

## 2004-2005 Board of Directors

<b>Commissioner Ricardo Rodriguez</b> <i>City of San Juan</i> <i>President</i>	<b>Councilmember Ricardo Rodriguez, Jr.</b> <i>City of Edinburg</i>
<b>Mayor Sylvestre Garcia</b> <i>City of Combes</i> <i>1st Vice President</i>	<b>Mayor Rick Rodriguez</b> <i>City of Harlingen</i>
<b>Commissioner Ric Godinez</b> <i>City of McAllen</i> <i>2nd Vice President</i>	<b>Mayor John David Franz</b> <i>City of Hidalgo</i>
<b>Commissioner Sylvia Handy</b> <i>Hidalgo County</i> <i>Secretary</i>	<b>Mayor Joel Quintanilla</b> <i>City of Mercedes</i>
<b>Mr. Arturo Guajardo</b> <i>Superintendent, PJA/ASD</i> <i>Treasurer</i>	<b>Mayor Norberto "Beto" Salinas</b> <i>City of Mission</i>
<b>Hon. Norma G. Garcia</b> <i>Member-at-Large</i> <i>Immediate Past President</i>	<b>Mayor Leo "Polo" Palacios, Jr.</b> <i>City of Pharr</i>
<b>Judge Gilberto Hinojosa</b> <i>Cameron County</i>	<b>Mayor Joe Alexandre</b> <i>City of Raymondville</i>
<b>Commissioner Israel Tamez</b> <i>Willacy County</i>	<b>Mayor Pro-Tem Johnny F. Cuellar</b> <i>City of Weslaco</i>
<b>Commissioner Victor Perez</b> <i>City of Alamo</i>	<b>Dr. J. Gilbert Leal</b> <i>President, TSTC Harlingen</i>
<b>Mayor Pro-Team Carlos A. Cisneros</b> <i>City of Brownsville</i>	<b>Mr. Gale Armstrong</b> <i>El Jardin Water Supply Corp.</i>
<b>Mayor Ricardo Morales</b> <i>City of Donna</i>	<b>Mr. Michael G. Wilson</b> <i>Willacy County Navigation District</i>
	<b>Mr. Don Medina</b> <i>Member-At-Large</i>
	<b>Mr. Arturo Ramirez</b> <i>Grassroot Organizations</i>

### Contacts For LRGVDC Administered Programs

<b>Kenneth N. Jones, Jr.</b> <i>Executive Director</i>	<b>Ann Lykes</b> <i>Director, Finance</i>
<b>Richard Hinojosa</b> <i>Deputy Executive Director</i>	<b>Elaine Hernandez</b> <i>Director, Border Health</i>
<b>Anna Hernandez</b> <i>Director, Human Resources</i>	<b>Terrie Salinas</b> <i>Director, Economic Development</i>
<b>Joe Gonzalez</b> <i>Director, Area Agency on Aging</i>	<b>Sandra Boyd</b> <i>Director, Regional Police Academy</i>
<b>Andrew Canon</b> <i>Director, Hidalgo County MPO</i>	<b>Mmanuel Flores</b> <i>Director, Transit Services</i>

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council**  
(956) 682-3481, Fax (956) 631-4670

E-Mail: [info@lrgvdc.org](mailto:info@lrgvdc.org) • Website: [www.lrgvdc.org](http://www.lrgvdc.org)

## Mission Statement

"ENCOURAGE AND PERMIT LOCAL UNITS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO JOIN AND COOPERATE WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF MAJOR ECONOMIC INTERESTS, CITIZEN GROUPS AND GROUPS EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC DISTRESS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND GENERAL WELFARE OF THEIR CITIZENS AND TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION"

### REGIONAL PURSUITS

*REGIONAL PURSUITS is the newsletter published by the LRGVDC. This publication is financed in part through funding assistance from State and Federal grants. REGIONAL PURSUITS is available without cost and inquires should be directed to:*

*Ken Jones, Executive Director*  
*Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council*  
*311 N. 15th St., McAllen, Texas 78501-4705*  
*E-Mail- [info@lrgvdc.org](mailto:info@lrgvdc.org) • website - [www.lrgvdc.org](http://www.lrgvdc.org)*

POOL PRINTING

DECEMBER - 2004  
VOLUME XLVIII

# REGIONAL PURSUITS

*Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for a Prosperous New Year from all the Staff at the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council*



## Border Binational Health Week a Great Success

The Lower Rio Grande Valley Border Health Council was appointed regional coordinator for the 2004 Border Binational Health Week in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and bordering cities of Reynosa and Matamoros. This important event was sponsored by the US-Mexico Border Health Commission and took place in all sister-cities along the US-Mexico border region, October 11 - 17, 2004.



Pictured at a video conference meeting with the USMBHC are Rosie Bryan, TDSHS Office of Border Health, Dr. Ann Millard, Texas A&M University Health Science Center, Father Edouard Alaranga, Diocese of Brownsville, Elaine Hernandez, LRGV-AHEC, Dr. Angel Brana, LRGV-BHC, Armandina Ortiz, BBHW Coordinator, and Doreen Garza, UTPA, Office of Border Health.

Twenty-seven events were offered by local organizers on both sides of the border. Health screenings were held by the Hope Family Clinic in McAllen, Su Clinica in Brownsville, Nuestra Clinica in Alton, and the Cruz Roja Delegation in Matamoros, as well as a dental screening. Major conferences were organized by the Valley AIDS Council at South Padre Island (HIV/AIDS), the Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas in Reynosa (Food Safety and Diabetes), and Texas A&M University Health Science Center South Texas Center in McAllen (Childhood Diabetes and Oral Health Summit). Rotary Clubs from Texas and northeastern Mexico attended the Rotary Binational

Tuberculosis Summit in McAllen, and the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio put on a "brown bag" series of discussions at the RAHC in Harlingen.

The first Public Policy Forum was organized by the LRGV Border Health Council, and a white mass held by the Brownsville Catholic Dioceses. Also, an international conference for promotoras was organized in Harlingen, and CPR and First Aid training workshops were offered by the American Red Cross and the Cruz Roja Delegations in Rio Bravo, Valle Hermoso, and Reynosa. The LRGV Area Agency on Aging sponsored three workshops for seniors.

A video DVD is being produced on this event by VYBE, a production company in McAllen.

Funding for the activities was provided by HRSA, the USMBHC, and the HETC-South Central Region at the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. Special recognition should be given to the UTPA Office of Border Health and the Mexican Consulates in McAllen and Brownsville for their contributions to the overall success of the week. Ms. Armandina Ortiz performed an exceptional role as the local staff person responsible for coordinating all the Week's activities.



Pictured are Ms. Eva Moya, Executive Director, US-Mexico Border Health Commission (US Section), Ms. Elaine Hernandez, Director of Border Health, LRGVDC, and Dr. Carlos Canseco, Past-President of Rotary International at the Rotary Binational Tuberculosis Summit.

Congratulations to all agencies and volunteers who worked incredibly hard to produce this exciting and successful first annual Border Binational Health Week 2004.

## LRGV-AHEC Participates in Career Fair



The Lower Rio Grande Valley Area Health Education Center recently participated in a Career Fair at Mercedes High School. Elaine Hernandez, the Director of the LRGV-AHEC spoke to students about the wide range of career opportunities in the health field. Pictured are students from Mercedes High School with Ms. Hernandez.

Printed on Recycled Paper



504-7-10987 X L 'u'ell'cM • S.T. 15th ST. 11 N. 3  
**Development Council**  
**Lower Rio Grande Valley**

10987  
X L 'u'ell'cM  
S.T. 15th ST.  
11 N. 3  
EG STAS S.U  
DLS TRS RP

## Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization Invites Community Participation

Do you wish that you could talk to your officials about transportation problems before the construction begins? The HCMPO provides numerous opportunities for you to be heard! Whether you are a member of the MPO or a private citizen, you have a role to play with the MPO.

**What is the MPO?** The HCMPO is a federally funded program that works with the cities of Hidalgo County, as well as the Texas Department of Transportation, to plan for the future transportation needs of Hidalgo County. Every metropolitan area with a population of 50,000 or more must have a designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). HCMPO has served as the MPO for the McAllen Metropolitan Area since 1993 and is composed of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and a Policy Committee. The TAC committee's membership consists of *local officials and planners* from the MPO planning partner cities and Hidalgo County. This committee is responsible for making technical planning recommendations to the Policy Committee for immediate action. The MPO Policy Committee consists of *elected officials* from each city and Hidalgo County and was created for the purpose of serving as spokespersons for the citizens of the county and cities in the metropolitan area. The Policy Committee is responsible for policy making in transportation planning issues.

An updated list of the technical and policy committee members can be obtained from the MPO office. MPO committee members are ultimately responsible to the residents of the region for the quality of transportation services and for the impact of transportation on their overall quality of life. This means the committee members share the responsibility for making sure that major transportation issues of today and tomorrow are dealt with fairly and properly. **Citizens are encouraged to participate in the transportation planning process** during the monthly meetings of the Technical and Policy Committees. For more information on the HCMPO please call Andrew A. Canon, HCMPO Director at (956) 618-0803 or email [hempoc@lrgvdc.org](mailto:hempoc@lrgvdc.org).

## Police Academy

The LRGVDC Regional Police Academy and Training Center has begun the process of accepting applicants for the 109<sup>th</sup> and 110<sup>th</sup> Basic Peace Officer Academies

The **109<sup>th</sup> Basic Peace Officer Academy will begin on April 15, 2005** at the Harlingen facility located on the

TSTC campus in Harlingen.

The **110<sup>th</sup> Basic Peace Officer Academy is set to begin on May 13, 2005** at the Mission Police Department training facility.

Both academies are full time-day academy programs. The tuition is one-thousand dollars (\$1000.00).

The TCLEOSE 618 hour curriculum will be taught that will include the S.F.S.T. and Crisis Intervention training. Other additional training units include TCIC/NCIC less than full access training, "Taser", "O.C." and Straight baton as well as Asset Forfeiture/Racial Profiling, Cultural Diversity, Special Investigative Topics and Identity Crimes so that the graduating cadets will have all TCLEOSE mandating courses for this training cycle.

### The pre-entrance exam dates are as follows:

(Applicants for both academy programs may test at either location except as noted)

Date	Location
January 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Harlingen facility
January 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Harlingen facility
February 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Harlingen facility
February 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Mission PD
February 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Harlingen facility
March 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Harlingen facility
March 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2005	Mission PD

Harlingen facility (last date for pretesting for the 109<sup>th</sup> BPOA) Mission PD (last date for the 110<sup>th</sup> BPOA)  
**To register for the pre-entrance exams, for additional information, fees, schedules, and entrance requirements please call the Regional Police Academy at 956-364-4507.**

NOTE: Cadets employed by Law Enforcement agencies are not required to pre-test but will need to complete an application prior to the beginning date of the academy program and have documentation that a criminal history check has been completed by the agency.

## Health Living Events for Seniors

The Area Agency on Aging coordinated three events in support of the Border Bi-national Health Week Initiative. The events targeted individuals aged 60 and over and the main topic on all three events was Living Healthy thru preventive measures. Speakers addressed issues such as how to communicate with their doctor or pharmacist, what to look out for and type resources available. Other topics included Medicare, Medicaid, and especially the new prescription card under Medicare.

The event held at the Rio Hondo Community Center on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 90 individuals were in attendance of which

62 were older persons. Available were 28 exhibitors. Some were providing blood pressure and glucose checks. Others were providing information on available resources and informational materials on eating right and overall all healthy living.

The second event was held at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church Hall in Elsa on October 13<sup>th</sup>. In attendance, there were 90 seniors. A local doctor and pharmacist spoke on how to communicate with their health care provider. Other speakers addressed steps to healthy living. Also available were three exhibitors who were providing information on their available resources.

The last event was held at the Saint Ignatious Catholic Church Hall in El Rancho. The event targeted seniors who live along the Old Military Highway (281) in Cameron County. Seniors were provided the opportunity to have tetanus and pneumonia shots. A school of Nurse Aide training was available providing blood pressure check. In total, there were twelve exhibitors. The attendance at the event totaled 153, of which 141 were older persons.



A new Medicare Rx outreach initiative was established to help organize 10 *Aging Network Medicare Rx Outreach Month* target site events. The Lower Rio Grande Valley Area Agency on Aging was selected as one of the 10 national sites. The others were Atlanta, Georgia; Baltimore, Maryland; Columbus, Ohio; Jackson, Mississippi; Detroit, Michigan; New York (city tbd); Phoenix, Arizona; Raleigh, North Carolina; and Seattle, Washington.

The purpose of this event was to assist seniors in reaching out, educating and enrolling Medicare beneficiaries in the new Medicare Rx drug discount program and \$600 low-income transitional assistance credit. This project is an effort to position SUsAs and AAAs for future resources as Medicare Part D is implemented and Medicare continues to evolve.

Several events were held in McAllen, Weslaco, Harlingen, and Brownsville by the LRGVDC - Area Agency on Aging as part of this effort. Congressman Lloyd Doggett kicked in his support by holding a press conference on December 3<sup>rd</sup> in McAllen to encourage seniors to apply for the \$600 low-income transitional assistance credit. Seniors who get the credit and do not use it this year can roll-over the credit to 2005 when they get an additional \$600.

(In the picture are Jaime Garza, AAA Case Manager

and Susan Hellums, District Mission Coordinator, with the The United Methodist Church in McAllen loading the pickup truck with the gift baskets. )

## FEAST of Sharing Project

The LRGVDC – Area Agency on Aging participated in the Feast of Sharing Project of The United Methodist Church of McAllen during the Thanksgiving Holiday season. Food baskets were distributed to needy families in the McAllen Area. As part of the project, 40 elderly individuals were selected from the Area Agency on Aging's Case Management client list. Case Management staff helped distribute some of the food baskets.

## LRGV-MMRS Gains Support from the US Military

The Management Team of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Medical Response System met in October and December to continue planning the first regional and binational medical response system. Six deliverables (Pharmaceutical Plan, Basic Plan, Biological Response Plan, Chemical, Radiological, Nuclear, or Explosive Response Plan, Forward Movement of Patients, and the Hospitals and Healthcare System) are ready for submission to the City of McAllen and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The LRGV-MMRS will begin to meet regularly with the Trauma Regional Advisory Council's Hospital Planning Group.

On November 17, 2004, Dr. Angel Braña and Ms. Elaine Hernandez met with Col. John A. Powell, Deputy Command Surgeon of the NORAD-Northern Command, and other military representatives from the Joint Regional Medical Plans and Operations Division and Defense Institute for Medical Operations (DIMO) to give an overview of the LRGV-MMRS and to invite them to provide their expertise in developing medical plans. Col. Powell approved the active participation of Lt. Col. Luis Morales and Major Keith Johnson in the preparation of our deliverables.



Pictured from left to right are Col. John A. Powell, MD, PhD, Deputy Command Surgeon, NORAD-USNORTHCOM/SG, Ms. Elaine Hernandez, LRGVDC, and Lt. Col. Luis Morales, US Northern Command, Branch Chief, Joint Regional Medical Plans and Operations.