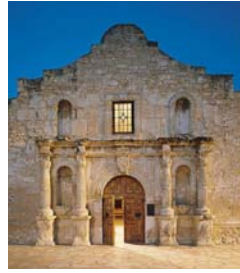


# SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

## Traffic Safety Newsletter





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# TAILGATE FAN

By Mona Lisa Zertuche

HUT . . . HUT . . . HIKE! are the words ringing in the ears of so many for the past few months and we still have a couple of months to go! Whether it's college football or national football, these words are widely recognized.

"Tis the Season!" is another phrase you'll hear again for the next couple of months. The holidays are here with many parties to attend and the beginning of a new year to be ushered in with all the bells and whistles.

Here is another set of words that is also gaining recognition: Person Appointed to Stay Sober (P.A.S.S.). It's the time of year when the excitement, celebrations and over indulgence of the holiday season can over take personal responsibility. Unfortunately, too many times this is when lives are lost. People deserve to travel safely and this year we all have to do our part to make our communities a safer place for our families, friends and the many people that come to visit San Antonio.

Safety is the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) priority and we are asking you to put safety on your menu. Be responsible and get your designated driver or P.A.S.S. A designated driver is not the individual who has had the least to drink; it is the individual who has had nothing to drink. That person is your ticket home. Other options on your menu for a safe arrival: call a friend, use public transit, take a cab, or simply stay where you are. Take back the responsibility and arrive safely at your destination.

## PUT SAFETY ON YOUR MENU

**GET A SOBER RIDE ON GAME DAY.**



# 2015 Grant Announcement

By Mona Lisa Zertuche

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) San Antonio District has awarded grants to six organizations for improving safety and bringing awareness to the residents of San Antonio and the surrounding area.

Three grants were funded through the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP), which focuses on speed, safety belts, Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) and Intersection Control (ITC). The STEP program promotes additional law enforcement and protection on our highways and roadways. Three other grants awarded concentrate on the No Refusal Initiative, DUI Adjudication and training of regional law enforcement on effective investigations of impaired driving cases. In addition, the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) received a grant to increase education of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians regarding their shared roles in achieving the goal of fewer motor vehicle-related pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities.

City of San Antonio Police Department – STEP DWI \$1,000,000

City of New Braunfels Police Department – STEP Comprehensive \$80,075.98

Bexar County Sheriff's Office – STEP Comprehensive \$499,985.20

Bexar County District Attorney's Office – Bexar County No-Refusal Initiative \$206,214.44

Bexar County Commissioner's Court – Bexar County DWI Court \$125,000.00

Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization – General \$7,200.64

This is a great example of coalition partners coming together to educate the community by providing safe and reliable information for all modes of transportation through collaboration and partnership, thereby saving lives.





By Mona Lisa Zertuche

## Community Collaboration: Working Together to Stop Drunk Driving



On November 4, 2014 a collaboration of community partners met in the City of San Antonio for the annual Texas Impaired Driving Summit. In attendance were representatives from law enforcement agencies from across Texas, Traffic Safety organizations and non-profits working together to stop drunk driving.

Included in the prestigious list of speakers was General Joe Weber, Executive Director, Texas Department of Transportation. General Weber's goal is to provide and maintain a safe and reliable transportation system for the 27

million people who call Texas home and support transportation as an economic development tool that makes Texas the best destination for businesses and visitors.

Ms. Georgia Chakiris, Regional Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Region 6 began the session by stating: "Impaired driving is a choice and we need to help people make the right choice." Many other topics were touched on such as The State of the State: Are We Making Progress? Collaborating to Eliminate Drunk Driving, and Civic Fusion: How Communities Address Tough Challenges through Collaboration.



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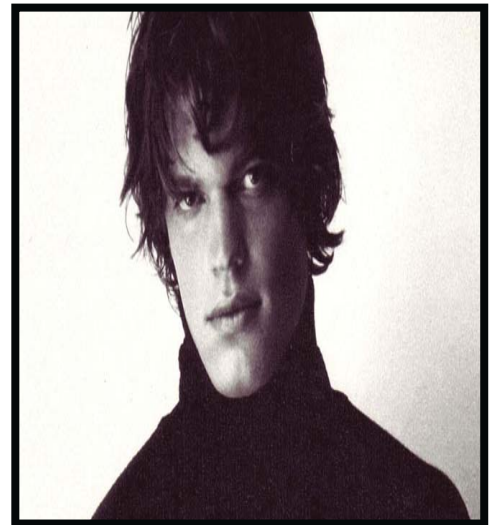
**General Joe Weber**  
**Executive Director**  
**Texas Department of Transportation**



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## Community Collaboration . . . cont'd

Sean Carter, spokesperson for WhenSeanSpeaks, Inc., made a very impactful address when he spoke about his mission in life to spread his message that choices do have consequences. Sean was a business major at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls and a professional model until the choice he made in 2005 left him unable to talk or walk. You can read Sean's story at: <http://www.facesofdrunkdriving.com/sean>



Mona Lisa Zertuche, Traffic Safety Specialist at TxDOT noted, "This is exactly what makes the San Antonio Traffic Jam Coalition so important to the 12 counties that we serve. We continue to discuss these topics and collaborate with our partners to make our highways and roadways safer". <http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/district/san-antonio/san-antonio-traffic-jam.html>





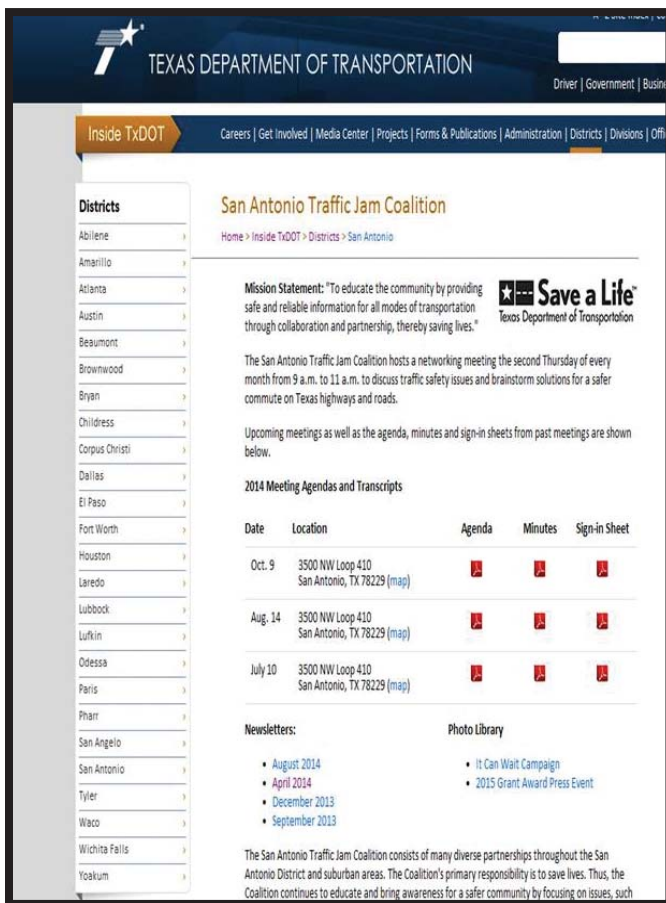
By Mona Lisa Zertuche

For the last several years, the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) has hosted our Traffic Jam Coalition website and made the monthly updates to the site by posting our agendas, sign in sheets, minutes and videos. AAMPO staff definitely exemplified professionalism and complete knowledge in this subject matter. Cecilio Martinez demonstrated perseverance from the beginning; his creativity and knowledge was an asset to this site. Clay Elkins also contributed with his support for our monthly updates.

Even with this great partnership and support, the time had come to move the website to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in order to create a page specifically for the Traffic Jam Coalition. It all began with a trip to Austin to sit down with the Communications Division-Creative Services team and discuss the project. This was a new and exciting adventure for everyone involved.

Over the past several months I worked very closely with Joshua Hunter, Web Services Branch Manager, Daniel Young, Web Writer, Jared Walls, Senior Editor, Andre Clemons, Senior Graphic Designer, Shawn Lloyd, Web Writer, Charles Boisseau, Web Writer, Tina Cheng, Web Writer, Donna Habersaat, Information Architect, Josh Black, Desktop Publishing Technician, and Marcos Lujan, Graphic Designer. The Traffic Jam Coalition was fortunate to have skilled knowledgeable individuals to create this new website for us. They did an amazing job!

So please check out our new home at [www.TxDOT.gov](http://www.TxDOT.gov) and type "Traffic Jam" in the search bar for upcoming events, meetings and campaigns!



# Helotes Police Department Celebrates National Night Out



By Mona Lisa Zertuche

Some events should happen more than just once a year and one of these events is National Night Out. The ties that bind us are not just family ties, but also neighborhood ties such as support, encouragement and looking out for one another. Those ties are no longer just reserved for "The Cleavers," as I found out; they are making their way back into our neighborhoods and communities.

This year I spent the evening in Helotes with the Helotes Police Department and Murney Whitehurst, the local HEB Loss Prevention Manager, Alice Coulna and Angelia Bocconcelli, Helotes Police Department. We traveled to several neighborhoods: Iron Horse, Beverly Hills, Acadia Heights Estates and Helotes Crossing. In each of these areas the laughter of kids rang out, chatter from around the barbeque pit flowed and there was music in the air.

Thank you to Officer Christopher Holt, and Chief Robert Hunley of the Helotes Police Department for coordinating this event.





# Johnson High School

# Smart Driving Club



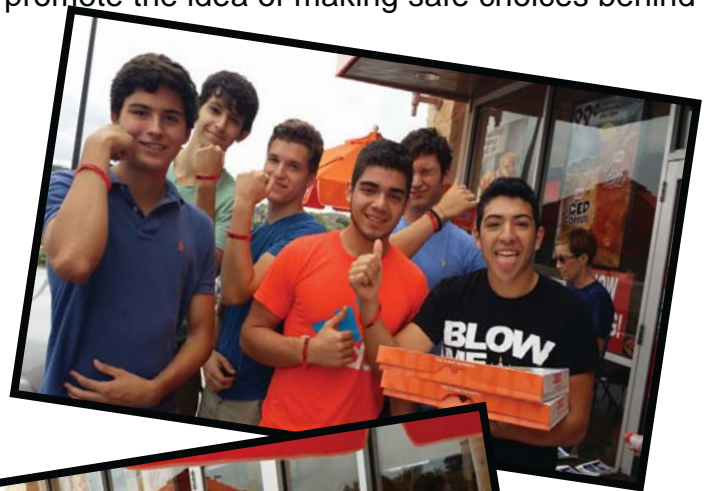
By Melinda Cox

In 2012, I started the Smart Driving Club for the students of Johnson High School (JHS) to give JHS Jaguar students the resources and information needed to become empowered ambassadors and advocates for a smart, safe driving message.

The students immediately began to spread the message of “No Distracted Driving” out to family, friends and the community. With several students participating, they moved forward with the mission of educating and bringing awareness to their “No Distracted Driving” Campaign. Through their own example as young drivers, they are making a difference.

In the last two years, the Smart Driving Club has distributed traffic safety information at many community and high school events such as homecoming, football games, and pep rallies. The club also likes to engage the community and peers with interactive opportunities such as using the “drunk goggles” for a bean bag toss or walking the sobriety line. On any given Saturday morning, you might find them at a Dunkin’ Donuts, talking to the public and having them pledge not to be a distracted driver.

The club is honored to be working with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) as ambassadors for a smart driving message and to promote the idea of making safe choices behind the wheel.





# Making A Difference

For the past 30 years, the Executive Women in Texas Government (EWTG) have been coming together in the spirit of building careers and developing leaders to create positive results in Texas state government. EWTG was founded in 1984 by six visionary women who recognized the need for women in higher levels of state government to have an educational and networking support group. The first meeting was announced by word-of-mouth and over 100 women attended.

This year hundreds of women came to San Marcos to attend the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Professional Development Conference. To kick off the conference we all enjoyed a night of poetry to which the audience cheered, laughed and enjoyed the readings.

The following morning our keynote speaker was Ms. Amy Henry. Ms. Henry captured our attention as she described how her life has changed since her experience as a contestant on the 2004 *The Apprentice*. She made it further than any other female contestant and was one of the final four to face Mr. Donald Trump in the boardroom. To this day Ms. Henry holds the record for the most wins on *The Apprentice* by a female contestant.

Ms. Henry has gone on to write a book "What It Takes, Speak Up, Step Up, Move Up" with the forward written by Mr. Trump. Ms. Henry believes strongly in several things that have helped her career develop and she shared them with us:

- Build relationships with superiors
- Speak up on behalf of your needs and accomplishments
- Step up to challenging assignments that demonstrate your skills
- Use rather than hide your charm and intuition
- Value your work and ask for the money you deserve
- Let objectivity rather than emotions guide your workplace behavior
- Make yourself and your achievements known

Our afternoon keynote speaker was Ambassador Karen Hughes who is one of the world's foremost communication strategists. Ms. Hughes served as a Counselor to President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2002. She shared many experiences she had while working directly under President Bush that were fun, enjoyable and life changing as she served under President Bush at the time of September 11, 2001.

(cont'd on page 11)



(cont'd from page 10)

# Difference . . . cont'd

Ms. Hughes has also has written a book "Ten Minutes to Normal" detailing her decision to leave the White House and to head back to Texas.

Sessions throughout the day were very informative and inspiring. I would encourage any female Traffic Safety Specialist that has not attended a EWTG Conference to put your name in the hat for 2016!

# CAMPAIGNS

By Mona Lisa Zertuche



## 2014 Football Impaired Driving

2014 Football Impaired Driving Campaign – As you are traveling to and from a football game, TxDOT wants a sober ride to be at the top of your list when making your game-day plans. The Fan Van will once again be touring Texas and will arrive in San Antonio on January 2<sup>nd</sup> for the Alamo Bowl.



## Sober Sleigh Ride

Sober Sleigh Ride is also returning this year with many stops throughout Texas. This festive limo will be here in San Antonio on December 12th to spread the holiday message of giving the gift of a designated driver. Give a P.A.S.S. (Person Appointed to Stay Sober) this season.

# PEARSALL SHINES

By Mona Lisa Zertuche

San Antonio District Traffic Safety Specialists held a Child Passenger Safety Seat Event in Pearsall Texas on December 6, 2014. After hundreds of flyers were distributed to schools, daycare centers, businesses and newspapers our appointment slots quickly filled and we geared up for a busy day that would not disappoint.

Our appointments promptly began arriving at 10:00 a.m. and would not stop until our last appointment at 2:00 p.m. The day was beyond rewarding as many children's lives were saved that day and parents were educated on how to keep their child safer longer. We installed 66 seats and checked 9 and children definitely left safer than they arrived.

I want to give a special thank you to all who volunteered that day. William Howard, Maintenance Section Supervisor in Pearsall, Texas had a crew to assist us that would prove to be invaluable. The crew checked in our appointments, if they were late Toni Cantu was calling them to confirm their participation.



The other 15 men were handing us seats, scribing, spotting as the cars backed out, spotting as they drove into the designated slots, barbequing and making sure we were all hydrated. The whole system ran so smoothly that time flew by. Pearsall Fire Department were on hand to finger print and register the children. And the Pearsall Current Newspaper also came out to cover our event.

(cont'd to page 14)



(cont'd from page 13)

# PEARSALL . . . cont'd

Our volunteers out of the Pearsall Office were: William Howard, Toni Cantu, Carlos Villarreal, Anthony Callis, Billy Coward, Rolando Gonzales, Enrique Hernandez, Miguel Hernandez, Gustavo Jimenez, Leonard Jonas, Reyes Leal, Trini Long, Sergio Martinez, Jacob Maldonado. From the Department of Health Services our volunteers were Bridget Wahler, Stephanie Deltoro and Tenia Houck with Department of State Health Services.



# THE CREW

# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

By Mona Lisa Zertuche



Helotes Market Days – The first Saturday of every month Helotes Texas blocks off several streets in the heart of Old Town. Traffic Safety Specialists were there to support the Helotes Police Department in sharing safety messages by having participants spin our Safety Wheel and answering a traffic safety questions. Education and awareness on impaired driving benefited the community of Helotes.



HEB Safety & Health Day – Robbi and I supported HEB this year at their Annual Safety & Health Day along with the Bexar County Sheriff's Department, Department of Public Safety, San Antonio Police Department and Helotes Police Department. Safety was heavily promoted that day as many came by to speak to us regarding the traffic safety issues they face with new drivers in the household.



National Child Passenger Safety Seat Week was September 14th through September 20th and many lives were saved due to the efforts all the Traffic Safety Specialists throughout Texas. Robbi and I assisted with several child passenger safety seats installations and checks.



Johnson High School Jaguar's Smart Driving Club once again gave up a Saturday morning to talk to customers at Dunkin Donuts about making their car a no phone zone. Approximately 100 customers came by the table to pledge that they would not text and drive. It was a great outreach effort Melinda Cox, Traffic Jam Coalition member.

(cont'd on page 16)

# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ... cont'd



O'Connor PTSA encourages parents to get involved with the safety program. O'Connor High School PTSA teamed up with the National Safety Council and held several events during National Safe Teen Driving week. The outreach not only dealt with the issues of teen driving but also educated the parents on the importance of staying involved with how well their teen does progress with the skills of driving. It's an awesome job that Dawn Koester, Traffic Jam Coalition Member is doing at O'Connor High School.



On December 12th the Sober Sleigh Ride came to San Antonio to remind everyone to enlist a designated driver during the holidays. The sleigh traveled to Lackland Air Force Base, Fort Sam Joint Base and Randolph Air Force Base. Then it was up up and away to downtown San Antonio historic King William District and last stop was the Alamo. Many signed our pledge to get a sober ride home this holiday.



Our efforts to save lives continue on the highways and roadways of San Antonio and the surrounding counties. Recently we have partnered with Chuck E Cheese to check child passenger safety seats. Robbi and I have been to several Chuck E Cheese Pizza restaurants' educating parents and safely securing the children in their seats



# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ... cont'd



TxDOT has partnered with Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA), regional Military Mission Partners, and our local community partners the San Antonio Police Department, Bexar County Sheriff's Department, and Union Pacific Railroad to develop a New Comer's Safety Video for military members, and their families, to learn more about traffic safety topics while in our great city. Representing TxDOT were Mr. Mario Jorge (District Engineer), Mr. Brian Weatherly (Safety Officer), Ms. Robbi Smith (Traffic Safety Specialist), and Ms. Mona Lisa Zertuche (Traffic Safety Specialist), from JBSA were Brigadier General LaBrutta (JBSA Commanding General), Lieutenant General Wiggins (Army North), Rear Admiral McCormick-Boyle (Medical Education Training Center), and Mr. Jewell Hicks (JBSA Chief of Safety), and from our local community partners were Officer Doug Greene (San Antonio Police Department), Mr. Buck Russel (Union Pacific Railroad), and Sheriff Susan Pamerleau (Bexar County Sheriff).



December 17th, TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialists Robbi Smith and Mona Lisa Zertuche joined with Union Pacific (UP), San Antonio Police Department and Councilman Rey Saldana, District 4 to promote safety at railroad crossings. "Safety is always a top priority for Union Pacific" stated Buck Russell, Manager of Public Safety with UP. A proactive event was held at the I-35 and Zarzamora rail crossing to reward drivers that are following the rules of safety at railroad crossings".



Today we thanked Chief McManus of the San Antonio Police Department for his service and protection here in San Antonio along with his contributions. We wish him well as he moves on to the next chapter of his life. We also welcomed Interim Chief Anthony Trevino as he steps in to fill this position.

# Word Search

## Holiday Safety

C T S I L A I C E P S G P  
E R L D S I T T G O S N L  
D C F S G A X C U M A I E  
I A N K A Y M T X Q P K D  
W M Q A F N R T P N I N G  
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A I Z C G Y U G T N R D A  
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S N Y R A U R B E F N J C  
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N H H G N I V I R D X Z O  
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PASS  
CHRISTMAS  
DRINKING  
STATEWIDE  
SPECIALIST  
PRIORITY  
SANANTONIO  
PLEDGE  
SUPERBOWL  
DRIVING  
JANUARY  
FEBRUARY  
MARCH  
OUTREACH  
CAMPAIGNS

