



**Newsletter of the South Plains Association of Governments**

**SOUTH PLAINS DISASTER RECOVERY FUND LAUNCHED TO AID IN WILDFIRE RESPONSE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS**

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(Lubbock, TX)- The Lubbock Area Foundation has announced the launch of the South Plains Disaster Recovery Fund through which anyone can donate to aid relief efforts related to wildfires and other disasters that may affect communities in the South Plains area.

Recent wildfires have caused widespread destruction and have exhausted the limited resources of volunteer fire departments and agencies such as Red Cross and Salvation Army that provide on-site support for emergency responders. "Our hearts go out to our neighbors and friends who have suffered losses due to the wildfires," said Lubbock Area Foundation Ex-



*View from McDonald Observatory in the Davis Mountains of West Texas. (Frank Cianciolo/McDonald Observatory)*



*Wildfire south of Iraan, Texas, burns on Wednesday, April 13, 2011. (AP Photo/Odessa American, Heather Leiphart)*

ecutive Director, Kathy Stocco. "The South Plains Disaster Recovery Fund will ensure that financial support is quickly and effectively made available to emergency response agencies that we count on for help when South Plains communities are at risk."

Our regional volunteer fire departments are currently in great need of funding to replace equipment and supplies that have been damaged or lost in fighting the recent wildfires. Some equipment is insured but many items are not.

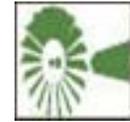
The Texas Forest Service announced last week that it has established a state-wide VFD Emergency Assistance Fund to help vol-

unteer fire departments battling wildfires.

Through the South Plains Disaster Recovery Fund, the people of the South Plains can focus their support on the needs of emergency response agencies that serve this region.

Individuals, businesses and civic organizations wishing to help replace equipment and keep our volunteer firefighters prepared for future emergencies can contribute online at [www.lubbockareafoundation.org](http://www.lubbockareafoundation.org). Checks can be mailed to Lubbock Area Foundation at 2509 80th Street; Lubbock, TX 79423 (please designate your gift for "Disaster Relief.") All gifts are tax-deductible.





June 2011

### Texas Tech University to Offer Certified Public Manager Program

The Center for Public Service at Texas Tech University is starting training programs specifically designed for government and nonprofit administrators and those who are preparing for administrative positions.

The program is a cohort program for employees who are presently working in government and nonprofit organizations. These administrative, noncredit training programs are being offered in the Lubbock and the Midland-Odessa areas. Upon completion of the program, participants are awarded the nationally recognized Certified

Public Manager Designation (CPM).



Continuing education credits are also awarded to participants. The programs will be held in convenient locations and at times that are convenient to working adults. The CPM Instructors are a mix of academics and practitioners who com-

bine theory with practical application.

The number of participants is limited to encourage interactive learning. If you are interested in furthering your education and training, you are encouraged to register now for the program to reserve a seat in the class that is forming.

For further information and to obtain a brochure or registration forms, contact Texas Tech University Center for Public Service:

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[www.depts.ttu.edu/cps/](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/cps/)



**“Upon completion of the program, participants are awarded the nationally recognized Certified Public Manager Designation (CPM).“**

### Dispatcher’s Appreciation Week @ SPAG

One week each year is set aside to recognize dispatchers in the SPAG region. This week (second full week of April) SPAG Regional 9-1-1 acknowledged the hard working dispatchers for all they do for their communities. Dispatchers this year were given a camouflage t-shirt with the SPAG emblem on it, gift basket with games (which includes an addictive top stacking activity), snacks and



*County Dispatchers, Cathy Sanchez, Aurora Garcia and Frankie Watson*

a trendy drink tumbler. SPAG Regional 9-1-1 and regional dispatchers share an amazing relationship, one that involves trust, great responsibility, patience and understanding. Luckily, all of the SPAG regional dispatchers are community-serving individuals that help any time they can. SPAG would like to say “thank you” to each dispatcher for your service to the rural communities.





## The South Plains Association of Governments Receives Grant to Support Regional Recycling Efforts

Recycling programs in 70 towns and cities throughout the country received a significant boost to their local recycling efforts when Keep America Beautiful and The Coca-Cola Company announced the recipients of the spring 2011 Recycling Bin Grant program. The SPAG grant application was one of 70 chosen from nearly 800 applications submitted. The 70 grant recipients represent a cross-section of community groups, local governments, colleges and nonprofit organizations across the country. Grant recipients will receive nearly 4,000 recycling bins from a pre-set list of options.

Grants were awarded for a diverse range of settings from 31 states, including nine colleges and universities, 25 municipalities and other local government entities, 10 K-12 schools,



26 nonprofit organizations, and additional community groups and Native American tribes. Recipients were chosen by KAB based on a number of criteria, including where bins are likely to have the most impact on recovering beverage containers from



the waste stream, ability of recipients to sustain their program in the future, and intention to support collection programs with recycling education and promotion. The Bin Grant program is sponsored by The Coca-Cola Company and is designed to promote and support community recycling in the U.S.

In a time of fiscal constraints and budget cuts, recycling has become more difficult for rural communities and organizations. The KAB recycling bin grant will help

SPAG address this challenge by giving area rural communities the basic tools to begin recycling. The bins will be distributed for free to city governments inside SPAG's 15 county region, where they will be placed in public facilities. This will work to help local governments to create awareness of recycling programs and promote a more Earth-friendly mindset.

"The resources we throw away every day are not infinite," said Christian Shotts, SPAG's Solid Waste Planner. "We hope that cities will not only reduce landfill costs, but also create an environmentally-conscious system for future generations"

The recycling bin grant given to the South Plains Association of Governments will include 40 bins with dimensions of 22L x 11 3/4 W x 45 1/2 H. These bins will be given out to city organizations on a first come basis. For more information, contact Christian Shotts at [cshotts@spag.org](mailto:cshotts@spag.org)



"The South Plains Association of Governments grant application was one of 70 chosen from nearly 800 applications submitted."





### SPAG Announces Start of Safe Room Program

When you think of West Texas, the word windy always seems to come to mind. West Texas, particularly the South Plains has long been associated with wind, dust storms, and tornadoes.

The region averages more than 19 tornadoes per year ranging from an F0 to F5 in severity. Extreme winds routinely cause damage in the South Plains and have been the cause of injuries and even fatalities to its citizens. While these conditions make for great movie scenes in westerns, they can make life very dangerous for our residents.

During the development of the South Plains Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, one solution was named over and over throughout the region: tornado shelters. Because this need was identified so many times in the plan, the COG applied for an Individual Safe Room/Storm Shelter Rebate grant through the Governors Division of Emergency Management (GDEM.)

In 2008, The South Plains Region was awarded a



Hazard Mitigation Grant by the GDEM for the South Plains Regional Safe Room Rebate Project. The grant allowed the COG to provide 215 homeowners a rebate of up to \$2,500.00 to build an approved Safe Room at their home.

As a part of the project, the location of each completed safe room will have the grid coordinates recorded and later provided to the local Emergency Management Coordinator. This will allow local emergency responders (Search & Rescue) to locate and check on these homeowners in the case of an event.

The program was administered for two years and saw over 200 shelters built in the South Plains Region. Fortunately for residents in the area, there were remaining funds left over allowing for the program to be extended for another two years.

Once again, SPAG will be working on this program. In

June, SPAG will begin accepting application for interested residents. Another media campaign is being developed to announce the extension of the program and make local citizens aware of the opportunity.

Redevelopment of press releases will be coordinated with The National Weather Service, Notional Storm Shelter Association, American Tornado Shelter Association, and local elected officials to ensure everyone in the South Plains has access to the project information. While we cannot control the forces of nature, the South Plains Association of Governments is taking a proactive approach to help protect our citizens.

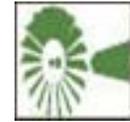
For more information contact the regional services department at (806) 762-8721



*Example safe room from SPAG's Safe room Program*

**“The purpose of the program is to provide partial funding of up to \$2,500.00 to home owners to support the cost of installing a qualified safe room/tornado shelter in their homes.”**





June 2011

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) has hosted several health fairs this Spring, and have several more on the agenda for the future. AAA has made these events possible through partnerships with Calvert Home Health and King Hearing, and provide a variety of health services.

The vital services offered by this agency include but are not limited to: hearing screenings, respiratory screenings, cho-



lesterol screenings, blood pressure screenings, blood sugar screenings, medication education, bone density screenings and foot care screenings.



*Francisco Sotelo, Aging Program Specialist, Irene Arredondo, 2-1-1 Call Specialist*

As we age, it is important for all of us to tend to our health, but this can be costly to those in retirement or on fixed incomes. This program seeks to ad-



*Renee Ramirez, Aging Program Specialist*

dress the issue by providing these medical services free of charge to all who attend them.

The program has more than 10 years of experience, and holds health fairs at least 10 times a year.

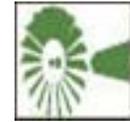
For more information, contact the Area Agency on Aging at (806) 687-0940.

**This year's Health Fairs have been held in Brownfield, Anton, Hale County and Lynn County**

## New Employees @ SPAG

**Josh Peltier** is the new SPAG Intern for the Administration and Finance Departments. Josh is originally from Fort Worth, Texas where he attended Bethesda Christian School for his K-12<sup>th</sup> education. After graduating high school, Josh felt he wanted to be a youth pastor and attended Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Waxahachie, Texas for a year. Thereafter, Josh became interested public service and decided to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science at Texas Tech University. In 2009, Josh decided to return to school to pursue a Master's Degree in Public Administration, with an emphasis on City Management. Once he has finished his MPA degree, he plans to attend law school. Josh's pastimes include Sports, Traveling, Movies, and hanging out with friends and his girlfriend. Josh has enjoyed his time at SPAG so far, and looks forward to getting to know everyone that is affiliated with the Association.





# SPAG Quarterly Calendar

## June 2011 Calendar

<b>Community Transition</b>	<b>June 9th</b>	<b>1:30-3 p.m.</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>SPAG Board of Directors Meeting</b>	<b>June 14th</b>	<b>10 am - 12 pm</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Texas Municipal League Quarterly Meeting</b>	<b>June 16th</b>	<b>4:30—8 pm</b>	<b>Texas Tech Club</b>
<b>Government Application Review Committee Meeting</b>	<b>June 29th</b>	<b>9 - 10 a.m.</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>

“Summer afternoon, summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language.”

~Henry James

## July 2011 Calendar

<b>SPAG Board of Directors Meeting</b>	<b>July 12th</b>	<b>10 am - 12 pm</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Resources United</b>	<b>July 14th</b>	<b>3-5 pm</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Advisory Council on Aging</b>	<b>July 19th</b>	<b>2-4 pm</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Directors &amp; Bookkeepers Meeting</b>	<b>July 21st</b>	<b>2-4 pm</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Government Application Review Committee Meeting</b>	<b>July 27th</b>	<b>9-10 am</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>

### SAVE THE DATE

SPAG ANNUAL MEETING

@

TEXAS TECH CLUB  
WEDNESDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2011

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

CASUAL DRESS

## August 2011 Calendar

<b>SPAG Board of Directors Meeting</b>	<b>Aug. 9th</b>	<b>10 am - 12 pm</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Law Enforcement Training Advisory Committee Meeting</b>	<b>Aug. 17th</b>	<b>9-10 am</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>
<b>Government Application Review Committee Meeting</b>	<b>Aug. 31st</b>	<b>9-10 am</b>	<b>SPAG Boardroom</b>

SPAG is a voluntary association created by the local governments within State Planning Region 2. It is an independent political subdivision of the state and is one of 24 such organizations in Texas. All local governments in the region are eligible and invited to become a member. Regional Forum is published monthly by SPAG and is available without cost.

