



# Arkansas Prepared

CONFERENCE 2012

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## Patterson named Coordinator of Year

Central Area Coordinator of the Year Sandra Patterson is also the State Coordinator of the year. She received the honor at the Arkansas Emergency Management Conference held in August at Rogers.

Sandra has worked with Prairie County Emergency Management for over 20 years. She graduated from Des Arc High School, where she was a cheerleader and homecoming queen. She has one son Corey Stallings. Sandra and her husband, Willie Joe, farmed, and she managed a large row crop farm on Raft Creek (White County) for several years in the 1980s, before becoming involved in emergency management.

Their home flooded in 2008 when the White River level got to 33.76 feet. She

and her husband remodeled and raised their home above the flood elevation. Then in 2011, the White River flood level went to a record high 39.43 feet, and again, flooded the home the family had worked so hard to repair. During both disasters, Sandra worked around the clock to make sure that all of the other people of Prairie County were taken care of, while in reality everything she owned had been destroyed. She and Willie Joe bought a new house above their old place, and enjoyed it only a short time together before Willie Joe passed away.

Under Sandra's leadership, Prairie County was chosen the Arkansas Floodplain County of the Year in 2011. In 2012, she was awarded Public Servant of the Year for Prairie County. She is a past president of the Arkansas Emergency Management Association. Sandra is known and respected throughout the county.



State Coordinator of the Year Sandra Patterson (right) is shown with Deputy Director Tina Owens at the state conference in Rogers. They are holding Patterson's awards for both State and Central Area Coordinator.

# Highlights of the annual conference:



The ADEM Duty Officers were named State Employees of the Year at the Arkansas Emergency Management Conference. Pictured, top photo from left, are Ken Gibson, Communications Division Director, Valerie Dillard, Wanda Cook, Tina Owens, Deputy Director, and Tianna Toups. In the photo below, Steven Gann of Crawford County receives his plaque from Garland County OEM and AEMA President Joy Sanders for being named the recipient of the Joe Halsey Award..



# First Lady addresses press conference

Arkansas First Lady Ginger Beebe was a special guest at a press conference held on September 13 at the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM). The event was to highlight National Preparedness Month which is held each September. Mrs. Beebe gave an overview of National Preparedness Month in Arkansas.

She stressed how Arkansas citizens need to be aware of the many hazards that face our state.

Her appearance also served as the formal introduction of the ReadyAR mobile app announce-

ment. The app contains a variety of helpful information that could save lives of Arkansans. There are planning tips, current weather information as well as up-to-date road conditions and other information. It is now available on the AppStore

The app is a joint effort of ADEM, Arkansas Council Citizen Corps and Ready Arkansas.

Also speaking at the press conference were Len Pagano, Executive Director—Safe America who urged Arkansans to “Text First, Talk Second”, ADEM Director David Maxwell who spoke on prepared-

ness efforts and programs in Arkansas. Maxwell spoke on a disturbing recent survey that showed more than half of Americans are unprepared for an emergency. Chad Stover, Chairman, Arkansas Citizen Corps Council, rounded out the program with an update on a fall promotional package with Radio Disney and displayed a comic series on “The Prepared Family” which will be available for schools, churches and any other interested parties.

For additional information, persons may visit the ADEM website at [ADEM.arkansas.gov](http://ADEM.arkansas.gov) or



**First Lady Ginger Beebe addresses a news conference held at the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management. ADEM Director David Maxwell (center) and Len Pagano, Executive Director of Safe America, also addressed the media. The focus of the event was National Preparedness Month including, “Text first, talk second.”**

# Area Coordinators of the Year are named



**Marty Cagle, Northeast Area Coordinator**



**Josh Johnston, Northwest Area Coordinator**



**Shanda Harris, Northeast Area Coordinator**



**Steve Conly, Southwest Area Coordinator**



**Some of those honored at the awards banquet proudly display their "hardware"**

# Governor promotes ADEM app in radio address

**Editor's note: Gov. Beebe used the occasion of his weekly radio address on September 14 to spotlight ADEM's new smartphone app as well as the Smart911 system. The complete text of his address is listed below.**

"We talk a lot about preparedness in Arkansas. As we go about our daily lives, we stress the importance of being ready for any emergency. September is National Preparedness Month, and the usual reminders are in place to plan ahead. Have a strategy in place for your family if a tornado or fire hits your home, and have supplies nearby for any prolonged emergency. This year, as innovation continues to advance technology, there are new tools available, at no charge, to help keep you and your family safer.

"A new smartphone app from the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management delivers real-time, interactive information based on your current location. Called ReadyAR, the app displays a radar image of current local conditions and notifies you about watches and warnings for severe weather in the immediate area. It also supplies current road conditions and maps from the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. The app offers an opportunity to help others by reporting emergencies to local officials, who can be contacted directly



through the app. This new tool can now be downloaded, for free, to smartphones that use Apple and Android software.

"Additionally, there's a new service for both wireless and landline telephones that allows you to provide vital information before an emergency ever strikes. The Smart911 system lets you confidentially submit and store a safety profile for yourself and your loved ones online at [smart911.com](http://smart911.com). The information is kept private until it is needed in an emergency. At that time, it is automatically available to 9-1-1 dispatchers and first responders when an emergency call is made. Information can include medical conditions, allergies, photos in the event of a lost child, and parental emergency contact information if a child calls 9-1-1. This data helps first responders to react more quickly and can more precisely pinpoint the location of an

emergency caller on a wireless phone.

"Arkansas will be the first state in the nation to implement the Smart911 system statewide. Currently, twenty-seven 9-1-1 centers in Arkansas are participating, and the rest will be using it within the next year. Already, the system is showing positive results.

"Earlier this year in Fort Smith, a four-year-old boy received a severe laceration across his face while playing outdoors. His mother, who had already created a profile on the system for the child, called 9-1-1. Caught up in the moment, she forgot to tell responders that her child was allergic to latex. Fortunately, this information was already in the database, and the dispatcher was able to warn responders and prevent a potentially dangerous allergic reaction.

"Today's technology makes us more interconnected than ever before. Planning for and responding to emergencies has always been a community effort. Through the ReadyAR app and Smart911 system, we can each make our communities better prepared and potentially save lives. The effectiveness of these programs, however, starts with individual responsibility. These two new services will help us to safeguard ourselves and our families in times of great stress and confusion and to see better results when emergencies occur."



**ADEM Director David Maxwell (left) receives the Key to the City of Rogers from Mayor Greg Hines at the annual Arkansas Emergency Management Conference held in Mayor Hines' city.**

## Joplin twister topic at conference

Conference-goers also heard of another major news event when Keith Stammer, Director, City of Joplin/Jasper County OEM, briefed on the EF5 Joplin, Missouri tornado that occurred on May 22, 2011.

Stammer said the tornado that claimed 161 lives was the deadliest tornado to occur in the U.S. since 1947. About 4,000 homes were destroyed.

Despite all that, Stammer said Joplin was fortunate the storm occurred on a Sunday, noting that the city pulls in workers from a big area during the week when the workday population is estimated to be around 240,000, almost five times more the official population of around 50,000.

## AEMA Scholarship goes to Brandy Pruitt

Brandy Pruitt is the recipient of the annual Arkansas Emergency Management Association Scholarship. Brandy's mother accepted the award on behalf of her daughter.

Brandy is a student at the University of Central Arkansas at Conway.

## Recap of shooting is emotional

Undoubtedly, the most somber portion of the Arkansas Emergency Management Conference held in Rogers came when Lt. Stephen Staggs and Lt. Brent Grill of the Van Buren Police Department recapped what is likely the most unforgettable day of their lives. To do so, they went back nearly a year (September 13) when a call came in advising of a shooter in the Crawford County Courthouse.

It was 3:30 p.m. That was the time according to the officers a man from nearby Kibler, James Ray Palmer, entered the courthouse and began shooting at people throughout the building. One person, an assistant to the circuit judge (believed to be the gunman's target) was wounded, but recovered. That office is on the second floor, and from there, Palmer went downstairs where he shot a reported 10 rounds through the glass door leading into the office of the administrative assistant to the county judge (who was hiding behind a desk.) After also firing at the office of the county clerk, Palmer, who reportedly carried two handguns, an assault rifle and several magazines, then went outside where he was killed in a shootout with police. One of the officer's door on the driver's side of his car was hit several times. He was inside, but not hurt.

The dash cam video of the officer was played, further highlighting the dramatic effect.

# Former Director's widow a special guest



**Dr. Jo Harper, left, widow of former ADEM Director W.R. "Bud" Harper, visits with Agency Deputy Director Tina Owens at the Arkansas Emergency Management Conference held in Rogers. Dr. Harper presented the first annual award named for her late husband to Sheila Magness, Lincoln County OEM.**

## **Arkansas Department of Emergency Management**

Building 9501

Camp Joseph T. Robinson

North Little Rock, AR 72199

Phone: 501-683-6700

Fax: 501-683-7890

E-mail: [adem@adem.arkansas.gov](mailto:adem@adem.arkansas.gov)



# **Keeping Arkansas Prepared**