

Clean Air Campaign Adds Two New Energy Partners

A new partnership formed between two Oklahoma City-based energy producers and the ACOG Clean Air Committee will help maintain and preserve Central Oklahoma's air quality status. Chesapeake Energy Corporation and Devon Energy Corporation recently contributed \$10,000 each to support ACOG's annual Clean Air Campaign, a program designed to educate citizens about the causes and solutions to air pollution.

"This is a generous gift from two civic-minded local corporations. We are very grateful to Chesapeake and Devon. They've set a wonderful example," said Zach D. Taylor, ACOG's Executive Director. "In tandem with their enthusiasm for the Clean Air Campaign, Chesapeake and Devon are both companies committed to managing their businesses in a manner to protect the environment as well as the health and safety of their employees and the public."

"Chesapeake is pleased to participate as a partner in this campaign with Devon," commented Aubrey McClendon, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Chesapeake Energy. "This program is about more than just clean air, it's about the quality of life in Oklahoma, living



Sally Perry Plummer helps the ACOG buffalo take shape. The public art project is a new initiative of the ACOG Clean Air Committee.

healthier and better lives, and is about demonstrating that natural gas is an answer to the nation's desire for cleaner air."

By supporting clean air in the metropolitan Oklahoma City region, Chesapeake and Devon join a group of entities: non-profit, corporate, and government in advancing the health, economic and environmental benefits of clean air.

"Devon is pleased to team up with Chesapeake for a very good local cause – clean air," said J. Larry Nichols, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Devon Energy. "Clean air is everyone's business. Our clean air is one reason Oklahoma City residents enjoy a better quality of life than most major cities. We recognize, however, we must continually work to ...See "Partners" on page two.

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Regional Ride Share Club Debuts

This summer, ACOG is encouraging carpooling in Central Oklahoma by teaming up with area businesses and entertainment destinations to offer carpoolers some special benefits.

With a \$50,000 grant from the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, ACOG launched a public education campaign in mid-May to promote carpooling with the Central Oklahoma Ride Share Club. By joining the club and committing to

carpooling to work at least one day per week, commuters can qualify for two-for-one and half-price ticket offers from the Oklahoma City Yard Dawgz, the Oklahoma City Blazers, the Oklahoma City Zoo, Frontier City and White Water Bay. In addition, Ride Share Club carpoolers can qualify for two-for-one coffee for their morning commutes, as well as an opportunity to receive \$15 in free gas ...See "Ride Share" on page four.

New Elected Officials Learn About ACOG

Spring elections across the region have led to many new faces at ACOG. Earlier this summer, at the annual orientation meeting for new public officials, several new members spent the day learning about public service and ACOG's programming. Matt Elerick, Mayor of Jones; Debbie Harrison, Councilmember of El Reno; Harold Haralson, Mayor of Norman; Wendy Wilkerson, Councilmember from Mustang; and Logan County Commissioner Mark Sharpton and Mary Murphey, of the Logan County Commissioner's office, attended.

In other board news, the Garber-Wellington Policy Committee - an entity of the ACOG Board of Directors - elected officers for the next fiscal year, including Chairman Marsha Jefferson, Mayor



Harold Haralson, Matt Elerick, Wendy Wilkerson, Mark Sharpton, Debbie Harrison and Mary Murphey recently participated in ACOG's annual orientation session.

of Spencer, Sandra Naifeh, Mayor of Edmond as Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer John Brown, Piedmont Councilmember. The Garber-Wellington Policy Committee works on issues relating to the Central Oklahoma region's ground water supply.

Officers for the 2004-2005 fiscal year for the ACOG Board of Directors continue to be Ron Bledsoe, Mayor of Slaughterville, Chairman; Willa Johnson, Oklahoma City Councilmember, Vice-Chair and Eddie Reed, Mayor of Midwest City, Secretary-Treasurer.

Officers will guide the ACOG Board of Directors with its considerations on policy issues regarding transportation,

air and water quality, federal grants, and state and federal legislation, regulations and programs that affect the Central Oklahoma region.

The 9-1-1 Association of Central Oklahoma Governments is in its second-year rotation of officers elected last year. Chairman is Dave Howe, Choctaw Councilmember. Grant Hedrick, Canadian County Commissioner is serving as Vice-Chair and Stan Inman, Oklahoma County Commissioner, is serving as Secretary-Treasurer. The 9-1-1 Association was formed to implement and manage the emergency telephone system for suburban communities within the Central Oklahoma region.

Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

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Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

*"Providing Regional Leadership in
Central Oklahoma Since 1966"*

Established in 1966, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary association of cities, towns and counties. ACOG helps member governments plan for common needs, cooperate for mutual benefit and coordinate for sound regional development.

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Mayor Ron Bledsoe, *Slaughterville*

Vice Chairman:

Councilmember Willa Johnson, *Oklahoma City*

Secretary-Treasurer:

Mayor Eddie Reed, *Midwest City*

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"Partners"

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remain clean."

Chesapeake and Devon's contributions strengthen the annual air quality public education campaign at a critical time during the summer months, when ozone levels can rise due to hot, low-wind conditions.

Over 90 percent of Clean Air Alert Days for ozone occur between July 1 and mid-September. While Alert Days are called, the committee is also implementing its media program that utilizes public service announcements on regional radio and television stations, as well as outdoor mediums.

ACOG recently unveiled its "clean air"

buffalo, which now appears on the Bricktown Canal, near the water taxi staging area. The work, titled "Abuff the Clouds," was painted by Sally Perry Plummer of Norman, and is part of the "Spirit of the Buffalo" public art initiative.

The program, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy, features over 100 buffaloes that will dot the regional landscape for the remainder of the summer and fall. The project merges public and private entities with the sponsorship, painting and installation of pre-sculpted buffaloes that are prominently displayed for public viewing.

For more information, visit www.letscleartheair.org.

Central Oklahoma Turning Point Releases Plan

According to rankings by the United Health Foundation, Oklahoma is the only state where health status is actually declining, and the state is currently ranked 46th in overall health status.

Reversing this trend, or “turning” it around, has been the goal of Central Oklahoma Turning Point, a local initiative designed to improve the health of the region’s citizens. For the past year, Turning Point has involved a citizen-led community engagement process that includes stakeholders from across the region, such as partners in media, non-profit organizations, corporate entities, local governments and ACOG.

Earlier this summer, the group announced its nine-action steps to improve the health of Central Oklahomans.

“We need to turn the responsibilities of health back to the citizens,” said Pam Troup, volunteer co-chair, and executive director of St. Anthony North.

Turning Point began in 1999 as a national initiative and demonstration program of the W.K. Kellogg and Robert Wood Johnson Foundations. The groups funded 14 state health departments, including Oklahoma, with programming designed to stimulate public health action in rural and urban communities.

The state’s health indicators show-case some negative trends. For example, Oklahomans tend to smoke more, exercise less and are more overweight than residents in other states.

This has an enormous impact on healthcare and insurance costs, particularly for small businesses, strapped local governments and non-profit organizations. This is not simply a rural phenomenon. Citizens in Oklahoma County, for example, are less healthy than other state residents. Stroke, cancer, heart disease, suicide and homicide rates are higher in the county than the rest of the state.

Bob Spinks, president of United Way of Central Oklahoma, added that the group would now begin to implement its recommendations and establish goals for regional health.

For more information, visit www.healthyoklahomans.org.



Around the Region

- In the future, Central Oklahomans will be able to dial **2-1-1**, an easy-to-remember number recognized throughout the nation for instant access to critical human services when a crisis affects an individual, a family or our community. Governor Brad Henry signed **SB 1405**, which designates the **Oklahoma 2-1-1 Advisory Collaborative** as the official coordinating entity for all 2-1-1 Call Centers in the state. The Collaborative will develop an integrated service map and certify information and referral providers that wish to become 2-1-1 Call Centers. The group hopes to turn up 2-1-1 in Central Oklahoma by near summer.
- In related news, the **Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT)** is currently developing a **5-1-1 Traveler Information Program Deployment Plan** for the state. The **Federal Communication Commission** has reserved the three-digit number for transportation information nationwide. Types of information projected to be available on the system include real-time weather and road conditions, route planning, and traffic conditions related to incidents, closures, maintenance and construction projects. Interested entities should begin partnering with ODOT as the project moves forward.
- **Brad Gambill** has been named interim city manager for the city of **Norman** by newly sworn-in Mayor **Harold Haralson**. Gambill had served the city previously as director of utilities until his retirement last year. He returns to public service to fill in for **Andy Anderson**, who has accepted a job as city manager of Bend, Oregon.
- The **United Way of Central Oklahoma** has ranked **ACOG** as its fourth

highest contributor per capita for organizations with 20 or more employees in annual workplace campaign giving. ACOG ranks just behind the United Way staff, **Ackerman McQueen**, and the **National Weather Service** in per capita giving. This year’s United Way events at ACOG are scheduled for mid-August. ACOG has been active in United Way for several years and the week is enthusiastically anticipated by staff.

- **Kris Wright** has joined the **ACOG** Water Resources Division staff as a hydro geological intern. She is currently working on her thesis on aquifer storage and recovery while pursuing a master’s degree in environmental science at Oklahoma State University. Wright has a bachelor’s degree in natural resource management from the University of Florida. While at ACOG, she will work on a variety of water projects, including pathogen studies, electro-resistivity data and other programs related to the Garber-Wellington aquifer.



Kris Wright, ACOG hydro geological intern

“Ride Share”

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at the end of the summer from Conoco-Phillips.

ACOG promotes carpooling during the summer months in tandem with its ozone awareness and clean air public education campaign. “This is the first year that we’ve partnered with our Clean Cities program and stakeholders to promote carpooling and to offer special rewards to people who are sharing a ride,” said Yvonne Anderson, ACOG’s Clean Cities program manager. “ConocoPhillips and the Oklahoma City Zoo are long-time Clean Cities stakeholders.”

Commuters can sign up for the Central Oklahoma Ride Share Club by logging on to ACOG’s Clean Cities Web site at www.okcleancities.org, or by picking up an application form at any of 29 participating Conoco and Phillips66 stations in the Central Oklahoma region. The Ride Share Club targets commuters who already have formed carpools, but people who would like to carpool and who are looking for others who want to carpool and who live and work in the same vicinity can find out more about Metro Transit’s carpool matching service by calling 235-RIDE.

“It’s really pretty easy to get signed

ACOG Calendar	
August	
5th	Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
12th	9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m. Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m. ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m. Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.
September	
6th	ACOG Offices Closed for Labor Day
9th	Areawide Planning and Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m. Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
14th	9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
21st	Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m. Clean Cities Stakeholder, 1 p.m.
30th	9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m. Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m. ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m. Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

up for the Central Oklahoma Ride Share Club,” said Anderson. Once carpoolers have submitted a Ride Share Club application to ACOG, applications are screened and membership packets with membership cards, instructions and discount

coupons are mailed. The Coffee Club promotion and opportunity to earn \$15 in free gasoline expire September 30. Ride Share Club discount coupons to sports and entertainment venues expire December 31.

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