

Star-Telegram

Two area conservatives have new posts

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Star-Telegram staff writers

Two local conservatives are taking the reins of two established political groups.

Pat Carlson of Fort Worth was recently named head of the Texas Eagle Forum, replacing **Cathie Adams**, who is now chairwoman of the Texas Republican Party. And former state Rep. **Arlene Wohlgemuth**, a Republican from Burleson, will become executive director of the Texas Public Policy Foundation as of January.

Oink?

Texas Republican U.S. Sen. **Kay Bailey Hutchison** got a boost or a Bronx cheer from the latest tribute to come her way — "porker" of the month in October for seeking \$1.6 billion in earmarked spending for 149 projects in fiscal 2010.

Citizens Against Government Waste, a nonpartisan watchdog group that awards the prize monthly to lawmakers who seek "pork" projects, criticized Hutchison for "loading up her goodie bag just before Halloween as she prepares to leave the Senate to run for governor."

But, of course, one of Hutchison's selling points in the campaign is all that she's done for Texas.

According to the group's database, Hutchison secured 130 projects worth \$189 million in fiscal 2009 and 145 projects worth \$259 million in fiscal 2008. The group gave her the title "for personifying the tiresome hypocrisy of some members of Congress who want to claim the badge of fiscal conservatism while continuing to abscond with billions of dollars in wasteful pork."

In D.C. again

Fort Worth's **Barrett Karr**, whose last posting was at the White House as a top legislative aide for President **George W. Bush**, has resurfaced on Capitol Hill. Karr is now the Republican staff director of the House Education and Labor Committee. Karr, a former chief of staff to U.S. Rep. **Kay Granger**, R-Fort Worth, also has a new baby on board, **Tilman Cooper Karr**, 7 months.

Rogue or Rouge?

The day before former Alaska Gov. **Sarah Palin's** memoir, *Going Rogue: An American Life*, comes out this month, a spoof is slated for release. *Going Rouge: An American Nightmare* was put together by two editors from *The Nation* and includes a reprinted column from former Texas Agriculture Commissioner **Jim Hightower**, who took issue with the notion that Palin is a populist.

"Being a populist is something real and just being popular or angry or a contrarian doesn't make you a populist," Hightower said in a recent phone interview.

He said Palin's plans to campaign for Gov. **Rick Perry** will hurt his re-election efforts. Then again, he said, no Democrat seems ready to unseat the man Hightower described as putting "the goober in gubernatorial."

"Texas, we've got a little farther to go, especially since now we're the Secessionist Republic of Republican Ridiculousness," Hightower said.

Out on a limb

State Rep. **Charlie Geren**, R-Fort Worth, was recently dubbed Friend of County Government by the Texas Association of Counties.

Tarrant County officials said Geren earned the award for his role in keeping state-owned property near Eagle Mountain Lake under local government control and because he opposed revenue and appraisal caps.

"I know you went out on a limb for us on many occasions," Tarrant County Judge **Glen Whitley** told Geren after he was presented the award by Commissioner **J.D. Johnson**, the association's president.

Geren said it is an honor to serve Tarrant County.

"I've got great commissioners to work with and a great county," he said. "Without your support, it wouldn't be worth a darn."

Staff writer Anthony Spangler contributed to this report.

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