



Rural Texan

Office of Rural Community Affairs ☆ Rural News and Information for Rural Texans ☆ Spring 2005

ORCA Opens Technical Assistance Center in Alice

By Jill McFarren, ORCA

The Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA) hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony on Friday, January 21, 2005 to celebrate the agency's new South Texas Technical Assistance Center in Alice. The event was attended by many South Texas local, state and federal elected officials, and representatives from stakeholder organizations.

ORCA's South Texas Technical Assistance Center, located in the Jim Wells County Courthouse, offers elected and appointed officials, economic and community development interests, community organizations, citizens, health care providers, and others local access to capacity building and technical assistance to small cities and counties, and Councils of Government within a 34-county

(Continued on page 6)

Counties Served by South Texas Technical Assistance Center

Aransas	Jackson	Real
Bee	Jim Hogg	San Patricio
Brooks	Jim Wells	Starr
Calhoun	Kenedy	Uvalde
Cameron	Kinney	Val Verde
DeWitt	Kleberg	Victoria
Dimmit	La Salle	Webb
Duval	Lavaca	Willacy
Edwards	Live Oak	Zapata
Goliad	Maverick	Zavala
Gonzales	McMullen	
Hidalgo	Nueces	

ORCA Awards Grants Totaling \$235,502 to Rural Hospitals

Grants to Support Technology Investment

By Julie V. Kelly, ORCA

On March 9, 2005, the Office of Rural Community Affairs awarded grants totaling \$235,502 to seven rural Critical Access Hospitals (CAH). Each hospital will use their grant monies for the development of medical and telecommunication technology systems and capital equipment investments for the facility.

"The Technology Investment grant allows rural hospitals to improve the quality of care available to their patients," explained Terrie Hairston, RN, CHE, Director of ORCA's Rural Health Division. "These

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**OFFICE OF RURAL
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

Austin-Area Colonia Receives First-Time Water Service

By Jill McFarren, ORCA

Ten households in a colonia located outside of Austin (Travis County) celebrated the completion of a new water line project on February 15, 2005. The project, which included the installation of 3,700 feet of line, seven hydrants and 10 service/meter connections, provides first-time water service to the residences whose occupants previously had to haul water to their homes for all needs, including proper toilet function.

The Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA), Travis County and the City of Austin jointly funded the project. In May 2001, Travis County Precinct Four Commissioner Margaret Gomez obtained \$189,820 in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from ORCA.

Travis County staff from the Transportation and Natural Resources (TNR) Department managed the project, administered the grant, obtained easements, and installed residential connections from the main water line to the 10 homes. The City of Austin designed the water system, installed the main water lines and will be the water service provider.

"The residents of Plover Place Colonia have never had running water," Gomez noted. "Most Travis County residents can't comprehend that such areas (colonias) exist in our urban county."

"Unfortunately, Plover Place Colonia is not the only area in Texas that lacks potable water," acknowledged ORCA Executive Director Charles S. (Charlie) Stone. "There are many communities sprinkled all over the state where residents haul water for various household needs."

The beginnings of Texas colonias date back to the 1950's, says the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. As a response to the reconstruction era, Texans adopted a state constitution to minimize the powers of government. By making counties subdivisions of the state with no home rule powers, Texans guaranteed that no county could take an action or adopt a rule until it is first voted on by the state. Thus, in Texas, all regulatory powers originate with cities and the state. Areas outside city limits are virtually "regulation free zones." (Texas Colonia, An Environmental Justice Case Study-1998, by Madeline Pepin, PhD.)

"Rural Texas is fortunate to receive CDBG funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, which are administered through ORCA to address these types of water projects in colonias and small communities across the state," Stone concluded.



Before the first-time water service project was completed, a rainwater collection system was this Plover Place resident's best source of water. As a result of the project, residents no longer use rainwater collection systems or haul water for their basic needs.

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From the Desk of ...

Executive Committee Chair

Rural Texans are known as self-reliant folks with a strong work ethic, plenty of business know-how and a talent for managing risk – qualities often gained through experience operating a family farm or perhaps running the town’s only grocery store. Given this background, rural Texas should be a rich source of entrepreneurial talent, yet it is not known as such. And although many rural Texans own small businesses, their talents are too often directed toward survival rather than growth. The ability to grow a business and create new opportunities is the defining factor of entrepreneurship.

How can rural communities encourage not just small-business ownership, but growth-generating entrepreneurship? Investing in the community’s entrepreneurial talent is a long-term investment that requires advanced business acumen, seed money, and the ability to collaborate with other members of the community and region.

Sources for education and seed money are better than rural entrepreneurs may think. On the local level, rural leaders should start by supporting high school business programs that emphasize entrepreneurship. Additional education is often available through federal, state, and private organizations that help small-business owners develop the advanced business skills needed to become entrepreneurs.

The value of advanced training is especially significant when it comes to marketing. Marketing a product or service from a rural location can be challenging, but, according to the US Small Business Administration, the recent availability of specialized mailing lists can open national and international markets for some small businesses. More information about resources for entrepreneurs is available online at www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev/sba.

Most importantly, local leaders must encourage community and regional partnerships. It is rare for an individual or small group of people to possess all of the skills required for successful entrepreneurship, so the ability to form working partnerships is often essential for growth. To do this, rural leaders must overcome rivalries with neighbors, geographic isolation, and the very sense of self-reliance that rural Texans often consider their greatest asset.

Executive Director

In rural Texas, we do business based on personal relationships and trust. Maybe it’s because so much of rural business is tied up with our natural resources like agriculture, oil and natural gas. These sources of income are connected to the land, and they follow traditional business customs – a handshake still seals the deal.

We bank with one institution because we went to grade school with the banker; we buy one make of truck or tractor because we know from experience it will perform well. Likewise, we feel comfortable doing business with our neighbors because we know them well. After all, they are few and far between and until very recently, they were the only people in arm’s reach to do business with. Doing business this way has always made sense for rural Texans, but to fuel growth it is necessary to overcome the geographic isolation of a rural location. For business purposes, we need to redefine what it means to be a “neighbor.”

Two tools that can help us do this are technology and regional partnerships. It’s true that broadband technology hasn’t exactly taken rural Texas by storm, however that could change any day. For most of the world, dial-up Internet access is still the most common way to log on. Rural Texans should make the best use of the Internet so that when broadband is readily available, we will have the skills to use the Internet to its fullest potential as a marketing, sales, training and customer service tool.

Online, your “neighbors” may include statewide, national and international customers. But your most important “neighbors” are regional. Through regional business organizations and connections, rural business people can quickly expand their knowledge and talent base by collaborating with other businesses. The Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (www.tcre.org) includes links to Texas organizations that support rural entrepreneurs and is a good place to start networking. Rural Texans hold a deep loyalty to the tried and true, but we always welcome new neighbors to town.

ORCA Executive Committee

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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 Awards \$198,381 to Rural Texas Emergency Services

Funds Will Provide Equipment, Training

By Julie V. Kelly, ORCA

On March 31, 2005, the Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA) awarded \$198,381 to rural Texas first responders for the acquisition of Automated Emergency Defibrillators (AEDs) and related Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and AED training. The funds will provide for the distribution of AED units, which are portable devices that provide an electrical shock capable of restoring the normal heart rhythm of cardiac arrest victims. A total of 91 organizations received funding for the AED devices as well as for CPR and AED training.

"Emergency Medical Services are a critical component of the healthcare system throughout Texas. These services are influenced by a number of factors, including access to equipment and trained responders," said ORCA Executive Director, Charles S. (Charlie) Stone. "EMS is particularly critical in rural areas where the "Golden Hour", the one-hour consideration for successful survival, can be jeopardized by long distances to services and facilities. The AEDs and training provided by this grant will improve the opportunities for immediate cardiac patient

care in rural areas. We applaud the awardees for taking time to apply for these funds so they can provide needed care in their communities."

"EMS is particularly critical in rural areas where the "Golden Hour", the one-hour consideration for successful survival, can be jeopardized by long distances to services and facilities."

Director of ORCA's Rural Health Division Terrie Hairston, RN, CHE, echoed Stone's remarks, "These AED units, and the special training supported by this funding will aid the emergency response professionals in performing lifesaving defibrillation of persons who have had a cardiac event resulting in the stopping of their heart," she explained. "In some cases having access to this equipment may mean the difference between life and death."

Rural first responders, such as Emergency Medical Services (EMS), law enforcement, fire departments, and local for- and non-profit entities concerned about cardiac arrest survival rates, were eligible to apply to the AED program. Eligible organizations included, but were not limited to, long-term care facilities, rural health clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Indian Health Service clinics and tribal Emergency Medical Services, post offices, libraries and other civic centers, athletic facilities, i.e., high school playing fields where a town may gather for games, senior citizen and child day care facilities, faith-based organizations, and schools.

The Federal Rural Access to Emergency Devices Grant Program, also known as the Federal Rural AED Grant, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the US Health and Human Service Agency (USHSA) is the funding source for these awards. This year, HRSA set aside \$9 million for the national Federal Rural AED Grant. ORCA received the Federal Rural AED Grant funds for the State of Texas because of the agency's national designation as the Texas State Office of Rural Health.

ORCA thanks the more than 100 rural Texas leaders & policy makers

who attended and contributed to
the ongoing development of rural policy at the

Rural Policy Symposium 2005

Big State. Big Ideas.
**Rethinking
Rural Texas.**

February 2, 2005
Austin (Travis County), Texas
Visit www.orca.state.tx.us
for a summary of the event.

Rural Resources

How To Direct Market Farm Products on the Internet

Internet marketing guide for agriculture producers

Publisher: US Department of Agriculture

www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/msb.htm

Public Relations Guide for Rural Housing Organizations

Basic PR guide for rural affordable housing organizations

Publisher: Housing Assistance Council

www.ruralhome.org

Issue Report: Immigrants Change the Face of Rural America

Publisher: Farm Foundation

www.farmfoundation.org

Disposal of Domestic or Exotic Livestock Carcasses

Guide for local authorities and farm/ranch owners when faced with animal mortalities

Publisher: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/comm_exec/publications.pl

Evaluation Study of The Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program in Texas

Study by The Texas A&M University System Health Science Center

Publisher: ORCA

www.orca.state.tx.us



HealthFind 2005

Discover the Vital Signs
of Rural Texas.

Don't miss ORCA's annual recruiting event!

HealthFind is the recruiting event where rural communities from across the state meet with health professionals to explore the many practice opportunities in rural Texas.

September 17, 2005

Fees	Registration	Location
<p>Residency & In-Training Health Professionals \$50</p> <p>Practicing Health Professionals \$100</p> <p>Rural Community Exhibit Fee \$300</p>	<p>Register online at www.orca.state.tx.us. For more information contact:</p> <p>Office of Rural Community Affairs</p> <p>Gina Lawson 800-544-2042 glawson@orca.state.tx.us</p>	<p>DoubleTree Hotel Austin 6505 IH-35 North Austin, Texas</p> <p>Just 10 minutes from downtown Austin and 20 minutes from Austin-Bergstrom International Airport!</p>

Register at www.orca.state.tx.us

ORCA Celebrates Community Development Week at Capitol

By Jill McFarren, ORCA

This year, the Office of Rural Community Affairs celebrated Community Development Week, March 28-April 3, 2005, with a press conference held on March 30th on the south steps of the State Capitol in Austin. The event recognized the annual National Community Development Week, celebrated by communities across America. Initiated by the National Community Development Association (NCDA), CD Week is a time for communities to show off local activities and projects made possible in full or in part through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds available from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Texas Governor Rick Perry also issued a proclamation declaring the week of March 28-April 3, 2005, "Community Development Week in Texas."

"Rural Texas has many projects that are worth being proud of. Community Development Week is a perfect time to recognize the results of local CDBG funded projects," noted Oralia Cardenas, ORCA's Community Development Division Director. "Local residents often have no idea what these projects mean to the entire community. Community Development Week is a perfect time to remind everyone of the benefits they all receive from the federal CDBG funding."

The CDBG program, administered to rural communities across Texas by the Office of Rural Community Affairs, provides local governments with the resources required to meet the public facility needs of persons of low- and moderate-income.

The CDBG program, used by many rural Texas county and community governmental entities, has been successfully administered through

identification and prioritization of local projects that address 'basic human needs' such as safe and sanitary sewer systems, clean drinking water, disaster relief and urgent needs projects, housing, drainage and flood control, passable streets, economic development, and other activities. The program has made a significant impact on our local economies through job creation and retention, physical redevelopment and improved local tax bases.

For more information on Community Development Week, contact the National Community Development Association at 522 21st St., NW, #120, Washington, DC 20006 Phone: 202.293.7587 Fax: 202.887.5546 E-Mail: ncda@ncdaonline.org Web: <http://www.ncdaonline.org>. For more information on the rural Community Development Block Grant program, contact ORCA.

ORCA Opens Technical Assistance Center

(Continued from page 1)

South Texas area (see table, "Counties Served by South Texas Technical Assistance Center").

The Center's staff, Clarissa Martinez, provides technical assistance and program information on all ORCA funding programs, information on other programs administered by the state for the benefit of local rural communities, and assistance in other areas, such as business development, rural economic development, housing information, and small and minority-owned business expansion and retention.

"ORCA is committed to serving rural Texans in their own region and community," noted ORCA Executive Director Charles S. (Charlie) Stone. "Establishing this field office enhances the opportunity for ORCA to establish a direct relationship with South Texans and understand and address their concerns first hand."

"The opening of the South Texas Technical Assistance Center in Alice is of the utmost importance to those seeking information on issues ranging from buying a home to starting a small business," said Congressman Ruben Hinojosa. "Next month, Congress will consider the budget for 2005, and I will closely monitor funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development to guarantee that cuts aren't made to programs like the South Texas Assistance Center. In addition, I will continue to support and introduce legislation that positively impacts rural

communities such as health care, home ownership and water system improvements and wastewater projects. I congratulate the Office of Rural Community Affairs and look forward to working with the South Texas Assistance Center in the future."

"This center will be of immediate benefit to South Texas, especially to Jim Wells and Brooks counties, which experienced some devastating flooding in the last two years," Senator Juan Hinojosa said. "And it will mean direct access to grants and other state programs that will help strengthen rural communities."

Representative Yvonne Gonzalez Tourelles stated, "It was an honor to be a part of an event which celebrated the opening of a state office that will do great things for the community of Alice and all of South Texas. I look forward to working with ORCA on future projects to ensure that areas just like Alice receive the similar facilities to help further distribute the information and resources needed for our rural areas."

"ORCA's presence in South Texas is a great asset for our region," Jim Well County Judge Arnold Saenz said. "The technical assistance provided will benefit all local cities and counties."

"I am very very happy that the office is in our area, and will serve our rural communities," noted Alice Mayor, Grace Saenz-Lopez. "The office is going to be very beneficial to us all, and will provide the needed assistance I've hoped for for a long time. I look forward to working with Ms. Martinez."



Back row (l-r): Brooks County Judge Joe B. Garcia; Jim Wells County Commissioner (Pct. 4) Javier N. Garcia; Jim Wells County Commissioner (Pct. 1) Zenaida Sanchez; Charles S. (Charlie) Stone, ORCA Executive Director. Front row (l-r): Jim Wells County Judge Arnold Saenz; Alice Mayor Grace Saenz-Lopez; Clarissa Martinez, ORCA staff; Oralia Cardenas, ORCA Community Development Division Director; Representative Yvonne Gonzalez Tourelles; Zandra Zuniga from Senator Juan Hinojosa's office; William Moreno from Congressman Ruben Hinojosa's office.

ORCA Awards Grants Totaling \$235,502 to Rural Hospitals

(Continued from page 1)

funds often provide a means for rural hospitals to not only replace obsolete equipment but also to expand services to better serve their region, and increase revenue for the facility. "

"The Office of Rural Community Affairs applauds the creativity of these rural hospitals in exploring all opportunities to improve care locally," said Charles S. (Charlie) Stone, ORCA's Executive Director. "The administrations of these facilities should be commended for their resourcefulness and dedication to providing care in their communities."

To receive ORCA's Technology Improvement grant, rural hospitals must be designated CAHs. The CAH program provides an alternative model to allow small rural hospitals to remain viable. Hospitals that meet certain federal and state criteria may qualify for the CAH designation.

The Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (FLEX)

Program funds grant programs and services to support the CAH hospitals and communities. As the federally designated State Office of Rural Health, ORCA administers the FLEX grant and the Critical Access Hospital (CAH) program in Texas. ORCA strengthens CAHs with programs that include: conversion of small rural hospitals to CAH designation; development of rural health networks associated with CAHs; integration and strengthening of rural emergency medical systems; and improving the quality of healthcare services for rural populations.

Critical Access Hospitals Receiving ORCA's 2005 Technology Investment Grant

Hospital	County	City
Bayside Community Hospital & Clinic	Chambers	Anahuac
Fisher County Hospital District	Fisher	Rotan
Hansford County Hospital District	Hansford	Spearman
Iraan General Hospital District	Pecos	Iraan
Kimble Hospital	Kimble	Junction
Rollins Brook Community Hospital	Lampasas	Lampasas
Sweeny Community Hospital	Brazoria	Sweeny



Funding Opportunities

AmeriCorps Indian Tribe FY 2005

www.americorps.org/pdf/2005guidelines/2005IndianTribeApplicationInstructions%20FINAL.pdf

Due date: 5/8/2005

US Department of Agriculture

Agriculture producer or rural small business owner

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill/2005NOFA/nofa05navigate.htm

Due date: postmarked by 6/26/2005

Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Grants

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farmbill/2005NOFA/nofa05navigate.htm

Due date: postmarked by 6/26/2005

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (preapplications)

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/buspr/rbeg.htm

Due date: 5/16/2005

Rural Business Opportunity Grants

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/nofas/index.html

Due date: 5/27/2005

Rural Rental Housing Program

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/mfh/brief_mfh_rrh.htm

Due date: 5/13/2005

Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants

www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/mfh/brief_mfh_rrh.htm

Due date: 5/13/2005

Faith In Action Grant Program

www.fiavolunteers.org/funding/index.cfm

Due date: Ongoing

US Department of Health and Human Services

93.226 AHRQ Health Services Research

<http://fedgrants.gov/Applicants/HHS/AHRQ/AHRQ/PA-00-111/Grant.html>

Due date: 6/22/2005

93.447 State Health Fraud Task Force Grants

<http://fedgrants.gov/Applicants/HHS/FDA/OFACS/FDA-ORA-04-2/Grant.html>

Due Date: 8/12/2005

Helping Outreach Programs to Expand Grant Program

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/fund/expandingoutreach/welcome.html

Due date: Ongoing

National Endowment for the Humanities

45.162 Landmarks of American History: Workshops for Teachers

<http://fedgrants.gov/Applicants/NEH/OPUB/OPO/NEH-GRANTS-111504-017/Grant.html>

Due Date: 8/5/2005

National Endowment for the Humanities

45.149 Reference Materials Grants

<http://fedgrants.gov/Applicants/NEH/OPUB/OPO/NEH-GRANTS-111604-007/Grant.html>

Due Date: 7/15/2005

ORCA's Calendar of Events

Visit ORCA's Calendar of Events at www.orca.state.tx.us for more events and details!

Application Due Dates

Rural Health Applications

- 05/13/05 Rural Health Facility Capital Improvement Loan Fund (CILF)
- 05/20/05 Outstanding Rural Scholar Recognition Program (ORS)
- 05/30/05 Texas Health Service Corps (THSCP), match participation
- 05/31/05 Medically Underserved Community-State Matching Incentive Program (MUCSMIP)
- 06/30/05 Rural Communities Health Care Investment Program (RCHIP)
- 07/31/05 CAH Board of Trustees Continuing Education Reimbursement
- 07/31/05 Texas Health Service Corps (THSCP), joint participation

Community Development Applications

- 06/03/05 Texas Capital Fund (TCF) 2nd Round (Texas Department of Agriculture)
- 06/27/05 Colonia Construction Fund
- 06/27/05 Colonia Planning Fund
- 06/27/05 Non-Border Colonia Fund
- 07/01/05 Downtown Revitalization Program (Texas Department of Agriculture)
- 07/29/05 Small Towns Environment Program (STEP) 2nd cycle

ORCA Executive Committee Meetings

June 2 - 3, 2004
Austin, Texas
(Travis County)

August 4 - 5, 2005
Columbus, Texas
(Colorado County)

Upcoming Events

HealthFind 2005
September 17, 2005
Austin, Texas
(Travis County)

Texas Rural Summit 2005
Aug. 30 – Sept. 1, 2005
Austin, Texas
(Travis County)

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Please let us know if you wish to receive *The Rural Texan* newsletter by filling out the form below and faxing this page to ORCA at 512-936-6776. You may also visit us online at www.orca.state.tx.us and fill out the "ORCA Information Sharing Service" form, or mail this form to: **The Rural Texan**, Office of Rural Community Affairs, PO Box 12877, Austin, TX 78711. You may choose to receive both the electronic monthly newsletter and the quarterly hard copy of the newsletter.

Please **mail** a hard copy of *The Rural Texan* to me every quarter.

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The following best describes my role(s) in the rural Texas arena (check all that apply)*:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic/Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment/Water related | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit organization representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture related | <input type="checkbox"/> For Profit organization representative | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service related |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community / Economic Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Government employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation related |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care related | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Telecommunications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education related | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing related | Other: _____ |

*For our e-mail users, this information will allow us to provide related grant opportunities and other information to you in a timely manner electronically.



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