on the floor and the box lid open . . . next you'll hear them load the bandolier and slap down the feed tray cover...now you can hear the 50 caliber charge handle being pulled and released . . . next you'll hear them call for the Sheridan tank . . . now they must be jumping on . . . you can hear the tank engine throttle up as they take off." Mr. Fambrough and I had a great time listening to the cacophonous melee of that recording and a couple of times were shouting ourselves.

At one point during playback, Doris Hill, the Center's receptionist, politely knocked on Mr. Fambrough's door and asked us to hold it down, explaining that they were conducting job interviews in the adjacent conference room. We complied gladly, but the attack was over by that point. The recording hissed along in silence, attack concluded.

I sometimes wonder if Mr. Fambrough's choice to bring that recording on that particular day wasn't somehow providential because I walked from his office into that conference room and proceeded with excitement to give the interviewer a 15-minute account of what had just gone down in Mr. Fambrough's office. The interviewer had heard the noise wondering what the commotion was about, so I told the whole story. Fortunately, he thought the whole story was cool as well. I wonder how things would have turned out had we not established so quickly a very good rapport. Following a second interview, I accepted a job with that company." — Darin Andrew Dalbom, Tulsa, Okla. fee appraiser.

Proud Damn Republican

Gov. (Ann) Richards appointed (me) a "damn Republican" to the Center (advisory committee). My reputation was that no one could bribe me.

During the time I was at the Center, I was proud of the operation, and I still am proud. — Dr. Donald Longworth, Lubbock, Tex., former advisory committee member

Staff Energy, Commitment

I do not take any direct credit for the end result of the great budget battle and continued Center funding of the last legislative session. I just happened to be around during that time. The countless hours spent by Ted, Gary, Malcolm, Conrad and others was an inspiration. The support of TAR was most satisfying as they realized the importance of keeping the Center operating.

I think one of my first, and most certainly lasting, impressions of the Center was the energy and commitment of the staff. The real estate industry of Texas is truly blessed with a team of individuals dedicated to their work who provide immeasurable bits of information about our profession.

As I have always told anyone who asked me about the Center — it is the premier research operation of its kind in the world. — Comments on the Center's 25th anniversary by Don R. Ellis, advisory committee member appointed 1989 and chairman 1995–96.

Man of Few Words

Dr. A.B. Wooten, the first director, was a man of few words. Here are a couple of examples.

In January 1978, a proposal to make *Tierra Grande* a refereed journal came up. I wrote a lengthy typewritten justification for keeping the original concept of the magazine. When I got it back, at the top of the memo, Dr. Wooten had written in pencil, "Your recommendations accepted. Subject closed."

In 1996, when asked to send us a written comment on the Center's 25th anniversary, the former director wrote "On the right track." — David Jones, senior editor

Defining Researchable Products

There were so many great moments. Most of them have to do with people. We have had remarkable run of people through the Center. It has been a great cast of characters.

To find back to back, a Jack Friedman, a Ted Jones and a Mark Dotzour was very fortunate. They are so unique in their ability to define researchable projects — that is absolutely key to this kind of organization. If you try to describe the difference between a professorship, chair and a center, it all comes down to having a program of research that's ongoing. The payoff may be sometime in the future, but there is a constant flow of information coming out that eventually gets you to your goal.

Judon Fambrough was a lot more important to the Center than most people realize. That has to do with his ability to publish a whole lot of credible material quickly — at a time when we were still trying to figure out how to get our research program going. He carried us for a long time. — Former Director Dr. Richard L. Floyd

Unforgettable People

My time as director of the Center was one of the highlights of my career. I enjoyed experiences and associations with people that I will never forget. The friendship and support of the real estate industry made the work of the Center thoroughly enjoyable.

You could do a roll-call of the chairs of the Center's advisory committee, the members of that committee, the people at TAR, the people at the various board offices around the state, and the rank-and-file licensees, and I would respond that I value the friendship of each.

The Center has always been very fortunate to have a strong, capable staff. The staff members believe in what they are doing and it shows in the quality of the output that is produced.

One key to the Center's success has been the ability to retain the good people. Turnover of the staff has been low. — Former Director Dr. R. Malcolm Richards

Case of Foreclosed Printer

Normally a printer for *Tierra Grande* magazine is the low bidder from a small number selected for their proven track record. We found it wise never to put a printer on the bid list that we were not comfortable with. But one year the university added an unknown (to us) printer to the list, and the result was a crisis never seen before or since.

The printer added to the list won the bid by less than \$200 on a three-year contract worth \$600,000. They barely edged out the existing printer, which had been printing the magazine six years.

The first issue went to the new printer June 20. Normally, we would get proofs in a week to ten days. Nothing. Days turned

to weeks. Phone calls went unreturned. Finally, a representative from the printer that had lost the contract called.

“Did you know your new printer is selling equipment to raise money to pay creditors?” asked our former sales rep.

Sure enough. Confronted with what we had heard, the new sales rep admitted the company did not have money to buy the paper to print *Tierra Grande*. I called the university printing center (the folks who had added the broke printer to our bid list). “You got us into this mess,” I told them. “Now, get us out.”

The university contacted a paper supplier, paid for the paper and had it delivered to the printer. Two days later creditors had the building locked by court order. Inside sat \$20,000 worth of blank paper owned by the university.

Eventually the magazine was printed and mailed. But it took months because the printer sold most of the equipment in its bindery, and the bottleneck slowed stapling and mailing to a crawl. The last magazine did not get mailed until August. Needless to say, but I will, that was the only issue of *Tierra Grande* printed by that particular printer. The contract reverted to the second highest bidder.

The end to the story came two years later. The sales rep for the now bankrupt printer called. “I have a new job with another printer,” he told me. “And I would like to be on the list when you solicit bids next time.” I hung up. — David S. Jones, senior editor.

Staying Connected

It was a great experience (service on the advisory committee). What was to have been a two-year appointment turned into nine years. During that time, I saw a lot of change. The Center began researching development and commercial real estate, not just residential.

The fact the staff spent much of its time on the road allowed the Center to connect with the state. In any given week, someone from the Center was travelling, a fact which helped them stay connected to their users. It allowed them to monitor the heartbeat of what was happening. — Joe Adame, Corpus Christi mayor and former advisory committee chairman

Break Room to Board Room

When Center offices were in the Halbouty Building, a closet was the break room for secretaries and student workers. They sat on overturned trash cans. One of our students was elected the first black student body president in the history of Texas A&M. While at A&M, he was in the Singing Cadets and shared a room with a future governor, Rick Perry. Our former student worker then attended Baylor Law School.

Eventually he moved to the White House where he was the first President Bush's senate liaison. As such, he was influential in the decision to locate the Bush Library at Texas A&M. After serving on the advisory committee, Fred McClure was

appointed to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents. — David Jones, senior editor

Farmers Fight

When I heard a real estate center was being set up at Texas A&M, I interviewed with Dr. Bill Adkins. I fit right in with Bill and Pat Wooten and their ag eco backgrounds. I was raised on a farm and knew economics.

In addition to my regular duties, I became the de facto PR guy. When the media had a question, I got the call.

Frequently the reporter would ask a question I could not answer. Knowing the reporter was often just fishing for a story, I would steer the interview into an area for which I did have data. The reporter got an answer — just not to the original question.

One of the valuable lessons I learned early when talking to a reporter is that you can give a date or a number but not both. And the further into the future the date is, the more confident you can be in your forecast. — Former Research Economist Dr. Arthur Wright

Unbiased Source

A highly influential business and political leader called the Center's director asking him to rescind a certain public information publication because it was negatively affecting his business.

The director reviewed the publication and determined that the information provided in the publication was accurate and important. He refused to rescind. The publication earned high praise from many individuals and became one of the Center's most widely distributed.

The director felt that the Center's mission was to serve the general public with helpful, unbiased information, not to serve the political or business interests of a few influential individuals, even though that policy might result in a negative evaluation of the Center at a high level.

As an observer for most of the Center's 40 years, I would judge that the Center's policy in this regard has not changed, with subsequent directors understanding its role in the dissemination of objective information to foster democracy and free enterprise. — Dr. Jack P. Friedman, CPA, former chief economist and holder of the Julio Laguarda Professorship

Leave It and Forget It

Former director Dr. Pat Wooten did not have what you would call an “in box” on his desk. He had a pile of papers on the right hand corner of his desk closest to the door. All correspondence, reports, everything went there. It was arranged chronologically, the latest was on top, the oldest on bottom.

If the staff brought him something to read or sign, he added to the top. It remained in the pile until someone asked about it. Then, and only then, did he take action.

When asked why the pile stayed about the same height, he replied that if no one asked about the item after three months, it must not be important and was thrown away. Whether he really threw it away wasn't clear. The point to the staff was never "leave it and forget it" if you wanted an answer. Wooten preferred to discuss it with you personally. — David Jones, senior editor

Brothers Wooten, Wootan

He (first director Dr. Pat Wooten) was interested in real estate and real estate as a profession well before the Texas Real Estate Research Center was conceived. I think he really got interested in that primarily through his teaching and particularly through the early work he did in banking. — Dr. Charlie Wootan, former director, Texas Transportation Institute and brother to Pat Wooten. (Editor's note. That is not a typo. The brothers spelled their last name differently. Wootan was the family name. However, Pat said the Army always spelled it with an "e," and after World War II, he just kept it that way.)

Rescued by UT

Once upon a time when Proxima projectors came in huge, wheeled suitcases, I was scheduled to speak at a meeting in Midland. The ASFMRA group asked me if I could bring a projector for my presentation, and I assured them there would be no difficulty with that.

Being one who plans at least 15 minutes ahead, I found myself tossing things in a brief case and rushing to the airport just in time to catch my flight. As we took off, I stretched out and relaxed, completely oblivious to the fact that the Proxima was safely locked in my office on campus.

In Midland, it dawned on me that I was going to be in deep trouble the next day, and Proximas rented for north of \$1,000 per day. I frantically called the local Realtors association looking for a loaner. No luck. Finally, in desperation I phoned the business school at UT-Permian Basin. I explained my predicament and pleaded for help.

They graciously agreed to provide a projector for the entire day and I was relieved that I would not be doing a hand-puppet show with an overhead projector. Sometimes that burnt orange looks OK. — Dr. Charles E. Gilliland, research economist.

'O Canada'

I was at the Hills Café in Austin presenting to the International Right of Way Association. It was the first time the group had ever met there so they didn't know the facilities. We met in the Darrell K. Royal room, but they announced that the room would be renamed the Canada Room for the meeting (I'm originally from Vancouver).

The room had brick walls and windows and no space for projecting an image. So they found a pop-up screen at the restaurant. It was too short so they put the three legs on

chairs to lift it up high enough for everyone to see. There was no good place to set the projector so one of the participants held it up for the presentation.

The presentation was only supposed to be about 15 minutes, but folks really got into it and it went on for about 40 minutes. In the end, everyone had a good time and much was learned. — Gerald Klassen, research analyst

Shirt off My Back

I rented a car to drive to Victoria (for a presentation to the Victoria Home Builders Association) but in the process of picking up the rental car I failed to transfer my hanging bag with my suit and dress shirt. I got to the hotel in Victoria before I discovered I didn't have anything other than the jeans I normally wear for travelling. Fortunately, the hotel was virtually next door to the local mall, so I went over to Dillard's and bought a complete "dress" outfit — sports coat, slacks, tie and shirt.

That presentation cost me nearly \$400 out-of-pocket. — Dr. Jim Gaines, research economist.

On with the Show

One of the first presentations I made for the Center was outside of Temple at a country barbecue

restaurant. The local Board had invited all of the elected officials in the county, and the turnout was around 100 people or so. The presentation was a standard PowerPoint, but I was to deliver it outside!

This was in the early fall before daylight savings, so we had to wait almost an hour for darkness before anyone could see the slides.

More than once I have made presentations at local restaurants during normal business hours — generally lunch time. On several occasions, we have not been in a separate room, but out in the general dining area. So I wind up giving the presentation to not only the local real estate group but to whoever happens to be in the restaurant having lunch at the time. Basically, I become the floor show. — Dr. Jim Gaines, research economist

Bugged Hotel Room

Bedding down in San Antonio, watching the news on the TV, I noticed a black bug fall from the ceiling and land near the TV set. I went over to the dresser in time to see another one fall near the first. They looked like termites.

Looking up I noticed that they were coming out of a small, v-shaped tunnel formed by the prefab construction design of the ceiling. Now more bugs were falling. It was late. I was tired and really didn't want to move to another room. Besides the bugs, by now dispatched and their bodies deposited in a hotel envelope, did not seem to threaten me with bodily harm.

However, they did keep coming out of the v, and I didn't relish the idea of the continuing stream of invaders all night long. So I fetched my shaving cream, shook it up, and filled the v-shaped opening with shaving cream. It worked perfectly, no more bugs.

The following morning I presented an envelope full of bugs to the desk as I was checking out. After first noting that I was not an entomologist, I told the clerk that they looked like termites to me and perhaps they should get a pest control person to inspect the premises. — Dr. Charles Gilliland, research economist

Butt at Least Your Name's Spelled Right

It started out as a normal "conference" morning on a warm September day. Attendees would be showing up in a few minutes to begin their day of learning, and I was busily setting up the check-in table at a commercial real estate conference.

As usual, I set out the check-in roster, pens, give-away items, and the file box with the paper name tag inserts, which were pre-printed with attendees' names. Then I pulled out the box of clear plastic name tag holders. You know—the kind with the clip on the back.

Now the late summer heat had been pretty stifling, but I had no idea how bad it was until I opened the box of name tag holders. They had been transported in the trunk of a car and had gotten a little too hot on the trip. Apparently that kind of plastic likes to curl when it gets hot, and boy, were they curled!

There was no way to load the name tag inserts into a curled holder, so I had to uncurl them in a hurry. How? Body heat! Not having an iron handy, I took out a few at a time and sat on them. I could fit about four under each thigh at one time, so I kept heating them up and loading name tags as folks checked in. Since that time, I have made sure that the box with the name tag holders always rides close to an air conditioner vent! — Denise Whisenant, education coordinator

Batty Center Work

I unlocked my office door in the Wehner Building and walked in. As I sat down in my chair I noticed that something was now lying on the floor where I had just stepped.

Thinking a big leaf had come off the bottom of my shoe, I went over to pick it up. As I reached down and touched it, it quickly became apparent it was not a leaf, but a bat.

After my freak-out episode had dissipated, I gathered some coworkers to help check it out. It was obviously dead, but where had it come from? It was not there just a few seconds earlier when I had stepped at that exact spot.

We determined that it must have been hanging on the ceiling air vent that was right inside the doorway, and opening the door must have knocked it down. Luckily, it had not fallen on

me. If so, the dissipation would have taken much longer! — Kammy Baumann, assistant editor

Hard Act to Swallow

Our first director Dr. Pat Wooten was interviewing a job applicant from New York. She had all the qualifications, but Wooten did not like her "Yankee attitude." She wanted the job, but he did not want her. He had to figure out a way for her to back out because there was no compelling reason not to hire her.

For lunch, he took her to Tom's Barbecue and ordered the "Aggie Special." His guest's eyes widened and her jaw fell as the waiter brought out a roll of butcher paper, tore off a piece about the size of the table, and put it down as the tablecloth. Then he brought out sliced beef, sausage, jalapenos, onions, pickles, bread, barbecue sauce, two steak knives and a roll of paper towels.

"Enjoy," said the waiter. The New Yorker sat and stared as Wooten wielded the knife like Zorro, consuming his portion in record time. "I never eat any place where they don't bring the food to me," he said proudly.

He never heard from her again, not even a "thanks for lunch" note. — David Jones, senior editor

Show Me the Money

Texas A&M President Jarvis Miller wanted a program put on in El Paso. Wooten assigned the job to me. I asked, where will the money come from? Pat Wooten knew a lot of people on campus and how to get money. He told me to go to the dean of engineering, tell him how much I wanted, and they would set me up an account. In the early years, that's how some of the first programs were funded. — William "Doug" Moore, former head of Center's education division.

Spittin' Image

Jim James occupies a special place in Center lore. Officially he was the first business administrator. Unofficially he was Director Wooten's chauffeur. Wooten only drove when he had to.

As far as can be determined, James was the only Center employee ever to have a spittoon in his office. Former director Rick Floyd said, "You could tell if Jimmy had been in the area from the cudgels on the floor."

At Christmas, James would randomly dial campus numbers and tell the person who answered that Santa Claus was calling to check on their behavior during the past year. He stopped the practice after he accidentally dialed the president's office. Luckily for him there was no such thing as caller ID at the time.

James was no fan of elevators. Moving from an office on the third floor of the Halbouty Building to one on the top floor of the Blocker Building proved too much for the senior Center

employee. After several months of climbing six flights of stairs, he retired. — David Jones, senior editor

Life Turning Point

I have great memories of first coming to the Real Estate Center. I applied for a job as an administrative assistant when my then husband and I had just moved to Bryan-College Station from Philadelphia, Penn. so he could continue in graduate school. I remember that Doug Moore told me that if I was going to fit in with the Texans I would have to SLOW down. My style was very direct (it actually still is), and I would just jump into a conversation quickly and try to get to the bottom line.

Mr. Moore told me I needed to learn to “visit” and have some small conversation first to earn people’s trust and then get to the business at hand. He also said not to be fooled into thinking that just because someone I might be talking to looked or sounded like “country folk,” they totally knew how to play that game well, and most times they were actually smart as a fox, so I shouldn’t let my guard down! Those lessons have served me well during these last many years.

Another memory I have is when I met some of the graduate students from Dr. Ivan Schmedemann’s Land Economics and Real Estate program. I began by helping them out by typing their papers for them for about \$1 per page! After a while, I had an “aha” moment — the course work didn’t seem that difficult to me, and I already had a strong interest in real estate. I had already taken my GRE exams. I started talking to Dr. Schmedemann and Dr. Wooten about enrolling in the graduate program.

I had to meet privately with Dr. Wooten and it was pretty scary. He was very stern and grim (little did I know that he would become a friend, one of my graduate advisors and one of my graduate committee members). I persisted in pushing Dr. Schmedemann and, as he now tells it, I eventually wore him down, and they cut through a lot of red tape to get me enrolled in the program for that next semester. It turned out to be a major turning point in my life and has given me a great foundation for my real estate career.

I am indebted to the people from the Center and the staff — they welcomed me to Texas and set me on a great path. Happy Anniversary and best wishes for many more to come. — Elise Mikus, executive vice president-development, Las Colinas Group LLC and owner, Mikus Realty Advisors

Where There’s Smoke . . .

Rick Floyd is the only director who summoned the fire department to the Center. Unfortunately, he did not intend to.

Rick and I stayed late one evening and used a circular saw to cut some countertops for our photo lab. We had just moved into the Blocker Building on campus and were making some “improvements.” While we cut, we did not notice the wisp of smoke circling overhead until it reached the smoke detector. The alarms throughout the building began to clang. Offices

and classrooms were cleared. Having inside knowledge of what really caused the alarm, Rick and I continued to work. We thought about calling off the fire department, but it was too late. We could hear the sirens outside.

Huffing and puffing after their six-flight trek to the top floor, three firemen appeared at the stairway entrance. Never at a loss for words, Rick explained what happened and apologized. They suggested we stop. We did. Never argue with men carrying axes. — Senior Editor David Jones

Relies on Center

Happy 40th birthday to the Real Estate Center. I had the distinct privilege of being on the staff at the Real Estate Center as a graduate student in the Land Economics and Real Estate program (now Masters of Real Estate) and have many fond memories of working on Market Reports and learning from the best real estate research team during this time.

Now, as a producer at NorthMarq Capital I rely on the Real Estate Center to keep me up-to-date on what’s going on across Texas. I also look forward to hearing Dr. Dotzour speak every time he comes to Houston or joins us at the Real Estate Roundtable or Society of Texas A&M Real Estate Professionals events. Thanks, Real Estate Center, for all you do! — Lori Sowa, vice president, NorthMarq, Houston, Tex.

Huge Dotzour Fan

As a broker of multifamily housing for more than 20 years in the Texas area, I rely on the great resources supplied by the Real Estate Center. I am a huge fan of Dr. Mark Dotzour and not only is he extremely informative, he is great entertainment as well! Go Real Estate Center and congratulations on 40 years! — Pauline Thude, Meridian Investment Realty, Houston, Tex.

Amazing Tools

I first want to say that your website is amazing. The information that you make available to the public about our great state is amazing. I am in the mortgage industry and have been for 15 years. My husband has been working for a national builder for ten years.

All of your information has made a huge impact in our Texas economy and real estate “education.” The research and tools that are available are amazing. It has added a large amount of value to what we contribute to the companies that we work for. My husband was transferred to a new area of Texas and had to start building homes. Started a division from the ground up!

Much of his success was built from information and education on your website. This website offers so much value and has helped us contribute so much value to our companies. Open doors for both us that we would have not imagined would happen. All of the information that you compile into this website is priceless. I want to thank everyone that contributes and works in making this possible. We stay tuned

and receive your email updates and use your website regularly.

I have passed on your website information to many of my colleagues. Thank you again for giving us another reason to call Texas the best state to live in. — Amanda Daigle, Amegy Mortgage Capital, The Woodlands, Tex.

Keep Up Good Work

Thanks RECON for the terrific (and well organized) information you provide. I rely on your THAI and your Houston home sales information to pass along in the six Houston area newcomer and relocation guides.

I also try to attend functions with Dr. Dotzour and Jim Gaines each year. Their presentations are always informative, usually right-on, and they are both very good speakers.

Keep up all the good work! — Sherri Charrin, Houston

Decades Long Relationship

The Real Estate Research Center is one of those resources I have been involved with and worked with for many, many years. I remember when Gary Maler was first hired at the Center. He came to some TAR meetings and conducted training on how to plan and think strategically. He especially assisted our Certified Residential Brokerage state chapter during the early- to mid-1980s. Later Maler began doing planning and strategizing with various local associations (of Realtors), including ours in Abilene. In other words, my association with the Center goes back several decades. In the early 1990s, Gary played a very important role as the research Center was central to much of our planning the future of the state association (TAR). The Center has given us the data and research we needed. The Center has done many study groups for us: What's happening with consumers? What's happening with Texas economic development? The answers are not only valuable to Realtors but to consumers, legislators and others. Many of our decisions have been based on research by the Center. Our gratitude for everyone at the Center runs deep. — David Dalzell, Abilene Realtor and former advisory committee chairman

Looking Forward to More Research

The Research Center information — the RECON newsletter and e-mails from David Jones — are just wonderful resources that I can pass on to my members. I am looking forward to even more information the research Center can provide to me and my members. — Mona LeBle, former TAR staff member and now executive officer for the Kerrville Board of Realtors

Made Me Ton of Money

Over the years, the people at the real estate research center have put together documentation on water leases, oil and gas leases and other good quality, timely articles that help me with my business. I guarantee that over the years, they have made me a ton of money, simply because they have

given me the right tools and right education to make sure my clients have the best opportunity in the real estate market. — Dan Hatfield, broker-Realtor from Medina, Tex.

1,000 People per Day

I congratulate the Center on its 40th anniversary. The Center is a valuable resource to me personally, my office, my family, all the state's Realtors and every Texas property owner. The Center plays a vital role in homeownership and sustaining Texas property values.

The Center's research and data, their incredible understanding of the market and their dissemination of how the research is applicable makes Texas the absolutely best place to live. Directly because of the Center's hard work, the state is growing by 1,000 people a day, and I give all the credit to the Center's understanding of the market place that they afford us. — Bill Jones, Temple Realtor and past TAR chairman of the board

Information That's Authoritative

The Real Estate Center is a wonderful entity, and I use it on many levels. Hearing Mark Dotzour talk about economics is very empowering. I can go back to my clients with information that's authoritative. The Center does the work and knows how to work the numbers. It's not general information; it's really accurate. I love the magazine too; it shows me what's happening around the state. The Center has been a great resource for me, and I appreciate having them around. — John Rosshirts, Austin Realtor and actor in Center ethics video

Tells Everyone About RECON

It is a real pleasure to be able to congratulate the Real Estate Research Center on 40 years. It is exciting that Texas has been the home of that agency for this long. Today it is an institution with worldwide recognition.

I recommend that every person I meet during a real estate transaction subscribe to RECON. Sign up. Get involved with the Center because it will be a source of information, education and data. It is a resource valuable to a Realtor, investor, homeowner, property owner, mineral owner, timber owner, cattle owner — everyone.

The Center at Texas A&M is a one-stop shop for resources that will help you make money, own and maintain Texas real estate. — John Eckstrum, Conroe Realtor, former chairman of the Texas Real Estate Commission and ex-officio member of Center's advisory committee

Happy 40th

Happy 40th birthday, Real Estate Center. — Randy Jeffers, Amarillo broker-Realtor and former TAR chairman of the board.

Help Agents Do Better Job

Happy anniversary to all my friends at the Real Estate Center. You provide all kinds of information and articles that help

me and my agents every day do a better job of protecting consumers, buyers, sellers, tenants and landlords in the state of Texas. Happy anniversary. We love you. — Avis Greer Wukasch, Round Rock Realtor, broker-member of TREC, starred in Center videos, contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses

Daily Website Visitor

Happy birthday, Real Estate Center. It is a pleasure to have been associated with the Center through the years. Every day I pull up the website and get information that I would not get otherwise. Thanks each and every one of you. — Lance Lacy, San Angelo Realtor, appraiser.

Quality, Understandable Data

Happy birthday to the Real Estate Center. I know and love the Real Estate Center because I am a huge fan of all the data and statistics you put out. I use those in my news releases practically every day. You cannot get quality data that is understandable anywhere but from the Real Estate Center. — Stacy Armijo, former TAR staff member and public relations consultant with Pierpont Communications in Austin

Not Best Kept Secret Any More

Happy 40th birthday to the Texas Real Estate Center. It's great to see that you are not the best kept secret in Texas anymore. — Benny McMahan, retired TAR CEO and former chairman of Center advisory committee

Wish We Had Something Like It

We think so much of the research Center. Congratulations on your 40th birthday. As we travel around the country, all we hear from other states is "Boy, wish we had something like the Texas Real Estate Center." — Dwight Hale, Broker-owner Realtor from San Antonio, TAR chairman, participant in Center strategic planning

We've Got You Covered

Tierra Grande covers over the years have proven quite popular. The only requirement for a cover is that the photo must have been taken in Texas or of a subject that could have been taken in the Lone Star State.

The first issues were photos we purchased from stock photo houses. Later we used in-state professionals, such as Lawrence Parent, who is well-known for his superb Texas landscapes. Today, we shoot them ourselves.

In the first issue (fourth quarter 1977), we ran a beautiful sunset/sunrise beach scene. We never heard from any readers about it, but Dr. Jim Stribling, an avid saltwater fisherman on the staff, caught us. He pointed out that nowhere along the 367 miles of Texas shoreline or 3,300 miles of Texas' bay-estuary-lagoon shores can the sun rise or set on a vast expanse of beach in the direction depicted on the cover.

A couple of times when we published actual Texas scenes, they were criticized for less-than-obvious reasons. Such was the case in the 16th issue, printed in third quarter 1981. The photo shows five horses standing on a treeless hilltop. The horses, big sky and unbroken horizon near Lubbock were not the problem. The pasture was, according to the range science experts at Texas A&M. They chided us for printing such a poor piece of grazing land.

For the 30th issue, Graphic Artist JoAnn Armke wanted a different kind of cover. She went to the Texas A&M experts and asked for samples of "Texas dirt." They said there is no such thing, but she could have some samples of Texas soil. The cover that issue is a shadow box filled with seven samples of soil — not dirt — from around the state. —Senior Editor David Jones

1970s



May 18, 1971. Gov. Preston Smith signed Senate Bill 338 creating the Center. L to R: Hub Bechtol, Julio Laguarta, Robert Hale, Rep. Delwin Jones, Lawrence Miller, Dr. Harry O. Kunkel, Sen. William T. Moore, Dr. A.B. Wooten and Cecil Culpepper.



Late 1960s. Julio Laguarta had the idea for a Texas "institute" dedicated to real estate research.



1972. The first Advisory Committee included, from left: Walstein Smith Jr., R.L. Pardue, Glenn W. Justice, Katherine Boyd, Julio Laguarta, George O. Yamini, Joe Loper, John Worley and Lawrence Miller.

1972. Dr. A.B. 'Pat' Wooten was named first director of the Texas Real Estate Research Center.





1974. First staff photo. From left: James W. James, Dr. Robert Lyon, John L. McCanlies, Dr. Robert Skrabanek, Dr. Roger Sindt, Dr. Arthur Wright, Dr. Ivan Schmedemann, D.E. Chalberg, Dr. William G. Adkins, William Moore and Dr. A.B. Wooten.



1973. First Center logo.

1972–1980. Halbouty Geosciences Building housed Center's information services and administration staff. Research staff offices were off campus at 707 Texas Ave. in College Station.



1972. Dr. William 'Bill' Adkins was first chief economist.



1976. Dr. Stephen Phyrri from the University of Texas lectured at the Center's Studies of Advanced Real Estate Subjects (SOARS) program.





1976. SOARS students were flown by helicopter from Texas A&M on a field trip to the site of The Woodlands being developed near Houston.



1976. A glimpse into the future was given to SOARS students during a field trip to The Woodlands, a master-planned community in Montgomery County.

First issue of new magazine appeals to realtors, public

By WIN SIMS
Staff Writer

Thirty scholars can turn out a lot of copy in a month. In three months, they ought to have enough for a magazine.

That at least is the thinking behind the Texas Real Estate Research Center's new quarterly, "Tierra Grande," the first issue of which was published earlier this month.

It's a curious magazine. On the one hand it is a forum for the 30 full and part-time researchers on the TRERC staff, and on the other, it's explicitly

intended to appeal to the general reader.

The first issue has a general interest feature on Luckenbach (Population 3), and an article by Phil Gramm on why economic growth occurs. But it also contains a feature on squatter's rights and how the baby boom is unsettling the Texas housing market.

The graphics are slick, with creative use of white space and varied type fonts. These are due to the magazine's two co-editors, JoAnn Armke and David S. Jones, both of whom are experienced in the private

magazine trade.

The magazine is free and distributed automatically to Texas' licensed real estate brokers, who support the TRERC through their dues. Others can receive the magazine free of charge on request.

The TRERC is one of several public-private hybrids on the Texas A&M campus. The funds to support the center come from licensed real estate agents and to the state real estate committee in Austin appointed by the governor.

The funds then travel to a special Texas A&M account from which they are disbursed to the center.

The center is thus privately supported but under the administrative control of the university and state. From this arrangement, the center gets added luster as a state institution and one associated with Texas A&M, and it can draw upon the staff and resources of the university.

From the first issue, the relationship appears to be a fruitful one. The magazine is bright and interesting for the lay public, attractive and useful for the real estate professional.

"What we are trying to do is to first provide a forum for our researchers," Jones said. "But we are also trying to do it in a way that's readable for anyone — so that a broker could dig out one of our articles and use it to explain something to a client."



Tierra Grande is the new publication.



1977. Initially, Tierra Grande was sent only to Texas real estate brokers. Today all active and inactive licensees — more than 144,000 — receive the quarterly periodical.

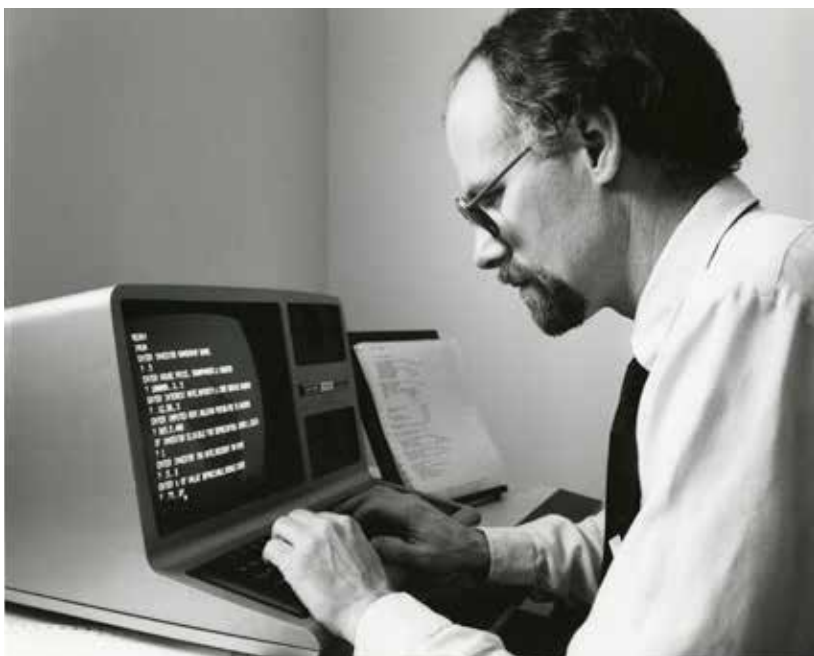
1977. The Bryan-College Station Eagle announced the new Center magazine.



1978. Student workers played cheerleader roles in photo shoot for real estate career campaign advertising 100,000 color brochures aimed at high school students.



1978. Attorney Donald Levi was the first associate director.



1978. Dr. Jack Harris tried out one of the Center's first computers, a TRS-80.



1979. Just two years old, Tierra Grande magazine won the Gold Quill award from the International Association of Business Communicators as the best nonprofit magazine in the world. A year later, the magazine won the award again.



1979. Dr. Jack P. Friedman, CPA, was the Center's second chief economist.

1980s



1980. Associate Director Dr. Richard L. Floyd, left, and Coordinator of Development Programs Gary Maler review plans for Center's new offices in the Blocker Building, the first location to house all Center staff under one roof.

1981. First Advisory Committee Chairman Julio Laguarta, right, made a presentation to Dr. A.B. Wooten during Texas Association of Realtors ceremonies honoring the Center's first director upon his retirement.



1981. Dr. Richard L. Floyd was named second Center director.



1983. From left, Senior Editor David Jones, Director Dr. Richard Floyd, Senior Operations Officer Gary Maler and Chief Economist Dr. Jack Friedman.



REAL ESTATE CENTER

1982. The “cube” was the Center’s second logo.

1980. A former Center student worker, Fred McClure, right, was elected chairman of the Advisory Committee. Future governor Rick Perry, left, served with McClure on the committee, including a term as chairman in 1983. Senior Editor David Jones, center, has been secretary to the committee since 1979.



1986. To help differentiate between TAR, TREC and TRERC, the Center’s name is simplified to ‘Real Estate Center.’

1986. Communications staffers included, seated: Dr. Shirley Bovey, Deborah Dunsford and JoAnn Armke; and back row, from left: Pat Sadberry, David Jones, Irene Caffee, Mary Gay Boedeker and Nancy Cassidy.



Just call us the Real Estate Center. We've streamlined our name, we're updating our image, and we're improving our publications. Look for the premiere of the new *Real Estate Center Journal* and other newly revised Center publications. The packaging is new, but our mission is the same. The Real Estate Center still is your source for reliable and useful real estate information. Just call us (809 845-2031) and we'll send you our latest catalog of publications, audiovisuals and computer software.

 **REAL
ESTATE
CENTER**

Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77843



1987. After 15 years in the College of Agriculture, the Center moved to the Lowry Mays College & Graduate School of Business, later simplified to Mays Business School.



1987. The Center had the first desktop publishing system on campus. It was operated by Rolanda Warren-Yarborough.



1989. Dr. Ted Jones was named third Center chief economist.



1980. Business Administrator Oran Jones, left, and Senior Editor David Jones were puppeteers for a photo shoot.

1990s



1991. Former Dallas Cowboy quarterback Roger Staubach, right, was interviewed by Business Administrator and Narrator Oran Jones for a Center video on tenant representation.

1995. The E.L. Wehner Building on Texas A&M's west campus was the Center's third home for 14 years.



1995. Dr. R. Malcolm Richards was Center's fourth director from 1995 to 2005.



1995. The first Center website had 1,453 visitors who logged 7,389 page views in the first two months.



1996. Hundreds of Realtors stopped by the Center's booth at the TAR convention to pick up 25th anniversary handouts.



1997. Dr. Mark Dotzour was selected Center's fourth chief economist.



1999. Before the advent of electronic clipping services, students pored over Texas newspapers and filed real estate related items by city. This was the forerunner to Center market reports and NewsTalk Texas.

2000s



2000. Real estate icons George Mitchell and Ebby Halliday were the first and only recipients of 'Lifetime Achievement Awards' given by the Center.



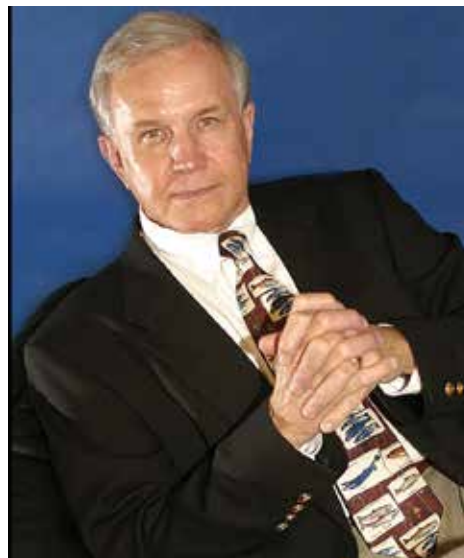
2000. Key logo was adopted as the new Center brand.



2004. The annual Outlook for Texas Land Markets program outgrew facilities in College Station and was moved to San Antonio in 2007. Attendees number more than 400.



2005. A Mexican free-tailed bat literally dropped in to the Center. University animal control personnel took the bat off the hands of Associate Editor Nancy McQuiston after it was found on the office floor.



2006. Gary Maler was selected Center's fifth director.



2006. A staff retreat presented a unique challenge to, from left: Dr. Mark Dotzour, Lynn Stevens and Bob Beals.

2008. Communications staff posed for a team photo after winning another award. From left, Bryan Pope, Bob Beals, David Jones, Kammy Baumann, Nancy McQuiston and JP Beato.



2009. Chief Economist Dr. Mark Dotzour spoke to the Real Estate Roundtable sponsored by the Mays Business School. In his first nine years at the Center, Dotzour spoke to more than 100,000 across the United States.

2009. Realtors had a chance to tell Director Gary Maler what they thought of the Center and its programs during first-ever TAR convention focus groups.





2009. The Center executive staff, from left: Gary Maler, Lynn Stevens, Patricia Smith, Elaine Lovell and Denise Whisenant.



2009. The Center research staff, seated, Dr. Mark Dotzour, left, and Dr. James Gaines. Standing, from left: Dr. Ali Anari, Dr. Charles Gilliland, Judon Fambrough, Beth Thomas, Gerald Klassen, Edith Craig, Mark Baumann and Dr. Harold Hunt.



2009. The Center communications staff, from left: Bryan Pope, Bob Beals, Kammy Baumann, Nancy McQuiston, JP Beato, David Jones and Randy Birdwell.



2009. Center moved to Two Research Park or Research Parkway on Texas A&M's west campus.



2010. Social media became the norm for communicating Center research results.



NEWS OUR CATALOG DATA EDUCATION ABOUT US SEARCH

RECON

Texas Home Sales Down

AUSTIN (Austin Business Journal) - Nearly 88,800 single-family homes in Texas sold in second quarter 2011, a 12 percent decrease from last year, according to the Texas Quarterly Housing Report.

SUBSCRIBE

TERESA GRANDE
Texas has the second most of all quarterly magazines. There's something for everyone here, no matter what type of real estate you practice. The articles are easy to understand and easy on the eyes. Browse the magazine articles or search by topic.

CATALOG
We serve as the library of Congress for when it comes to real estate articles, reports and videos, we've got the goods.

DATA, DATA & MORE DATA
We're often told we have the best selection of data in the nation. Don't you agree? These numbers are worth their weight in gold.

CONFERENCES & COURSES
Who needs shopping? Learn from experts from across the industry. Register online for upcoming Center conferences and courses.

VIDEOS
Light, colorful, action. It's movies in text and a few words in text. Check out our latest 3D videos. Our library includes two, national and video resources. Check us out when the weather is high definition.

PRESENTATIONS
Remember when you used to hear a Center researcher give a speech? Remember that slide that looked like a map? You can find it now. There's a staff or your presentation or presentation to yourself and impress your colleagues.

QUizzes
Test your real estate knowledge and have fun, too.

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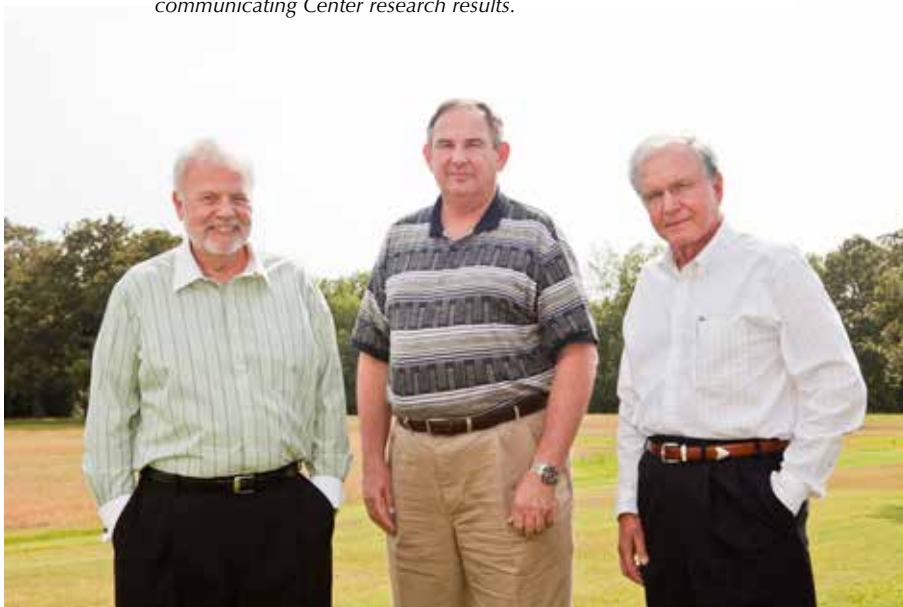
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2010. Two former directors, along with the current, met to discuss the first 40 years of the Center and what lies ahead. From left, Dr. Richard Floyd, Dr. Malcolm Richards and Gary Maler.

Eyewitnesses to History

Who was, who is. A cast of characters four decades in the making.

Lasting Legacy

It is amazing how many current programs were generated in the early years. That speaks to the genius of Pat Wooten and his team.

Over the years, the Center's history has been marked with success, integrity and reliability. Without ever being political or confrontational, the Center's hallmark has been its record. — Julio Laguarda, Texas real estate icon and father of the Center

The story of the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University is the story of the people who have worked on and with the staff. Their vision, imagination, team spirit and plain old hard work are the reasons the Center is known and respected worldwide. Despite the best efforts to make it so, there is no way this list is complete or historically perfect. If you or someone you know should be on the list and is not, do not be offended. Oversights, errors and updates are welcome. Anyone who served on the staff, was a member of the advisory committee or contributed to any of the Center's products should be on this list. Send names, dates and details to: Senior editor at info@tamu.edu.

Abelson, Dr. Michael. Associate professor of management in Mays Business School. Wrote 13 articles 1993–98 on various aspects of residential brokerage.

Adame, Joseph. From Corpus Christi. Advisory committee chairman 2000–02. One of only three advisory committee members to author or coauthor a *Tierra Grande* article.

Adams, E.V. "Rusty" III. Joined the Center's staff as legal expert in 2016. After graduating from Baylor Law School in 2004, Rusty practiced general civil law, including real estate law.

Adkins, Dr. William G. "Bill". Research economist with Texas Transportation Institute. Elected first secretary to Center's advisory committee. Served as first chief economist. Employed 1972. Authored seven Center manuscripts.

Albrecht, Don. Research scientist with Center and rural sociology department at Texas A&M. Wrote 13 manuscripts for Center 1984–88.

Allen, Forrest. From Corpus Christi. Served as ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 1977–80.

Allen, Dr. John. Senior research economist 1985–89. Held joint appointment with Texas A&M Department of Economics. Authored popular Center book, *Private Rights to Property: The Foundation of Freedom, Prosperity and Harmony* and article by same name.

Alley, Troy C. Jr. From Arlington. Appointed to advisory committee in 2019, representing commercial properties. Elected chairman in 2020. Term to expire in 2023.

Alsmeyer-Kellett, Dr. Ann M. Joined staff in FY 1988–89 as assistant editor responsible for technical reports. Also worked on marketing Center products.

Anari, Dr. M.A.M. Research economist. Joined Center June 1999. Former associate research scientist in Mays Business School. Since 2003, has written Center's Monthly Review of the Texas Economy. With Texas A&M University more than 25 years. Retired in 2019.

Armke, JoAnn. Associate editor and Center's first art director. Winner of numerous awards for graphic design. Wrote seven articles 1977–85.

Arriaga, Adrian. McAllen Realtor who has helped the Center on various projects, including being a resource for a 2009 Center video on "Selling Homes in the Melting Pot."

Arriaga, Mario A. Conroe broker appointed to advisory committee 2011 to represent commercial real estate professionals.

Baen, Dr. John S. Coauthored (with Guttery) 1996 technical report and article on coming downsizing of real estate industry, which generated most letters in history of *Tierra Grande* magazine. Associate professor in finance, insurance, real estate and law at University of North Texas.

Bailey, Mona R. From North Richland Hills. Represents public on advisory committee 2008–13.

Baker, Harry L. Real estate coordinator at Houston's North Harris County College 1982 and author of Center's Investment Analysis Guide.

Barlow, Keith. MAI from Midland and LERE graduate who was liaison between AIREA and Texas A&M University.

Baumann, Kammy. First employed 1983–85 as word processor for senior systems analyst. Worked part-time 1986–90 for director's office. Employed full-time as desktop publishing system assistant until 1993. Title changed to assistant editor in 1994. Associate editor since 2019.

Baumann, Mark. Associate research social scientist, information technology director responsible for economic databases and statistics. Center webmaster. Joined staff 1994. Created first Center database and first website.

Beato, JP III. Joined staff as student worker 1998. Hired full time 2003 as graphics specialist, photographer. Designed Center website introduced in 2010. Produces, edits HD video programming. Winner of numerous awards in documentary photojournalism, sports photography, *Tierra Grande* covers and editorial photography.

Beal, Michael. College Station real estate broker. Member of advisory committee 1992–97. Graduate of first SOARS class, 1974–76.

Beals, Robert II. Hired 1987 as Center art director. Winner of numerous awards for graphic design and illustration, particularly for *Tierra Grande* magazine. Center photographer, videographer.

Bechtol, Hub. Member of advisory committee 1987–90.

Benedict, Howard M. Connecticut appraiser and CCIM whose 1960s presentation in Atlanta, Ga., gave Julio Laguarda the idea for establishing a real estate research center in Texas. Benedict was one of three real estate representatives on the University of Connecticut Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics advisory committee 1965–79.

Benedict, Margaret. Business coordinator.

Benjamin, Dr. James J. Member of Texas A&M accounting department who served on the review team evaluating Center programs and activities in 1994.

Bering, Conrad. Houston Realtor. Advisory Committee chairman 1992–94.

Birdwell, Randy. Retired videographer, producer, director with communications staff. Employed 2001. Produced 17 feature videos, including 12 editions of “Close-Ups,” a quarterly program for real estate licensees.

Boedeker, Mary Gay. Editorial assistant, illustrator, photographer on communications staff in 1980s.

Bohannon, Patsy. Midland real estate broker on advisory committee 1981. Represented real estate brokerage. Chairman 1985–86.

Born, Dr. Waldo. Researcher and author of nine articles 1984–88, primarily dealing with financing issues.

Bovey, Dr. Shirley. Associate editor on communications staff. Author, coauthor of 17 Center manuscripts.

Boyd, James M. Houston commercial broker. Advisory committee chairman 2010–11. Instrumental in moving Center to Texas A&M Research Park.

Boyd, Katherine. From Arlington. Served four-year appointment on first advisory committee (1972–76).

Brewster, Ellissa. Assistant editor. Wrote news releases and edited RECON. Authored seven *Tierra Grande* articles 2002–06.

Brummett, Jay. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TREC 1999–2001.

Buffa, Dr. Frank. Member of Texas A&M business analysis department who served on the review team evaluating Center programs and activities in 1994.

Bush, Dr. Paul. Member of Texas A&M marketing department who served on the review team evaluating Center programs and activities in 1994.

Caffee, Irene. Communications secretary in mid-1980s.

Cain, Russell L. Port Lavaca Realtor appointed to advisory committee 2011. Represents residential real estate professionals. Term to expire in 2023.

Callahan, Phil. Education research associate 1976–78. Authored five articles.

Callery, Terri. Former administrative secretary.

Canon, Pamela. Assistant director responsible for travel, events and purchasing, joined the Center staff in 2012.

Cantu, Pete Sr. From San Antonio. Member of advisory committee 1995–98.

Cardwell, J. Alice. Secretary to first director. Second employee of Center. Employed April 1, 1972. Moved to Abilene in 1983 after 18 years’ service to Texas A&M.

Carter, Lois. Hired 1989 as senior secretary for research staff. Became publications specialist 1995. Moved to assistant director of real estate programs in Mays Business School.

Cassidy, Nancy. Assistant editor in communications. Later moved to senior accounting lecturer in Mays Business School.

Chalberg, D.E. “Bo”. Member of education staff. Employed 1973. Conducted Center’s first homebuyer clinic.

Chapman, Harold. TREC chairman 1974. Ex-officio member of advisory committee 1973–77. Spoke to Center-sponsored conferences; authored four Center articles 1979–84 on contracts.

Cherry, Robert. Assistant to Texas A&M University president and ardent supporter of bringing Center to Texas A&M. Later vice chancellor and executive secretary to Texas A&M Board of Regents. Served Texas A&M 46 years. Given plaque by Center in 1983 for his “friendship and counsel.”

Chipman, Guy. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 1986–87.

Christian, Dr. James W. Third Center director (1993). Author, coauthor of six *Tierra Grande* articles.

Cigarroa, Melissa A. Vice president of Laredo National Bank when appointed to advisory committee member 1996.

Clemence, Jingjing “JJ”. Appointed to advisory committee in 2018. Resigned in 2021 prior to expiration of term.

Cocanougher, Dr. Benton. Mays Business School dean emeritus and professor emeritus. Instrumental in leading Center through 1993 leadership crisis. Was dean of business when Center moved from College of Agriculture in 1987.

Conrad, Deborah Drew. Assistant editor hired 1987.

Cortes, Louis A. "Tony." From China Grove. Member of advisory committee 2009–11. Resigned prior to expiration of term (2015).

Craig, Edith W. Administrative coordinator. Joined Center November 2003. Primarily responsible for Market Reports and NewsTalkTexas. Co-host of Red Zone podcast.

Cron, Catarina Gonzales. From Houston. Appointed to advisory committee 2007.

Crumbley, Dr. D. Larry. Former Texas A&M professor of accounting. Wrote for Center on tax law. From 1983–88, authored seven Center manuscripts.

Culpepper, Cecil. President of Bryan-College Station Board of Realtors when Center was founded and active supporter of new organization.

Dalzell, David. Abilene Realtor. Advisory committee chairman 2007–08. Noted Texas real estate educator.

Davis, G.J. Administrative clerk. One of first employees 1972.

Davis, Dr. Joseph M. Taught residential, income property appraisal at Arizona State University. Authored, coauthored (with Wyndelts) four Center articles, reports from 1976 to 1984 on appraisal, component depreciation and buying versus renting.

Dehay, Loretta. TREC general counsel, ex-officio member of broker-lawyer committee, former TREC commissioner and contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2004-present.

DeMoss, Alden. Graphic designer joined staff in 2016. She graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in environmental design – architectural studies and a minor in art. She had previously been a Center student worker.

Dickens, Dr. Thomas. Center research associate in early 1980s. Wrote six articles for Center 1982–86 on income tax law.

Donnell, Cydney C. Executive professor of finance and director of real estate programs for Mays Business School. Contributor to *Tierra Grande* magazine.

Dotzour, Dr. Mark. Named chief economist in 1996. Retired in 2015. While chief economist, he gave an estimated 1,000 presentations to 230,000 people and greatly increased the national exposure of the Center. Author, coauthor of 91 Center articles and reports.

Dumphy, Debbie. Advisory committee member from Corpus Christi appointed in 1978.

Dupree, Norene. Research associate responsible for assisting researchers in organizing, conducting and analyzing surveys.

Dunsford, Deborah. Former assistant editor in 1980s working in media relations.

Earle, Gary. Senior systems analyst. Author of 11 Center publications 1990–95 dealing with building permit and home sales data.

Eckstrum, John. Conroe commercial-industrial Realtor. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC, 2006–2011.

Eleveld, Bart. Research associate 1978–79. Author, coauthor (with Sindt, Levi) of five technical reports.

Ellis, Don. From Del Rio. Appointed to advisory committee 1987. Chairman 1995–96.

Etter, Dr. Wayne E. Center research economist, Julio S. Laguarda Real Estate Professor in Mays Business School finance department. Coordinated LERE program. Authored 63 manuscripts for Center beginning 1977, including "Instructor's Notebook" column in *Tierra Grande*. Retired 2006 after 37 years at Texas A&M.

Evans-Cowley, Dr. Jennifer. Research associate. Created Center's popular Market Reports. Hired 1999 as assistant research scientist. Authored, coauthored more than 140 publications and articles, including 17 after joining faculty at Ohio State University (through 2007).

Fair, David. From Dallas. Member of advisory committee 1985–87. Succeeded future governor Rick Perry on committee.

Fambrough, Judon. Joined staff 1977. Attorney and author of Center's most popular articles, including Hints on Negotiating an Oil and Gas Lease and Obtaining a Texas Real Estate License. Most prolific writer in Center history. Retired in 2016.

Farmer, Doris J. Advisory committee chairman from Longview, 1987–88.

Farmer, Joe. Ex-officio member of advisory committee 1972.

Fatheree, James L. Jr. From Richmond. Public member of advisory committee 1983, chairman 1986–87.

Faulk, N.J. One of first two Center administrative clerks. Employed 1972.

Floyd, Dr. Richard L. Joined Texas A&M 1974 and Center 1977 as extension economist—real estate. Worked on educational program design. Promoted from associate director to second Center director October 1981. Executive director of System Real Estate Office 1991. Retired as executive associate vice president emeritus at Texas A&M 2007. In retirement, he coordinated the Center's popular legal seminar on ad valorem taxation.

Foster, Doug. From San Antonio. Joined Center advisory committee in 2021, representing real estate finance. Term to expire in 2027. Elected vice chairman February 2022.

Fraser, Dr. Donald P. Hugh Roy Cullen Chair in Business at Mays Business School. Authored, coauthored eight Center articles, mostly related to real estate financing issues.

Friedman, Dr. Jack P. CPA. Joined Center in 1979 as second chief economist. Named to Julio S. Laguarda Professorship in Real Estate 1985. Prolific author with 80 Center titles to his credit.

Fullerton, Vicki. From The Woodlands. Joined Center advisory committee in 2021, representing real estate brokerage. Term to expire in 2025.

Fuqua, Wendell. Twice employed as Center videographer. Also writer, photographer, producer, director and assistant editor. Hired initially 1977.

Gaines, Dr. James. Joined Center 2005 as research economist specializing in residential properties and demographics. Named chief economist in 2015. Retired 2020 and rejoined staff in 2021. Maintains Texas Housing Affordability Index and First-Time Housing Affordability Index. Called “most quoted real estate expert in Texas” by Dallas Morning News. In high demand as speaker. Former director of Rice Center in Houston.

Garrett, Debra. Joined staff in 1988 as research associate responsible for computer-generated data. Coauthored six articles.

Gann, Tom. From Lufkin. Advisory committee chairman 2005–06.

Geddes, Patrick. From McKinney. Appointed to the Center advisory committee in 2021. Term to expire in 2023.

Gilliland, Dr. Charles. Began as research associate in 1977. Hired full time in 1983. Center’s expert on Texas rural land. Author, coauthor of numerous Center articles, reports.

Gonzales, Alberto. Houston attorney who, after serving as chairman of advisory committee 1989–90, was named 80th U.S. Attorney General in 2005 under President George W. Bush.

Goode-Haddock, Celia. From College Station. Chairman of advisory committee 2003–04.

Goodnight, Patsy Rose. Joined staff in 2015 bringing 30 years’ experience at Texas A&M to the position of administrative assistant.

Graeber, Kenneth. One of first Center employees. Held dual appointment with TAEX. Was key to disseminating land-use information to rural Texas. Also researched energy issues.

Griffin, Frances. Administrative clerk responsible for Center’s publications distribution center for 14 of 15 years she worked for Texas A&M. Distributed more than 700,000 publications during her Center career.

Grissom, Terry V. MAI, associate research economist late 1980s and early 1990s. Studied urban land issues, rental housing and risk analysis. Author of 20 Center manuscripts.

Grohman, Ellen. Joined staff 1983 as senior systems analyst. Oversaw computerization of Center in 1983–84.

Guseman, Dr. Pat. Center research scientist in early 1980s. Studied urban-rural dynamics of residential real estate.

Guttery, Dr. Randall S. Assistant professor at North Texas State University (now University of North Texas). Coauthored 1996 technical report and article on coming downsizing of real estate industry, which generated most letters in history of *Tierra Grande* magazine.

Hale, Robert. TAR director of governmental affairs at time Center was created. One of five who attended original meeting at Texas A&M regarding possibility of research center there. CEO and president of Houston Association of Realtors.

Halliday, Ebby. Famed Dallas Realtor. In 2000, one of only two recipients of Center’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Haney Jr., Dr. Richard L. Professor of real estate and finance in Mays Business School. First wrote for Center in late 1970s. Authored, coauthored six Center manuscripts.

Harding, Stephen D. Executive vice president Tennessee Association of Realtors. Member of a three-person team assembled to review overall Center operations in FY 1987–88.

Harp, James H. Communications specialist in information and support services division. Edited TREND and Progress Report. Employed 1973–74.

Harris, Dr. Jack. Former research economist. Residential specialist. Developed Texas Housing Affordability Index. Authored, coauthored 207 reports and articles for Center since first Homebuyer’s Guide in 1980. Coauthored (with Friedman) English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary, one of Center’s most popular publications.

Hazleton, Dr. Jared. While director of Center for Business and Economic Development and professor of finance for Mays Business School at Texas A&M and research fellow 1991–98, he authored, coauthored 24 Center manuscripts.

Hawkins, Jacquelyn. From Austin. Member of advisory committee 2007–2011; reappointed to term ending 2017. Represented public.

Hellriegel, Dr. Don. As interim dean of business, supported Center’s move from College of Agriculture to Lowry Mays College & Graduate School of Business in 1987.

Hendricks, Andrew B. Research associate responsible for Market Reports in late 1990s, early 2000s. Coauthored four Center manuscripts.

Henry, Reese. Member of advisory committee from San Antonio in 1978–83.

Hubert, Dr. Frank H.R. Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System who testified before the Texas Sunset Commission on behalf of legislation to continue Center operations in 1980.

Housley, Gary. First SOARS coordinator. Joined education division 1974.

Hofmann, Jenifer V. Assistant editor. Authored, coauthored six articles, 1998–99.

Hunt, Dr. Harold. Research economist. Began as graduate assistant September 1995. Became full-time assistant research economist in 1998.

Houston, Vera. Communications division secretary early 1980s.

Hull-Patillo, Louise. Texas owner-broker from Victoria, real estate commissioner and contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2004–10.

Jambers, Harold. In 1977, became new SOARS coordinator. Later responsible for Center's San Antonio field office. Author of six articles on rural land, real estate education, computerization.

James, Andy. TRERC administrator, first ex-officio member to advisory committee, 1972.

James, James, W. Employed 1972 as real estate specialist, information and support services division. Handled special projects for director.

Jennings, William Douglas "Doug". From Fort Worth. Appointed to Center advisory committee in 2014, representing commercial properties. Term set to expire in 2027. Elected chairman February 2022.

Jennings, William C. Sr. From Fort Worth. Advisory committee chairman 1990–91.

Johanson, Dr. Richard. SOARS instructor from University of Arkansas. Led 1983 Center strategic planning session for advisory committee.

Johnson, James N. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 1987–89.

Jokl, Larry. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 2001 and contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2004–present.

Jones, David S. Joined communications staff in 1975. Named senior editor 1983.

Jones, Delwin. Member of Texas House of Representatives from Lubbock. Sponsored house version of legislation creating Center.

Jones, Robert "Bob". Ex-officio member of advisory committee from San Antonio representing TRERC 1979–82.

Jones, Oran. Academic business administrator II, narrator. Known as "gunny" in reference to his service in U.S. Marine Corps. Coauthor (with Harris, Earle) of three Center manuscripts on housing sales.

Jones, Dr. Ted C. Began as graduate assistant, joined research staff, promoted to senior research economist and eventually became Center's chief economist. Authored, coauthored 55 Center titles 1993–99. Popular speaker.

Justice, Glen. From Dallas. Appointed to first advisory committee, chairman 1977–78.

Kemp, 'Dick' Scott. A commercial broker and real estate investor from Austin who was a key player in the Center's recovery from its leadership crisis of 1994–95.

Kessler, Travis. TAR chief executive officer, former CEO of San Antonio Board of Realtors and contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2004–05.

Klassen, Gerald. Joined Center 2008 as research analyst. Responsible for analyzing real estate transactions databases and GIS analysis. Returned to Center as Research Data Scientist.

Kubin, Emma L. Second Center business administrator, communications division secretary. Employed 1972.

Kunkel, Dr. Harry O. Dean of Agriculture and instrumental supporter of establishing Center in his college.

Kyle, Chester. From Kingsville; served on first advisory committee, 1972–79.

Laguarta, Julio. Houston Realtor considered "father" of Center. Appointed to six-year term on first advisory committee 1971. Committee's first chairman, 1972–73. Co-author of 1990 Center book the Texas Real Estate Investment Guide.

Leigh, Dr. James. Professor of marketing in Mays Business School. Wrote five Center articles 1984–2007. Provided advice and counsel on marketing, surveying. Developed 1998 Texas Real Estate Confidence Index (TRECI), quarterly measure of real estate professional confidence in short term.

Levi, Dr. Donald R. Hired 1978. Attorney. Interim research director between Akins and Friedman. Wrote Center's first legal article (1973) while Texas A&M agricultural economics professor. Authored, coauthored 13 publications. Center's first associate director 1978.

Longworth, Dr. Donald. From Lubbock. Active property manager. Member of advisory committee 1992–97.

Loper, Joe W. From San Antonio. Received a two-year appointment to first advisory committee.

Lopez, Omar. Former Center and LERE graduate student. Was the Spanish translator for the Center's online *English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary*.

Lovell, Elaine. Senior office assistant 2008–11.

Lyon, Dr. Robert. Employed 1973. Continuing education associate professor. Community college liaison. Established first real estate educator newsletter, The Educator. Authored five Center publications (1978–87).

Madrid, Carlos Jr. Owner, president of Carlos Madrid and Associates in San Antonio when appointed to advisory committee 1995–2001.

Maler, Gary. Center's fifth director. Joined staff in 1978 to coordinate programs for real estate developers. Later promoted to senior operations officer, then assistant director and associate director. Well known in Texas real estate industry, especially for conducting strategic planning sessions.

Martin, Elizabeth "Besa". From Boerne. Attorney appointed to Center advisory committee in 2016.

Martin, Robert T. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 1989–91.

Martin, Roy. Ad valorem tax manager for Valero Energy Corporation in San Antonio. Coordinator of Center's annual ad valorem taxation seminar. Namesake of endowed scholarship at Texas A&M.

Matina, Sherry. Greater Fort Worth Board of Realtors chief executive officer and contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2007–10.

Matthewson, Dr. C.C. Received Center grant 1972–73 to develop engineering geology and communications system for land-use evaluation. Wrote 1980 Center article on Texas lignite.

McCanlies, John L. First data processing manager. Hired 1972. Authored 1976 Center article on computer programs for financial analysis of real estate. SOARS instructor.

McCanse, George A. Houston Realtor appointed to advisory committee in 1979; elected chairman 1981. Represented those engaged in ownership, development or management of industrial properties.

McCartt, Joe Bob. Amarillo commercial Realtor. Advisory committee member 2001–06 and 2008–13. Elected vice chairman February 2011. Became chairman May 2011.

McCracken, J.R. Attorney, Center research scientist. Author, coauthor (with Levi) of three *Tierra Grande* articles 1977–78.

McCoy, Don. Communications staff writer late 1970, early 1980s.

McFarland, Bobette. Center marketing director in 1980s.

McClure, Frederick D. Attorney from San Augustine. Former Center student worker. Advisory committee chairman 1980–81. First advisory committee member to write article for *Tierra Grande*.

McDougal, D. Marc. From Lubbock. Advisory committee chairman 2008–09. Represented commercial properties.

McMahan, Benny D. Retired TAR CEO. Appointed to advisory committee 1976 while Dallas Realtor. Reappointed to advisory committee in 1981 to represent public. Advisory committee chairman 1978–79. Instrumental in Center's success in its first four decades.

McNeely, Dr. John. Professor emeritus in Texas A&M's agricultural economics department. Authored five articles 1978–80, primarily on water issues.

McNight, Sen. Peyton. State senator from Tyler. Introduced Texas Senate Bill 383 in 1981 to continue Center according to recommendations of Sunset Committee.

McQuistion, Nancy. Hired as associate editor 1999. Promoted to managing editor in 2010. Primary responsibility is *Tierra Grande* magazine. Retired in 2018.

Manzel, Dr. Robert. SOARS lead instructor in late 1970s specializing in behavioral science.

Martinez, Alfonso. Joined Center staff in 2020 as database administrator. He is a retired 24-year Air Force veteran.

Miller, Catherine. Fort Worth CPA and shareholder with Kapp & Miller in Fort Worth. Member of advisory committee appointed in 1997. Authored 2005 article on cost segregation.

Miller, Lawrence "Bud." Dallas Realtor. As TAR president in 1971 was instrumental in formation of Center. Only person to be chairman of Center's advisory committee, chairman of Texas Real Estate Commission and president of TAR.

Miller, W.C. "Dub". Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 1977.

Miller, Wesley. After earning a master of science in economics from the University of Texas at El Paso, he joined the Center as research associate in January 2017. His research focuses on state and metropolitan housing markets in Texas, as well as on the regional economy.

Mitchell, George. Founder of Mitchell Energy & Development Corp. and developer of The Woodlands. Recipient of one of only two lifetime achievement award, 2000.

Moore, Marjory Kay. Broker, owner of Home Real Estate in Big Spring while serving on advisory committee 1995–99.

Moore, William "Doug". Head of education division. Employed 1972. Authored, coauthored seven Center manuscripts.

Moore, William T. State senator from Bryan who sponsored Senate Bill 338, legislation establishing Center.

Morales, Brittany. Brittany joined the staff in 2021 as business coordinator. A 2016 graduate of Texas A&M University, she has a background in human resources.

Morgan, J.E. Education division staffer. Employed 1972.

Murdock, Dr. Steven. Center demographer 1989–2007. Former head of Department of Rural Sociology, former Texas state demographer and director of Texas State Data Center and former head of U.S. Census Bureau. Numerous presentations on Center's behalf. Authored, co-authored 68 Center articles, reports.

Myres, Angela. Member of advisory committee appointed in 1997.

Nelson, Walter “Ted”. From Houston. Appointed to advisory committee in 2013. Term to expire in 2025.

Nicholas, Nick. From Dallas. Advisory committee chairman 2004–05.

Oldmixon, Douglas. Attorney, broker, TREC administrator and narrator of 2010 Center video “New Man at TREC.”

Ordway, Dr. Nicholas. Associate professor of finance and real estate at University of Texas at Arlington. Collaborated with several Center staff on projects and articles. Co-authored (with Sadler) seven Center manuscripts, including first edition of Landlord’s and Tenant’s Guide, 1985.

Orum, Claudia. Joined staff in 2013 as assistant director for business administration and human resources. Retired in 2016.

Owen, Kathleen McKenzie. Commercial broker-developer from Pipe Creek. Member of advisory committee 2008–13 representing construction industry. Also contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2007–10.

Pardue, Robert L. Houston Realtor. Served two six-year terms on advisory committee beginning with original committee 1972. Chairman. 1973–77.

Parker, Katherine. Center systems analyst 1977.

Pearson, Peggy. Center’s second data processing manager. Authored 1980 Center article on computer programs for financial analysis of real estate.

Perdue, Adam. Adam joined the Center as research economist in 2020. He came from the University of Houston Institute for Regional Forecasting where he studied the Houston and Texas economies and real estate markets. He obtained his economics graduate degrees from the University of Houston.

Perry, James Richard “Rick”. From Haskell. Represented public on advisory committee; chairman 1983–84. As state’s longest-serving governor, he appointed many of those who followed him on advisory committee.

Pflugger, Sheryl. Communications staffer in charge of print media service, clipping Center news from 20 Texas newspapers beginning in 1976.

Phyrr, Dr. Stephen. University of Texas assistant professor of finance and real estate. Awarded Center grants (1970s) to revise brokerage firms. Developed computer teaching models for analysis of income-producing real estate investments. Also taught in SOARS program.

Pilant, Karen. Communications assistant editor in early 1990s.

Pope, Bryan. Hired 2006. Associate editor in charge of Real Estate Center Online News (RECON) and Red Zone podcast. Also works in media relations, editing and writing. Became managing editor of *TG* in 2018.

Presnal, Rep. Bill. State representative from Bryan. Sponsored H.B. 570 to continue Center after its Sunset Review.

Pruitt, Cheryl. Programs coordinator who joined the Center in 2018. With her diverse business background, she brings a wealth of administrative experience to the Center.

Racster, Dr. Ronald L. From Ohio State University and member of a three-person team assembled to review overall Center operations FY 1987–88.

Richards, Dr. R. Malcolm. Fourth Center director, 1995–2006. Held Patricia and Bookman Peters Professorship in Banking. Instrumental in moving Center to Wehner Building and obtaining first funding increase in 20 years.

Rieder, Hayley. Center’s Communications Specialist II, graduated from Texas A&M University in 2017. Her duties include editing RECON, producing the Red Zone podcast, and creating content for social media. Hayley joined the Center in 2015 as a student worker.

Roberson, Joshua. The Center’s Senior Data Analyst joined the staff in 2016. He holds master degrees in economics and real estate finance.

Ross, Dr. Glen. University of Houston faculty member. Recipient of Center grants 1977–78 to study real estate curricula development and student enrollment projections through 1985.

Ryan, Sarah L. Attorney. Hired 1974. Authored five articles for Center from 1975–82.

Russell, Barbara A. From Denton. Member of advisory committee 2006–11. Elected chairman February 2011 but served only two months as her term had expired in January. Rejoined the advisory committee in 2021.

Sadberry, Patricia. Staff writer, editor and narrator in communications division. Wrote 11 manuscripts 1982–86.

Sadler, J. Michael. Arlington attorney and lecturer of business law at the University of Texas-Arlington in 1984 when he coauthored (with Ordway) the Center’s first Landlord’s and Tenant’s Guide.

Santamaria, Henry. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC, 1991–95.

Schoenfeldt, Dr. Lyle. Member of Texas A&M management department who served on the review team evaluating Center programs and activities in 1994.

Schmedemann, Dr. Ivan. Research economist and professor with joint appointment in agricultural economics. Led Land Economics and Real Estate program and conducted rural land research. One of first to publish during Center’s first full

year of operations (1972). Known as 'Doc.' Ivan and Louann Schmedemann endowed scholarship established by Society of Texas A&M Real Estate Professionals 1989. Authored 14 Center reports, articles.

Seline, Richard S. Member of advisory committee 1989–95. Moved to Washington, D.C. during his appointment.

Senter, Bill. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC 1982–83.

Schaffner, Jerry. From Dallas. Advisory committee chairman 2002–03.

Scifres, Julia. Hired 1983 as administrative assistant to director.

Schneider, John Jr. From Austin. Advisory committee chairman 1996–98.

Schuler, Ted. From Amarillo. Appointed to advisory committee by two different governors. Committee chairman 1982–83.

Schwartz, Douglas. From El Paso. Advisory committee chairman 2006–07.

Shambley, Kimberly Anne. Dallas attorney. Public member of advisory committee, 2010–15. Filled unexpired term of Louis Cortez of San Antonio who resigned.

Shelton, Debbie. Austin real estate broker. Chairman of advisory committee in 1979.

Shetty, Dr. Bala. Executive associate dean and Letbetter Chair of Business, Mays Business School. Coordinated Center activities as they relate to Mays. Key to integrating the Center as part of Mays.

Silva, Paige. Paige started at the Texas Real Estate Research Center as a student worker while completing her undergraduate and master's degree in economics at Texas A&M University. She analyzes housing trends across Texas and contributes to the Center's publications.

Sindt, Dr. Roger. Research economist. Employed 1972. From 1973 to 1979, authored, coauthored 46 Center reports and articles. More than 50,000 copies of his Homebuyers' Guide distributed.

Skrabanek, Dr. Robert L. First demographer. Employed 1972. Authored, coauthored more than 20 Center articles, reports. Served nearly 40 years with university.

Smith, James Connor. Bryan real estate appraiser. Actively supported Center and promoted scholarships for students studying real estate at Texas A&M during 1970s.

Smith, Patricia. Hired March 2007. Center's business administrator. Promoted to assistant director 2012.

Smith, Walstein Jr. From Waco. Received a four-year appointment to first advisory committee.

Snider, Rhonda. Assistant editor, 1998.

Snyder, Eileen A. Research associate. Wrote ten articles 1978–82, including the 1998–99 annual report.

Staubach, Roger. Former Dallas Cowboy quarterback turned real estate entrepreneur. Coauthored script (with Oran Jones) and starred in 1991 videotape on trends in Texas housing.

Stebbins, Dr. Don. Member of education division in mid-1980s. Wrote two publication on homebuying.

Stern, Dr. Jerrold. A doctoral student in Texas A&M accounting department 1978 and Center research associate. Continues to write tax columns as research fellow at Indiana University.

Stevens, Lynn. Administrative assistant hired June 2001. Retired 2015.

Stirton, David. Houston appointee to advisory committee. Served as chairman 1988–89.

Stribling, Dr. James C. SOARS coordinator 1980. Authored five articles 1981–88.

Stringfellow, Dale. Former independent real estate appraiser with 20 years' experience. Hired 1980 to help with SOARS.

Taska, Laura. Administrative secretary late 1990s.

Terry, Edwin. Ex-officio member of advisory committee representing TRERC, 1974–75.

Thomas, Beth. Moved from communications intern to full-time research assistant. Coauthored four Center articles 2007–10.

Torres, Dr. Luis. Research economist hired in 2012 from Mexico's central bank, Banco de Mexico. He brought international expertise to the Center. Author of two monthly reports, "Outlook for the Texas Economy" and "Texas Housing Insight."

Tumlinson, Jack. From Cameron. Member of advisory committee 1990–93.

Tymm, Dr. Tyrus. Head of agricultural economics when Center was formed. Participated in first meeting regarding a possible research center at Texas A&M.

Vajdek, Rebecca "Becky". From Temple. Joined the advisory committee in 2021. Term to expire in 2025.

Van Zandt, Gloria. Principal broker, owner, CEO of Van Zandt Realtors in Arlington when appointed to advisory committee 1995. Later served as chairman.

Vick, Sarah. Joined administrative staff in 2018, bringing with her a background in coordinating business functions.

Villarreal, M.A. Administrative clerk. Employed 1972.

Wakefield, Ronald. From San Antonio. Advisory committee chairman 2009–10.

Walker, Ronald J. Attorney. Former vice president of legal affairs, TAR. Contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses, 2004-present.

Warren-Yarborough, Rolanda. Assistant editor hired 1987. Hired specifically to run Center's desk-top computer, first on the Texas A&M University campus.

Watson, Jack. Dallas attorney. Served on advisory committee.

Wheeler, Jeff. Advisory committee member from Lubbock.

Whelan, Sally. Communications staff assistant editor hired 1983. Authored 212 news releases FY 1983–84. Editor of Real Estate Center Digest, newsletter for Texas salespersons.

Whisenant, Denise. Education coordinator. Joined Center 2004. Manages conferences, edits course texts for Texas Real Estate Commission and coordinates TREC instructor training.

White, Dr. Richard A. CPA, assistant professor of accounting at Louisiana State University. Coauthored (with Dickens) 1984 *Tierra Grande* article on income tax law.

White, Dr. Don. University of Arkansas management professor and SOARS lecturer. Coauthored (with Sadberry) 1983 *Tierra Grande* article on stress.

Wilder, Thomas A. Tarrant County district clerk from North Richland Hills. Advisory committee chairman 1991–92. Represented commercial real estate.

Wilson, Reid. Board certified Houston real estate attorney with long-standing relationship with Center's commercial seminar at South Texas College of Law. Author of five Center manuscripts 2003–11. Contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses beginning 2011.

Woodward, Todd. Communications staff writer in early 1980s.

Wooten, Dr. A.B. Appointed first director Feb. 29, 1972. Led Center through formative years, including Sunset process. Retired Aug. 31, 1981, after 32 years with Texas A&M University. Named director emeritus.

Worley, John A. From Dallas. Received a four-year appointment to first advisory committee.

Wright, Dr. Arthur L. Former Dallas Federal Reserve economist. Joined Center 1972. First assigned to information services division, later research division. Wrote Texas Real Estate News & Developments, popular publication published in many formats for 11 years beginning 1973. Authored more than 60 Center manuscripts.

Wukasch, Avis Greer. Round Rock Realtor. Broker-member of TREC. Leading actress in Center videos. Contributor to Center legal update and ethics MCE courses.

Wurtzebach, Dr. Charles. Associate professor and real estate director at University of Texas at Austin. Lead SOARS instructor. Also did grant research on impact of franchising on real estate brokerage industry.

Yamini, George O. From Dallas. Recipient of six-year appointment to first advisory committee.

Young, Sue. Home builder and former housing and home furnishings specialist with TAEX. Hired 1980 as staff real estate specialist. Authored nine Center articles 1977–87.

Appendix A

Establishing and Governing the Real Estate Center

By Judon Fambrough

NOTE: This publication is designed to acquaint the general public with the creation, organization and purposes of the Real Estate Center as established by law. The sections printed here are not verbatim.

The original legislation creating the Texas Real Estate Research Center (now known as the Real Estate Center) was Senate Bill 338 passed in 1971 by the 62nd Texas Legislature. This act created the Real Estate Center, increased the fees for certain real estate license renewals and provided for their disposition. It also amended Sections 22 and 24 of the Real Estate License Act located in Article 6573a of the Texas Civil Statutes. Presently, the Real Estate License Act is found in Chapter 1101 of the Texas Occupations Code. The original bill has been amended six times: in 1975 by S.B. 344 during the 64th Legislature; in 1981 by S.B. 383 during the 67th Legislature; in 1987 by S.B. 756 during the 70th Legislature; in 1991 by S.B. 432 during the 72nd Legislature; in 1995 by H.B. 1205 during the 74th Legislature; and in 2009 by S.B. 862 during the 81st Legislature.

S.B. 309 passed by the 77th Texas Legislature in 2001 repealed Section 86.511 of the Education Code thereby removing the Real Estate Center from Sunset Review.

The following statutes reflect the current law (as amended) effective May 12, 2009.

Establishing the Real Estate Center

Texas Education Code

Section 86.51—Real Estate Center

There is established at Texas A&M University a Real Estate Center. The Center's operating budget, staffing

and activities shall be approved by the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System.

Section 86.52—Real Estate Center Advisory Committee

The Real Estate Center Advisory Committee is created. The advisory committee is composed of nine members appointed by the governor, without regard to race, creed, sex, religion or national origin, and with the advice and consent of the senate, with the following representation:

- Six members shall be real estate brokers, licensed as such for at least five years preceding the date of their appointment, who are representative of each of the following real estate specialties:
 - real estate brokerage;
 - real estate financing;
 - ownership or construction of real estate improvements;
 - ownership, development or management of residential properties;
 - ownership, development or management of commercial properties; and
 - ownership, development or management of industrial properties.
- Three members shall represent the general public.
 - Members representing the general public who are appointed after this act's effective date shall not be licensed real estate brokers or salespersons and shall not have, other than as consumers, a financial interest in the practice of a licensed real estate broker or salesperson.
- It is grounds for removal from the advisory committee, if:
 - a broker member of the committee ceases to be a licensed real estate broker; or

- a public member of the committee appointed after the effective date of this act or a person related to the member within the second degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity acquires a real estate license or a financial interest in the practice of a licensed real estate broker or salesperson.

Except for the initial appointees, members of the advisory committee hold office for staggered terms of six years, with terms of three members expiring on January 31 of each odd-numbered year.

Any vacancy shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired portion of the term. Each member shall serve until a successor is qualified.

The chairperson of the Texas Real Estate Commission or a member of the commission designated by the chairperson shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the advisory committee.

The committee shall elect a chairperson from its membership to serve for an annual term.

The committee shall meet not less than semiannually, and in addition on call of its chairperson, or on petition of any six of its members, or on call of the president of Texas A&M University or a designated representative.

The advisory committee shall review and approve proposals to be submitted to the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System relating to staffing and general policies including priority ranking of research studies and educational and other studies.

The president of Texas A&M University or a designated representative shall submit to the advisory committee in advance of each fiscal year a budget for expenditures of all funds provided for the Center in

a form that is related to the proposed schedule of activities for the review and approval of the advisory committee.

The proposed budget approved by the advisory committee shall be forwarded with comments of the committee to the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System prior to its action on the proposed budget, and the board of regents of The Texas A&M University System shall not authorize any expenditure that has not had prior advisory committee approval.

The president of Texas A&M University or a designated representative shall submit to the advisory committee for its review and approval a research agenda at the beginning of each fiscal year and shall continuously inform the advisory committee of changes in its substance and scheduling.

Each member of the committee is entitled to per diem as set by legislative appropriation for each day that the member engages in the business of the committee. A member may not receive any compensation for travel expenses, including expenses for meals and lodging, other than for transportation expenses as prescribed by the General Appropriation Act.

The advisory committee is subject to Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code better known as the Open Meetings Law; Chapter 2001 of the Government Code that deals with Administrative Procedures; and Chapter 572 of the Government Code that deals with Open Government and Ethics.

The Center's financial transactions are subject to audit by the state auditor in accordance with Chapter 321, Government Code.

On or before January 1 of each year, the Center shall file with the governor and the presiding officer of each house of the legislature a complete and detailed written report accounting for all funds received and disbursed by the Center during the preceding year.

Section 86.53—The Center's Purposes, Objectives and Duties

The Center's purposes, objectives and duties follow.

- Conduct studies in all areas directly or indirectly related to real estate, or urban or rural economics or both and to publish and disseminate the findings and results.
- Assist the real estate teaching programs offered by Texas colleges and universities as requested and to award scholarships and establish real estate chairs when funds are available.
- Supply material to the Texas Real Estate Commission for preparation of examinations for real estate salespersons and brokers, as requested by the commission.
- Develop and from time to time revise and update materials for extension courses in real estate offered by Texas universities and colleges when requested.
- Assist the Texas Real Estate Commission in developing accreditation standards for vocational schools and other teaching agencies giving real estate courses, and standards for the approval of real estate courses, as and when so requested by the commission.
- Study and recommend changes in state statutes and municipal ordinances, providing, however, that no Center staff member shall contact legislators or locally elected officials directly concerning the recommendations except to provide a factual response to an inquiry about research methods or the nature of the findings. Those conducting such research and studies shall periodically review their progress with the advisory committee or its designated representative, and the results of any research project or study shall not be published or disseminated until it has been reviewed and approved in writing by the advisory committee or its designated representative.
- To prepare information of consumer interest describing Center functions and to make the information available to the general public and appropriate state agencies.

Section 86.54—Publication Charges, Gifts and Grants

The Center may charge for its publications and may receive gifts and grants from foundations, individuals and other sources for its benefit.

Section 86.55—Annual Report

A report of the Center's activities and accomplishments shall be published annually.

Texas Occupations Code 11.01

Two sections in the Texas Occupations Code deal directly with the funding for the Texas Real Estate Research Center. Here is a summary of the two sections.

Section 1101.152 provides that the commission shall adopt rules to charge and collect fees in amounts reasonable and necessary to cover the costs of administering the chapter including but, not limited to, fees for the following:

- filing an original application for a broker license,
- renewal of a broker license,
- filing an original application for a sales agent license,
- renewal of a sales agent license and
- registration as an easement or right-of-way agent.

Section 1101.154 provides that the commission shall charge and collect the following fees in addition to those specified in Section 1101.152 for the benefit of the Texas Real Estate Research Center;

- \$70 for the issuance or renewal of a broker license,
- \$20 for the issuance or renewal of a sales agent license and
- \$20 for the certification of registration of an easement or right-of-way agent.

The additional fees collected under Section 1101.154 shall be transmitted not less than quarterly to Texas A&M for deposit in a separate banking account that may be appropriated only to support, maintain and carry out the purposes, objectives and duties of the Texas Real Estate Research Center.

Fambrough is an attorney, member of the State Bar of Texas and Senior Lecturer with the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University.

Appendix B

Real Estate Center Timeline

Year	Event
1971	March 16. Texas Senate passes Senate Bill 338 creating Texas Real Estate Research Center. Sen. William T. Moore of Bryan introduces bill.
1971	May 6. Legislation to create Center introduced to Texas House of Representatives by Rep. Delwin Jones of Lubbock. It passes with amendments.
1971	May 10. Senate concurs with House amendments.
1971	May 18. Gov. Preston Smith signs legislation creating Texas Real Estate Research Center and placing it at Texas A&M University.
1971	August 30. Legislation creating Texas Real Estate Research Center becomes effective. Center funded by \$10 annual fee for brokers and \$5 for salespersons.
1972	February 11. College of Agriculture Dean H.O. Kunkel recommends to Texas A&M University President Jack K. Williams that Dr. A.B. Wooten be named first director of TRERC.
1972	February 29. Texas A&M University President Jack K. Williams recommends to the University's Board of Directors that Center be established. Recommendation is approved.
1972	Dr. Alvin B. Wooten named first director
1972	June 16. Texas A&M University board approves operating program, budget for Center; research officially begins.
1972	May 17. First Advisory Committee meeting held. First Center budget approved.
1972	Julio Laguarta elected first chairman of Advisory Committee.
1972	August 31. Center's first official day of operation. Offices set up in Halbouty Geosciences Building.
1972	Dr. William G. 'Bill' Adkins named Center's first chief economist.
1972	<i>First research projects proposed: Study of Texas housing inventory, Texas licensee survey, development of real estate problems outline, and development of three-year program of work.</i>
1972	First Master of Agriculture Degree in Real Estate Economics — later known as Master of Land Economics and Real Estate (LERE) — awarded.
1972	The Educator, a newsletter for real estate teachers, begins publication
1972	<i>First licensee survey shows 66,000 total Texas licensees.</i>
1972	Center gives first research grants, three to Texas A&M and three to the University of Texas
1973	June 15. Progress Report, a bimonthly newsletter of Center activities, begins publication.
1973	First issue The RealEstateMent, a series of research-based fact sheets, published on "Why Prepay the Home Mortgage?"
1973	First Center audiovisual programs produced, "Real Estate Career Day" and "Texas Real Estate Research Center."
1973	First real estate conference: "Opportunities in Real Estate Under Urban Encroachment."
1973	<i>First real estate workshop for junior/community colleges deans, directors and department chairs.</i>
1973	Center issues first report on rural land values on Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona.
1973	TRENDS, a quarterly statistical report, begins publishing.
1973	Staff and Advisory Committee visit Real Estate Center at University of Connecticut.
1973	Additional staff space secured in petroleum engineering building and later off campus at 707 Texas Ave.
1973	First series of reports on statewide housing published.
1973	Center begins tracking trends in single and multifamily housing permits, listings, inventories, home sales, home prices; office, retail and industrial building permits.
1974	May 20. First class of School (later "Studies") of Advanced Real Estate Subjects (SOARS) held.
1974	Texas Assembly on Land Use organized.
1974	Student scholarship program introduced.
1974	R.L. Pardue elected chairman of Advisory Committee
1975	Licensee fees dedicated to Center increase to \$15 for brokers and \$7.50 for salespersons
1975	David S. Jones joins Center as senior editor
1976	Texas Real Estate Teachers Association (TRETA) organized with help from Center
1976	Texas Real Estate 1985 published
1976	SOARS graduates first class

- 1976 First Homebuyers' Guide published; 50,000 printed over several years.
- 1977 *Tierra Grande, the Center's quarterly magazine, begins publication; initially sent only to brokers*
- 1977 First real estate conference for four-year college and university deans
- 1977 Glenn W. Justice elected chairman of Advisory Committee
- 1978 Donald R. Levi named first associate director
- 1978 In response to a request from the Texas Legislature, Center researches effects of property tax reform. Preliminary Investigation of Proposed Property Tax Reform in Texas sent to House Ways and Means Committee of Texas Legislature.
- 1978 First proprietary school conference sponsored
- 1978 Researchers begin using computers (Radio Shack TRS-80s)
- 1978 Benny McMahan elected chairman of Advisory Committee
- 1978 100,000 color copies of "Building a Future in Real Estate" printed, distributed to real estate students statewide.
- 1978 Gary Maler joins Center staff
- 1979 Jack P. Friedman named chief economist
- 1979 Debbie Shelton elected Advisory Committee chairman
- 1979 *Association of Real Estate Economists (later STAMREP) organized.*
- 1979 *Tierra Grande wins Gold Quill from International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) as best nonprofit magazine in world*
- 1979 "Pattern for El Paso's Tomorrow" assembly held
- 1979 Center becomes state's primary source of building permit data
- 1979 Center and Texas Real Estate Commission hold 16 regional meetings on new earnest money contract forms. Center funds live simultaneous PBS television broadcast to multiple Texas cities.
- 1979 Texas Housing Affordability Index (THAI) developed
- 1979 San Antonio field office opened
- 1980 Richard L. Floyd named associate director
- 1980 *First Center-written software, "Investment Analysis Package" released in MS DOS. Sells for \$20.*
- 1980 *Tierra Grande wins second Gold Quill from IABC as best nonprofit magazine in world*
- 1980 First Spanish-language publication, a homebuyer's guide, published
- 1980 Fred McClure elected Advisory Committee chairman
- 1980 TAMUS Board of Regents passes resolution urging Sunset Committee continue Center operations
- 1980 Center moves from Halbouty Geosciences Building to Academic and Agency Building (later named the Blocker Building)
- 1981 "The Realty Report" radio program begins airing on 85 Texas stations
- 1981 "Texas Real Estate & You" newspaper column begins, sent to 70 newspapers
- 1981 George M. McCanse elected Advisory Committee chairman
- 1981 Gov. Bill Clements signs legislation continuing Center following two-year Sunset Committee review
- 1981 First director Alvin B. Wooten retires
- 1981 Dr. Richard L. Floyd named second director
- 1981 Number of Texas salespersons declines for first time, Center revenue begins falling
- 1981 Center funds \$100,000 endowed professorships at University of Texas at Austin (now William Jennings Professorship) and at Texas A&M University (Julio Laguarda Professorship in Mays Business School)
- 1981 Alvin B. Wooten endowed scholarship established
- 1981 First homebuyer's survey conducted
- 1981 Annual review and outlook report initiated
- 1981 *Analysis of Property Tax Shifts Resulting from Reappraisal report sent to Texas House of Representatives.*
- 1981 Center sponsors first meeting of nation's real estate research center directors, National Real Estate Center Directors Association formed
- 1982 Computers introduced into SOARS curriculum
- 1982 Ted Schuler, Jr. elected Advisory Committee chairman
- 1982 Separate divisions (research, education, communications) eliminated

1982 Leadership Information Series, packets of speaking materials for industry leaders introduced

1982 "Cube" replaces TRERC as official Center logo

1982 Center begins copyrighting all materials

1983 First convocation for local board presidents held

1983 *James R. (Rick) Perry elected chairman of Advisory Committee*

1983 Real estate sourcebook first published

1984 Teacher Instructional Packets (TIPs), research-based presentations for real estate teachers, introduced

1984 Executive Newsletter, periodical for industry leaders, begins publication

1984 *Lawrence (Bud) Miller, Jr. elected chairman of Advisory Committee*

1984 Center Digest, newsletter for salespersons, begins

1984 *Senior Editor David Jones assists Texas A&M with speakers' packet, slides and special pull-out section of The Texas Aggie magazine promoting passage of Proposition 2 to Texas Constitution*

1985 Dr. John Allen selected to lead research

1985 Real Estate Executive Lecture Series (REELS), audio cassette tapes detailing Center research results, introduced

1985 Research Report, newsletter of research highlights, begins publication

1985 Patsy Bohannon elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1986 "Real Estate Center" becomes unofficial name replacing "Texas Real Estate Research Center"

1986 *Letter of the Law, a newsletter of legal real estate issues, begins publication*

1986 Center establishes research program on rural land values in the Southwest

1986 James L. Fatheree, Jr. elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1986 *Words "Real Estate Center" added to titles of all periodicals. Tierra Grande becomes Real Estate Center Journal.*

1987 Center buys first desktop publishing system on Texas A&M campus for \$200,000

1987 Administration for Center moved from College of Agriculture to Mays College of Business & Graduate School of Business

1987 First seminar on ad valorem taxation held

1987 Doris Farmer elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1987 Outside review team examines overall Center programs, says Center doing good job

1987 TRENDS becomes monthly newsletter after four years as a quarterly

1988 David L. Stirton elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1988 Publication requests set record with 49,027 orders for year

1988 *Center gives record 35 scholarships; because of declining funding, however, scholarship program discontinued following year*

1989 Gary Maler named assistant director

1989 Dr. Ted C. Jones named chief economist

1989 Alberto R. Gonzales elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1989 Institute of Property Taxation (now Professionals in Taxation) requests Center evaluate IPT property taxation courses. Center helps develop new courses. IPT begins holding annual educational program at Texas A&M.

1989 Center issues 354 news releases in single year

1991 First rural land seminar held

1990 First Board of Realtors MLSs linked directly to Center via computer

1990 MCE classroom series initiated

1990 English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary published.

1991 Thomas Wilder elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1990 William C. Jennings Sr. elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1990 MCE classroom series initiated

1990 Largest single news release mail out (2,800) announces publication of the *English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary*.

1991 Thomas Wilder elected chairman of Advisory Committee

1991 Center, Commission, and KAMU-TV produce three 50-minute MCE videotapes

1992	Conrad Bering elected Advisory Committee chairman
1992	Publications sales set annual sales record of \$80,508
1993	<i>Real Estate Center Journal</i> renamed <i>Tierra Grande</i>
1993	Dr. James W. Christian becomes Center's third director
1994	Texas RECON, an online bulletin board, established; forerunner to today's website and digital newsletter
1994	Don Ellis elected chairman of Advisory Committee
1995	Center moves into E.L. Wehner Building on west campus of Texas A&M
1995	National Association of Realtors uses Center's English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary in its Certified International Property Specialist designation courses.
1995	Texas Legislature authorizes first funding increase for Center in 20 years to \$17.50 for salespersons and \$20 for brokers annually
1995	<i>Tierra Grande</i> sent to all licensees, increasing circulation from 40,000 to 85,000; <i>Center Digest</i> discontinued
1995	Dr. R. Malcolm Richards becomes Center's fourth director
1995	Center's website unveiled.
1996	First full year of website operation attracts 39,440 visitors
1996	Conrad Bering elected interim Advisory Committee chairman
1996	Center's 25th anniversary celebration held on campus of Texas A&M University
1997	Dr. Mark G. Dotzour becomes chief economist
1997	Inactive licensees added to mailing list, bringing total circulation to 110,000
1997	<i>Real Estate Center Online News (RECON)</i> , first Center e-newsletter, begins publishing
1997	Letter of the Law sent to all licensees
1998	John P. Schneider elected chairman of Advisory Committee
1998	First-Time Homebuyers Affordability Index developed
1999	Market Reports on Texas MSAs initiated
1999	Gloria Van Zandt elected chairman of Advisory Committee
1999	First director A.B. Wooten dies
1999	Texas Real Estate Confidence Index (TRECI) initiated
1999	Center begins using TTVN to broadcast MCE to West Texas audiences
1999	Associate Editor Nancy McQuiston joins communication staff
2000	Total research reports published in one year sets record with 42
2000	Newspaper, magazine clippings set record with 1,525 for year
2000	"Key" logo introduced
2000	Center presents first Real Estate Lifetime Achievement Awards to Ebby Halliday and George P. Mitchell
2000	357,063 persons visit Center website logging 4.6 million pageviews
2000	Joe Adame elected Advisory Committee chairman
2000	Annual report combined with a calendar
2001	First all-electronic news release disseminated to 400 media outlets
2001	Seven Texas PBS stations air Center video on affordable housing crisis; stations nationwide take satellite feed for future broadcast
2001	Lynn Stevens joins staff as administrative assistant
2002	Jerry L. Schaffner elected Advisory Committee chairman
2003	Celia Goode-Haddock elected Advisory Committee chairman
2003	Dr. Ali Anari begins Monthly Review of Texas Economy
2004	<i>Home Buying Among Ethnic Groups</i> study released
2004	Nick Nicholas elected Advisory Committee chairman
2004	Center rated "very good – one of the best programs in the nation" by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Research Assessment Program
2005	Gary Maler named Center's fifth director
2005	Tom Gann elected Advisory Committee chairman

2005 Dr. Jack Harris retires.

2005 Dr. Jim Gaines joins staff.

2005 *Tierra Grande circulation reaches 130,000*

2005 *English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary released on CD*

2006 Douglas Schwartz elected chairman of Advisory Committee

2006 June visitors view 2.2 million pages on Center website

2006 Total page views on Center website sets record of 20,506,387

2007 David Dalzell of Abilene elected chairman of Advisory Committee

2007 Dr. Mark Dotzour appears on PBS' "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer."

2007 Center recognizes Dallas Morning News writer Steve Brown as "Reporter of the Year" for coverage of Real Estate Center.

2007 Center Research Fellow Dr. Steve Murdock named director of U.S. Census Bureau.

2007 *Center videotapes added to website and average 9,000 hits per month*

2007 Articles about Center reach 150.6 million households worldwide.

2007 Patricia Smith joins staff as business administrator

2008 D. Marc McDougal of Lubbock elected chairman of Advisory Committee

2008 Economic downturn puts Center experts in national spotlight with interviews for Forbes.com, Time, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Chicago Tribune, CNN.com. USA Today, Los Angeles Times, MSNBC and others.

2009 Ron Wakefield of San Antonio elected Advisory Committee chairman

2009 Center moves to Two Research Park on Research Parkway

2009 Center ramps up social media with Twitter, Real Estate Red zone podcast, Facebook and YouTube.

2009 First focus group held to discuss Center communications and research. Held at TAR convention in Dallas.

2009 Dr. Charles Gilliland appointed Helen and O.N. Mitchell Fellow in Real Estate in Mays Business School

2009 Dr. Charles Gilliland wins Gold Quill Award from American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

2009 National Association of Realtors makes unrestricted \$10,000 gift to Mays Business School. Gift results from REC's Gerald Klassen white paper on "The Equity Assistance Structure" A Restricting Plan for the Residential Secondary Mortgage Market."

2009 Market News renamed NewsTalk Texas

2009 Center moves to Two Research Park on Research Parkway

2009 Center ramps up social media by beginning Twitter, Real Estate Red Zone podcast, adding Facebook page and uploading videos to YouTube.

2009 First focus group held to discuss Center communications and research. Held at 2009 TAR convention in Dallas.

2009 TAR staff visits Real Estate Center

2009 Charles Gilliland appointed Helen and O.N. Mitchell Fellow in Real Estate in Mays Business School

2009 Charles Gilliland wins 2009 Gold Quill Award from American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

2009 National Association of Realtors makes unrestricted \$10,000 gift to be used by Mays Business School. Gift results from REC's Gerald Klassen white paper on "The Equity Assistance Structure" A restricting Plan for the Residential Secondary Mortgage Market."

2009 Market News renamed NewsTalk Texas

2010 James Michael Boyd elected Advisory Committee chairman

2011 First online MCE courses offered, one each on commercial real estate and Texas land markets.

2011 English-Spanish Real Estate Glossary published as first Center and Texas A&M e-book. Sold on Amazon.com for Kindle users.

2011 Center initiates Roy G. Martin Jr. Endowed Scholarship with \$25,000 donation.

2011 First post on Center blog

2011 Oct. 19. Mortgage industry leaders meet for Center's first "intelligence panel"

2011 Joe Bob McCartt elected Advisory Committee chairman

2011 TREC and Center partner to develop, deliver, and maintain courses to meet certain MCE requirements of Texas Occupation Code. Courses cover legal updates, ethics, and broker responsibilities.

2012 Dr. Luis Torres joins Center as associate research scientist

2012 Center publishes 2,000th title

2012 Gary Maler named one of nine outstanding alumni of Texas A&M College of Architecture

2012 Patricia Smith named assistant director

2012 Mario Arriaga elected Advisory Committee chairman

2013 Assistant Director Patricia Smith retires

2013 Claudia Orum joins staff as assistant director

2013 Market Reports reformatted, renamed Market Data Sources

2014 Kimberly Shambley elected Advisory Committee chair

2014 Gerald Klassen rejoins Center as university's first research data scientist. Center enters "big data" revolution to explore patterns and relationships affecting Texas real estate.

2014 W. Douglas Jennings appointed to Advisory Committee to complete unexpired term of James M. Boyd.

2015 C. Clark Welder elected Advisory Committee chairman

2015 REC launches "digital first" policy by posting research results on web as soon as possible.

2015 Aug. 31. Mark Dotzour retires as chief economist

2015 Sept. 1. Dr. James Gaines named Center's sixth chief economist

2015 Redesigned website launched

2016 Pamela Canon named assistant director/business administrator

2016 *Tierra Grande* wins third IABC Gold Quill for global excellence.

2016 Joshua Roberson joins staff as senior data analyst

2016 Alden DeMoss joins staff as graphic designer

2016 Attorney Judon Fambrough retires

2016 Claudia Orum retires

2017 Stephen D. 'Doug' Roberts elected chairman of Advisory Committee

2017 Dr. Ivan W. 'Doc' Schmedemann dies.

2017 Center launches Monthly MSA Spotlight Report featuring text written by a computer.

2017 Hayley Rieder joins staff as communications specialist

2017 Nov. 9. First webinar held. Dr. Luis Torres presents talk on "Texas Housing Trends." Only 15 watch "live."

2018 Jan. 10. First broadcast webinar, "2018 Austin Economic Outlook" viewed live by 130.

2018 Managing Editor Nancy McQuiston retires

2018 W. Douglas Jennings elected Advisory Committee chairman

2018 Patsy Rose Goodnight retires

2018 Dr. Erin Kiella joins staff as assistant research scientist for rural land

2018 Cheryl Pruitt joins staff as business coordinator

2018 Wesley Miller joins staff as a research associate

2018 Annual Report + Calendar wins IABC Gold Quill Award, the Center's fourth

2018 Sarah Northcutt joins administrative staff

2018 Associate Editor Edie Craig retires

2019 29th Annual Outlook for Rural Land Markets draws record crowd of 509

2019 Alvin Collins of Andrews elected Advisory Committee chairman

2019 *Tierra Grande* magazine wins its fourth, and the Center's fifth, IABC Gold Quill Award

2019 Reputation Lighthouse of Austin completes first-ever REC communications audit, formulates new branding initiative

2019 Research economist Ali Anari retires

2020 Julio Laguarda, father of Real Estate Center, dies at 86

2020 *Tierra Grande* rebranded as *TG*

2020 Adam Perdue joins Center as research economist

2020 Alfonso Martinez joins IT staff

2020 REC joins TRETAs as "life member"

- 2020 Troy C. Alley Jr. appointed chairman of Center's Advisory Committee
- 2021 Brittany Morales joins Center as Business Coordinator

Endnotes

- ¹ "Texas Real Estate Commission Staff Report to the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission," July 28, 1978
- ² "TRERC and the Department of Agricultural Economics, The Early Years" by David S. Jones, 1984
- ³ "College History, Mays Business School," <http://mays.tamu.edu-mays/college-history/>
- ⁴ "TRERC and the Department of Agricultural Economics, The Early Years" by David S. Jones, 1984
- ⁵ The Texas Real Estate Research Center, 1971-1972 Annual Report
- ⁶ "TRERC and the Department of Agricultural Economics, The Early Years" by David S. Jones, 1984
- ⁷ Retrospect, 1973–74. Annual Report of the Texas Real Estate Research Center, November 1974
- ⁸ 1977–78 Texas Real Estate Research Center Annual Report
- ⁹ "Research, Education and Communications, an Interview with TRERC Director Dr. Richard Floyd," Texas Realtor, December 1982, p. 14
- ¹⁰ 1977–78 Texas Real Estate Research Center Annual Report
- ¹¹ *Tierra Grande* magazine, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fourth Quarter 1977
- ¹² Fiscal year 1983–1984 Annual Reporter, Texas Real Estate Research Center at Texas A&M University.
- ¹³ Aggie Real Estate Network (aggierealestatenetwork.com/history)
- ¹⁴ TRERC Publications by David S. Jones, May 1977
- ¹⁵ 1977–78 Texas Real Estate Research Center Annual Report.
- ¹⁶ "Remarks on the Organization of the Texas Real Estate Research Center" by Richard L. Floyd, 1982
- ¹⁷ Annual Report, Texas Real Estate Research Center, 1980–1981
- ¹⁸ *Tierra Grande* magazine, Third Quarter, 1980
- ¹⁹ "The Texas Real Estate Research Center, "Journal of Real Estate Education, Fall 1982, by Dr. Richard L. Floyd and David S. Jones.
- ²⁰ Real Estate Center Digest, Vol. 11, No. 2, Summer 1995
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Fort Worth Star Telegram, June 1, 1986, article by Casey Selix
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ 1987-88 Real Estate Center Annual Report
- ²⁵ "Real Estate Center Attacks Day-to-Day Problems" by David S. Jones, Texas Realtor, September 1989, pp. 32–34
- ²⁶ 2002–2003 Real Estate Center Annual Report
- ²⁷ Annual Report 1995–96, Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University
- ²⁸ *Tierra Grande* magazine, Spring 1996, pp. 2–3
- ²⁹ Texas Real Estate 1985, September 1976
- ³⁰ "At Texas A&M, Realty Research for Real" by David S. Jones, The Texas Aggie, February 1978, pp. 22–23
- ³¹ 1998–99 Real Estate Center Annual Report



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