

PLEASE CIRCULATE TO:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



ORCA  
P.O. Box 12877  
AUSTIN, TX 78711

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 470  
Austin, TX



# THE RURAL TEXAN

FALL 2002

OFFICE OF RURAL COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE . . .

From the Desk Of . . .

<i>The Executive Committee Chair</i>	2
<i>The Executive Director</i>	2
<i>Guest Column: Rural Texas: Where Opportunities Abound</i>	3
<i>ORCA and TDA Host Rural Economic Development Conference</i>	4
<i>Cuero Works Toward Recovery From 1998 Floods</i>	4
<i>Rural Counties Selected for Comptroller's FMR</i>	4
<i>USDA Site Consolidates Farm Bill Information</i>	4
<i>Spotlight on . . .</i>	
<i>Texas Municipal League Serves Texas Cities</i>	5
<i>The City of Coleman</i>	5
<i>Migratory Texas Two-step in 1990s Affected All Counties</i>	6
<i>ORCA Employee Honored for Bravery</i>	6
<i>Publications for Community Leaders Now Available Online</i>	6
<i>Nonprofit Warehouse Announces New Drug Discount Card</i>	6
<i>Entrepreneurial Spirit, Texas Style</i>	7
<i>ORCA Joins State Disaster "Response" Team</i>	7
<i>Publications of Interest</i>	7
<i>Learning Opportunities</i>	8
<i>Funding Opportunities</i>	9
<i>Report Card for IT Systems Spotlights Results</i>	10
<i>To Contract Out or Not to Contract Out</i>	10
<i>Part II: After the Declaration . . . Who Helps?</i>	10
<i>Cheap Trees Contribute to Community Beautification</i>	11
<i>Using Technologies More Effectively in Small Business</i>	11
<i>Library Project for Bookless Colonia a Success</i>	11
<i>Disparity in Quality of Care for Minority Patients Studied, Addressed</i>	11
<i>ORCA's Program Activities</i>	12
<i>Help for Communities Fighting Illegal Dumping</i>	13
<i>Rural and Frontier First Responders Get Needed Defibrillators</i>	13
<i>PUC Set to Support Advanced Telecommunication Services in Rural Texas</i>	13
<i>Goodbye Hard Copy, Hello Cyberspace</i>	14
<i>Rural Youth in Higher Education</i>	14
<i>Movie Industry a Boost to Community Economy</i>	15
<i>HHS Takes New Steps To Aid Rural America</i>	15
<i>Center Provides Professional Assistance to Border Communities</i>	15
<i>Research Addresses Transportation Issues</i>	16

## Rural Communities Win Governor's Community Achievement Awards

Four rural communities were among the nine total winners of the prestigious 33rd Annual Keep Texas Beautiful Governor's Community Achievement Awards for 2001-2002. The awards have been funded by The Texas Department of Transportation since 1986, and are presented to communities in nine population categories. Balmorhea, Breckenridge, Lufkin, and Muenster won the awards for having some of the best grassroots environmental programs in the state. The \$1 million prize the winners share is designated for landscaping along state-maintained highways.

**Balmorhea**, in Reeves County, works as a community—all 527 residents—to make the difference. Nearly everyone participates in

community-wide activities of Keep Balmorhea Beautiful. Some of the community's projects include campus cleanups by students, Earth Day activities, cleanups along area highways in Adopt-a-Highway groups, lake and canal cleanups, Christmas tree recycling, and water conservation education.

**Breckenridge**, in Stephens County, considers freedom from litter a priority. Known as the Mural Capital of Texas (so designated by the Texas Legislature) original murals have turned some of the most unsightly buildings into works of art and reduced graffiti in the process. The Stephens County Beautification Association has logged more than 8,300 hours of volunteer

(Continued on page 14)

## Citizen's University Offers Insight, Understanding of City Government

By Ann Dewees, ORCA

The College Station Citizen's University (CSCU) began in 1998 as a way of improving citizens' understanding of city government and their role in it. Today, the University spurs students on to become involved in their local government and essentially develops a local pool of knowledgeable potential elected or appointed city leaders.

"Most citizens don't have a clue how their city works and don't really care until it's time to write the tax check," said Peggy Calliham, Public Relations Director for the city of College Station. "This is a feeding ground for positive support. About half the class later gets actively involved in city government, and their knowledge and understanding makes for a much higher quality of city official." She feels the investment of about \$125 per person is well worth the results.

The University's 10-week session consists of a 3 1/2-hour class one night each week. The class focuses on city police and fire departments, city budgets, public utilities, public works, parks

(Continued on page 8)



# FROM THE DESK OF . . .

## The Executive Committee Chair

In the ten months since ORCA began, some systemic rural problems have become obvious.

- ♦ Population loss, which depletes the tax base of any community, is the result of a loss of jobs. Not discriminating between low-paying and high-paying jobs, we're talking about a loss of jobs. A loss of the economic base. As the loss occurs, communities need assistance in providing the necessary services of water, waste disposal, health care, transportation, and low- to moderate-income housing, all of which put a strain on our entire economic system.
- ♦ The legislature enacted the sales tax options for communities to provide a source of revenue for economic and industrial development. ORCA has the Texas Capital Fund, which is currently administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture, for economic development. There are many programs for assistance to communities to address the various problems facing our rural communities, but the most serious problem is the lack of leadership capacity. Not necessarily a lack of desire to lead, but rather the skills to lead and to compete.
- ♦ We have many leadership programs in the state, advanced by many agencies of state government. But they lack coordination and focus, and in some cases, they lack cooperation.
- ♦ There are cities and counties in our state that have no e-mail system.

So what do we do? We forge a policy that has focus and makes the most efficient use of the funds that we have. We build on a regional basis. We help those communities who are willing to take a risk to be successful. Those who plan. Those who reach out. Those who can successfully implement programs which stem the tide of job loss and create new jobs.

It takes commitment on the part of the state and the communities to make changes. Changes which may require giving up old ways and old boundaries and old turfs so that we can "reinvent" the way we solve the problems we face, as well as the way we attack those problems.

Rural Texas is the Heritage of Texans. It exemplifies the values, the spirit, and the foundation on which our state has grown over the years. There is opportunity in rural Texas, and we must nurture its growth for the benefit of all.

William M. Jeter III  
Chair, ORCA Executive Committee

**The Rural Texan** is a free publication of the Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA).

It is produced quarterly to inform the public about agency programs and services, and is written and designed in-house by agency staff.

For permission to reproduce material from **The Rural Texan** or to contribute articles for consideration of publication, please contact ORCA.

ORCA is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are made available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Copies of this publication have been distributed in compliance with the State Depository Law and are available for public use through the Texas State Publications Depository Program at the Texas State Library and other state depository libraries.

To subscribe to **The Rural Texan**, or for more information about ORCA, contact:

Office of Rural Community Affairs  
P.O. Box 12877, Austin, TX 78711  
Phone: 512-936-6701 Fax: 512-936-6776  
Toll free: 800-544-2042  
E-mail: [orca@orca.state.tx.us](mailto:orca@orca.state.tx.us)  
Web: [www.orca.state.tx.us](http://www.orca.state.tx.us)

ORCA does not endorse any product or service discussed in this newsletter. Such discussions are provided to readers for their information only.

## The Executive Director

### On the Square in Rural Texas

Greetings again from the Office of Rural Community Affairs, where it really is all about rural Texas.

This is the second issue of our new newsletter, *The Rural Texan*. It looks like the first issue came across well. I want to thank everyone for all the positive feedback and comments on the first issue. The feedback has been encouraging. It is important that the information in this newsletter be helpful. Please continue to share your ideas and suggestions.

Perhaps one of the most critical opportunities offered by the creation of our new agency is the opportunity for new ideas and innovation. The challenges facing rural communities are as many as there are communities but these challenges can be opportunities. There are success stories in many communities, where creativity mixed with motivation and leadership makes the difference. Thinking of new things and then trying them is the norm.

Then there are places and situations where trying the same old thing seems to be the norm. We have to learn that it is all right to try something new. There is room for change, for innovation, and for trying new things. The Office of Rural Community Affairs is a partner for change, a resource for best practices, and a place for support and encouragement. Perhaps the bottom line is that if many of our communities or parts of their infrastructure do not try some new ideas, maintaining the status quo will continue to become more difficult. Survival may depend upon planned and managed change.

In another area, the agency is tasked with developing a rural policy for the State of Texas and submitting it to the Legislature. This policy must first represent the realities of our rural communities as they are now, and their future as it could be. It must be comprehensive and meaningful. It must also be solution-oriented.

What should that policy include from the perspective of rural leaders and rural citizens all across our state? How can all the areas that are part of daily life in rural communities be included and yet reflect the diversity of our rural areas and our rural population? What should be included in the roadmap to the future of rural communities all across Texas from a state policy perspective? This statewide rural policy offers another opportunity to influence the future of rural Texans.

Have suggestions for this policy? Share it now; participate in the process. Our web site will soon have a special place for input and discussion of the rural policy for our state. I look forward to your partnering in the process.

Thanks again from YOUR Office of Rural Community Affairs. See you next time.

Robt. J. "Sam" Tessen, MS  
Executive Director

### ORCA Executive Committee

William M. Jeter III, Chair (Bryan)  
David Richey Alders (Nacogdoches)  
Carol Harrell, Vice Chair (Jefferson)  
Wallace Klussmann (Fredericksburg)  
J.C. "Jim" Roberts (Lubbock)  
Lydia R. Saenz (Carrizo Springs)  
Kent Sharp (Big Spring)  
Patrick Wallace (Athens)  
Michael Cooper Waters, Secretary (Abilene)



## ORCA PHONE LIST

**Executive Office**

Hill, Jerry	512-936-6708
Knopp, Pamela	512-936-6706
Miller, Cindy	512-936-6702
Morgan, Susan	512-936-6710
Tessen, Sam	512-936-6704

**Accounting**

Cruz, Theresa	512-936-6719
McGlasson, Robert	512-936-6707
Newberry, Phoebe	512-936-6718
Truong, Lai	512-936-6717
Valenzuela, Rebecca	512-936-6716

**Communications**

Deweese, Ann	512-936-6714
McFarren, Jill	512-936-6712

**Community Development**

Dial, Wayne	903-272-0111
Garcia, Gus	512-475-3817
Garrison, Yolanda	512-475-3880
Hartley, Julie	512-475-3823
Langabeer, Wendy	512-475-3843
Larkin, Jacqueline	512-475-3924
Leos, Erica	512-475-3811
Lopez, Alvino	806-794-6938
Medel, Mary Ann	512-475-3315
Mendoza, Steve	512-475-1888
Midura, Joe	512-475-3835
Negrete, Refugio	512-475-3842
Odom, Kelle	512-475-3909
Sandoval, Veronica	512-475-2305
Schreiner, Kathleen	512-305-9404
Swango, Stephen	512-475-3851
Terry, Bonny	512-475-3833
Torres, Clara	512-475-3895
Vallejo, Cynthia	512-475-3925
Vistein, Jeffrey	512-475-3855

**Information Services**

Beissner, Robert	512-475-3279
Eguzo, Celestine	512-936-6721
Huffman, Roger	512-305-9408
Lizcano, Olga	512-475-2639

**Outreach & Training Services**

Funderburk, Bill	512-936-6701
Gibson Jr, Clyde	512-936-6731
Hoefling, Stacy	512-936-6738
Scott, June	512-475-3806
Stone, Charles	512-936-6737

**Program Compliance and Audit**

Arce, John	512-475-1416
Boyer, Jennifer	512-475-3923
Cardenas, Oralia	512-475-3911
Smith, Mary Alice	512-475-3849
Ramos, Joe	512-305-9090
Watson, Alice	512-475-3869
Wuest, Robert	512-475-3922

**Research, Policy, and Planning**

Allis, Jennifer	512-936-6727
Beverly, Eric	512-936-6701
White, Kim	512-936-6713

**Rural Health**

Darnell, David	512-936-6730
Easley, Michael	512-936-6709
Hofmann, Jennifer	512-936-6734
Kindle, Dondii	512-936-6703
Lewis, Alan	512-936-6733
Ngo, Quang	512-936-6729
Wright, Robin	512-936-6732

To email a member of the ORCA staff, address the missive to the staff member's first initial and full last name@orca.state.tx.us. For example, for Ann Deweese use adeweese@orca.state.tx.us.

Just want to send comments to the agency in general? Send your email to orca@orca.state.tx.us.



# GUEST COLUMN

## Rural Texas: Where Opportunities Abound

By Judge Sue Kennedy, Nacogdoches County

**W**ithin each new challenge or problem, an opportunity waits to be discovered and fulfilled. In the vast state of Texas, many rural areas are struggling with difficult economic situations, including the decline of resources and jobs. Even though many tools are available to local rural communities, the toughest decision can be what process can best solve the problem.

County governments have the legislative authority to create economic development programs, fund programs with local tax dollars, and enter into agreements for program administration. In Nacogdoches County, an economic development corporation was formed to locally and creatively identify opportunities for creation of jobs and development of resources. Since we do not have an economic development sales tax, this corporation is funded through membership dues, with each member getting at least one board position. The board is composed of more than 60 members, representing county and city governments, Stephen F. Austin State University, Chambers of Commerce, utilities, financial institutions and advisors, realtors, developers, engineers, attorneys, the local Farm Bureau, hospitals, physicians, insurance agents, newspapers, the local blood center, and the industrial foundation. This corporation has been successful in recruiting new business, expanding existing business and securing private donations for the development of a bio-tech research and industrial park. The corporation has been in place for five years and our area continues to experience growth in jobs, housing starts, and sales tax receipts.

The true success story is the strong partnership of diverse interests that was created. When we COMBINE our individual, political, and economic strengths into one voice, we know we can fulfill any opportunity. Similar successes await discovery and completion in every rural community. It is the local community/area that can best address problems, identify resources, and develop a unified plan of action. As the partnership experiences successes and deeper trust, the local effort develops into regional partnerships. These regional partnerships have a stronger voice and can work in concert to overcome larger, regional problems.

Significant components in the success equation are our state and federal resources. ORCA is rural Texas' advocate in Austin and the conduit to assistance from state agencies. The ORCA Executive Committee, along with staff, has held meetings throughout rural Texas. They have encouraged public input at each meeting and have given the communities a tremendous opportunity to foster a local-state partnership. ORCA has a broad mission, but we can expect specific and direct assistance if we ask.



### Inaugural Rural Summit *Rural Passion Into Action*

Don't miss the chance to share your ideas with others who are interested in rural development and economic issues.

***Come to the first-ever  
totally rural conference!***

Mark your calendar now to attend the **Inaugural Rural Summit**, "Rural Passion Into Action," February 19-20, 2003, at the Austin Convention Center in beautiful downtown Austin!

The **Inaugural Rural Summit** will bring 300 local officials, stakeholders, and individuals representing various rural interests together to discuss rural development and economic issues and develop innovative rural policies to encourage rural growth for the 78th Legislative Session.

Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities will be available.

Watch the ORCA website for more information or contact Cindy Miller toll free 800-544-2042 or email [cmiller@orca.state.tx.us](mailto:cmiller@orca.state.tx.us).

## ORCA and TDA Host Rural Economic Development Conference

By Jill McFarren, ORCA

The Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA) and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) teamed up on September 10 in Killeen to host a conference dedicated to redefining economic development in rural Texas.

The conference was intended to broaden the scope of conventional economic development processes and include the creative application of unique practices that reflect distinctive nuances and personalities of individual communities. The concept was designed to bring economic development back to the local level, encouraging a review and exploration of local resources for opportunities instead of looking to external prospects.

“ORCA and TDA share a common goal of supporting rural Texans,” said Robt. J. “Sam” Tessen, MS, ORCA’s Executive Director, “so we came together to facilitate the growth of new perspectives towards economic development in rural Texas communities. One way our partnership can accomplish this goal is to bring community leaders together to share considerations, ideas, and encouragement to nurture existing prospects, and diversify, expand and create new opportunities. This conference was our first step.”

Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs said, “TDA and ORCA brought state, academic, and professional resources together to explore opportunities for rural communities to ‘grow their own’ entrepreneurs, expand existing businesses, and establish new businesses. It was a great opportunity to strategize about rural community development beyond the traditional means.”

Representatives from rural community chambers of commerce, councils of government, elected officials, and economic and community development organizations attended the one-day event.

## Rural Counties Selected for Comptroller’s FMR

The Texas Comptroller’s Office selected Jim Hogg, San Jacinto, and Wichita counties from a total of 32 that applied for a Financial Management Review (FMR), an on-site review of financial and/or managerial operations conducted by a team of Comptroller analysts and certified public accountants. The three were selected as providing a good cross-section of county governments in the state.

Under a mandate from the 77th Texas Legislature, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (TCPA) is required to help at least three counties develop and implement effective county management systems. The process must be coordinated with the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas.

FMRs are strictly voluntary, as is the implementation of recommendations derived from them, and can be requested only by a local government’s governing body or an elected office holder. In the past, reports generated by an FMR mostly addressed financial issues for each department, but more recently, the Comptroller’s office began offering four types:

- ♦ Traditional FMRs;
- ♦ Information Technology and Electronic Infrastructure Reviews;
- ♦ Governmental Accounting Standard Boards (GASB) 34 Implementation Reviews; and
- ♦ Municipal Revenue Reviews.

For more information on FMRs, contact the Comptroller’s Local Government Assistance division at 800-531-5441, extension 3-4679, or visit their web site at [www.window.state.tx.us/lga/index.html](http://www.window.state.tx.us/lga/index.html).

## USDA Site Consolidates Farm Bill Information

The United States Department of Agriculture, in an effort to make it easier to locate information on Farm Bill 2002, has set up a web page consolidating information on the various categories of the bill at [www.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.usda.gov/farmbill)

The site contains details of the bill, questions and answers, applications and sign-up forms, and a comparison of the 1996 and 2002 bills.

The site also offers fact sheets in English and Spanish, a summary of the bill by Title in chart form, and a “What’s New” section to highlight updates and additions.

The site will change and grow as new information becomes available.

## Cuero Works Toward Recovery From 1998 Floods

By Oralia Cardenas, Gus Garcia, and Clara Torres, ORCA

The city of Cuero continues to recover from the devastating flooding of October 1998. Torrential rains poured into the Guadalupe River, creating flooding that swept through almost half the city, moving and distributing tons of debris from damaged homes, trees, and other vegetation. An estimated 643 homes were destroyed and 433 were in need of rehabilitation or reconstruction, while approximately 265 families sought temporary shelter.

Neighboring communities; private individuals; and local, state, and federal emergency and public safety agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); the American Red Cross; the Salvation Army; Civil Defense; and the Texas Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Management Team, provided immediate assistance. While residents looked to families and friends for temporary help, the city bore the full burden for providing long-term recovery assistance in the area. With limited staff, the city sought assistance from DeWitt County, Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission, Lower Colorado River Authority, ORCA’s Texas Community Development Program (TCDP), and other organizations.

Between 1999 and 2002, the city received a series of awards totaling just over \$1.5 million from TCDP funds for: demolition and clearance activities affecting approximately 200 home sites; provision of the 25 percent match required for assistance from FEMA; a neighborhood revitalization project that includes water, sewer, street, flood, and drainage improvements; technical assistance; Planning and Capacity Building; and other needs of the area.

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs’ HOME Investment Partnership Program assisted the city with housing for eligible residents.

The city is continuing its efforts to rebuild the damaged areas and repair or replace infrastructure that was damaged or destroyed during the flood. Additionally, the city may be eligible to receive further funding from FEMA to address remaining unmet needs. ORCA’s TCDP staff continues to provide technical assistance to the city.



The remains of a mobile home destroyed by the 1998 floods in Cuero.





# SPOTLIGHT ON . . .

## Texas Municipal League Serves Texas Cities

By Karla Vining, Texas Municipal League

Since its formation in 1913, the Texas Municipal League's (the League) mission has remained the same: to serve the needs and advocate the interests of its members at the state and federal levels. From the original 13 members, the League's membership has grown to more than 1,060 cities. Over 14,000 mayors, council members, city managers, city attorneys, and department heads are member officials of the League by virtue of their cities' participation. Membership in the League is voluntary and open to any city in Texas.

The League provides a variety of services to its member cities. Among the thousands of bills introduced during each session of the Texas Legislature are hundreds of bills that would affect Texas cities. The League, working through its Legislative Services Department, works to support and facilitate the passage of legislation that would improve the ability of municipal governments to operate effectively.

The League employs full-time attorneys who are available to provide member cities with advice and information on municipal legal matters. On a daily basis, the legal staff responds to member cities' written and oral questions on a wide variety of legal matters.

The League annually conducts a variety of conferences and training seminars to enhance the knowledge and skills of municipal officials throughout the state. In addition, the League publishes a variety of printed materials to assist member cities in performing their duties. The best known of these is the League's monthly magazine, *Texas Town & City*. Each issue focuses on a variety of contemporary municipal issues, including survey results that respond to member inquiries.

For additional information on any of these services, contact the Texas Municipal League at 512-719-6300 or visit their website at [www.tml.org](http://www.tml.org).



## The City of Coleman

By Ann Dewees, ORCA

Coleman, TX, county seat of Coleman County, is in the west central part of the state, in the transitional area between the Edwards Plateau and the Rolling Plains. Archeological evidence indicates that human occupation of the area began 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. Later, the area was occupied by the Lipan Apaches and Comanche Indians. Several Spanish expeditions explored the area in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Camp Colorado was moved to Coleman County in 1857 and was operated by the United States Army until the outbreak of the Civil War. The camp housed state militiamen from 1861-62 and Texas rangers from 1862-65, and served as county seat from 1864-76. Among the notables who served at the Camp were John Bell Hood, later a general in the Confederate Army who led the last battle of the Civil War (at Brownsville, TX), and Lawrence S. (Sul) Ross, who became governor of Texas. John Chisum, renowned for his trail driving, established a store and maintained a ranch headquarters in the county at one time.

Begun in 1876 as the county seat, the town of Coleman boomed as a supply and recreation center for trail drivers bound for Dodge City, KS, with their cattle herds. The town was named for the county, which was named for Sam Houston's aide, Robert M. Coleman, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence. The original courthouse, built of lumber from elm trees found locally, was used in turn as quarters for bachelors, a general store, and to hold community gatherings and religious services.

The first newspaper began in 1877, but didn't survive long. The *Coleman Voice* began in 1881, and the *Coleman Democrat* began operation in 1897. In 1906, the two papers merged to become the *Democrat-Voice*. The first public school began in 1882, and the public library opened in January 1885.

After 1900, the economy base shifted to raising cotton, and by 1910 the county had a population of about 20,000. Severe drought between 1917 and 1920 caused a decline in the prosperity and the population, and the Depression caused many farmers to leave their land and move into town. The town later became a meat-processing and wool center and a manufacturing center for brick and clay tile, clothing, leather goods, office supplies, and furniture. In the 1920s, the oil industry took hold and continued to grow, reaching a production of about three million barrels a year during the 1950s and early 1960s. Agriculture and petroleum continue today as the primary industries. The current population is 5,127.



Coleman, TX: "Home of the Friendliest People in Texas"

Coleman is known as the "City of Many Titles," including:

- ◆ Land of Lakes,
- ◆ Hunting and Fishing Capital of Texas, and
- ◆ Friendliest Town in Texas.

Nearby tourist attractions include the 2,000-acre Lake Coleman and Press Morris Park. Other area lakes include Novice, Ivie, Santa Anna, and Hord's Creek Lake.

For more information on Coleman, contact the Coleman Chamber of commerce at 915-625-2163 or visit [www.colemantexas.org/coleman.html](http://www.colemantexas.org/coleman.html).

**Look for ORCA  
to Spotlight  
your community  
in a future issue of  
The Rural Texan.**

### Hazards in Texas:

Texas is number one in tornadoes,  
number one in flash floods,  
number one in rail accidents, and  
number two in hurricanes.

(Texas EMS Magazine, September/October 2002)

## Migratory Texas Two-step in 1990s Affected all Counties

According to Mark Lisher and Bill Bishop of the *Austin American-Statesman* staff, Texas looked like a kicked anthill in the 1990s, with the furious trade of people and their incomes among Texas cities. Between 250,000 and 450,000 Texas families moved from one Texas county to another each year in the 1990s. However, only one city gained from every other—Austin.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) records show a one-way flow of higher education and income into the Austin area and a migration of lower-income people out of the area throughout the 1990s. There is a hierarchy of regions in Texas, with Austin at the top, then Dallas, then Houston. Cities such as Austin are growing and drawing people from poorer, less populated areas, and the state's economy is being reshaped by this activity. People and income are not just being recycled, there are net gains by the leading cities and net losses by the rest of the state.

*Excerpted from "Population Shift in '90s Lifted Austin Area," in the Austin American-Statesman, July 21, 2002. Also see "Rural Texas," by Lisher and Bishop, in the same issue, for an additional perspective on the migration in and out of Austin. For a copy of the articles, contact the Austin American-Statesman at 512-445-0687 or 512-445-3500.*

## Publications for Community Leaders Now Available Online

Publications designed to assist rural community leaders and administrators with becoming more effective at providing essential public services and resolving local administrative, financial, social, environmental, and technological issues are now available online.

The publications, produced by ORCA's Outreach and Training Services Unit include:

- ♦ Guide to Texas Laws for County Officials (1999-2000 edition)
- ♦ Operating Manual for Rural Fire Prevention District Board of Fire Commissioners (2000 edition)
- ♦ Advantages and Disadvantages of Incorporation of a City
- ♦ Guide for City Council Members
- ♦ Comprehensive Planning for Small Texas Cities
- ♦ Computer Dictionary

These publications can be downloaded (in PDF) and printed for free, or the order form can be completed and emailed to ORCA for a copy to be sent by mail. Paper copies are available for \$20 per manual and can be requested by telephone.

According to the Texas Department of Transportation, there are more than 80,000 miles of county roads in Texas. Almost all of these were acquired between 1845 and 1981.

## Nonprofit Warehouse Announces New Drug Discount Card

*No Age or Income Restrictions; No Cost for Drug Card*

Nonprofit Warehouse has joined with Kmart America's AmeriKind Pharmacy Network to provide a Prescription Drug Discount Card to organizations, government agencies, religious organizations, or any individual who does not have a prescription drug plan or who has drugs that are excluded from their current plan, including individuals on Medicare. Prescriptions are provided at or below the wholesale price with the free card.

The discount card is valid on any legend prescription filled at your local Kmart Pharmacy. Covered pharmaceuticals include insulin, contraceptives, weight management medication, and more. There is also a mail-order program for those individuals who do not have ready access to a participating pharmacy.

The Drug Discount Card can be printed off the Nonprofit Warehouse website at [www.nonprofitwarehouse.com/kscripccard.asp](http://www.nonprofitwarehouse.com/kscripccard.asp) where information says to print or photocopy as many as you need. An application form for the mail-order service and additional information on the Discount Drug program can also be found at this website.

## ORCA Employee Honored For Bravery

*DPS honors state employee's heroic effort that saved trucker's life*

By Jill McFarren, ORCA

On Tuesday, September 3, 2002, the Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA) joined the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) in honoring Al Lewis, a Licensed Paramedic who serves as ORCA's Emergency Medical Services Specialist. Lewis was recognized in Austin with DPS' prestigious Director's Award for having saved a truck driver from burning wreckage in Ward County on April 24, 2002, while on duty for the state.

The award, created in 1982, is designed to honor non-DPS employees for cooperation, bravery, investigative assistance, etc. It is the highest honor that a non-DPS employee can receive. Only 11 Texans have received the honor this year. Recipients have included local or county law enforcement officers and fire fighters who have assisted DPS officers with criminal and narcotic investigations, and average citizens who have assisted with providing emergency services to individuals in the absence of law enforcement officers.



Colonel Thomas "Tommy" Davis, Jr., Director, Texas Department of Public Safety, presents award to Al Lewis.

*(Continued on page 16)*



## Entrepreneurial Spirit, Texas Style

Some of the characteristics of the Texas “entrepreneurial spirit” are

- ♦ being adventurous,
- ♦ having a vision,
- ♦ being self-confident,
- ♦ having versatility, and
- ♦ the ability to be a benevolent despot (a kindly absolute ruler)

Starting a company is an adventure and it can be risky. Even being a fast-growing company is no guarantee of long-term success.

To learn more about the entrepreneurial spirit and to see if you have it, see “Entrepreneurial Spirit, Texas Style,” by Jan Triplett, PhD, COO, Business Success Center ([www.bscusa.com](http://www.bscusa.com)) in *Austin Business Times*, August 2002, page 2.

## ORCA Joins State Disaster “Response” Team

By Jill McFarren, ORCA

In July 2002, the Office of Rural Community Affairs joined a team of 32 federal, state, and local agencies visiting areas in central and south Texas that were damaged by floods in June 2002. Agencies on the “response” team, coordinated by the Texas Department of Public Safety’s Division of Emergency Management (DEM), assessed the need for relief assistance.

“Some of the hardest hit areas during the recent floods were our rural communities,” said Governor Rick Perry. “ORCA’s assistance will be a valuable addition to these response teams as Texans recover from damage to homes, businesses and agricultural land.”

According to ORCA’s Executive Director, Robt. J. “Sam” Tessen, MS, ORCA was simply getting out of Austin to meet with rural community leaders on their own turf to support them during their recovery efforts. “Our job is to work with as many agencies as it takes to address the needs of rural communities across the state. Our role in the response team is to assist with the damage assessment in rural areas. ORCA’s federal, state, and local partnerships are particularly important during times like these when so many of our communities have lost so much.”

ORCA administers the state’s Disaster Relief/Urgent Need Fund, which assists communities on an as-needed basis for recovery from disasters such as floods. Typically, the relief funds are available to eligible communities and counties officially declared disaster areas by either the Governor or the President of the United States only after all other federal resources are exhausted.

Recovery efforts that are normally eligible for assistance under the Disaster Relief/Urgent Need Fund include the reconstruction of public infrastructure, including the repair of bridges, culverts, and county roads, and housing rehabilitation. In the event an area receives a federal disaster declaration, funds from the Disaster Relief/Urgent Need Fund may also be used to meet the 25 percent match requirement associated with grants awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, affected counties officially declared disaster areas by the President, as of July 8, 2002, included:

Atascosa	Comal	Hayes	Medina
Bandera	Gillespie	Kendall	Travis
Bexar	Guadalupe	Kerr	Uvalde
Blanco			

The Texas Department of Public Safety also noted that the affected counties officially declared disaster areas by Governor Perry, as of July 8, 2002, included:

Bastrop	Duval	Gonzales	Lavaca	Taylor
Brown	Eastland	Hidalgo	Live Oak	Val Verde
Burnet	Edwards	Jim Wells	Llano	Williamson
Caldwell	Frio	Karnes	McMullen	Wilson
Dimmit	Goliad	LaSalle	Real	Zavala

The Disaster Relief Fund is one of eight TCDP funds that provide financial assistance to cities under 50,000 in population and counties under 200,000 in population. Funds are earmarked for public works projects, housing, economic development, planning projects, and activities improving living conditions in the state’s colonias.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the funding source for this program.

## Publications of Interest

### *Business and Education Partnerships Regenerate Local Economies*

For community revitalization, small towns must identify and utilize all available resources. Yet one of their greatest assets—schools—is often overlooked in development efforts. In *Better Schools Through Public Engagement*, the Heartland Center looks at the important role of rural schools in local economic development and identifies “10 Strategies for Making the Connection.” Learn how to build a strong education/business partnership, and examine successful school-based projects from around the country. *Better Schools Through Public Engagement* is available for \$20 from the Heartland Center 1-800-927-1115.

The W.K. Kellogg Collection of Rural Community Development Resources, created in cooperation with the University Libraries and College of Architecture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, contains high quality rural community development materials. The collection contains guidebooks, manuals, workshop materials, reports, books, and videos in a central repository. Many publications are free or available for a nominal fee.

The collection is organized into seven categories and can be browsed in several different ways. The categories are:

- ♦ Community Development
- ♦ Strategic Planning
- ♦ Telecommunication / Education
- ♦ Leadership Development
- ♦ Economic Development
- ♦ Land Use / Natural Resources
- ♦ Health Care

To learn more about the collection or to access the materials available, visit [www.unl.edu/kellogg](http://www.unl.edu/kellogg) or contact The Heartland Center for Leadership Development, 941 ‘O’ Street, Suite 920, Lincoln, NE 68508. Phone 402-474-7667 or 800-927-1115.



The Hubbard, Texas, water tower is caught standing up for itself by Clyde Gibson, ORCA’s Technology/Telecommunications Program Specialist. Hubbard is in Henderson County.



# LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## Upcoming NOEP Classes

Here are the upcoming classes being presented by the Texas Nurses Foundation, Nurse Oncology Education Program (NOEP), for nurses and social workers who deal with cancer patients.

Date	Class	Location
Oct 11	Cancers of the GI System & Hepatitis C	Palestine
Oct 18	Breast & Gynecologic Cancer	Odessa
Nov 8	Cancer Prevention & Hepatitis C	Tyler
Nov 15	Cancers of the GI System & Hepatitis C	Bryan

For more information, or to register for workshops, please call NOEP at 800-515-6770 or in Austin at 512-467-2803, or visit [www.noep.org](http://www.noep.org). NOEP offers continuing education credits for nurses and social workers and is funded by the Texas Cancer Council.

## Need a safe Playground?

KaBoom! is a national, non-profit organization that empowers communities to build safe and accessible playgrounds for schools, churches, and neighborhoods.

The KaBoom! model helps guide volunteers in three stages of playground development: 1) information is shared; 2) people are trained; and 3) playgrounds are built.

KaBoom! offers unlimited resources, suggestions, and guidance to help any group build a safe playground.

Since 1997, KaBoom!, The Home Depot, and groups such as community volunteers, city employees, local school volunteers, business leaders, corporate sponsors, and non-profit agencies have built 351 playgrounds across the United States.

For more information about KaBoom! and how to build a safe playground in your community, visit the organization's website at [www.kaboom.org](http://www.kaboom.org) or call 202-659-0215, extension 225.

## Cancer Awareness Program Spreads Message

The Piney Woods Area Health Education Center (AHEC) offers a community-based Cancer Prevention and Control Program to promote cancer awareness. If you would like more information on the program or if you would like to schedule a presentation on cancer awareness, please contact the Piney Woods AHEC at 936-468-6901.

### University (Continued from page 1)

and recreation, city council function, economic development, and office technology and information systems.

The class is free to applicants who meet minimal eligibility requirements including the requirement that the potential student not currently be running for political office.

## Short Course in Proposal Writing Available Online

The Foundation Center Finding Funders website has a Learning Lab with a Proposal Writing Short Course. The instruction gives tips and suggestions, as well as a walk-through of how to prepare a proposal. The premise of the website is that "Raising funds is an investment in the future." The website, <http://fdncenter.org/learn/shortcourse/prop1.html>, also links to numerous entities that offer grants in many areas of need. The Foundation Center can be reached at 800-424-9836.

## Pharmacy Classroom Presentations Available

Walgreens is launching a new program to introduce high school students to careers in pharmacy. Key Walgreen employees are prepared to come to your school to deliver a presentation that will show your students what a career in pharmacy entails. They will also discuss the benefits of a career in healthcare, working as a pharmacy technician, scholarship opportunities, and potential career paths and growth.

To take advantage of this opportunity, go to the Walgreens website at [www.walgreens.com/about/careers/pharmacy/presentations.jhtml](http://www.walgreens.com/about/careers/pharmacy/presentations.jhtml) and select the link marked [here](#).

The main corporate number is 847-914-2500, but the website encourages contact by email.

Twenty-four College Station residents are selected by an anonymous committee of former graduates of the CSCU. Selection is based on strength of the applications, civic leadership potential, and diversity of the applicants.

Bryan and Lubbock are currently using similar systems, and Lubbock credits their program's success to the College Station model.\*

## Scholarships Available to Nursing Faculty

NOEP is offering 14 scholarships to faculty members of Texas undergraduate nursing programs for the 5-day Faculty Training Program at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston on May 19-23, 2003.

In addition to observational clinical experiences in inpatient and outpatient settings, topics will include:

- ♦ Cancer treatment modalities tumor biology
- ♦ Colorectal, breast, lung, and prostate cancer update
- ♦ Pain management
- ♦ Ethical issues
- ♦ Symptom Management
- ♦ Psychosocial issues

For a scholarship application, contact NOEP at 800-515-6770 or email Becky Elam at [belam@texasnurses.org](mailto:belam@texasnurses.org). Deadline for scholarship applications is November 1, 2002.

## Conservation Service Student Internships Available

Student Conservation Association (SCA) has opportunities for high school students ages 15-19 and people 18 years of age and older, in their internship program.

This program is for students interested in having one of more than 2,000 expense-paid internships in disciplines such as:

- ♦ Wilderness Habitat Restoration;
- ♦ Historical Research or Interpretation;
- ♦ Marine Ecology;
- ♦ Public Policy;
- ♦ Environmental Education; and
- ♦ Fire Management.

Detailed information can be found in the SCA website address: [www.sca-inc.org](http://www.sca-inc.org). For more information, contact Ashley Hansen at 703-524-244 or [ashley@sca-inc.org](mailto:ashley@sca-inc.org).

**CHECK THE ORCA WEBSITE  
FOR A CALENDAR OF  
UPCOMING RURAL EVENTS.**

For more information on this program, visit their website at <http://mvp.ci.college-station.tx.us/cscu> or contact Calliham at 979-764-3499.

\* To read more about the City of Lubbock Citizens' University, see *Texas Town and City*, June 2002, page 12, "Welcome to Our World: Educating Citizens about Municipal Government" by Liz Inskip-Paulk.





# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Latino Undergraduate Student Internships Available

The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), a nonprofit organization, promotes Latinos participation in our nation's civic life and each year sponsors two Congressional Internship programs: the SHELL Legislative Internship Program (SLIP), for junior and senior undergraduate students studying at an accredited four-year institution, and the Ford Motor Company Fellows Program, for college graduates at an accredited four-year institution.

Participants in either the SLIP or Ford Congressional Internship Programs will be eligible to meet and network with Latinos who are involved in leadership positions at the municipal, state, federal, and nonprofit levels.

The SLIP is a paid five-week internship, and the Ford Motor Company Fellows Program is a paid six-week internship program.

For more information contact Edith J. Castillo, Director of Leadership Programs, NALEO Educational Fund, at 323-720-1932, extension 122, or 800-34NALEO, or at 5800 S. Eastern Ave., Ste. 365, Los Angeles, CA 90040.

## Federal Funding Available for Public Transportation Study

The US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, is issuing a request for grant proposals for an operational test, which is funded at \$1million to demonstrate and evaluate innovative approaches to integrating Advanced Public Transportation System technologies (also referred to as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies for transit or Transit ITS) and available Information Technology (IT) systems.

The purpose of the test is to better coordinate subsidized transportation services in rural areas among multiple transit operators.

A rolling application process will be used for this solicitation, so, there is no specific closing date.

Contact Mr. Ronald Boenau or Mr. William Wiggins at 202-366-4995, or by email at Rural.RFP@fta.dot.gov, <http://www.fta.dot.gov/research/fleet/its/otrpf.html>.

**The ORCA  
2003-2007 Strategic Plan  
is now available on the  
ORCA website.**

## Federal Funding Available for Economically Distressed Areas

The US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) has funding available for projects that will alleviate conditions of substantial and persistent unemployment and underemployment and low per-capita income in economically distressed areas and regions of the nation.

Potential applicants must demonstrate to EDA, by providing statistics and other appropriate information, the nature and level of distress their project efforts are intended to alleviate. EDA funding priorities must reflect the priorities of the US Department of Commerce, which are:

- (1) proposals to construct or rehabilitate essential public works and development facilities required to stabilize and diversify employment in economically distressed communities throughout the United States;
- (2) proposals to help communities plan and implement economic adjustment strategies in response to actual or threatened sudden and severe economic dislocations (e.g., major layoffs and/or plant closures, trade impacts, defense restructuring, natural disasters);
- (3) proposals that support sustainable development such as the productive reuse of abandoned industrial facilities and the redevelopment of brown fields;
- (4) proposals that build local capacity for enterprise development in distressed communities (e.g., small business incubators, revolving loan funds, and other programs to support business start-ups, retention and expansion).

This includes proposals that involve minority-serving institutions and assistance to minority communities and businesses. Proposals are accepted on a continuous basis and applications are invited and processed as funds become available. For more information contact Sharon T. Frerking at 512-381-8154.

## Wells Fargo Funds Proposals to Benefit Low-Income Texans

Wells Fargo accepts grant proposals throughout the year and reviews them upon receipt. Their first priority is to support programs that benefit low- and moderate-income individuals and the makes contributions to three primary areas:

- ♦ Community development programs;
- ♦ Education programs; and
- ♦ Human services programs.

Eligible organizations must have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) of the US Internal Revenue Code or be a qualified governmental or tribal entity.

For additional information, visit [www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/tx\\_apply.jhtml](http://www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/tx_apply.jhtml) or contact one of the Wells Fargo regional representatives (listed on the web page) or Sheri Bebee, Contribution Coordinator, at 512-344-7203 or by email at [sheri.bebee@norwest.com](mailto:sheri.bebee@norwest.com).

## Funding for Essential Community Facilities Available

The US Department of Agriculture, Rural Housing Service announces the availability competitive grant funds to develop essential community facilities in rural communities with extreme high unemployment and severe economic depression.

Grants are targeted to communities with the smallest populations and lowest incomes. Communities with lower population and income levels receive a greater percentage of the federal contribution. For further information contact Joseph Ben-Israel, Community Programs, at 202-720-1490.

## Funds Available to Extend NOAA Weather Radio Coverage

The US Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service has grant funds to finance the installation of new transmitters to extend the coverage of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio system (NOAA Weather Radio) in rural America. The program will provide funds for use in rural areas and communities with populations of 50,000 or less. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis and will be accepted until the total appropriation of \$5 million has been dispensed. For information, contact Roberta D. Purcell at 202-720-9554.

## Report Card for IT Systems Spotlights Results

*In these tough fiscal times, it's important to . . . measure what IT projects are producing*

Report cards have a way of calling attention to specific areas of performance that need improvement. In Information Technology (IT) management, it is just as important to measure results as it is to measure how well the system is being managed.

Here are five areas that need to be addressed in order to start measuring results:

- ♦ How much is being spent on IT, with whom, and for what?
- ♦ What IT capabilities and information do front-line personnel have at their disposal?
- ♦ What benefits are being achieved from the investment states and localities are making in IT?
- ♦ How quickly, and at what price, can different jurisdictions buy technology?
- ♦ How effectively can state and local governments dig out and report on information about their own business?

When performance in these areas has been measured, it is possible to assess capabilities and turn the measures into report cards.

*Excerpted from "Grading for Results" by Thomas R. Davies, from Governing: the Magazine of States and Localities, August 2002, page 54.*

## To Contract Out or Not to Contract Out

When is it right to contract out Information Technology (IT) projects rather than use in-house staff and resources?

"Be realistic about your own capabilities," says Todd Sandler, Chief Information Officer for Tucson, AZ. "If you have to stop everything else you do every day, you need to augment it and get some help."

The in-or-out decision may not be an all-or-nothing proposition. It often makes sense to contract out for studies and analysis. . . . On the technical side, some government organizations simply don't have the skills and experience to navigate skillfully through the software development process.

## Part II: After the Declaration . . . Who Helps?

By Ann Dewees, ORCA

In "Part I: After the Disaster . . . Then What?" which appeared in the Summer 2002 issue of *The Rural Texan*, we discussed the levels of assessment used to determine the extent of damages sustained in a disaster.

After damage assessments are completed, and an area is declared a federal or state disaster area, the area becomes eligible for state and/or federal disaster aid that was not available before the declaration.

If the area receives a federal declaration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other agencies offer funds under such programs as:

- ♦ Individual Assistance grants:
  - Funds and services from FEMA's Disaster Housing Program for individuals whose homes are unlivable because of the disaster, and
  - Low-interest business loans from the US Small Business Administration and the Farm Service Agency of the US Department of Agriculture.
- ♦ Individual and Household Program from the Texas Department of Human Services,
- ♦ Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Emergency Funds from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA),
- ♦ HOME Funds for housing rehabilitation and reconstruction from TDHCA,
- ♦ Public Assistance grants direct from FEMA are available for specified assistance categories.
- ♦ Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

Fifteen percent of the total federal public assistance funds an area is awarded for disaster recovery are set aside for mitigation activities. Mitigation activities address prevention of future disasters in the same or similar areas of a community. These funds are made available to all eligible entities, although priority is given to applicants affected by the disaster.

Eligible projects, in order of priority are:

- 1) buyout of properties located in the floodway,

The Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute has put together a "Capability Maturity Model for Software" that can help an organization assess whether it has good software processes and how to improve them. The CMM model addresses five levels of "maturity" for governments with regard to software. A summary can be found at [www.sei.cmu.edu/cmm/cmm.sum.html](http://www.sei.cmu.edu/cmm/cmm.sum.html).

The trick is to establish good processes and procedures in the organization and have the

- 2) buyout of properties located in the floodplain,
- 3) buyout of structures located in the floodway and then floodplain,
- 4) drainage activities, and
- 5) if funds are still available, warning systems.

An area may be eligible to receive one or more of these assistance awards, but may not necessarily receive all of them.

When eligible awards from all other funding sources have been exhausted, the disaster area becomes eligible to receive assistance from ORCA's Disaster Relief/Urgent Need Fund for such things as:

- ♦ mitigation measures,
- ♦ housing repair and reconstruction,
- ♦ debris removal,
- ♦ road and drainage repair, and
- ♦ matching grant funds needed to meet requirements for funding from other sources.

To address rebuilding efforts, communities can access ORCA's Texas Community Development Program (TCDP) for assistance with demolition and clearance, neighborhood revitalization, technical assistance, and the 25 percent match required for assistance from FEMA or for Public Assistance from the US Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Because the State of Texas does not have an official disaster recovery fund, the governor generally requests assistance from ORCA's Disaster Relief Fund under the TCDP to assist disaster victims with housing and public assistance. The governor may also request housing assistance from TDHCA and its CSBG program and may request other public assistance from the NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program.

Contact ORCA for additional information on the agency's Disaster Relief Fund. For additional information on FEMA programs, call 800-621-3362 or visit [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

*Assistance for this article provided by Gus Garcia, ORCA*

right people write the specifications, according to Alisoun Moore, Chief Information Officer for Montgomery County, MD.

*Excerpted from "Inside Job or Out?" from Governing: The Magazine of States and Localities, July 2002, page 56*

*Additional reference: Patterns of Software Systems Failure and Success, by Capers Jones, details 12 essential attributes that lead to successful software. Available on amazon.com.*



## Cheap Trees Contribute to Community Beautification

A pretty town attracts more visitors and more residents. An attractive town has higher property values. And adding more trees goes a long way toward community beautification.

For \$10, the National Arbor Day Foundation will provide 10 trees, either flowering varieties or Colorado Blue Spruce.

To learn more about this offer, visit their web site at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org) or contact them at 402-474-5655.

## Using Technologies More Effectively in Small Business

Does your business have the ability to keep up with rapid technology changes? Are you using your technology as effectively as you could? Do you see technology as an investment in your business or an expense?

Making technology decisions is a complex full-time job that small businesses often overlook. How does a small business get started with technology planning? One of the most effective approaches is to build a technology roadmap. Some parts of the basic methodology include:

- ♦ Assess where you are,
- ♦ Figure out where you're headed, and
- ♦ Map the best route, including how designated key areas relate to your company.

Technology is an essential component of business today, and planning is an essential first step to realizing return on the investment, understanding available options, and knowing how to use them effectively to help increase efficiency and profitability.

For more detailed information on small businesses strategies for effective use of technology, see *Austin Business Times*, August 2002; "Small Business Strategies: Using Technology More Effectively," by Kevin Cumins, CIO, Attune Technology Corporation ([www.attunetechnology.com](http://www.attunetechnology.com)). For free planning templates or assistance identifying technology opportunities, email [strategies@attunetechnology.com](mailto:strategies@attunetechnology.com) or call 888-792-8300.

## Library Project for Bookless Colonia a Success

By Ann Dewees, ORCA

El Cenizo Colonia in Webb County once had no library and, as in many colonias, most residents had no transportation to the closest one 14 miles away. This made it very difficult for students to do necessary research for school projects.

El Cenizo Mayor Flora Barton and the city council met on June 13, 2002, and designated the un-air conditioned second floor of the local city hall building as the new public library. When Senator Judith Zaffirini heard about the project, she began a book drive, with a goal of collecting 5,000 books within a year. The response to the need has been outstanding.

After only one month, the new library has more than 5,000 books, and the second floor at city hall is overflowing.

After seeing the response, the local Rotary Club has volunteered to add a room to city hall just for the library—with air conditioning. The project could still use donations of money, building supplies, chairs, tables, and sweat equity.

Anyone interested in donating to the project or finding out how to start a similar project in their own community, is encouraged to contact Christina Gonzalez in Senator Zaffirini's office at 512-463-0121.

## Disparity in Quality of Care for Minority Patients Studied, Addressed

A panel of experts convened by the National Quality Forum in June 2001 identified 10 actions that should be taken to improve the quality of healthcare for minority patients, for whom it is widely acknowledged that care falls far short of that received by white Americans. In their report, issued in June 2002, the panel concluded that undertaking these specific steps could significantly improve the quality of healthcare provided to racial and ethnic minority populations, to which approximately one in three Americans belong.

The recommended steps are:

1. Adopt the specific goal of eliminating disparities;
2. Analyze existing healthcare quality measures to fully quantify the magnitude of minority healthcare disparities and refine the measure sets to reflect priorities for improving healthcare quality for minority patients;
3. Develop new measures that focus on areas in which racial and ethnic minorities bear a disproportionate burden of disease or poor healthcare quality;
4. Adopt and utilize a standardized set of cross-cutting quality measures (e.g., pain management, availability of support services, and cultural competency);
5. Establish healthcare quality standards around population-based goals;
6. Increase and sustain federal support to improve services and research to improve healthcare quality for minority patients;
7. Adopt federal policies that specifically promote standardized classification and collection of race and ethnicity data in healthcare settings;
8. As has been done for the US Census, build support and awareness among the public and providers on the importance of race and ethnicity data collection to improving healthcare quality for minority populations;
9. Engage the many disparate consumer audiences in the drive to improve healthcare quality; and
10. Use community-based intermediaries to develop and disseminate healthcare quality information to minority consumers.

For additional information about this report visit [www.qualityforum.org](http://www.qualityforum.org) or call 202-783-1300.

### ORCA's Mission

"To assist rural Texans who seek to enhance their quality of life by facilitating, with integrity, the use of the resources of our state so that sustained economic growth will enrich the rural Texas experience for the benefit of all."



# ORCA's PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

## Disaster Relief Urgent Need Fund

The city of **Martindale** received \$350,000 to assist with recovery from flooding in both October 1998 and November 2001. The grant will be used as the city's required 25 percent match for an award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to allow the city to buy out properties located in the floodway and floodplain and demolish these properties, in order to avoid additional damage and potential loss in the future.

The city of **Wharton** received \$255,000 to assist with recovery from flooding in October 1998. \$125,000 will serve as the city's required 25 percent match for a FEMA HMGP award; \$130,000 will be used to meet the match requirement for a grant from FEMA's Unmet Needs program.

**Shackelford County** was awarded \$321,600 to repair streets and culverts damaged by flooding in April 2002.

The city of **Albany** received \$349,900 to repair streets and water and wastewater treatment facilities damaged by flooding in April 2002. The city will access funds from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' HOME program to repair damaged houses.

## CAH Feasibility Studies

ORCA's Rural Health Unit has awarded up to \$15,000 each to seven rural hospitals to conduct Financial and Operational Feasibility Studies for Critical Access Hospital (CAH) designation for the facilities. The Medical Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) program funds the studies for the CAH program.

The CAH designation allows for increased service and staffing flexibility and increased reimbursement from Medicare.

Awardees were:

- Big Bend Regional Medical Center Alpine in Brewster County
- Collingsworth General Hospital Wellington in Collingsworth County
- Culberson Hospital Van Horn in Culberson County
- Knox County Hospital Knox City in Knox County
- Mangold Memorial Hospital Lockney in Floyd County
- Medical Arts Hospital Lamesa in Dawson County
- Muleshoe Area Medical Center Muleshoe in Bailey County

## Outstanding Rural Scholars\*

The Outstanding Rural Scholar Recognition Program made five awards to medical students who have committed to practice in a rural area of Texas.

NAME	COURSE OF STUDY	ATTENDING	SPONSOR
Jessica Fulcher Giddings, TX	Nursing	Lamar University Beaumont, TX	Fayette Memorial Hospital La Grange, Fayette County
Lindsey Hickle La Grange, TX	Nursing	Stephen F. Austin Univ. Nacogdoches, TX	Fayette Memorial Hospital La Grange, Fayette County
Tiffany Malatek Gonzales, TX	Nursing	Texas Lutheran Univ. Seguin, TX	Gonzales Healthcare System Gonzales, Gonzales County
Carolyn Pickett Fort Worth, TX	Medicine	Univ. of North Texas Fort Worth, TX	HSC Memorial Medical Center Livingston, Polk County
Coral Steffey-Duarte Brookston, TX	Medicine	Univ. of Texas HSC San Antonio, TX	CHRISTUS St. Joseph's Health System Paris, Lamar County

\*Awards made in May 2002.

## Colonia Fund

**Webb County** received a TCDP Colonia Economically Distressed Areas Program Fund grant to install water and sewer yard lines and water and sewer house service connections, and decommission or mitigate septic tanks and cesspools. The project will provide low- and moderate-income persons located in the Tanquecitos I and Old Milwaukee areas access to facilities installed through funds from the Texas Water Development Board's Economically Distressed Areas Program.

## EMS Scholarships

The Rural EMS Scholarship Incentive Program has made three awards of matching funds toward the cost of training for certified EMT and EMT-Intermediate specialists to achieve the next certification level. The awardees were:

- Mario Sanchez of Port Arthur in Jim Wells County, \$1325
- Rebecca Ann Kott of Rocksprings in Edwards County, \$1112
- Dawn Brooks of Spring Branch in Comal County, \$1650



Jeff Vistein, of ORCA's Community Development Unit (CDU), sorts some of the approximately 800 applications received for several of CDU's programs at the end of September 2002.

## Physician Assistant Loan Reimbursements

ORCA's Physician Assistant Loan Reimbursement Program (PALRP) awarded a total of \$90,000 to 18 physician assistants (PAs). The awards provide school loan reimbursements to PAs who practice in eligible medically underserved communities throughout the state.

Awardees were:

PA NAME	COUNTY OF PRACTICE
Shelby O. Church	Tyler
Todd M. Crawford	Gonzales
Kathryn L. Fordahl	Val Verde
Bertha Davila-Holley	Starr
Shane Howatt	Polk
Douglas I. Laird	Grimes
Troy W. Lischka	Colorado
Bli R. Marston	DeWitt
Richard S. Marks	Starr
Janet L. Miles-Maestas	Hill
John Neill	Atascosa
Crystal L. Orr	Milam
Tanya Pletin	Stonewall
Sam G. Puccinelli	Lee
Paul Puckett	Red River
Eric Shahin	Gonzales
David S. Taylor	Milam
Rene E. Torres	Starr



# Help for Communities Fighting Illegal Dumping

By Ann Dewees, ORCA

Thanks to the 77th Texas Legislature, communities now have a means for combatting illegal dumping—the dumping of unwanted items at un-permitted locations. While “open dumping,” “fly dumping,” or “midnight dumping,” as it is sometimes called, is a problem for all communities, it tends to be worse in the rural areas, since people in the cities will frequently drive to the country to do their dumping.

Besides eyesores that make the community less attractive to visitors or new residents, illegal dumping sites create health hazards, including bacteria that contaminates the soil and water, breeding grounds for mosquitoes, and havens for rats and snakes. Thanks to the new law, local officials can more easily prosecute offenders and, hopefully, discourage them from future dumping.

Under House Bill 631, the Texas Health and Safety Code was changed to increase the penalties for the dumper. Depending on the amount of material dumped, it can be prosecuted as a Class C, B, or A misdemeanor charge, and, if the amount dumped is 1,000 pounds or 200 cubic feet or more, it is a state felony punishable by up to two years in the county jail.

For additional information on illegal dumping and combatting the problem, see related articles in *Texas County Progress* magazine, September 2002. Call them at 915-673-4822 or visit their website at [countyprogress.com](http://countyprogress.com).

# Rural and Frontier First Responders Get Needed Defibrillators

By Al Lewis, ORCA

Earlier this year, the American Heart Association (AHA) conducted the Texas Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Placement Program for first responder organizations from police, fire department, and emergency medical service units to apply for 50 percent matching funds for purchasing AEDs.

The Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA) saw the opportunity to help the most needy rural and frontier EMS and volunteer fire organizations receiving grant funds from the AHA program by providing a matching grant to pay the remaining 50 percent of the cost for an AED. Through funds provided by the Federal Flex Grant Program, ORCA funded 23 matching grants for a total of 30 AEDs.

Organization	City	County	Total Award
Austin County EMS	Bellville	Austin	\$1,007
Silverton Volunteer Ambulance Service	Silverton	Briscoe	\$1,075
Cuero Community EMS	Cuero	DeWitt	\$1,075
Freer Volunteer Fire & EMS	Freer	Duval	\$1,075
Fayette County EMS	La Grange	Fayette	\$1,075
Winchester Area Volunteer Fire Department	Winchester	Fayette	\$1,007
Goliad County EMS	Goliad	Goliad	\$1,012
Ambulance Service of Hale Center	Hale Center	Hale	\$2,151
Plainview Fire/EMS	Plainview	Hale	\$ 974
2604 Volunteer Fire Department	Whitney	Hill	\$1,075
Faith Community Hospital EMS	Jacksboro	Jack	\$1,000
Lee County First Responders	Giddings	Lee	\$1,002
Sunrise Beach Volunteer Fire Department- First Responders Organization	Sunrise Beach	Llano	\$2,008
Central Martin County First Responders	Stanton	Martin	\$1,007
Mason County EMS	Mason	Mason	\$1,075
Motley County EMS	Matador	Motley	\$2,151
Vega Volunteer Fire Rescue	Vega	Oldham	\$1,075
City of Mineral Wells Fire/EMS Department	Mineral Wells	Palo Pinto	\$3,022
Pecos County Memorial Hospital	Fort Stockton	Pecos	\$2,015
Snyder Volunteer Fire Department	Snyder	Scurry	\$1,075
City of Happy-Volunteer Fire Department and EMS	Happy	Swisher	\$1,075
Val Verde Regional Medical Center EMS	Del Rio	Val Verde	\$1,007
Dean Dale Volunteer Fire Department	Wichita Falls	Clay	\$2,151

# PUC Set to Support Advanced Telecommunication Services in Rural Texas

By Christine Donahoo, PUC

In 1999, the 76th Texas Legislature enacted legislation to bring about the spread of advanced telecommunication services in rural areas of the state. The legislation also established a state policy to ensure that customers in all regions of the state have access to advanced telecommunications and information services at reasonably comparable prices regardless of their location.

To achieve these mandates, the Public Utility Commission (PUC) of Texas has undertaken several initiatives to speed the distribution of advanced services to all areas of the state. These initiatives include:

- 1) adopting a new rule to establish procedures through a “competitive response process.” Under this rule, a retail customer within a rural service area may seek advanced services in order to access the Internet by submitting a written request to the commission for advanced services. If no advanced services agreement is reached in the competitive response process, the Bona Fide Retail Request allows retail customers in the rural area to secure access to services that are reasonably comparable to the advanced telecommunications services offered by companies within urban service areas.
- 2) approving funding of a project with the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas to conduct a policy research project on “Telecommunications and Economic Development in Texas,” which brought about the creation of the LoneStar Broadband website to provide a rich resource of information, guidelines, educational materials, case studies, and contacts for leaders in Texas communities to use to bring broadband services to their citizens. The website, [www.lonestarband.org](http://www.lonestarband.org), was launched in May of 2002.

For additional information on these programs or the PUC, contact Christine Donahoo at 512-936-7257, or by email at [christine.donahoo@puc.state.tx.us](mailto:christine.donahoo@puc.state.tx.us).

Each year, Texas harvests the first bale of cotton, the first fresh peaches, and the first fresh apples in the nation.  
(From the *Windmill Monthly*, August 2002.)

# Goodbye Hard Copy, Hello Cyberspace

## *Rural Texans get Transition Support From ORCA*

By Clyde Gibson, ORCA

In the last 100 years, we have seen the extraordinary acceleration of the development of technology. This era has spawned the invention of countless information-based products and allowed us to contact people worldwide, regardless of time and location. The quantity of information available to us is without bounds. Technology profoundly affects the way we live, communicate, and think.

Communication is at the core of almost all aspects of modern life. Education and health care rely upon it, as do everyday work and community life, and democratic governance. Since new communication technology does offer significant opportunities—as well as equally significant risks—and because the form of the communication infrastructure of tomorrow is being shaped today, it is critical that people from all walks of life play more active roles in this crucial transition period from paper to cyberspace. This growth in technology has created the need for technology-literate communities in rural Texas and has spawned the creation of ORCA's Technology and Telecommunications Outreach Program through its Outreach and Training Services Unit.

The mission of the Technology and Telecommunications Program is to provide technical assistance, training, materials, and resources to enable rural communities and Texans to move into the digital age through the use of technology, computers, high-speed broadband communications, and the Internet. It is the larger goal that rural Texas communities should have access to all available resources and information on technology and telecommunications. The anticipated outcome is that through this assistance and provided resources, rural Texas communities will develop their capacities to fully utilize technology and telecommunications.

The specific aspects of the ORCA's Technology and Telecommunications Program are:

- ♦ Promote the use of technology in rural Texas communities;
- ♦ Promote connectivity to the Internet and use of the Internet by local governments and communities as a resource to share information, eliminate rural isolation, and enhance economic development activities;
- ♦ Coordinate efforts with other state agencies engaged in similar activities;
- ♦ Provide information and advice about how to obtain, use, and take advantage of today's computers and technologies;
- ♦ Provide technology and telecommunications training and assistance to communities, local governments, and organizations;
- ♦ Promote and coordinate distance learning opportunities that offer technical, graduate, and post-graduate educational courses in rural areas;
- ♦ Develop technology reference and education materials for understanding computers and the Internet; and
- ♦ Provide assistance in identifying and locating technology funding resources to local governments and organizations.

For more information, contact Clyde Gibson at 512-936-6731 or by e-mail at [cgibson@orca.state.tx.us](mailto:cgibson@orca.state.tx.us).

More than 15 percent of Texas' total population lives in areas designated as rural.

(2002-2003 Texas Almanac, Mary G. Ramos, Editor)

### **Awards** (continued from page 1)

time in the past year on projects such as the Stephens County Frontier Days; cleanup of litter and maintenance of flower boxes in the downtown area; cleanup and repair of homes and gardens; and the Annual Recycling Fair.

**Lufkin**, in Angelina County, has turned trash into cash with the Don't Mess with Texas Spring Fling, that raised nearly \$6,000 for Keep Lufkin Beautiful (KLB). Community volunteers contributed to such projects as the annual Great Forest Trash-Off and Great American Cleanup, and a new litter-prevention campaign called "Are You East Texas Class or

Are You East Texas Trash?" was introduced. The KLB ran a new media campaign "Litter Bugs Me—Stop Trashing Angelina County" during their Litter Prevention Week, targeting illegal dumping as well.

**Muenster**, in Cooke County, has made littering and illegal dumping "socially unacceptable." Residents are expected to keep their own property free of litter, brush, and discarded furniture, etc. Keep Muenster Beautiful (KMB) volunteers logged an impressive 3,300 hours working on projects such as Texas Recycles Day, Make a Difference Day, Don't Mess with

## Rural Youth in Higher Education

In Rural Texas, only eight percent of rural adults have a college degree (US Bureau of the Census, 1999). A comprehensive survey by the School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Austin, completed and published in January 2001, revealed that four factors influence rural youth in their decisions to pursue higher education:

- ♦ **Systems factors:** Rural school systems often have fewer resources to prepare students for college.
- ♦ **Community factors:** Rural youth are less likely to have contact with college-educated role models and most jobs in rural communities do not require a college education.
- ♦ **Family factors:** Rural youth are less likely to have college-educated parents; college may be unaffordable; or parents may lack information or understanding of financial planning and assistance for college.
- ♦ **Personal factors:** Rural youth often lack confidence in their ability to compete successfully at college level, or their educational aspirations tend to be lower due to limited exposure to information and opportunities. Gender and ethnicity also play major roles. For example, women in rural areas tend to marry earlier than those in urban areas. Many rural ethnic minorities are steered into high school courses that do not prepare them for college.

Numerous strategies have been developed to overcome these barriers, including:

- ♦ increasing student access to college preparatory courses;
- ♦ adding mentoring programs;
- ♦ involving parents in workshops and financial planning for higher education; and
- ♦ creating support networks and internships for rural students.

*Excerpted from Participation of Rural Youth in Higher Education: Factors, Strategies, and Innovations, by Dennis L. Poole, PhD and Susannah More, BS, Center for Social Work Research, School of Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin, January 2001. Available from Sandra Tenoria at Texas Rural Communities at 512-219-0416.*

Texas Trash-off, and Adopt-a-Highway cleanups. KMB was also instrumental in obtaining 100 new trees for the community. Businesses in Muenster offer various recycling opportunities to the local citizens.

Congratulations to the hard-working and dedicated volunteers that help make all of these communities "Texas Proud!"

For more information on the award, or to enter for the 2002-2003 awards, visit [www.ktb.org/GCAA/index.htm](http://www.ktb.org/GCAA/index.htm) or call 512-478-8813.



## Movie Industry a Boost to Community Economy

By Ann Dewees, ORCA

The film industry has become a major contributor to local economies in Texas. In 2001, film and television productions contributed more than \$135 million to the state's economy, with most of it going into local hotels, restaurants, dry cleaners, car services, and other businesses. Approximately 8,700 Texans were employed by the motion picture and video production industry, with 40 percent working in the production side, 43 percent working in allied services, and the remaining 17 percent employed in film and video distribution. These benefits were not just seen in the major cities, but also in rural areas of the state, including Canadian, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Big Bend, Bertram, and Huntsville.

"A film comes into town and spends a great deal of money in a short time. Local businesses start seeing the difference right away," says Carol Pirie, Assistant Director of the Texas Film Commission (TFC). "They're using local goods and services like crazy, but they don't put any

strain on publicly funded services, like schools and health care."

The best way to get your community into the running for future productions is to work with the TFC. Ask TFC for a copy of their book entitled *When Hollywood Comes to Town* that defines the most productive ways for a community to make itself available to the industry, including:

- ♦ how to take and submit location photos and what locations to photograph;
- ♦ how to respond to an inquiry from a film company;
- ♦ what to do if your community is selected;
- ♦ perks to offer the company; and
- ♦ who benefits.

To obtain a copy of *When Hollywood Comes to Town*, or for more information, contact the TFC at 512-463-9200 or visit [www.governor.state.tx.us/film](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/film).

## HHS Takes New Steps To Aid Rural America

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tommy G. Thompson recently announced the availability of \$46 million in grant funding to improve health care and social services for the 65 million Americans living in rural areas. There are currently approximately 225 HHS programs that serve rural and frontier communities

He also announced new approaches to improving these five key areas of service delivery:

- ♦ improving access to services; strengthening rural families;
- ♦ supporting rural economic development;
- ♦ improving coordination among state, local, and tribal governments; and
- ♦ conducting more and better research to determine the needs of rural communities.

The \$46 million includes:

- ♦ \$23 million to states through the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program,\* focusing on the smallest, most rural hospitals;
- ♦ \$15 million to improve the quality of care in more than 1,000 small rural and frontier hospitals across the country;
- ♦ \$8 million to support the 50 state Offices of Rural Health;\*\*
- ♦ a commitment to ensure that HHS processes include a specific focus on serving rural America;
- ♦ a new approach to better identify communities with unmet needs; and
- ♦ expansion of the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health to include rural social services.

"Health care can represent up to 20 percent of a community's employment and income," Secretary Thompson said. "In some lower-income rural communities, federal support for these services may account for as much as 50 percent of the community's revenue. The department's efforts to bring more and better health and social services to rural areas will also give a boost to local economies."

For additional information on HHS's steps for rural America, visit [www.hhs.gov/news](http://www.hhs.gov/news) or call 877-696-6775

\* ORCA administers this program in Texas

\*\* ORCA's Rural Health Unit is Texas' State Office of Rural Health

## Center Provides Professional Assistance to Border Communities

The Frank M. Tejada Center for Excellence in Environmental Operations (Center) works to improve the quality of life in communities along the U.S./Mexico border by championing a vision of clean, safe drinking water and wastewater services for all residents of the border region. Fulfilling this vision can best be accomplished with a localized approach that invests in communities on both sides of the border and better utilizes human and financial resources.

Communities within 100 kilometers of the US/Mexico border can call on the Center to assess and improve their institutional capacity. The Center applies its diverse resources to troubleshooting shortcomings in the financial, managerial, and technical capacity of water or wastewater systems. Using the Center's free assistance, communities that are challenged by large infrastructure projects or the complexities of regulatory processes can reduce costs and save time.

For example, the Texas town of Asherton (pop. 1610), in Dimmitt County, exemplifies the plight of many small border communities. The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) had previously determined that Asherton was ineligible for funding for a much needed wastewater plant to replace the current plant, that was built in the 1970's. Asherton did not make the list of communities eligible for such funding, due to numerous capacity-related deficiencies.

Because the Center understands how these issues affect fundability and implementation of projects, staff were able to work with Asherton over a period of a few short months to remedy the deficiencies and prepare the city for the application process. The city is now able to generate management reports and real-time financial and operational data. By learning to manage data electronically, and simple yet effective methods to address regulatory violations, Asherton was able to meet the deficiencies cited by TWDB and recently received the needed funding.

For more information on the Center, call 210-354-3904 or email [thomas.nyman@teexmail.tamu.edu](mailto:thomas.nyman@teexmail.tamu.edu).

Texas is 801 miles long  
from north to south and  
773 from east to west.  
(Texas Film Commission)

**Honored** (continued from page ##)

Lewis, a Licensed Paramedic, who had just finished visiting several area hospitals on agency business, was leaving Monahans to travel to Midland International Airport on Interstate 20 when he noticed a burning 18-wheeler. Lewis rushed into a ball of fire, smashed the cab window of the burning big rig, and pulled the driver, Timothy Ray Buster, 30, of Fresno, California, to safety.

The award presentation began with a brief narrative of the April 24 event by Teresa Day, EMT-B, Burnet County, and Legal Assistant with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Day described what typically goes through the minds of EMS providers on their way to a similar scene, and how Lewis didn't have the luxury of time to mentally review the possible scene before he came upon the wreckage. Instead, he prayed, and dove right in to save the truckers life.

Rachele Smith, a representative from the office of Senator Gonzalo Barrientos, presented Lewis with a Texas flag that had been flown over the capitol the morning of the event, along with a certificate from the Texas Senate recognizing Lewis' heroism. Ms. Smith noted that state employees often go beyond the call of duty, and Mr. Lewis' heroics are worthy of this high honor.

Trent Thomas, on behalf of Representative Robert R. "Bob" Turner, whose district includes Ward County, presented Lewis with an official resolution from the Texas House of Representatives acknowledging Lewis' heroism.

Robt. J. "Sam" Tessen, MS, Executive Director, Office of Rural Community Affairs followed, noting, "It is a rare privilege that I have the honor of recognizing such a hero. Al's bravery was tremendous, commendable, and I am happy that DPS is honoring Lewis in the manner in which he deserves to be recognized."

In closing the award ceremony, Colonel Thomas "Tommy" Davis Jr., Director, Texas Department of Public Safety, presented Lewis with the agency's prestigious Director's Award. "The bravery shown by Mr. Lewis embodies the principles of self-sacrifice and public service we envisioned when the Director's Award was created. Texas needs more people like Al Lewis."

Governor Rick Perry responded to notification of Lewis' valor with a certificate recognizing Lewis for his "outstanding bravery during a serious accident," and noted that Lewis' "courageous behavior highlights the best of Texas."

Representative Manny Najera (El Paso) also recognized Lewis' heroism with a letter congratulating him on being honored with the prestigious Director's Award, "Your fast thinking and acting in this situation saved a life. I agree that the hand of the Lord Jesus was with you."

Today, Lewis continues to travel to rural communities across the state to assist them with coordinating their Emergency Medical Services.

# Research Addresses Transportation Issues

The Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) is the largest university-affiliated transportation research agency in the United States. Created in 1950, TTI addresses all modes of transportation—highway, air, water, rail, and pipeline. TTI, a state agency and member of The Texas A&M University System, is an official research agency for the Texas Department of Transportation and the Texas Railroad Commission.

TTI research results in a savings of lives, time, and money and leads to the conservation of natural resources and the attraction of federal dollars to the state. Some of the projects brought about by TTI research include:

- ◆ the ET2000 guardrail end treatment, which absorbs the energy of an impacting vehicle, bending the guardrail and forcing it away from the vehicle, while bringing the vehicle to a safe stop. The ET2000 is estimated to have saved lives in more than 400 collisions across the nation since 1990.
- ◆ crash tests and evaluating the results of the tests. TTI has developed the most current guide on how to conduct crash tests, with guidelines that have had a significant and lasting effect on roadside safety in Texas and the US.
- ◆ the Advanced Law Enforcement and Response Technology (ALERT), which integrates all the electronic components of police work through an on-board computer and a hand-held computer unit. The system improves the accuracy and value of traffic data, improves the safety of the work environment for public safety personnel, and helps them perform their duties more efficiently and effectively.

TTI also focuses on sustainable transportation systems for the future, including:

- ◆ application of advanced technologies;
- ◆ travel behavior;
- ◆ land use;
- ◆ roadside vegetation and erosion;
- ◆ mobile source emissions;
- ◆ transit; and
- ◆ High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) networks.

In addition, TTI works with partners to operate and maintain clearinghouses that allow transportation professionals to share information and research findings. One of TTI's most important functions is to education and train the transportation workforce of tomorrow.

TTI's headquarters are on the Texas A&M University campus in College Station, and it also has offices in Bryan, Arlington, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, and Houston.

For more information on TTI and its programs, contact Dr. Herbert Richardson, Director, at 979-845-1713 or by email at [herbert-richardson@tamu.edu](mailto:herbert-richardson@tamu.edu). You can visit their web site at <http://tti.tamu.edu>.

The population in Texas is growing at twice the rate of the rest of the country. (American Farmland Trust, Texas Field Office)

## NAME / ADDRESS CHANGE REQUEST FORM

If you are currently a subscriber, please note any changes to your contact information on this form. Please feel free to use this form to be added to our mailing list. Simply give us the information below, cut this portion of the page off the newsletter, and **mail in a stamped envelope** to: Office of Rural Community Affairs, P.O. Box 12877, Austin, TX 78711

- New subscriber   
  Address change   
  Renewal   
  Name change

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_      FAX: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_