

ACOG Sets the 'Pace' for United Way Campaign

The "A Team" was missing Mr. T., but its triumphant return set the pace for another successful ACOG campaign for the United Way of Central Oklahoma.

ACOG staff participated in the association's annual United Way fundraising campaign last month that featured an exciting week full of regional educational opportunities, fun and entertainment.

This year's primary staff participation event again revolved around a "scavenger hunt" which pit staff into four teams. Each team was given a list of items in the region to collect, and nine different situations that required photographic proof that the group visited the sites and accomplished the tasks. A twist this year put an emphasis on ethnic cultures, minority populations and public art. The primary intent of the hunt also focused on the impact that the United Way has on the region. Staff donated time, money and volunteer opportunities to several United Way partner agencies.

The United Way of Central Oklahoma last year ranked ACOG as its fourth highest contributor per capita for organizations with 20 or more employees in annual workplace campaign giving. This year, ACOG staff helped raise over \$10,700,



The "A Team" draws first blood during ACOG's United Way activities. Here, giving blood at Oklahoma Blood Institute, are (left to right) Johnny Irons, Randy Entz, Doug Rex, Kris Wright and Ellen Owens.

Photo by Jeff Smith, OBI

keeping ACOG's Pacesetter giving record intact.

The team with the most cumulative points won a prize, but the focus and emphasis of the week was placed on fundraising for the United Way. The week capped off with the increasingly popular annual chili cook-off, an auction that incorporated donations from over 23 regional organizations, individuals and

businesses and a first-ever poker tournament. Staff provided the entertainment at the end of the week with team presentations and awards. Over 60 people attended lunch with nine chili cooks entering their cuisine.

This year's United Way drive organizers were Josie Adams and Jerry Church. Danny O'Connor, the original architect ...See "United Way" on page four.

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Trick or Treat Night in Central Oklahoma Scheduled for Oct. 30

Regional leaders in Central Oklahoma have recommended Saturday, Oct. 30 as the night for Trick or Treat activities in the metropolitan area this year.

The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments Board of Directors, comprised of local elected officials, recommend moving Trick or Treat night up one day from its usual Oct. 31 date to keep a

uniform regional date that can be enjoyed by children, families and public safety officials.

The ACOG Board has helped schedule trick or treat night since the 1980s. A uniform date helps plan for the safety and welfare of children in the region and allows everyone to have fun around the area ...See "Trick or Treat" on page two.

Annual Workshop to Involve Government Leaders

The sixth annual First Amendment Congress will be held November 11 and 12 at Oklahoma City University. Friday, November 12, is the professional development day, while the Thursday sessions will target high school and college students, all following the theme of "Everybody's First Amendment?"

The opening session Friday will be presented by Tom Blanton, Director of the National Security Archive at George Washington University. Mr. Blanton will discuss how freedom of information has changed following the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Following the opening session, there will be a panel discussion on how information would flow to the public if a disaster like the Oklahoma City bombing were to

happen in today's environment. A panel of government officials and media representatives will discuss the question in light of Homeland Security restrictions, HIPPA's medical privacy stipulations and other recent regulations.

There will also be a session on "Behind Closed Doors", why the Oklahoma state legislature has exempted itself from the Open Meetings Act while all other governmental entities must abide by its openness rules.

The conference will also include a luncheon where the Justice Marian Opala First Amendment Award will be presented.

ACOG is one of several cosponsors of the workshop, and encourages local

government officials and staff to attend the all-day training and discussion.

Other sponsors include the Associated Press, Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration, Metropolitan Library System, Oklahoma City Public

Schools, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma Library Association, Oklahoma Press Association, The Oklahoman, Tulsa City-County Library System, Tulsa World, Univer-

sity of Central Oklahoma Department of Journalism, and the OSU School of Journalism and Broadcasting.

To obtain more information or to register, go to www.foioklahoma.org, or call Zach Taylor or Jane Sutter at ACOG.



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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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Central Oklahoma Perspective, printed by TNT Printing, is authorized by the ACOG Board of Directors. Financing is partly provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Transportation and local dues. 1,850 copies were prepared and distributed at a cost of \$944. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

WNV Appears in Central Oklahoma Region for Third Straight Year

A wet, cool summer has led to lower West Nile Virus (WNV) readings this year, but the potential for human cases in the region is still extremely high as fall weather arrives. Human cases of the potentially deadly disease generally occur in October, so precautions and preventative community and citizen action is still vital and necessary. Already this year, an elderly man in the state has died from the disease, and WNV has put a stranglehold on the Western continental United States, particularly Arizona, New Mexico and California.

In Central Oklahoma, West Nile Virus has been present since the summer of 2002. This year saw the first variation of St. Louis encephalitis, an equally volatile strain of the illness. Both WNV and the new variant can cause illness and death in humans and horses. People who suffer from its most severe form can suffer brain damage, permanent paralysis or death.

Communities throughout the four-county region have established mosquito control programs thanks to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Oklahoma Department of Health (OSDH) and local

county health departments in Oklahoma, Cleveland, Canadian and Logan counties. The Oklahoma City County Health Department and ACOG has been providing pesticide to participating Oklahoma County communities for free.

Communities needing more information should contact their individual county health department or Jerry Church, ACOG.

"Trick or Treat"

...Continued from page one.

on the same night. Many years ago, communities set their own schedules, and it caused great confusion and inconsistency in the region, as trick or treaters and their families could visit several communities over a two or three-night span to take in Halloween festivities.

The Association also recommends several tips for a safe Trick or Treat night such as making sure children are accompanied by adults, inspecting all candy, leaving porch lights on, and keeping yards and driveways free of clutter.

Communities still determine their own hours of activity on Saturday, Oct. 30. For further details, call your local city hall.

Long Range Survey Data Collection Ongoing

The region's long-range transportation plan, known as the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) Plan for 2030, continues its development with an ongoing public survey. ACOG is asking citizens to participate in a survey that will measure the area's future transportation needs.

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), ACOG coordinates regional transportation planning efforts within the metropolitan region. Known as the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) area, the region encompasses all of Oklahoma and Cleveland counties and portions of Canadian, Grady, Logan and McClain counties.

Input from the survey is primarily intended for the 2030 OCARTS Plan, which will identify strategies to improve auto, bus, pedestrian, truck, rail and bicycle travel for the next two decades. Results from the survey will identify or recommend the most acceptable means of financing transportation improvements as well as gauge the level of interest in improving alternative transportation modes.

The survey will provide planners with insight into public wants and needs, and gauge responses to important plan issues such as travel habits, employment travel, intermodal elements and other facets in transportation planning.

The survey can be taken online, or downloaded at www.acogok.org. It has also been distributed to ACOG's database of citizens and public leaders, and has also been provided to local media, neighborhood groups and interested transportation advocates.

Survey results can be faxed to 405-234-2200, mailed to 21 E. Main, Suite 100, Oklahoma City, OK 73104, emailed to jchurch@acogok.org, or taken online through November 5.



Around the Region

- Eight communities and entities in the Central Oklahoma region were awarded automated external defibrillators (AEDs) last month that may potentially save lives in emergencies involving cardiac arrest. **ACOG** distributed the devices in a second phase of continuing grants provided by the **Oklahoma Department of Health, American Heart Association and Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils. Richland Rural Fire Protection District, Mulhall Fire Department, Union City Police Department, Piedmont Police Department, Calumet Volunteer Fire Department, Crescent Ambulance, Woodcrest Fire Department and Sooner Volunteer Fire Department** were presented the defibrillators. Over 200 AEDs were distributed statewide through the program. The AEDs provide instant medical help to rural communities.

- The **9-1-1 Association** (9-1-1 ACOG) has 40 used uninterruptible power supply (UPS) units available for sale or donation to local entities. The UPS units were made available due to a region-wide hardware upgrade. For more details, contact Johnny Irons, 9-1-1 ACOG.

- **Metro Transit** is encouraging citizens to "try transit" this month. The annual campaign sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association's Communities in Motion program showcases regional transportation options provided by public transit. The organization is also continuing its **Sooner Shuttle** for the third straight year. The service is a game day shuttle that transports football fans of the Oklahoma Sooners to home games in **Norman**. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$5 at the new Transit Center, Union Station and Crossroads Mall. Shuttles begin de-

parting from Crossroads Mall three hours before kickoff.

- The **Oklahoma Municipal League** held its annual conference last month, and several regional leaders were recognized. **Stewart Meyers, Jr.**, Mayor of **Nichols Hills** was among the nominees for small community Mayor of the Year, while **Jon Gumerston**, Mayor of **Guthrie** was named for large community honors. The cities of **Bethany** and **Edmond** were recognized with Innovations Awards. Bethany garnered nods for innovative approaches to commerce and Edmond was recognized for grant coordination activities. Former Oklahoma City City Manager **Don Bown** was inducted into the **Oklahoma Hall of Fame for City and Town Officials**. Bown was recognized for long civic service and spearheading mass community rebuilding efforts.

- The city of **Oklahoma City** is about to complete its first skatepark by the **Oklahoma River**. The skatepark is part of the city's massive riverfront development program and included the recommendations of the regional extreme sports community of skateboarders, inline skaters and bicyclists. Funding for the park was established through a municipal bond issue several years ago, and national design consultants were brought in to make the park one of the premier public parks in the Southern Plains.



Construction is underway for Oklahoma City's first public Skatepark.

“United Way”

...Continued from page one.
of the scavenger hunt, was retained to help enhance this year’s outing. The organizing team laid out the intricate treasure hunt and helped garner auction items and prize incentives from generous Central Oklahoma sponsors and businesses.

The “A Team,” consisting of Randy Entz, Johnny Irons, Ellen Owens, Doug Rex and Kris Wright won the hunt. The “Texas Hold’em” Poker tournament was won by Jerry Church, with Randy Entz garnering silver. People’s Choice in Chili went to Kasey Simonich, from Third Degree Advertising, Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer earned second place and third place went to Zach D. Taylor. Best Chili Presentation was awarded to Twyla Nelson, with Express Premium Finance Co.

The United Way of Central Oklahoma serves the region as a “community safety net” by improving the health, safety, education and economic well being of families and individuals in need.

The United Way helps support 56 partner organizations and agencies that reach one out of three Central Oklahomans each year. An allocation staff of volunteers annually reviews and audits each partner agency and helps provide recommendations on how to

ACOG Calendar	
October	
14th	Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
28th	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.
30th	Trick or Treat Night in Central Oklahoma
November	
10th	Areawide Planning Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m. Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
11th	ACOG Offices Closed for Veteran’s Day
12th	Garber-Wellington Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
16th	Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m. Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1 p.m.
18th	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.
25th	ACOG Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

maximize and leverage program resources, which also helps guarantee accountability.

For more information, visit the United Way of Central Oklahoma at www.unitedwayokc.org.

Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

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