



TCOG HOSTS 41ST ANNUAL AWARD MEETING

Outstanding Citizens Award

In 1986, TCOG began recognizing individuals who made outstanding contributions to the Texoma region. The Governing Body appoints a committee of board members to consider the selection of a citizen from each county who has dedicated volunteer time and resources to his or

her community. The Honoree may be involved in either a public/non-profit organization or a private sector business. This is an opportunity to recognize the impact of those individuals whose lives have truly made a difference for the Texoma Region.



Kanita Maxwell
Cooke County Outstanding Citizen



Pat Hilliard
Fannin County Outstanding Citizen



Janie Bates
Grayson County Outstanding Citizen

Appreciation Award

Kevin Fitzpatrick, Southern Creative Services



Kevin Fitzpatrick owns and operates Southern Creative Services in Sherman. Southern Creative Services offers web design, print design, and logo brand design. Kevin believes that community service is an essential component to any successful small business model. Over the last several months, Kevin has given his time and expertise to TCOG to recreate our web site at no cost. An updated, current and professional web site will allow TCOG staff to communicate more frequently and more accurately with our member jurisdictions and the citizens of Texoma.

Executive Committee

Bill Lindsay, President
Grayson County Citizens

Cary Wacker, Vice President
Councilwoman, City of Sherman

Pat Hilliard - Secretary
Commissioner, Fannin County

Robert Brady
Mayor, City of Denison

Roy Floyd
Mayor, City of Bonham

Glenn Loch
Mayor, City of Gainesville

Al Smith
Commissioner, Cooke County

Gene Short
Commissioner, Grayson County

Maria Vega
Cooke County Minority

Full Governing Body

Michael Baecht
Councilman, City of Denison

Roy Brewer
Gainesville ISD

Charles Draper
Councilman, City of Gainesville

Jimmy Doyle
Fannin County Citizens

Jack Flusche
Councilman, Cooke County Small Cities

Misha Frey
Van Alstyne ISD

Scott Galyon
Pottsboro ISD

Obie Lee Greenleaf
Councilman, City of Denison

Janet Gott
Grayson County College

Lieutenant David Hawley
Denison ISD

Jim Hoenig
Whitesboro ISD

Leon Hurse
Mayor, Fannin Cty Small Cities

Cecil Jones
Fannin County Minority

Bill Magers
Mayor, City of Sherman

Joe Smith
Councilman, City of Sherman

Robert Softly
Grayson County Minority

Bob Thomas
Bonham ISD

Nancy Webb
Councilwoman, Grayson Cty Med Cities

Patsy Wilson
North Central Texas College

Bill Yoss
Mayor, Fannin Cty Small Cities

Al Zorrilla
Sherman ISD

“Box Car” Climbs the Ladder to Home-Ownership

For five years, through ingenuity, creativity and sheer determination, and with only a monthly disability check, Ronald Lawrence, aka “Box Car”, made his home inside a vacant train box car parked behind an Albertsons store in Denison, Texas. Believe it or not, that experience was the first rung of the ladder in becoming a home owner.

The second rung came in 2007, when Mr. Lawrence applied and received a Housing Choice Voucher through the Texoma Council of Government’s Section 8 Housing Program. On the next rung, he joined the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program where he entered into a contract of participation with the goal of home-ownership. The contract required Home Ownership Education, acquiring a satisfactory credit rating and a mortgage down payment. Mr. Lawrence climbed these rungs and exceeded all requirements including saving over \$4,000 for a mortgage down payment. This along with the \$2,500 1st time homebuyers grant provided by the City of Denison allowed Mr. Lawrence to reach the top rung of the ladder and achieve the American dream of owning his own home.

On May 29, 2009, Mr. Lawrence signed the closing papers on a brand new 3 bedroom, 2 bath, house in Denison, Texas. He has been a role model to those who long to have a home of their own but think it is impossible. He continues to be involved with the TCOG FSS Program by volunteering his time to serve on the Advisory board and to mentor other FSS clients who affectionately refer to him as “Box Car”.

Community Development Block Grant Update

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has entered a new phase in the 2009-2010 funding cycle. Twelve communities in the three-county TCOG region submitted applications for funding through this program. The scoring of these applications is a two-phase process. The first phase involves applying the criteria that was developed by the Texoma Regional Review Committee, a group of local leaders appointed by the Governor. The second phase consists of scoring by the Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA). Both sets of scores have been tallied and the communities have been tentatively ranked.

Under normal circumstances, ORCA would work with these communities once the scores are finalized so that our cities and counties can begin their projects. We don’t live in

normal times, however. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“stimulus bill”) that Congress passed earlier this year in an effort to address the economic downturn has put more money into the CDBG process. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – the federal agency that administers the CDBG program by working with ORCA – has required the states to submit the list of projects that will be funded with the stimulus money by June 29, 2009. While these stimulus projects are coming from the same list of applications that were submitted through the normal process, it has added an extra layer of complexity. Nonetheless, we remain hopeful that HUD will act quickly to ensure that these “shovel-ready” projects can begin in the very near future.



Area Agency on Aging of Texoma Receives An Award For Outstanding Service During Hurricane Ike

At the Texas State Access and Assistant Conference in Austin, TX, in front of hundreds of their peers, the Area Agency on Aging of Texoma was presented with an outstanding service award. Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Aging and Disability Services, Gary Jessee and DAD Manager for the AAA Section, Betty Ford presented the award in Recognition of Outstanding Service during the Hurricane Ike Crisis and Disaster Recovery.



In September 2008 Hurricane Ike hit the Texas coast and those areas were shut down. As the mandatory evacuation began, the Texoma Region, TCOG and the AAA of Texoma began preparations to help evacuees (much like they did during Hurricanes Katrina & Rita). Working with Texoma's Emergency Response officials, non-

profit agencies and volunteers, the AAA put four bilingual staff on call along with Ombudsmen and Caregiver Specialists, Benefits Counselors and three RN Care Coordinators to serve those affected by the flood. The 2-1-1 call center handled 3,794 emergency calls – many of them in Spanish. Ombudsmen met with evacuees from nursing homes and assisted living facilities to help them find shelter, food, clothing and a new place to live if necessary. The Ombudsmen staff, benefits counselors, and care coordinators helped victims cope throughout the disaster and helped them get back to “normal life” as quickly as

they could. Congratulations to TCOG and the Texoma AAA!

Continued from TCOG 41st Annual Award Meeting

Texoma 911 Silent Hero Awards

Texoma area 9-1-1 call takers received Silent Hero awards from the Texas Commission on State Emergency Communications and the Texas Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association. Winners from across Cooke, Grayson and Fannin Counties included:

Megan Robinson, Bonham Police Department
Kristy Westcott, Fannin County Sheriff's Office
Lisa Gailey, Denison Fire Department
Craig Eaton, Denison Police Department
Joahanna Bradfield, Sherman Police Department
Dana Waugh, Grayson County Sheriff's Office
Beth Eggar, Van Alstyne Police Department
Lisa Whitten, Whitesboro Police Department
Travis Achorn, Gainesville Police Department

Silent Hero awards are given to those who demonstrate a positive attitude toward all aspects of the job, a willingness to be a team player, professionalism and pride in work, ability to earn



and maintain the respect of coworkers, flexibility in assignments, job performance above and beyond the call of duty, and exceptional professionalism in the field of emergency communications. We are proud to recognize the accomplishments of these individuals who make the Lone Star State's 9-1-1 program one of the best in the nation.

**Community Partner Award
Pottsboro Church of Christ Ladies Bible Class**

The Pottsboro Church of Christ Ladies Bible Class have supplied the Immunization Program for years with handmade baby quilts and crocheted/knitted blankets to give to new mothers and their babies at area hospitals.



**Texoma Caring Professional
Dr. Pamela S. Egner, D.D.S**

The Texoma Caring Professional award was presented to Dr. Pamela S. Egner, D.D.S. with gratitude from Elder Watch & the Area Agency on Aging of Texoma for helping clients with dental needs at a significantly reduced rate.



**Outstanding Volunteer Award
Maurine Gross**

Maurine Gross advocates for issues affecting seniors at the Texas State Legislature as a member of the Texas Silver Haired Legislature. Maurine also serves as a Certified Volunteer Ombudsman, helping senior and disabled citizens in several nursing homes. She is a long-time RSVP volunteer and serves on the Texoma Regional Advisory Council on Aging. Maurine serves various departments of the Area Agency on Aging of Texoma, including Senior Volunteers for Childhood Immunization.



**Transportation Partner Award
Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS)**

The Transportation Partner Award was presented to Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS) for its exceptional achievement in improving the quality of life of our communities. This was achieved through reorganizing and recovering from a rather complex and near devastating financial situation. Brad Underwood, TAPS Executive Director, accepted this award.

**Texoma Most Excellent Community Partner Award
Pat Hedrick, H.H.S.C.**

This award was presented to Pat Hedrick, H.H.S.C. with gratitude from Elder Watch & Area Agency on Aging of Texoma. Pat Hedrick, a Department of Aging and Disability Services Case Worker in Sherman, stands out as an example of a DADS employee who consistently strives to maintain a cohesive relationship between DADS, AAA & Tri County Senior Nutrition. Pat receives referrals from the AAA of Texoma and needed follow-up information on the status of these referrals.



FYI: