



Your Source for Employee Information



## Spring in Myers Park

Bluebonnets are out at Myers Park & Events Center. While MPEC's not quite in full bloom, their field of bluebonnets are out after a poor showing last year. And, in case you haven't seen, the patches between the Admin Building and the Sheriff's Office are coming along, too. See back page for more.

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## County benefits: When you can't take them with you ...

### **Collin County provides great retirement benefits to you through the Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS).**

If you are an eligible employee, you automatically save for retirement by contributing 7% of your pay each paycheck to your TCDRS account. The money you put in your account earns interest at a rate of 7% annually.

Over time, the value of your account will increase because of compounding interest — that is, it will earn interest on the interest. Additionally, you will receive a match from Collin County upon retirement depending on your years of service with Collin County and other qualifying employers.

While we all hope to enjoy our retirement and the money we have saved, you may wonder when and how your

beneficiaries will receive the money from the retirement account if you pass away. That answer depends on how much service time you have with TCDRS.

When you set up your TCDRS account, you designated at least one beneficiary for both your retirement account and your life insurance policy

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Pictured: Yoon KIM, Miho TANABE, Judge Hayato HORIUCHI, Judge Jay BENDER, Stacey KEMP and Caren SKIPWORTH.

## Japanese court officials take a look at how we hold court

Collin County hosted a visit from Hayato HORIUCHI, Judge of the Kanazawa District and Family Court Japan, and Miho TANABE, Court Clerk and Assistant Human Resources Manager of the Chiba District Court, Japan, in late February.

Judge Horiuchi is presently doing research on the American Judicial System as a visiting scholar at the SMU Dedman School of Law under the Overseas Training Program of the Supreme Court of Japan.

Ms. Tanabe was visiting the United States to learn about the various methods of court management, and to exchange ideas on a training and educa-

tion program with her American counterpart.

## March was Procurement Month



County Judge **Keith SELF** presents Purchasing Agent **Michalyn RAINS** a proclamation to coincide with March being Procurement Month. Purchasing hosted an open house and celebrated its 13th straight Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award from the National Procurement Institute.

## Healthcare cost Estimator app

Wondering about out-of-pocket health costs? Want to know how much you co-pay will be on a scan or health procedure?

United Healthcare has a free mobile app -- Health4Me -- that can help you save out-of-pocket expenses for treatments: on-the-spot. It's the same as the online Cost Estimator after you logon to MYUHC.

With this app, you can:

- ◆ Locate nearby health care providers, and convenience care, urgent care and emergency care facilities
- ◆ Review market average prices for more than 520 medical services across 290 episodes of care, providing a comprehensive view of what consumers should expect throughout their course of treatment
- ◆ More easily anticipate and manage health care expenses based on local estimates.

# Phishing: avoid online attacks at work & home

**Email is one of the primary ways we communicate. We use it every day for work, and to stay in touch with our friends and family.**

It's also become one of the primary attack methods used by cyber criminals. And we thought it might be a good idea to explain phishing — a common email attack method, and the steps you can take to use email safely.

Phishing refers to an attack that uses email or a messaging service (like those on social media sites) to trick you into taking an action, such as clicking on a link or opening an attachment.

What's at risk? Highly sensitive information stolen or your computer infected.

Attackers work hard to make their phishing emails convincing. They will make an email look like it came from a friend or a trusted company. They will even add logos of your bank or forge the email address so the message appears more legitimate. Then the attackers send these phishing emails to millions, not knowing who will fall victim. All they know is the more emails they send, the greater the chance for success.

There are several ways attackers use phishing to get what they want:

**Harvesting info:** The attacker's goal is to harvest your personal information, such as your passwords, credit card numbers or banking details. An email takes you to a website that appears legitimate, then asks you to provide your account information or personal data.

Any information you enter goes directly to the attacker.

**Malicious Links:** The attacker's goal is to take control of your device. To do this, they send you an email with a link. If you click on the link, it takes you to a website that launches an attack on your device that, if successful, infects your system.

**Malicious Attachments:** The attacker's goal is the same, to infect and take control of your device. But instead of a link, the attacker emails you an infected file, such as a Word document. Opening the attachment triggers the attack, potentially giving the attacker control of your sys-

tem.

**Scams:** Some phishing emails are nothing more than scams by con artists who have gone digital. They try to fool you by saying you won the lottery, pretending to be a charity needing donations or asking for your help to move millions of dollars. If you respond to any of these, they will say they first need payment for their ser-

**The easiest way to avoid falling victim to Phishing? Delete the email.**



vices or access to your bank account, scamming you out of your money.

For a phishing attack to work, the bad guys need to trick you into doing something. Fortunately, there are clues that a message is an attack. Here are the most common ones:

- ◆ The email creates a sense of urgency, demanding "immediate action" before something bad happens, like closing your account.

The attacker wants to rush you into making a mistake.

- ◆ You receive an email with an attachment that you were not expecting or the email entices you to open the attachment. For example, an email saying it has an attachment with details of unannounced layoffs, employee salary information or a letter from the IRS saying you are being prosecuted.
- ◆ Instead of using your name, the email uses a generic salutation like "Dear Customer." Most companies or friends contacting you know your name.
- ◆ The email requests highly sensitive information, such as your credit card number or password.
- ◆ The email says it comes from an official organization, but has poor grammar or spelling, or uses a personal email address like @gmail.com, @yahoo.com or @hotmail.com.

The link looks odd or not official. One tip is to hover your mouse cursor over the link until a

# Alcohol Awareness Month speaks to how much is ‘drinking too much’

**April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Most people know that drinking too much can harm your health. But what is considered “drinking too much”?**

Have you ever left work on a Friday, picked up a 6-pack of beer on the way home and finished 5 cans or more before turning in for the night?

If you are a man and this sounds like you, you are engaging in a serious type of excessive drinking called binge drinking. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, binge drinking is the most common form of drinking too much.

If you are a woman, having just four drinks at one time is binge drinking. You don't have to be an alcoholic to be a binge drinker and be at immediate risk for many harmful health conditions including violence, alcohol poisoning, and miscarriage.

Over time, excessive use of alcohol can lead to the development of chronic diseases and other serious problems such as liver disease, heart disease, and breast cancer.

Keep in mind that a drink is considered 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of distilled liquor (gin, rum, vodka, or whisky).

Another form of excessive drinking is heavy drinking. If you are a man and have 15 or more drinks per week, or a woman and have 8 or more drinks per week you are drinking too much.

Alcohol often has harmful interactions with medications and some herbal remedies, including nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and changes in blood pressure. Alcohol interac-

tions may decrease the effectiveness of medications and may make drugs harmful or even toxic to the body.

Even in small amounts, alcohol may also make medication side effects worse such as sleepiness, drowsiness, and light-headedness. Your concentration and ability to operate

machinery or drive a vehicle may be affected and lead to serious or even fatal accidents.

It is important to observe warning labels and ask your doctor or pharmacist if it's safe to use alcohol with any medications and herbal remedies that you take.

If you think you may have a drinking problem, talk with your doctor right away. Other ways for managing excessive drinking include Care24, a

*UnitedHealthcare* benefit that connects you with registered nurses and counselors to get you the help that you need.

Care24 can help with all kinds of problems and provide confidential counseling, community referrals, and help choosing appropriate medical care. Call **1-888-887-4114** to talk with a professional. I am also available to provide resources and support.

**Kaila COHEN** is the *UnitedHealthcare* Nurse Liaison for Collin County. She can be reached at 972-548-4653, or by email at [Kathleen\\_cohen@uhc.com](mailto:Kathleen_cohen@uhc.com).





### 35 years?!

Friends, family and co-workers gather to celebrate **Donna GELVIN's** 35-year service anniversary in March during Commissioners Court. Donna works in the Precinct 1 Constable's office, and received her pin from Constable **Shane WILLIAMS**.



### A couple of real GEMS

▲ County Clerk **Stacey KEMP** (right) and supervisor **Mary COLLINS** (left) presented Vital Statistics employees **Pat CROSSWHITE** (McKinney) and **Louann FAWCETT** (Plano) with GEM awards in April. Pat and Louann stepped in without hesitation when two long-term employees retired in the same month, and the department was short-staffed during a very busy season. Both put in extra efforts to make sure it all got done on time, done right, and that customers got excellent service.



### 20 Years' service

▲ **Amy CUNDIFF**, who works in the County Court at Law Clerks' office in McKinney, received her 20-year service pin from County Clerk **Stacey KEMP**.

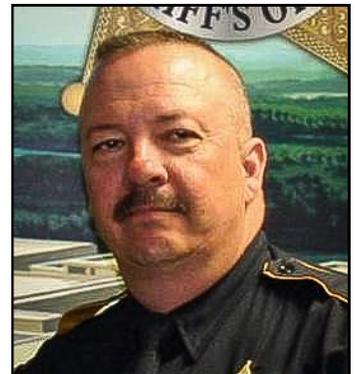
### 15 Years' service

◀ And, **Mendy ROGERS** (left) — also from County court at Law Clerks — received her service anniversary pin from Stacey.



## Meritorious Service

Sheriff **Terry BOX** (left) presented awards for Meritorious Service to six Sheriff's Office Investigators and one Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden for their actions during the aftermath of the tornadoes on December 26. He also presented Investigator **Charles SIBLEY** (right) with a Medal of Valor. While off-duty and shortly before the tornado passed through Copeville, he drove to several stores in the area to warn people. Rather than seek shelter himself, Sibley then drove through the storm to Farmersville, and blocked traffic with his vehicle until it had passed. He then returned to Copeville to find that, in one store, the patrons had taken shelter in the cooler and though the store had been hit directly by the tornado. All three were alive and uninjured.



## Retirement

▲ Sheriff Box presented Chief **Rick ALLEN** (above, right) with his retirement plaque and thanked him for his many years of dedicated service with the Collin County Sheriff's Office.

## Promotions



▲ **Kevin CHRISTIAN** was promoted from Sergeant to Lieutenant. Lieutenant Christian has worked with the Sheriff's Office since 2011.



▲ **Michael SEPULVADO** was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain. Captain Sepulvado has worked for the Sheriff's Office since 2004.



## Lifesaver

Sheriff Box congratulated Deputy **Gean BLALOCK** (left) who was recently presented with a Life Saving Award. Deputy Blalock saved the life of a fellow deputy **John HUNT**, when he used the Heimlich maneuver to clear his airway.

## New Major

Sheriff Box recently swore in **Randy CLARK** as a new Major at the Sheriff's Office.

## FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

**Facilities Management would like to acknowledge several employees for their service to Collin County.**

**Dylan HARRIS** has been an employee of Collin County for five years. He started at Myers Park as a Grounds Keeper, then transferred to Facilities as a Grounds Keeper, and was recently promoted to a Maintenance Specialist under **Lloyd ROLLINS'** supervision.

We also want to recognize **Clint HENDRICKS** for his five years of service. Clint is a Maintenance Specialist under the supervision of Lloyd Rollins.

Congratulations to **Patty JOHNSON**,

Facilities Maintenance secretary, for 10 years of service under Julie **WHITSELL's** supervision.

Facilities would like to thank **Ray BURTON**, Control Room Operator, for his 10 years of service.

**Gary SAVAGE** has been here for 15 years. Gary works the night shift to cover maintenance requests for the Jail under **Terry BABBITT's** supervision. We appreciate his service and working a difficult shift.

**Jackie WHITFIELD** is recognized for his 20 years of service. Jackie started as a Tech 1 and changed positions to work under **Mark CRULL's** supervision as an

overnight Control Room Operator. Thanks, Jackie, for all that you do.

Finally, we would like to honor **Julie WHITSELL** for her 25 years here at Collin County. Julie started in Commissioner's Court in October 1990, and transferred to Facilities in 1999. Julie is the Office Administrator and works under Facilities' Director **Dan JAMES**.

Facilities would like to introduce two new employees. **Scott LOVE** is a Grounds Keeper hired in January. **Chance MAGOUIRK** is a Tech 1 in General Facility Maintenance and Renovation. Welcome to Facilities Maintenance.

**THE COLLIN COUNTY CONNECTION** is published six times a year for county employees by the Public Information Office, with a lot of technical assistance from the good people in Information Technology's GIS Department. Please submit your articles, anniversaries, announcements, classified ads, good deeds and kudos in plain text email to:

**publicrelations@collincountytx.gov**. We post deadlines for submissions on the Calendar at *MyCollinCounty*.



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through TCDRS.

If you die prior to processing a retirement with TCDRS, your designated beneficiary chooses how the retirement funds will be paid out by TCDRS. If you have less than four years of service and pass away, TCDRS will pay the account balance, including deposits and interest, to the designated beneficiary (ies).

Once you reach four years of service, your designated beneficiary will be eligible for employer-matched funds and will have three options from which to select.

◆ **The first option** is to immediately begin receiving a monthly payment which would continue for the rest of your designated beneficiary's life. This monthly payment is calculated based on a number of factors including the age of your beneficiary, the total amount of money in the account

from your contributions, earned interest, and eligible employer-matched funds.

◆ **The second option** is your designated beneficiary chooses to wait for a period of time before receiving a monthly payment which



would continue for the rest of his/her life. This monthly payment is calculated from your contributions, earned interest, and eligible employer-matched funds.

If your designated beneficiary chooses this option, the account will continue to grow due to interest and the monthly payment will increase.

◆ **The last option** your designated beneficiary may select is to withdraw the account funds (your contributions and earned interest). If your designated beneficiary makes the choice to withdraw the money, any employer-matched funds and the ability to receive a monthly payment in the future will be forfeited and lump sum received will be subject to taxes.

To leave this decision to the designated beneficiary, no action is necessary. However, if you would like to choose to remove the withdrawal option to ensure your beneficiary will receive a lifetime monthly benefit that includes employer matching, you should contact TCDRS directly to select this option.

Through the TCDRS website, you can create a personalized login which will allow access to the details of your TCDRS account. If you need assistance with the website, you should contact TCDRS directly.

If you have specific questions regarding retirement, you may contact a Benefits Representative in Human Resources. Jasmine **RICHARDSON** can be reached at Ext. 4687 and **Abby SPENCE** can be reached at Ext. 4602. They are happy to answer your questions and assist you.

Additionally, **TCDRS will be here in May to answer any questions you may have.** Contact either Jasmine or Abby for details about the scheduled meetings. — and be sure to check the MYCC Calendar.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS / CLASSIFIEDS

**NOTARY SERVICE:** We'll come to you for any notary need. Available evenings and weekends. Visit [BrazealNotaryServices.com](http://BrazealNotaryServices.com) or contact **Carrie BRAZEAL** at 469-271-2377 or [carrietbrazeal@gmail.com](mailto:carrietbrazeal@gmail.com). 10% discount for county employees.

▼ **FOR SALE:** 2002 VW Golf; Great shape, runs excellent, new timing belt and other work (can provide proof), air conditioning is cold and works great. Interior in good shape and seat covers included. Tires have no wear. This car has been well maintained. 112,700 miles, 2.0 liter 4 cylinders. Perfect for a new driver or a second car. Sale will be final and as is. \$4400, negotiable. Email: [staroflife@gmail.com](mailto:staroflife@gmail.com) or call **Lynn** 845-309-4045.

