



Grants improve area volunteer fire departments

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative and the Lower Colorado River Authority awarded the Winchester and Martindale volunteer fire departments and the Bastrop County Emergency Services District 1 more than \$100,000 in grants to purchase a fire truck, help build a new fire station and add a restroom and walkway.

The Winchester Area Volunteer Fire Department in Fayette County, which received \$50,000, is purchasing a new fire and first responder truck equipped to fight wild-land fires.

“We provide fire and rescue protection to a 53-square-mile area with a lot of farms and ranches,” said Winchester Area Fire Chief Eddie Schneider. “This truck also will be available for other fire departments with which we have mutual aid agreements in Fayette, Lee and Bastrop counties.”

The \$50,000 grant to Bastrop County emergency district will help replace a fire station in the far western section of Bastrop County, at the edge of its large service area. It will be built on land donated by nearby Spiderwood Studios in Utley.

“The new location will reduce emergency response times by as much as 10 minutes,” said Clovis Boatwright, treasurer of Bastrop County emergency district. “The new fire station also will include a bay for our rescue boat for emergencies on the Colorado River.”

The Martindale Volunteer Fire Department’s \$11,920 grant will be used to build the fire station’s first restroom, which will include a walk-in shower and sink.

“We have served the community in and around the city of Martindale (in Hays County) for more than 41 years,” said John DeMarzo, Martindale fire chief. “We’ve been housed in the same station since Day One, in a building that does not have running water. All of our funds have gone into front-line equipment and training for our firefighters.”

The community grants are awarded through the LCRA’s Community Development Partnership Program, which provides economic development and community assistance grants to cities, counties, volunteer fire departments, regional development councils and other nonprofit organizations in its electric and water service areas. Information: www.lcra.org/cdpp. ■



Sarah Beal photo

Anthony Bontempo, above, with the Bastrop County emergency district



LCRA photo

Above from left, Lori Berger (LCRA board member), Rick Arnic (LCRA representative) and Bill Hamilton, Martindale Volunteer Fire Department board president.

Unless otherwise noted, those pictured below are with the Bastrop County emergency district. From left, the Rev. Chaplain Sheldon D. Furlong, Jack Crosby (Spiderwood Magic board member), Donald Loucks, Tommy G. Warren (Spiderwood Studios), Tim McCanlies, David Gahagan, Rick Arnic (LCRA), Lori Berger (LCRA board member), Roderick Emanuel (Bluebonnet board member), James Kershaw (Bluebonnet board member), Johnny Sanders (Bluebonnet), Capt. Darryl Ackerman, Doris Kershaw (wife of Bluebonnet board member), Deborah Rogers (Bluebonnet), Chief Brandon Bancroft and Clovis Boatright.



Sarah Beal photo



LCRA photo

Unless otherwise noted, those pictured at left are with the Winchester Area VFD. Front, from left, Clayton Kleiber, Mark Johnson (Bluebonnet), Sherry Murphy, Larry Herzog, Eddie Schneider, Ron Kaiser, Lori Berger, (LCRA board member), and Kate Holman (LCRA). Back, from left, Nate Hill, Roger Loewe, Tom Atkins and Russell Jurk (Bluebonnet board member).

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