

ETCOG HAPPENINGS

ACHIEVEMENTS & EVENTS

9-1-1 TELECOMMUNICATORS APPRECIATION DAY

Governor Rick Perry proclaimed April 14-20 Public Safety Telecommunicators Week stating, "The men and women serving as public safety telecommunicators are dedicated to saving lives. These 9-1-1 operators and dispatchers and other communication specialists respond to Texans in times of great need, and their specialized skills and calm presence are invaluable to the Lone Star State."

To celebrate, for the 15th year, ETCOG's Public Safety Division honored 9-1-1 dispatchers for their work in the region with Telecommunicator's Day. This year's event was held at Fire Mountain Amusements in Tyler on April 13, 2013. Seventy two telecommunicators and their family members spent the day enjoying go cart rides, lunch, golfing and arcade games. Cherokee County Sheriff Department staff, Robin Jackson, is pictured right with her husband Jeremy Jackson.



WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS EAST TEXAS BOARD MEMBER PARTNERS WITH ROBOTICS CLASS FOR WINDMILL PROJECT

Longtime Workforce Solutions East Texas Board member, John Nash, was so impressed with a board presentation by the Bullard Robotics team that he gave the teens money to build a wind generation farm on his property. Led by instructor, Stacy Gwartney, one of her Engineering, Design & Problem Solving classes with twelve students, worked for the next six weeks to tackle the project.

The students started at the beginning with research as if they were proposing to build a new wind generation farm in our community. Students served in different roles as if they would be presenting to the civic council, state reps, taking the position of an environmentalist, looking at policies, and on to researching windmills and choosing how this one would work to create energy and how to convert it to electricity.

Mr. Nash's windmill will turn causing the motor to turn and create energy which can be converted for use. His particular wind farm will be hooked up to a battery bank where the energy produced can be stored until it is needed to be used. Mr. Nash is pictured right with Austin Gwartney, senior at Bullard High School, who worked on the project.

The Bullard Robotics team will soon take their main current project, a solar car, to be judged on July 20th prior to an 8 day, 1500 mile race, beginning July 23rd to Los Angeles, CA.



BENEFITS COUNSELING EVENTS & OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Area Agency on Aging will celebrate national Older Americans Month during May. The Older Americans Act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965 and amended in 2006, specifying objectives for maintaining dignity and welfare of older individuals. To commemorate this effort, the Area Agency on Aging of East Texas will participate in the following events during the month of May:

May 16th, 3:30 p.m.

Senior Resources Subcommittee Meeting - Tyler Chamber of Commerce

May 17th, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

East Texas Centers for Independent Living Health Fair
4713 Troup Hwy., Tyler, TX 75703

May 20, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Good Shepherd Hospital's Institute for Healthy Living, in collaboration with Fountainview Estates and Area Agency on Aging, present a special showing of Age of Champions documentary

OVER \$832,000 IN CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTED IN 2012 THROUGH CHOICES PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP

Initiated in August 2005, Non-Custodial Parent Choices is a collaborative effort of the Texas Workforce Commission, The office of Attorney General, local workforce boards and family court judges. The program targets unemployed or underemployed non-custodial parents who are behind on their child support payments. The goal of the program is to overcome substantial barriers to employment and career advancement while becoming economically self-sufficient and making consistent child support payments.

In 2009 the NCP program made its debut in the East Texas Region when it was expanded to Gregg County. The program has been ranked as one of the best programs in Texas. The program collected \$522,912 in 2011, \$832,239 in 2012, and so far \$329,239 in 2013.

Recently, ETCOG received additional funding for the existing program in Gregg County and authorization to expand it into Van Zandt County.

OMBUDSMAN VOLUNTEERS TRAINED & RECOGNIZED



The week of April 21st through April 27th was National Volunteer Recognition Week. The Ombudsman Program of ETCOG's Area Agency on Aging of East Texas, trains and certifies volunteers to assist in service to residents who live in nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Without the dedicated, caring advocacy by the volunteers, there would be far less visibility of the Ombudsman Program and service given to residents, families and facilities in quest of quality of life and quality of care. The current value of volunteer time for 2012 is calculated as \$22.57 in the State of Texas. The volunteers of the East Texas program have given 933.5 hours of service or \$21,069.10 dollars in countable in-kind service from October 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013.

A training session and recognition event was held Thursday, April 25th at the Tyler Jr. College West campus. The session provided 4.5 hours of the twelve required hours of continuing education for the volunteers. The East Texas Ombudsman Program provided quality speakers and topics to increase knowledge and skills. We also recognized volunteers that have tenure with plaques from the State Ombudsman Program, Department of Aging and Disability Services as well as expressions of appreciation from the local program.

BENEFITS RECEIVED REPORTS

Recently ETCOG sent its member cities and counties a summary of all the benefits received from ETCOG services in each county. The reports include all services from grant funds to job seeker services, 9-1-1 addressing, GoBus trips and much more. Total cash value for the services provided in 2012 was \$33,895,494. The number of participants served is 1,099,932 which include those receiving duplicate services.

East Texas Council of Governments

3800 Stone Road Kilgore, TX 75662

Phone - (903) 984-8641

Fax - (903) 983-1440

www.etcog.org

ETCOG is an Equal Opportunity Employer / Program. Auxiliary Aids and Services are available upon request, to individuals with disabilities. Relay Texas: 1-800-735-2989 (TTY); 1-800-735-2988 (Voice); 1-800-662-4954 (Español).