

# Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting

500 Grapevine Hwy. • Suite 362  
Hurst, TX 76054  
(817) 205-2334 • Fax (817) 796-2087  
Email: john@thefletcher.org

Get **Linked in** with John at:  
[www.linkedin.com/in/johnfletcherpr](http://www.linkedin.com/in/johnfletcherpr)  
Read John's blog on  
[www.thefletcher.org](http://www.thefletcher.org)

VOL. 10-4 • APRIL 2018

## SMART STRATEGY:

### Adapt a Winning Model

My client AgTexas Farm Credit Services recognizes how to engage youth in the agriculture industry.

When Bob Tallman and I began working with AgTexas in 2014, we pitched the idea of repurposing a widely used method of bestowing sports honors to fit their profession. We've all seen organizations that recognize the student-athlete of the week, so Bob and I borrowed this idea

and created a new concept that pays tribute to high school seniors involved in 4-H and FFA, as well as their campus and community.

This program, which we named AgYouth of the Month, recognizes six monthly honorees in the 13 AgTexas office areas for a total of 78 honorees. Of these, 21 students received a \$1,000 scholarship at our banquets.

AgTexas held a regional AgYouth Scholarship Banquet in three locations last week: Amarillo on Monday, Lubbock on Tuesday and Granbury on Wednesday. By the way, if you ever receive an invitation to attend an event at the Kitalou Gin just outside Lubbock, be sure to accept. This repurposed gin is quite a unique venue!

The highlight of each evening is the random drawing of the scholarships. Because each of the 78 honorees is already a winner of a \$100 Visa gift card and the recipient of recognition from local media, there are already plenty of good feelings to go around. As each honoree sits with family members and FFA or 4-H advisers, AgTexas representatives conduct a drawing to select the scholarship winners.

Something unusual and inspiring occurred in Lubbock when Beverly Fehr's name of Seminole FFA was drawn. She asked AgTexas CEO Tim McDonald if she could transfer her \$1,000 scholarship to Megan Leitkeman, her fellow Seminole FFA member.

Beverly said that she is already receiving a full scholarship to Sam Houston State University and that her friend Megan is putting together student loans and scholarships in her quest to attend Texas

When Bob Tallman and I began working with AgTexas, we repurposed...

AgYouth of the Month recognizes 78 4-H and FFA students each year

Beverly asked if she could transfer her \$1,000 scholarship to her friend, also in Seminole FFA...



Tech University. [Check out this brief video clip here.](#)

This gesture provided a truly inspiring moment, one that proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that there are many thoughtful and considerate young people preparing to be the leaders of tomorrow.

To my friends at AgTexas Farm Credit and the 78 students who work with their families, as well as 4-H and FFA advisers, to improve agriculture, I say, "Very well done!"

What began as an idea with Bob Tallman has grown to become the cornerstone of AgTexas' identity and branding campaign.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

TCU held its annual Leadership Awards Luncheon this past Friday and honored seven amazing people. Among these are three that I interact with from time to time:

- **John and Nancy Krister** from Amarillo (John is CEO of Yellowhouse Machinery with 10 locations), who were named **Most Valuable Alumni** for their ongoing service to TCU as both donors and leaders on the National Alumni Board.

John was my doubles partner at TCU during my junior year, and he could knock the cover off a tennis ball.

- **Miguel Reyes**, CEO of Saturn Freight Systems, received the **Alumni Service Award** for the many ways he serves – as president-elect of the Frog Club Advisory Board and as director of the Alumni Career Network. Miguel and I



are members of the TCU Fellowship of Christian Athletes board.

• **Mike Berry**, President of Hillwood Properties, received the **Royal Purple Award** for his service on the TCU Board of Trustees and the many other ways he makes a difference at TCU and in Fort Worth.

# SMART RECOGNITION:

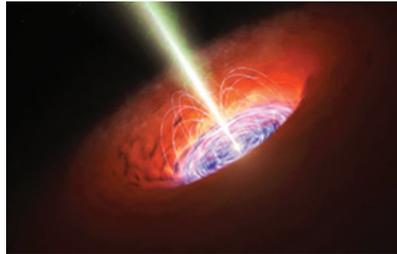
## News Hole

We call it "The News Hole." That 30-, 35- or 60-minute TV newscast theoretically has a massive amount of space to provide coverage of your story, but that hole shrinks whenever a major story breaks.

Consider the recent passing of former First Lady Barbara Bush and the Southwest Airlines incident.

No matter how compelling or timely your news story may be, sometimes a stroke of bad timing removes your chances of showing up on TV, radio or in print. In an instance like this, social media becomes the best vehicle for pushing your story out.

On some occasions, the other stories may be so massive that you can still get washed up onshore in the wake of their enormity.



Occasionally, you may even benefit from such distracting coverage because your story reflects badly upon your business, organization or community.

Former First Lady Barbara Bush died on Tuesday, April 17. The same day, Southwest Airlines flight 1380 experienced a horrific accident during which an engine fan blade sheared and cut through a window, killing a passenger. Then, there were numerous political storylines vying for attention: the back-and-forth between Congress and the President, Mike Pompeo's approval process for Secretary of State, negotiations with North Korea, etc.

Oh yes, and we had a weather event that led to an expanded four-minute weathercast.

So, take your 35-minute 10:00 p.m. newscast and perform the following math:

- 10 minutes of commercials
- 4 minutes for Mrs. Bush's death, remembrances and family side stories
- 2 minutes for Southwest Airlines' story
- 3.5 minutes for weather
- 4 minutes for sports

You now have only 11.5 minutes for Congress/President Trump/Michael Cohen/Russia/North Korea/Pompeo approval. AND your local news.

There is VERY little time remaining for your story about National Volunteer Week or your company's new hiring initiative or your new product launch.

There ARE, however, situations when a shrinking news hole can be good:

• Disappointing news on earnings or revelations about a shakeup at your company. Issue the news release on a small news hole day

and your story is unlikely to be covered, yet you can prove that you did submit the story idea.

• The City of Waco: TV networks and stations across America were interested in returning for the 25th anniversary of Mount Carmel's final day (April 19). Several told me they would be reporting from Mount Carmel, but that fell to the wayside with the death of Mrs. Bush and the Southwest Airlines incident. That proved to be very fortunate for Waco, which had been unfairly branded with this event although it occurred 12 miles outside town.

The news hole is a very real concept and it rules every single newscast. Plus, broadcast, print and digital media are all limited by the number of people they have available to cover your story since news departments now have smaller staffs.

Your best solution: Shoot photos and video, then send them to the media along with a well-written and brief narrative. You'll be amazed at how often you can earn coverage for your story when you make it easier on the media.

Check out [this story on the Zebra Strings](#), the violin program from Grandview Elementary in Grandview. By shooting and submitting the story, we ran on the News 8/WFAA TV news.

Be aware of the News Hole and be creative in how you work around it.

# THE Tiebreaker

## Wise Use of Donated Money

I sponsored the March 22 luncheon of the Southlake Chamber of Commerce. At the end of my sponsor talk, I asked everyone to look under the last page of the note pads I had placed at each table setting.

Each note pad had a \$5, \$10, \$20 or \$50 bill – \$1,000 in total. I asked everyone to do something especially kind to serve others. Over 20 people shared what they had done with the money to make somebody else's day.

I originally planned to give \$100 to the person who was most creative with their generosity. Since THREE stood out, I gave \$100 to each of them – one to **Joey Kramer from Hope South Chiropractic**, another to **Sonia Leal from McGuffin CPA**, and another to **Laura Redman from Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Southlake**. [Read below](#) to learn how people gave the money away and how these small acts of kindness made a huge impact.





Fletcher Consulting

## **Generous Spirit of Southlake Chamber Members Lives!**

I have kept a record of how so many of our Chamber members so generously gave away their cash received at the March 22 Southlake Chamber luncheon. Our roll of honor includes these below and the many of you who gave your money away yet did not tell me how:

- Arlin Gold – Providence Bank
- Barb Walker – EECU
- Dan Holmes – Engel & Volkers Real Estate
- Ian MacLean – Highland Landscaping
- Jame' Scott – GRACE
- Jeff Sanford – Juris Fabrilis
- Joey Kramer -- Hope South
- Karen Adams – Texas Health Southlake
- Laura Redman – Texas Health Southlake
- Leslie Barrows -- Barrows Firm
- Lindsay Polyak – Insperity
- Mark Jones – First Financial Bank
- Mika Davis-- Methodist Southlake Hospital
- Norm Downing – U.S. Health Advisors
- Paul Blight – Glacier Commercial
- Sonia Leal – McGuffin, CPA
- Ted Bilsky – Scratch Catering & Fine Food
- Teddy Nugen – Kirby's

### **By the way, just a few of the comments included:**

- . It made MY eyes well up with tears. I gave her that \$5 as an extra tip.
- It was great to see how a small gift of kindness made these workers happy and appreciative
- Your gift was not only incredibly generous, it was also profoundly inspiring.
- Your service above self has a profound impact on our community and the world at large.
- It was so awesome to help and to see the relief and gratitude on her face. Thanks so much for the opportunity to help others.

**Without revealing who did what, some of these inspiring contributions included:**

- I gave \$5 tip to a woman who had cut the hair (a traumatic experience) of an Autistic little boy
- Due to my car having been attacked by small birds, on a sunny Saturday I found this group washing cars for donations and I had a \$20 bill from the chamber event and gave it to these terrific high school kids. I added a video of it.
- I gave money to students who are raising money for Young Life Camp!
- I donated the money to the Family Drug Court program in Tarrant County, which uses the money to buy books and gift cards for children in foster care.
- I went around to all the writing pads and made sure people took their cash - I found \$120.00 in extra cash not picked up, so I donated it to a great cause. Mark Delgado is bringing a movie about PTSD to Southlake called "We Are Stronger" - <http://www.strongermovie.com/> Every \$15.00 is an extra seat for a veteran at the movie - we have over 600 of them registered so far. **I contributed an extra \$300.00 to the event to get more in there.**
- With my mother in a nursing home, I've noticed how the workers are so kind. Using this cash and some of my own, I purchased \$10 gas cards for each of them. I gave these to them this weekend and they were so grateful. It brought so much joy to my heart and everyone in the nursing home.
- GRACE may have made a haul – I gave my \$5 to them, and I know she said that others had done the same thing
- I paid my five dollars to the persons next to me at Sonic!
- My Southlake Rotary Club is having a Food Drive to benefit the GRACE Food Pantry today. With your gracious donation, I was able to purchase MORE of the items that GRACE is in dire need of.
- I bought the guy behind me in line at Subway's sandwich combo for lunch today. Thanks for the fiver.
- While waiting in line at Walgreen's, I overheard a college aged girl not having enough money to pay for her medicine. She was calling her mom to transfer her money, but she wasn't answering, and the girl was getting very embarrassed. I decided to go up and pay for her prescription (it was over \$20 so I paid the difference personally).
- I took my \$5 and turned into \$50 worth of ice cream for the staff at my office. They were VERY appreciative! Thanks for the neat idea.
- Just gave away my first \$20, pretty funny I walked behind a young lady holding 5 containers of Blue Bell Ice Cream. I, being the natural Smart Alec, "said to her, Gee is that Gluten Free!" She giggled and said since she was pregnant the only way she could get her baby to move was when she ate some Ice Cream. So, I pulled out my first \$20 and said let me buy you a supply for a while! She was floored and the 4 people in line gave her a standing ovation! It was great to make her Day!

- This was a family in Sam's while I was getting an Rx and I said, Boy. that looks like quite a family to feed and the grandmother replied yes and there are three others at home...so needless to say they got the last \$25 I had to give away!
- A young lady has applied to college in the fall at Sam Houston and part of the process is that she needs certain documentation proving she had several shots and the deadline is today. Her parents do not have the means to pay for the shots and she doesn't have the money. A co-worker, whose daughter is friends with her, told her mother. Her mother mentioned it to me. I knew right then exactly where my \$50 should go. I told my co-worker to tell Ashlyn to make sure some day when she has \$50 to spare-to pay it forward towards someone else in need and she said "absolutely!".
- I was given \$5. However, as we continued to introduce ourselves to others, 4 other people gave me their \$5 so I left with \$25. I was thinking hard of what I would do with \$25...so then I felt like God put it on my heart to match the \$25...so now I needed to figure out what to do with \$50 for someone at GRACE. Well, that Thursday was a busy day for me. We had graduation that evening for 3 ladies that had successfully completed our Transitional Housing program. I went to dinner with our dynamic speaker and shared with her my "dilemma" and she decided to match with ANOTHER \$25 gift certificate to the Cheesecake Factory. I decided to gift a phenomenal single mother in our program, who goes to at 3:00 o'clock in the morning, and she takes her lunch break to go home and take the younger boys to school then goes back to work daily. I purchased a \$50 gift card to Hand and Stone for a facial or massage, Cheesecake Factory \$25, a coupon for a free Nothing Bundt Cakes bundlet and then this morning I was just given another \$5 for her to tip at the spa.

**I had promised a \$100 bill to the most unique way of giving the money away. Since there were two, I am awarding the cash to each of them, so \$200:**

- **Joey Kramer from Hope South**, for collecting the undistributed \$120 and then adding \$300 of his own to send people to the "We Are Stronger" PTSD movie
- **Sonia Leal from McGuffin CPA**, for noticing a college-aged girl at the pharmacy who did not have enough to pay for her prescription. Sonia used our money and then added her own to pay for the girl's prescription.
- **Laura Redman from Texas Health Southlake**, for paying for a young lady's medical shots documentation she needed to complete her college application.