



# Regional Forum

Photo by Curt E. Roberts, Paint Rock Arts  
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Newsletter Of The South Plains Association Of Governments

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# Congressional Visit

## Congressman Neugebauer Advises SPAG Board to Consider Water Technology

BY JOSIE MUSICO - A-J MEDIA

Consider exploring new options for water technology, U.S. Rep. Randy Neugebauer advised the South Plains Association of Governments' board of directors Tuesday morning.

Desalination and wastewater reuse are likely in the region's future, he said, and recommended studying them further.

"I think it would be good for this organization to have a water subcommittee," he said.

The association consists of local government representatives from 15 neighboring counties.

The Lubbock Republican told the board that by joining forces, they're already headed in the right direction.

"What the people that came out here originally realized was you couldn't survive out here unless you worked together. As we address this water issue, these partnerships will be extremely important," he said.

Nationwide, another crisis centers on money — or lack thereof — the congressman said. With the national debt at \$17.5 trillion, the country's finances are in trouble.

"These deficits are real,

and they're big numbers," he said. "That should bring a lot of uncertainty about our future."

Raising taxes and cutting spending are obvious solutions, he continued, but neither option meets full support from the public.

"As we begin to try to solve this deficit problem, we're going to have to make some tough choices," he said.

City Councilman Todd Klein questioned if entitlement reform is likely ahead.

Neugebauer said plenty of discussion in the House of Representatives centers on cuts to those programs, like Medicaid and Social Security, but little action accompanies



U.S. Rep. Randy Neugebauer, center, addresses the South Plains Association of Governments' board of directors. Photo by Josie Musico

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# Providing Good Council

## Benefits Counselors Hold Fairs to Explain Programs for Aging

In the last few months the Area Agency on Aging Benefit Counselors have been busy attending numerous health fairs throughout the 15 counties, mailing out flyers and submitting news articles to some of the rural newspapers.

The Health Fairs have been very beneficial for all those individuals needing assistance with their Medicare and Medicaid benefits as well as getting answers to questions about any issues involving their benefits.

The Benefits Counselors have used all these efforts as a needed forum to help promote their statewide push on MIPPA.

In 2008, Congress enacted the

Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA). This piece of Legislation included provisions to strengthen Medicare for low-income beneficiaries, reduce racial/ethnic disparities among Medicare patients, and increase accountability measures for Medicare Advantage programs.

The federal government allocated targeted funding to the State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) to assist low income Medicare beneficiaries to access key benefits that made Medicare affordable - namely the Part D Low Income Subsidy and the Medicare Savings

Programs.

The Low Income Subsidy program assists low income Medicare beneficiaries by reducing the cost of their prescription medication copays, Part D premiums and deductibles.

The Medicare Savings Program assists low income Medicare beneficiaries by paying the Medicare Part A and Part B premiums every month, copays/co-insurance and Medicare deductibles.

These programs are so beneficial to all those that qualify and the Area Agency on Aging will continue to promote these essential programs to all the beneficiaries in the SPAG 15 county region.

## An Empowering Partnership

### South Plains AAA Partners with StarCare ADRC to Provide Assistance

The South Plains Association of Governments' Area Agency on Aging is collaborating with StarCares' Aging and Disabled Resource Center (ADRC) to cover 14-county area around Lubbock. StarCare ADRC will continue to assist persons in the Lubbock County. The ADRC targets older adults and persons with disabilities with the goal of empowering individuals to make informed choices about services. If you believe the residents in your area are in need of assistance with understanding your Medicare Benefits, letters you receive from Medicare/ Medicaid, need assistance applying for Extra Help, food assistance, information and referrals, we would love to be available to assist with those and much more. These are the scheduled counties so far in the region; if you are in need of our service or would like us to come out to your area please call 806-687-0940 to set up a date.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2014- 11AM-1PM- GARZA COUNTY TRAILBLAZERS- 205 E. 10TH, POST, TX.

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014- 11AM-1PM- LYNN COUNTY PIONEERS- 1600 S 3RD ST, SLATON, TX.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2014- 11AM-1PM- LORENZO SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOC. - 606 6TH ST, LORENZO, TX.

TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2014- 10AM-12PM- ANTON SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOC. - 201 MAIN ST, ANTON, TX.

# Worthy of Praise

Hansard Recognized by Junior League of Lubbock  
for Service to Community



PICTURED: DEBBIE HANSARD, CAROLYN SIMPSON, AND SANDY OGLETREE

Debbie Hansard exemplifies a woman of integrity, hard work, and passion to serve her community! These attributes are essential to any member of the Junior League who receives the honor of being named a “Sustainer of the Year.”

On Thursday, May 1, 2014, Debbie Hansard from Senator Duncan’s Office, was recognized by the Junior League of Lubbock as the “Sustainer of the Year” for her countless hours of working with organizations such as the Junior League and the YWCA.

Debbie is a former President of

the Junior League and served as the Advisor to this year’s President, a role not taken lightly, as she provided guidance and counsel to the President during her year.

According to Elena Quintanilla at South Plains Association of Governments: “Debbie is a visionary who views challenges as opportunities and she does it with such grace and enthusiasm! She is a mentor to me because she is an example to other woman that there can be a balance of work, service to community, and time with the people we love.”

## AAA HOSTING CONFERENCE FOR CAREGIVERS

The Area Agency on Aging will be hosting their First Annual Caregiver Conference Thursday, August 14 at the Science Spectrum Exhibit Hall from 10am ending to 4pm.

Although the conference is for all caregivers, our guest speaker, gerontologist, Tam Cummings, will be covering dementia from diagnosis to death.

Tam will be touching on the progression of the disease, the behavioral stages, nutrition, behaviors, ADL’s (Activities of Daily Living), sun downing and the end of life process.

We are excited to be able to host an event that will focus on the caregivers in Lubbock and our surrounding region.

The caregiver will walk away knowing that they don’t have to feel alone, guilty or clueless about their loved one’s illness or caring for their loved one. Our caregivers need to be able to take care of themselves. If they don’t then who is left to take of the one needing the round a clock care? No one.

We look forward to the turn out and know this will be beneficial to the caregivers as well as their loved ones.

If you would like to attend the conference, RSVP with Linda Rautis at 806-762-8721 or by email at [lrautis@spag.org](mailto:lrautis@spag.org).



Photos by Curt E. Roberts, Paint Rock Arts



[www.paintrockarts.com](http://www.paintrockarts.com)



# Joining the 2-1-1 Team

## 2-1-1 Texas South Plains Welcomes New Staff Member to the Team

**C**onnie Hernandez has joined the 2-1-1 Texas team at South Plains Association of Governments.

Connie is a new full-time Information and Referral Specialist. She was previously employed at Crossmark for 2 years.

In her spare time, she serves as the PTA President at Ramirez Charter School and has recently been asked to serve on the state level. She enjoys working with parents and getting them connected to community resources and promoting their child's education.

2-1-1 Texas South Plains is the Area Information Center for the South Plains region. It is part of an integrated, statewide network

of centers across the State of Texas. It provides resources for those who need access to services such as utilities assistance, food, counseling, and seasonal programs, for example.

2-1-1 is also the number for three other state programs: Your Texas Benefits, State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry, and Office of Inspector General to report fraud and abuse of state benefits.

2-1-1 Texas South Plains is a program of Texas Health and Human Services Commission and South Plains Association of Governments.

For more information about South Plains or Texas resources, please visit [www.211texas.org](http://www.211texas.org).



CONNIE HERNANDEZ  
Information & Referral Specialist  
2-1-1 Texas South Plains

VISIT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 that talk. With recipients of those programs likely to remember proposals to lower them when they head to voting booths, many politicians are nervous to address the issue.

But spending at the current rate doesn't seem plausible for the long-term future, either.

"We're going to have to elect people who are less worried about the next election and more worried about the country," he said. "Some of these programs are not sustainable anymore."

A few board members questioned Neugebauer about possible solutions to other issues.

City Councilman Floyd Price

addressed concern of a backlog of Veterans Affairs case. Veterans from Vietnam and other wars are suffering while they wait for the VA to process them, he said.

"They're dragging their feet, and I'd like to know what Congress and the Senate can do about it," he said.

The representative agreed the backlog is "ridiculous."

John Cervantez, another board member, said he's worried about area youth turning to crime when they lack adult supervision and structured activity in their after-school hours. He suggested establishing activity centers where they can spend their time productively.

"We're turning our children into

criminals," he said.

Neugebauer said to save the expense of building after-school centers, an alternative could be for pastors and volunteers to host tutoring and other after-school programs in their churches.

Garza County Judge Lee Norman suggested teaching children to be good citizens and leading them by example.

"We need to get back to the principles this country was founded on," he said.



# SPAG Regional Law Enforcement Academy

## QUARTERLY TRAINING CALENDAR



**SANDY HOOK SHOOTING: AN OVERVIEW OF EVENTS AND WHAT CAN BE LEARNED**

DATE: June 4  
 TIME: 10:00am – 12:00noon  
 LOCATION: SPAG Law Enforcement  
 1321 58th Street, Lubbock, TX 79412  
 COST: Free

**INTERMEDIATE CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATIONS**

DATE: June 9-12  
 TIME: 8:00am – 5:00pm  
 LOCATION: Brownfield Public Safety Training Center 215 E. Broadway in Brownfield  
 COST: \$75

**BASIC COUNTY CORRECTIONS COURSE**

DATE: July 7 -24  
 TIME: 8:00am – 5:00pm  
 LOCATION: SPAG Law Enforcement  
 1321 58th Street, Lubbock, TX 79412  
 COST: \$175

To register for any of the classes, contact Julie Ryan or any of the academy staff at SPAG by calling (806) 762-8721. Please pre-register for classes. Failure to register may result in class being canceled due to lack of attendance.

If unable to attend a class please contact the academy to cancel your spot.

Any person needing special assistance to attend training should notify Academy staff prior to class.

# Breaking New Ground

## Construction Begins on New Hotel in Lubbock

On Tuesday, May 13th Arbor Hotel and Conference Center hosted their groundbreaking ceremony to commemorate the beginning of construction of their 100 room hotel to be located at Spur 327 and Milwaukee Avenue in Lubbock, Texas.

Caprock Business Finance Corporation assisted Arbor Hotel in obtaining an SBA 504 loan to construct their second facility in Southwest Lubbock.

Their first 73 room hotel is located at 5310 Englewood. The addition of this new larger facility will have a significant impact on the local economy by contributing to the local tax base and creating an estimated 72 new jobs to the Lubbock area.

The new facility will be 69,376 square feet which includes 3,000 square feet of conference space. There will also be a restaurant, bar, pool, hot tub, and fire pit in addition to the generous amenities

that Arbor Hotels offer.

The location of Arbor Hotel and Conference Center will be easily accessible by Loop 289 and Marsha Sharp Freeway and is considered to be a growth stage area by the City of Lubbock.

This expansion of the Arbor Hotels is indicative of the hospitality need in Lubbock, especially with conference space to accommodate large groups.

The Arbor Hotels are a partnership formed by three siblings, Rob, Jennifer, and Tom Meyer, whose hospitality background goes back to their childhood days when their father was in the hospitality industry in the Oklahoma and gulf Texas regions over 30 years ago.

For more information please visit:

[www.RAISEDinLUBBOCK.com](http://www.RAISEDinLUBBOCK.com)



From left to right: Rob Meyer, Jennifer Thompson, Tom Meyer, and their mother, Mrs. Meyer

# Grant Writing Workshop

An exciting opportunity has presented itself to our region courtesy of the Lubbock Police Department Training Academy and Grant Writing USA.

They will be hosting a two day grants writing workshop in Lubbock that will be held on June 9-10, 2014.

The training will cover how to write grant proposals from start to finish and how to locate and track relevant grant opportunities.

This program is not specific to law enforcement and is applicable for beginning and experienced grant writers from city, county, and state agencies as well as nonprofits, K-12, and universities.

Multi-enrollment discounts and discounts for Grant Writing USA returning alumni are available and tuition payment is not required at the time of enrollment.

The tuition is \$425 and includes all materials: workbook and accompanying 420MB resource CD that's packed full of tools and more than 200 sample grant proposals.

Seating is limited and online reservations are necessary.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

JANET DARLING  
888-290-6237

JANET@GRANTWRITINGUSA.COM

LT. CHRIS DANIELS  
806-775-2853

CDANIEL@MYLUBBOCK.US

# Calling 9-1-1

## Hockley Co. Students Meet Cell Phone Sally

First through third graders of South Elementary School in Hockley County were excited about participating in their public safety event held on Friday, May 9th. The event consisted of 6 different speakers that presented on various topics concerning public safety.

The Regional 9-1-1 Department was involved in teaching children the importance of knowing how and when to communicate with 9-1-1 telecommunicators.

This was achieved by showing

the video 9-1-1: Getting Help is Easy Cell Phone Sally and Friends. Also, the department was fortunate to interact with the students by discussing their experiences with telecommunicators.

The children were very excited to share how they would deal with an emergency situation, if needed. In this discussion, it was stressed to them the criticalness of knowing their 9-1-1 address.

The Regional 9-1-1 Department was pleased to learn that many of the students knew their address!



## Free Summer Meals for Kids and Teens

SUMMER SHOULD BE A STRESS-FREE TIME FULL OF FOOD, FRIENDS AND FUN.  
FREE SUMMER MEALS CAN HELP.

- FREE to kids and teens 18 years and under
- Healthy meals based on USDA nutrition guidelines
- Served at sites such as schools and churches that may offer learning and recreational activities
- Fun, safe place for kids and teens to be active and visit with friends
- Help families save money
- No application or proof of income needed

CALL 2-1-1 TO LEARN MORE AND TO RECEIVE SITE INFORMATION FOR THE SOUTH PLAINS REGION.

SOUTH PLAINS ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
 QUARTERLY CALENDAR

<i>JUNE</i>		
SPAG Board of Directors Meeting	6/10/14 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	SPAG Boardroom
<i>JULY</i>		
SPAG Board of Directors Meeting	7/8/14 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	SPAG Boardroom
<i>AUGUST</i>		
SPAG Board of Directors Meeting	8/12/14 10:00 a.m.-12:00pm	SPAG Boardroom



**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 quarterly by SPAG and is available without cost.

Please direct any correspondence or inquiries to  
 SPAG

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THE HONORABLE  
 CLINTON SAWYER  
 PRESIDENT

TIM PIERCE  
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR