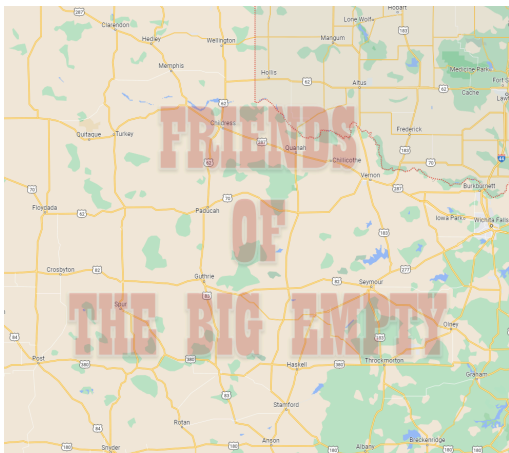




## Friends of The Big Empty Newsletter

July, 2024



## Upcoming Events

7/4 - The 6th Annual 4th of July Thing - Munday

7/6 - Main Street Market: presented by Henderson Beef - Seymour

7/7,14,21,28 - Sunday Matinee - The Chosen Series - Munday

7/13,14 - 3 Person Scramble - Munday

7/13 - Munday Market - Munday

7/13 - Seymour TX Rodeo Concert - Seymour

7/20 - Big Country Clay Shoot In Memory Of KOLE GRAY - Goree

for more events and details, see the [Event Calendar](#)

If you have an event you would like posted, please send us the details [here](#).

## Photo of the Month

Meet Tele, Sheriff of The Big Empty. See details in article below.



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## Mascot Contest Winner: Ashton Kuehler



**Friends of The Big Empty** is excited to announce our **Mascot Contest Winner**. Congratulations to **Ashton Kuehler of Haskell**. We started our contest earlier this year looking for local artists to create a mascot for **Explore**

**The Big Empty.** Our requirements included something that would represent our area of Texas known as The Big Empty. It could have been a tumbleweed, saddle, RV, jackalope, horned toad, etc. Then we asked for it to have a face, hands, feet, etc. Ashton combined these elements and came up with a cowboy phone named “Tele” who is described as “**The Sheriff of The Big Empty Who Knows What Is Going On**”.

Although Ashton is the recipient of the prize, she tells us that this was a collaboration of ideas during a discussion with friends. She loves cowboys and grew up with many cowboys and cowgirls. Her mother was Miss Rodeo Texas in 1976 and the cowboys in her life include her father, uncles, brother and husband. She and her husband raise horses in Haskell County. One of her uncles was Senior Pro World Champion in Saddle Bronc Riding in 1998 and 1999. Another uncle qualified in the NFR Saddle Bronc Riding in 1979 and was the Texas Circuit Season Champion in 1978. Her brother is even a professional bull fighter. Ask Tele about “Fear The Beard” Bull Fighter.

Ashton was inspired to come up with **the cowboy theme**. She noted that people in our area would most likely be using their phones to search for information or to browse [explorethebigempty.com](http://explorethebigempty.com) and [friendsofthebigempty.org](http://friendsofthebigempty.org). She won the \$350 prize and a video camera which were presented to her on June 9th at the **Haskell County Courthouse** by members of the **Board of Directors of Friends of The Big Empty**. Shown in the photo are Becky Offutt, Marcella Barden, Cindie Kesler, Ashton Kuehler, Exa Lee Smith, Alex Vukasin, (not pictured Jessica McDermott and Mariah McDermott). Not wanting to be left out of the celebration, Tele is also included in the photo. Thank you to everyone who participated in this contest.

Soon, you will see **Tele** pop up whenever **Friends of The Big Empty and Explore The Big Empty** promote the **Photos, Places and Events** collected on [explorethebigempty.com](http://explorethebigempty.com). We encourage anyone who wishes to share their Big Empty photos along with stories that could be meaningful to both visitors and residents. We also welcome events to add to the calendar and then we will post these notices on our [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/friends.of.the.big.empty) and in our monthly newsletter.

Friends of The Big Empty is a **non-profit organization** that also offers memberships that benefit one another by helping us to promote The Big Empty while we promote our sponsors who wish to share in the spirit of living in this wonderful part of Texas. You can find out more by visiting our [Membership](#) page.

# Featured Sponsor: Texas Ag Insurance Agency

Friends of The Big Empty would like to present **Texas Ag Insurance Agency** as our **Featured Sponsor** this month. Texas Ag Insurance provides Multi-Peril Crop insurance to several different crops, Crop Hail, Annual Forage, Pasture Rangeland & Forage and Livestock Protection. They assist the farmer when severe weather and crop failures occur. Their main office is in **Haskell** and they have two satellite offices in **Lubbock** and **San Angelo**.



Becky Offutt and Kacy Sanders both worked for Matlock & Associates initially. When that business was for sale, Becky and Kacy acquired it in 2020, forming Texas Ag Insurance Agency. With Becky's 42 years of experience and Kacy's 12 years of experience, it was an excellent match. At present, four full-time and two part-time employees are employed to assist customers. Their customers include farmers and ranchers primarily located in **Knox, Haskell** and **Throckmorton** counties. However, they have been able to serve other Texas counties as well as **New Mexico** and **Oklahoma**. They tell us what makes their business different is how **they strive to provide the best service than any other agency** and **genuinely care about the farmer and rancher**.

Texas Ag Insurance was the inaugural Bronc Buster level sponsor of Friends of The Big Empty. We are fortunate to have their support and appreciate their continued involvement and promotion of Explore The Big Empty. We were also fortunate to have Becky join the Board of Directors in April. She has taken on the role of processing new memberships. She and Kacy also lent their favorite recipes for a book we have available as a fundraiser. You can purchase **The Merry Table** now in Kindle format or paperback on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). If you would like to learn more about Texas Ag Insurance, please see our [Sponsors](#) page where they are listed under the Bronc Buster section. You will find their website and contact information as well as their latest short video on **Livestock Risk Protection**.

## Notable Resident Corner





### **Don Thompson (Munday)**

Don grew up in small towns in the Panhandle, then worked in Amarillo for years as a Buyer for a couple of wholesale companies after attending Frank Phillips College and West Texas State University.

He worked with his Dad in Knox County for a few years, then moved to Abilene for almost 10 years.

Next, he lived in Plano for 13 years, working first as a retail store manager, then later as a Buyer for a

software company before landing work as a Buyer for World Tableware, a Division of Libbey Glass for four years. He was transferred to Toledo, Ohio, to the corporate office of Libbey, working there for 6 years.

“A new boss came in and booted me out of Libbey after 10 years,” he said. “But I was able to go to work for Oneida Silverware as Vice-President of Procurement – Metalware, so I worked in New York for one year for Oneida before relocating to Guangzhou, China for two years for Oneida. Then Oneida was bought out by Anchor-Hocking so I was out again. That’s when I moved back to Texas and worked as a Right-of-Way Agent for pipelines and oil drilling companies for a few years. It was good to be back ... continue reading at our [website](#)

## **Welcome to our newest sponsor and members!**

**Vaquero:** [RAS Trucking, Inc.](#)

### **Buckaroo:**

Shirley Welch

Glenna Shahan

Wilde Farms

Janice Dutton

Frank Dutton

Nancy Bellinghausen Tidwell

Urban Bellinghausen, Jr.

If you are interested in joining us to help spread the word in our effort to gather photos, events and places to explore in The Big Empty, please see our [Membership](#) page.

## A big big thank you to our **sponsors!**

### **Bronc Buster:**

[Texas Ag Insurance Agency](#)

### **Vaquero:**

[Munday Emporium](#)

[By the Books Business Services](#)

[Wichita Brazos Museum and Cultural Center](#)

[RAS Trucking, Inc.](#)

### **Thank you.**

[Friends of The Big Empty](#)

[Explore The Big Empty](#)

Friends of The Big Empty, a registered non-profit, is working to bring together the people, places and sites to see.

The purpose of Explore The Big Empty is to educate the public about public and private resources available for tourism within counties of Texas known as "The Big Empty".



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