

# The Current and Future state of EMS in Coke County

By Steve Salmon

Coke County has had No expense for EMS services, unlike most or all other Counties in TEXAS.

Most Counties in the Concho Valley, are responsible for providing EMS services and have at least a Paid administrator. Some Counties pay their volunteers by the ambulance run. Other Counties contract with surrounding counties, cities, or private firms to provide EMS service in all or parts of the county. The County has access to compensation funds (unpaid services) that are not available to 501 C 3, non profits.

Coke County currently has two 501 c3, Volunteer services, West Coke County EMS (WCCEMS) and East Coke County Ambulance Service (ECCAS) at no cost to the county. Blackwell is supposed to cover from the 70/277 split, but does not and only is available occasionally from 6 pm to 6 am.

Both are funded by insurance or Medicare/Medicaid and some

monies that flow through DSHS to the Regional Trauma Council, then to EMS (generally less that \$6,000 to \$7,000 to be shared by the Coke County services).

The value of the ECCAS ambulance (2003 model) and equipment is approximately \$150,000, not including depreciation. The volunteer hours exceed 1000 per year (worth in Excess of \$100,000). We have 14 certified people on the service, of which four work extended periods out of state, one works for the Abilene Fire Department, and one who lives and works out of town. So we typically get 3-4 volunteers carrying the workload.... The state requires 2 for any ambulance run. All but three volunteers are over the age of 60, some have been on the service for more than 30 years. All are tired and would like to retire. At some point, they will.

In the past 12 years, Bronte has hosted four training classes. Robert Lee, none. We have trained a few for Robert Lee, but only two have ever made the



**New Members on the Court!** Precincts 2 and 4 new commissioners Paul Williams (center) and Joe Sefcik (right of center) took their seats on the Coke County Commissioners Court for the first time Tuesday morning, January 13, 2015.

service. Robert Lee now has two certified individuals to staff the WCCEMS ambulance. ECCAS is putting on a class for Robert Lee beginning next month.

Both Nursing Homes, funded

in part by Hospital District taxes, are required to have an EMS service to be able to transport some patients to a hospital...No EMS, there may be no nursing homes.

It has always been the opinion of the County that they can't afford EMS. They may not be able not to, and the current situation may not last many more years.



**Showmanship Winners!** Showmanship winners at this year's Livestock Show were (from left) Blaine Yanez, Clay Antilley Memorial Steer Showmanship; Katlyn Reeves, Frank Percifull Memorial Overall Showmanship and Ralph Walker Top Hand; Saige Busby, Goat Showmanship; Moriah Royall, Swine Showmanship and McCutchen Ranch Top Hand; and Garrett Knight, Lamb Showmanship.

## 'Last chance' CEU training set for Feb. 3

Submitted by Morgan Runyan Texas AgriLife Extension Agent The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service office in Tom Green County will offer their annual "Last Chance" Continuing Education Unit Course from 12:30 - 6:15 pm February 3 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center. The center is north of San Angelo on U.S. Highway 87.

Five Texas Department of Agriculture credits will be available: one in the integrated pestmanagement category, two general, one in laws and regulations, and one in drift minimization.

"The training is called the last chance course because it's the last time our office will offer Texas Department of Agriculture continuing education units before

the Feb. 28 deadline," said Josh Blanek, AgriLife Extension agent in Tom Green County. "All private applicator license holders must earn 15 continuing education units in specific categories over the five-year period their license is valid. Older licenses renew on Feb. 28, though more recently issued licenses renew on the anniversary of the date they were originally issued."

Blanek said attendees are reminded to bring their pesticide license or pesticide number with them to the training to ensure proper continuing education credit as a driver's license number alone will no longer suffice.

"This course is not meant to simply earn the participants their needed CEUs, it's also meant to provide area and regional-specific educational information useful not only to agricultural

producers, but to homeowners as well."

Topics and presenters will include:

- Pest Control Around the Home and Barn, Dr. Charles Allen, AgriLife Extension entomologist, San Angelo.
- Herbicide Modes of Action, James Jackson, AgriLife Extension program specialist, Stephenville.
- Pesticide Laws and Regulations, Cory Pence, Texas Department of Agriculture, San Angelo.
- Drift Minimization and Equipment Calibration, Dr. Billy Warrick, AgriLife Extension agronomist, retired, San Angelo.

Individual registration is \$25 due upon arrival. For more information and to RSVP by Jan. 30, call the AgriLife Extension office in Tom Green County at 325-659-6522 or 325-659-6524.

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