



# The *Lightning* Rod

December 2013

The Official Newsletter of the Texas Floodplain Management Association *Volume 18 Issue 4*

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### Saying Goodbye to a Great Year and Saying Hello to a New Year Filled with Success!

As we approach the Christmas Holidays and begin to prepare for saying goodbye to 2013 and welcoming 2014, I must reflect on what a fantastic year 2013 was for TFMA.

Looking back at 2013, we achieved some milestones. One major milestone is Membership – we celebrated our 2,000 member. Never did I imagine a 2,000+ membership! As of this writing, we have 2,129 members and counting. One can only guess what our potential is and how large the TFMA family will grow. How about 2,500 at the end of next year?

We experienced two very successful conferences with record attendance at the Spring and Fall. Our members continue to step forward with their willingness to present papers and workshops and I cannot begin to express how much we appreciate the companies who are always ready and able to step up with sponsorships and exhibits. You add so much to our conference experience.

TFMA also stepped up to the training plate with an energized Training Committee working with our partners, FEMA, TWDB, TxDOT, etc. to bring some of the best training possible. With our two conferences, TFMA offered 17 separate and diverse training opportunities all across the state. It was the TFMA Training Committee's goal to have at least one training event in all ten TFMA Regions, and with fantastic help from our Regional Directors, we were able to accomplish this goal. How successful were we? Looking at the numbers, almost 1,800 participated in one or more of the events. Many were CFM's looking to gain their CECs for the renewal requirements, but also there were large numbers of new people, new floodplain managers, gaining knowledge about their profession and learning about TFMA. Kudos to our Training Committee and trainers for a job well done. Speaking of the CFM program, this is another of TFMA's successful milestones. We added 125 new CFMs and we will add to that number before we close out 2013. We now have 1,688 CFMs. Overall, our CFM program is strong and will grow even larger as we move through 2014.

A final milestone is the relocation of the new TFMA Office. We went from a cramped and often cold warehouse to a warm home atmosphere with ample and pleasant working, meeting and even storage space. If you can, stop by for a visit sometime. I cannot mention our new office without mentioning our staff. Markie Casebier and Selina Mirza do a fantastic job of holding down the TFMA fort and carry out our day to day operations in a very professional manner. Our intern, Courtney Casebier has done a fantastic job working with our new web provider as we transition to a new look and a new way of doing our on-line business. Please join me in thanking them for their hard work, support and dedication to the TFMA family.

I could continue on with even more Thanks for a successful year, but for the sake of space, it is time to end my nod to TFMA with an even bigger THANK YOU to the membership. Without you and your support, there would be no TFMA. You are the spirit, heart and soul of the TFMA family. God Bless TFMA, Texas and our glorious Nation!

On behalf of the TFMA Board of Directors and the TFMA Office Staff, I want to wish the TFMA family a Very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a wonderful New Year. Stay safe and healthy and we look forward to seeing you again next year and counting you as a valued member of the TFMA family. — Roy Sedwick, TFMA Executive Director



# From the President

By *Diane Calhoun, CFM*

### Greetings TFMA

It is hard to believe that it is almost the end of 2013. Amazing how the year has flown by!

Thank you all for being a part of TFMA. It is thrilling to see the membership grow and people getting involved with committees, outreach, and general attendance at conferences and especially training that has been offered. I want to send a special thank you to the TFMA Board of Directors, Regional Directors, and Committee Chairs.

However, I do want to say how much I appreciate Jessica Baker, TFMA Vice President. I truly appreciate your support and hard work that you have put forth this year. Your support and belief in TFMA is obvious by your attention to details and dedication to members.



Diane Calhoun,  
TFMA President

I also want to thank Markie and Selina in the Executive office, for their support and dedication to the Board and the 2100+ TFMA members and CFMs®. The daily calls, emails and paper work involved in keeping TFMA moving is a major task and these two ladies make it look easy.

Most of all I want to thank Roy Sedwick, TFMA Executive Director. What a year it has been to celebrate 25 years of floodplain management in Texas. TFMA is now (although not officially declared by anyone but us) the largest Chapter in the U.S. And we continue to grow. So what can we expect for 2014? Well if you talk with Roy, there is no limit. Thank you Roy, for your passion, dedication and belief that this would all happen. If you think we “Rocked” in 2013, watch out for 2014! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year TFMA. May your Holidays be filled with peace, good friends, good food, and many Blessings.

## 2014 TFMA Renewal Time

### WHAT DO I NEED TO SUBMIT BY DECEMBER 31?

#### Existing CFM’s (certified previous years)

- ⇒ Log on to the website and update your profile such as email address, employer, etc.
- ⇒ Pay the \$90 TFMA/CFM Renewal Fees (\$45 for Federal/State Agency Non-Voting Members)
- ⇒ Complete, sign and return your CEC Summary Verification Form showing proof of at least 8 CECs
- ⇒ Provide any supporting documentation you may have

#### New CFM’s (certified in 2013):

##### *If you were certified between January 1 and June 30 of this year:*

- ⇒ Log on to the website and update your profile such as email address, employer, etc.
- ⇒ Pay the \$90 TFMA/CFM Renewal Fees (\$45 for Federal/State Agency Non-Voting Members)
- ⇒ Complete, sign and return your CEC Summary Verification Form showing proof of at least 6 CECs
- ⇒ Provide any supporting documentation you may have

##### *If you were certified between July 1 and December 31 of this year:*

- ⇒ Log on to the website and update your profile such as email address, employer, etc.
- ⇒ Pay the \$45 TFMA Membership Fee (\$0 – Federal/State Agency Non-Voting Members)
- ⇒ No CECs are required

**How do I pay for my renewal?** Online at [www.tfma.org](http://www.tfma.org) to pay by MasterCard or Visa or by check.

**How do I submit my CECs?** You may scan and email them to us at [tfma1@att.net](mailto:tfma1@att.net) or fax them to us at 512-260-1409 or simply drop them in the mail.



# 2013 in Pictures



*What will 2014 bring?*



## The Traveling Boots

The TFMA Spring conference was in full swing. It was the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and the first ever Silent Auction. Bidding was at a feverish pace and the crowd of attendees wanted to make sure they weren't outbid! One lady in particular had her eye on a pair of rain boots and for a very special reason.

At a time when TFMA was listening to excellent speakers and networking with fellow floodplain administrators, our neighbor to the North had been devastated by tornadoes. After the TFMA conference, Lori McLennan, CFM, from Jackson County, was heading to Oklahoma to work with disaster teams already onsite. The boots were to travel with her and become part of an ongoing story!

One of the first people Lori met in Oklahoma was Ms. Pauline Reeves, a 75-year, young lady who had survived the tornado by grabbing a helmet for her head and taking shelter in a storage container. As the storm approached, she felt herself going airborne and tumbling over and over with a dresser belonging to her grandmother landing on top of her. When the storm passed, she was found beaten up, bruised and bloody but still wearing her helmet. Nothing was left of her home of 75 years. The only thing still standing was the container in which she sought refuge and her American Flag flying proudly.



Ms. Pauline went on to cook for the volunteers on an iron grate over a hole she had dug in the ground and her cast iron skillet that had landed on her car. Food was dropped off by the First Baptist Church in Akron, Ohio. Everyone ate hamburger patties with all the fixing's!

Toward the end of her stay, Lori met a young lady from Dexter, Iowa who admired the boots. She wore work boots and never complained about the long hours and hot days. Three days later, the young lady's work boots had been replaced with a pair of tennis shoes. When asked about her work boots, the young lady replied, "A 14 year old girl whose home was devastated by the tornado along with all her belongings, had admired this young lady's work boots; so she took them off and traded the younger girls' tennis shoes for them. She told the 14 year old girl, she would "walk in her shoes for a while and carry her burden for her." Being touched by this remarkable woman, Lori took off her boots and gave them to the "volunteer angel" telling her to wear them with pride until someone else came along who needed their burdens lifted.

The boots traveled to Arkansas where a volunteer had them on when helping to pull a family from their flooded home. Last seen, they had made their way to Colorado to help out in yet another disaster. So, next time you get a chance to be part of a rescue relief team, look around and see if you spot a fancy pair of rain boots. I think they were meant to travel!

*Many thanks to the Dallas Convention & Visitors Bureau for contributing this item to the Silent Auction!*



The "Traveling Boots"



## 2014 Annual TFMA Spring Conference

### TFMA Call for Abstracts

The Texas Floodplain Management Association is pleased to announce its Call for Abstracts for the 2014 Annual Conference. The conference will be held at the Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas starting on May 27 and ending on May 30, 2014.

#### **ABSTRACTS**

Abstracts will be used to develop the conference agenda including the plenary and concurrent sessions, and for workshops. Abstracts should be limited to one page (Word format) and include the presentation name, description, name(s) of presenter(s), and indicate how much time you would need (30 minutes, 1 hour, longer). Times allocated for plenary and current session presentations typically range from 30 minutes to 1 hour. Times allocated for workshops range from 4 hours (1/2 day) to 8 hours (full day).

#### **ABSTRACT SUBMITTAL DEADLINES**

**Plenary and Concurrent Sessions** - The deadline to submit abstracts to be considered for plenary or concurrent session presentations is **January 31, 2014**. Notification of the acceptance of your presentation will be sent by email on or before February 7, 2014.

#### **WHERE TO SEND YOUR ABSTRACT**

John A. Espinoza, PE, CFM

TFMA Conference Chair

tfmaconference@gmail.com

Phone: (210) 347-5330

or

Tim Raines, PE, CFM

U.S. Geological Survey

[thraines@usgs.gov](mailto:thraines@usgs.gov)

(817) 263-9545, ext. 201

Thank you for your interest in being a part of the TFMA 2014 Annual Conference. We look forward to seeing you all in May!

## Save the Date

**When:** May 27-30, 2014

**Where:** Omni Mandalay Hotel & Irving Convention Center  
Irving, Texas

Early Bird Workshops begin on Tuesday and the Plenary Session opens on Wednesday. Lots of opportunity for networking including the popular Wednesday Night Banquet you won't want to miss! TFMA has negotiated a special room rate of \$125++ single/double occupancy. Call the Omni at 800-THE-OMNI or make your reservations online at: <http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/DallasMandalay/MeetingFacilities/TFMAAnnualSpringConference5.aspx>.

More conference information will be available in late January and registration in February, so visit us at [www.tfma.org](http://www.tfma.org).



## FloodSmart Offers Tools and Resources to Help Communicate Flood Risk

In the United States, floods are the most common severe weather emergency. In the past 5 years, all 50 states have experienced floods or flash floods. In fact Texas is no stranger to these kinds of conditions, with 3 flood declarations over the past 10 years. Yet a well-prepared and highly informed public can take the necessary steps to lessen the financial consequences of flooding.

With support from FloodSmart, the marketing campaign for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), communities can better communicate the risk of flooding and importance of flood insurance to local residents. Shareable tools and resources easily accessed online from the FloodSmart [Community Resources page](#) provide dramatic, illustrative examples of flood risks and highlight the value and ease of purchasing flood insurance through thousands of insurance agents around the country.

Several tools can be downloaded, shared or posted on community websites. These tools include:

[Flood Risk Scenarios](#)—This downloadable tool illustrates common causes of flooding through animated scenarios. After the tool is downloaded to a community's website, visitors can click on a scenario to see examples of how and why it can flood.

[Cost of Flooding](#)—This shareable tool shows that only a few inches of water can cause major damage to a home and its contents. It is an excellent way to illustrate the financial consequences of a flood and start the conversation for purchasing flood insurance.

[Widgets](#) —During the year, FloodSmart creates and updates interactive widgets that can be downloaded and used to illustrate the risks of flooding. Widgets have been created for a variety of seasons and topics, including winter flooding, hurricane season, and flood-after-fire.

[Levee Simulator](#)—This downloadable educational tool helps explain in simple terms how levees work, and shows the risk of living or working behind a levee. Using illustrated scenarios, users can see different ways that a levee can be breached, overtopped, or compromised through seepage and offers tips on how property owners can mitigate against damage.

[Testimonials](#)—Online videos from people who have experienced flooding provide compelling, first-hand accounts of the consequences of flooding. These testimonials describe floods that occurred in different parts of the Nation from a number of sources, including coastal storms and levee breaches. They include both home and business owners who did and did *not* have flood insurance. Add links to the videos relevant to your area on your community website.

### **Toolkits and Opportunities for Targeted Communities**

FloodSmart has developed a series of toolkits that community officials can use to promote flood insurance, assist in communicating the changes in flood risk due to map changes, and address levee issues. The mapping and levee toolkits contain templates for outreach materials and letters designed for communities to customize and use in their local outreach. The toolkits are available for immediate use at [FloodSmart.gov/toolkits](http://FloodSmart.gov/toolkits).

FloodSmart is also developing pilot programs for agents, stakeholders, and consumers. The communities are being selected based on flood history and on the willingness of State and local leaders to join FloodSmart in concerted efforts to communicate flood risks and the need for flood insurance protection. To learn more about this new effort—or for help on downloading these resources to your website—contact FloodSmart at [info@fema floodsmart.com](mailto:info@fema floodsmart.com).



## The Change Makers of 2013

The "Change Makers Of 2013" (CO-2013) is a team of 6th and 7th grade boys and girls from Canyon Vista Middle School in Austin, who have spent the past five months working on a research project about floods and how technology can be used to minimize the impact flood events have in Texas. This is not surprising as theirs is an F.I.R.S.T Lego League (FLL) Team.

FIRST, "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology" is an organization with the mission of "getting children excited about science and technology and teach them valuable employment and life skills" (<http://firstlegoleague.org>). Since 2008, FLL organizes a competition for teams to develop science and technology ideas based on a "challenge". This year's competition theme is "*Nature's Fury*, Can *FIRST*® LEGO® League teams help us master natural disasters?" <http://www.firstlegoleague.org/challenge/2013naturesfury>

The CO-2013 Team selected "floods" as its research subject area since this is a problem that affects thousands of people across Texas. After several months of research, the team decided to work on creating a mobile app prototype they called "Esafety" ("Escape to Safety") to integrate different technologies from phone alerts and notifications, maps (including directions and elevation) and a routing algorithm into a single mobile app. The purpose was to offer a very intuitive way to alert app users in imminent danger from flooding waters and allow them to route their path to safety. Each team member brought his/her unique skills and talent to put together this prototype, from data research, flood sensor systems, application design and prototype programming using MIT's App Inventory to develop an Android app. Finally, the team put together a skit to present their solution at the FLL competition where they will show their acting skills and communicate their solution to a wider audience in a fun and engaging way. In addition to the research project, the team also designed and built a Lego EV3 Robot for the Nature's Fury Robot Game. In this game, the robot must perform a series of tasks from lifting objects, carry objects and overcome obstacles. The "CO-2013" team will participate in the 2013 FLL Central Texas Qualifier at Del Valle HS on Saturday, December 14th, 2013. We wish them well!

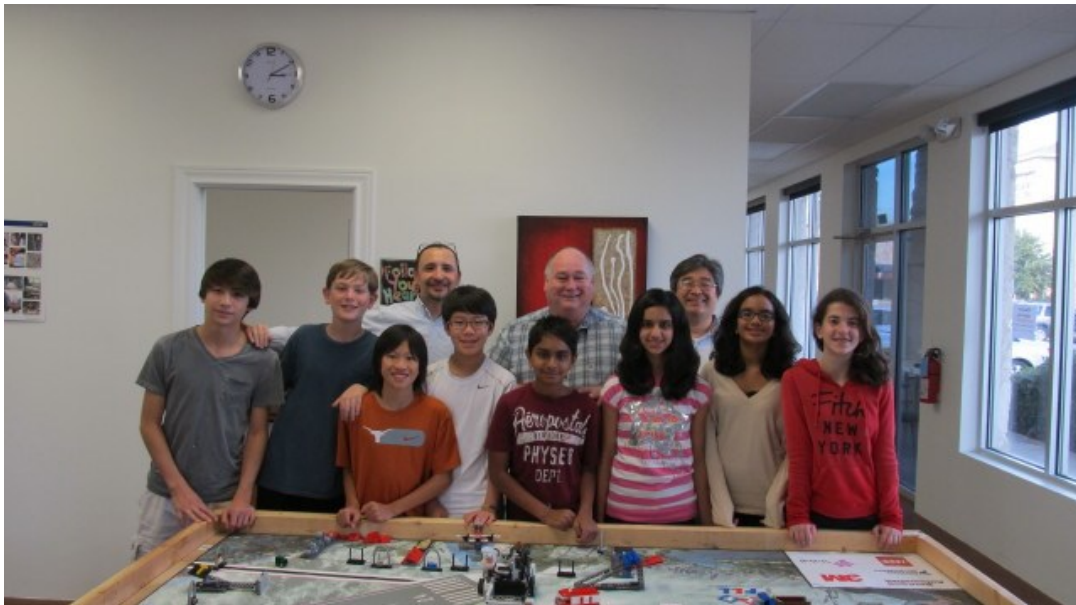
For more information about FLL Central Texas, visit the page: <http://centraltxfirst.org/fll-program>

**The "CO-2013" team members are:**

- |                     |                                |                       |                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Aarushi Machavarapu | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) | Aryan Patel           | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) |
| Danny Farkash       | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) | Emma Farkash          | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) |
| Ethan Lao           | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) | James Joh             | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) |
| Purvi Mujumdar      | (7 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) | Santiago Campos-Araoz | (6 <sup>th</sup> grader, CVMS) |

**Coaches:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Ruben C. Campos (Head coach)               | Ace Joh (Co-coach Design and Programming) |
| Adrian Farkash (Co-coach Research Project) |   |





## TFMA Committee Corner

### *Outreach Committee*

#### **Are You Prepared for The Flood Zone?**

TFMA will soon be inundated by The Flood Zone! But we're not talking about FEMA floodplains in this case; we're talking about a new TFMA program to educate adults and children of the dangers of flooding, as well as increase awareness of the importance of protecting our floodplains and natural resources.

The tools within The Flood Zone are not new. The primary tool in the program is the Ward's Stormwater Floodplain Simulation System, developed by Ward's Science+. This is a dynamic, hands-on simulation model that provides a visual representation of watersheds and floodplains. It can be seen online at [https://www.wardsci.com/store/catalog/product.jsp?catalog\\_number=805770](https://www.wardsci.com/store/catalog/product.jsp?catalog_number=805770)

Several of you have probably seen these stormwater models in the past because TFMA owns three models that Markie and Selina safeguard in Cedar Park. Luz Locke (City of Pasadena) and many others in our state have had success using the stormwater model to educate their communities on basic floodplain information and how various environmental scenarios impact floodplains. What is new is your Outreach Committee (formerly Special Projects Committee) has been working hard to develop a specific outreach program to make demonstrating these models even easier for you and your community.

We will officially roll out The Flood Zone program at the Spring 2014 conference and plan to offer training during this event too. We hope you are all as excited about this outreach opportunity as we are! See you in Irving!

Jill Trevino, P.E., CFM

Outreach Committee / The Flood Zone Project Lead

## 2013 TFMA Training Recap

In 2013 TFMA continued its' effort to provide training throughout the state of Texas. There were 17 training opportunities stretching from El Paso to Tyler and Fort Worth to South Padre Island. With the guidance of our outstanding Training Committee and Regional Directors, TFMA will endeavor to keep increasing the training each year. TFMA partnered with FEMA and TWDB to bring four NFIP courses to our members.

In conjunction with the classes, there were 13 exam opportunities. This year TFMA not only crossed over the 2000 member number but we also certified 125 new CFMs! Great job everyone!

Keep checking the website for 2014 training sessions. We promise good things to come in the new year!





## Association News

### TFMA Newsletter

The TFMA newsletter *The Lightning Rod* is changing and we need your input. We want the newsletter to be more about YOU the Membership and include articles of particular interest to you in Texas. Our goal is that this newsletter will serve as one you can't wait to get your hands on BUT, we need your help. Got some news you'd like to share with us? Have some ideas of what you'd like to see in your newsletter? Let us know by emailing us at [tfma1@att.net](mailto:tfma1@att.net). We'd love to hear from you. We are very excited about the NEW newsletter and we can't wait to share it with you!

### TFMA Executive Office Hours

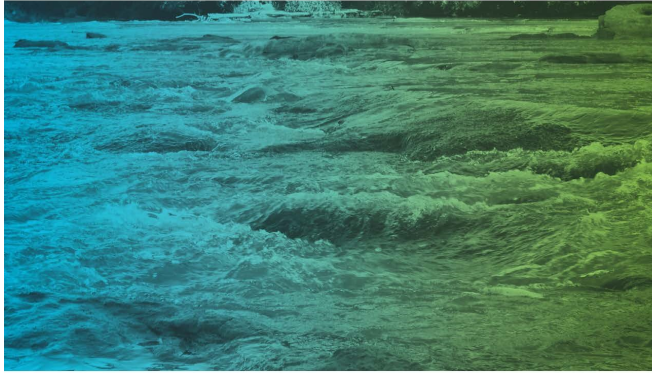
The TFMA Executive Office will be closed Christmas week, December 23-27. Members will still be able to submit their renewal information to the office via email at [tfma1@att.net](mailto:tfma1@att.net), fax: 512-260-1409 or simply mail in your renewal information to the office at: P.O. Box 1237, Cedar Park, TX 78613-9998. You can also submit your questions using the online "Contact Me" option on our website at [www.tfma.org](http://www.tfma.org) or simply call us at 512-260-1366 and we will return your call upon our return on Monday, December 30 during normal business hours.





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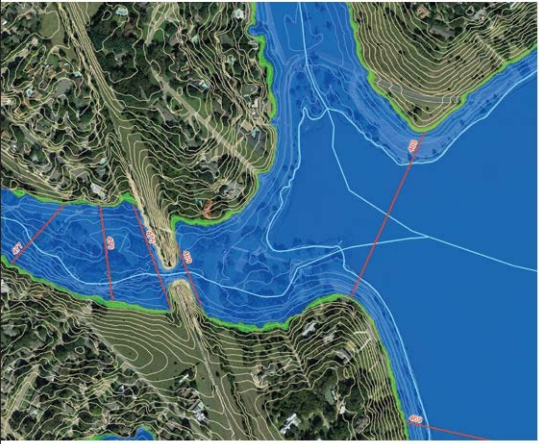


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