

C  N N E C T I O N

Your Source for Employee Information

One for the Team

Representatives from MCCI / Laserfiche in mid-May recognized members of the County Clerk's office, Records Management and Information Technology for their work in building innovative ways to use the Laserfiche product in Records Management initiatives with a Run-Smarter Award during Commissioners Court.



Passphrases

An effective way to make your logons more secure

Passwords are something you use almost every day, from accessing your email and banking online to purchasing goods or accessing your smartphone.

However, passwords are also one of your weakest points; if someone learns your password, they can steal your identity, transfer your money or access your personal information.

Strong passwords are essential to protecting yourself. In this newsletter, you will learn how to create strong passwords that are easy to remember by using a type

of password called passphrases.

The challenge we all face is that cyber attackers have developed sophisticated methods to guess or brute force passwords, and they are constantly getting better at it.

This means they can compromise your passwords if they are weak or easy to guess. An important step to protecting yourself is to use strong passwords. The more characters your password has, the stronger it is and the harder it is for an attacker to guess. However, long, complex passwords can be difficult to remember.

So instead, we recommend you use pass-

phrases. These are simple phrases or sentences that are easy to remember, but hard to hack.

Here is an example: *Where is king Julian?*

What makes this passphrase so strong is that it is 21 characters long, and also uses capital letters and symbols that many online systems require for complexity. Remember, spaces are nothing more than another symbol for online accounts that allow them.

You can make your passphrase even stronger if you replace letters with numbers or symbols, such as replacing the

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

letter 'a' with the '@' symbol or the letter 'o' with the number zero. If a website or program limits the number of characters you can use in a password, use the maximum number of characters allowed.

Using Passphrases Securely

You must also be careful how you use passphrases. Using a passphrase won't help if bad guys can easily steal or copy it:

- ◆ **Be sure to use a different passphrase for every account** or device you have. For example, never use the same passphrase for your work or bank account that you use for your personal accounts, such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter. This way, if one of your accounts is hacked, the other accounts are still safe. If you have too many passphrases to remember (which is very common), consider using a password manager. This is a special program that securely stores all of your passphrases for you. That way, the only passphrases you need to remember are the ones to your computer and the password manager program.
- ◆ **Never share a passphrase** or your strategy for creating them with anyone else, including coworkers. Remember, a passphrase is a secret. If anyone else knows your passphrase, it is no longer secure. If you accidentally share your passphrase with someone else or believe it may have been compromised or stolen, be sure to change it immediately.
- ◆ Just like passwords, **avoid easy-to-guess or commonly used passphrases**. For example, the phrase, "Four score and seven years ago," is not a good passphrase, since it is so well known.
- ◆ **Do not use public computers**, such as those at hotels or libraries, to log in to a work or bank account. Since anyone can use these computers, they may be infected with malicious code that captures all of your keystrokes. Only log in to your work or bank accounts on trusted computers or mobile devices.
- ◆ **Be careful of websites that require you to answer personal questions**. These questions are used if you forget your passphrase and need to reset it. The problem is that the answers to these questions can often be found on the Internet, or even on your Facebook page. Make sure that if you answer personal questions, you use only information that is not publicly available or fictitious information you have made up. Password managers can help with this, as many allow you to store this additional information.
- ◆ Many online accounts offer something called **two-factor authentication**, also known as two-step verification. This is where you need more than just your passphrase to log in, such as a passcode sent to your smartphone. This option is much more secure than just a passphrase by itself. Whenever possible, always use these stronger methods of authentication.
- ◆ **Mobile devices often require a PIN** to protect access to them. Remember, a PIN is nothing more than another password. The longer your PIN is, the more secure it is. Many mobile devices allow you to change your PIN number to an actual passphrase.
- ◆ Finally, if you are no longer using an account, **be sure to close, delete or disable it**.

MHMC coordinator gets state bar award

Alyse FERGUSON has been selected as this year's recipient of the *Louise B. Raggio Award* by the Women and the Law Section of the Texas State Bar.

The award is given to recognize attorneys who are actively addressing the needs and issues affecting women in the legal profession and in the community.

Alyse received the award recently in conjunction with the State Bar's Annual Meeting in Fort Worth.

Alyse runs Collin County's **Mental Health Managed Counsel Program**, one of a handful of county advocacy programs in Texas to help keep the mentally ill out of the criminal justice system and into proper treatment and care.



As the MHMC program coordinator, Alyse has not only seen thousands of inmates with mental health issues get treatment and legal representation, she's also tracked substantial cost savings in housing prisoners, psychological testing services, criminal investigations, and court costs.

The program is tailored to manage criminal cases against defendants suffering from mental illness to reduce the odds of re-arrest. These efforts provide a chance for those with mental illness to avoid the revolving door effect of repeated offenses and jailing in the criminal justice system.

Blackland Prairie Chapter is 10 years old



Members of the Texas Master Naturalists – Blackland Prairie Chapter — were recognized by Commissioners Court on May 23 on the 10th anniversary of their founding.

This organization is a partnership between Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife department.

Volunteers must complete a 13-week training program that also includes 40 volunteer hours and 8 advanced training hours.

They have contributed more than 100,000 hours in service that includes education about the Blackland Prairie and its natural habitat and for the preservation of prairie

remnants and restoration projects for private and public entities.

Pictured above (left to right) are **Dave POWELL**; Game Warden **LeRoy THOMPSON**; **Rick MAXWELL**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; **Deborah CANTERBURY**, chapter President; **Donna COLE**; **Ed ELLERBEE** and **Sally EVANS**, founding members.

Walk Across Texas teams log some serious mileage this spring

When 11 county teams started Walk Across Texas on March 6, they didn't know that they would end up on April 30 logging 22,798 miles.

Just think about it....that's 9 trips going from McKinney to Amarillo to El Paso to Brownsville to Texarkana to McKinney plus 150 miles.

These teams of eight pooled their miles for eight weeks to see if they met the challenge of walking the 800 miles across Texas. All teams exceeded this challenge by several hundred miles. Need we say anything about how competitive county employees might be?

Racking up an impressive 3,792 miles while they were walking



Walking for the Blue team, from left: Ro'Derica WARREN, Sheryl BAXTER, Tracie TIDWELL, Valerie MILLER, Katie ELDER, Crissy HINOJOSA, Debbie HARRISON and Coline WOOD.

around Texas were **Coline WOOD's** Walking for the Blue team whose members include **Ro'Derica WARREN, Sheryl BAXTER, Tracie TIDWELL, Valerie MILLER, Katie ELDER,**

Crissy HINOJOSA, and Debbie HARRISON.

Hot on their heels were **Hope ROBINSON's** Records Rock Stars with 3,338 miles. Team members sporting worn out

walking shoes were **L'Cena PARSONS, Lisa ROBNETT, Leilani JUDD, Paul GARRISON, Paula DICKERMAN, Cindy WEBB, Tanna ROADHOUSE**

(Continued on page 5)



Public Works Anniversaries

▲ Public Works had several employees with service anniversaries. (L-R), Supervisors **Mike EVERSTON** and **Gary ENNA** celebrate with **Kevin ROHR**, 5 years; Public Works Director **Jon KLEINHEKSEL**; **Eddie SAMUDIO**, 10 years; **Larry BLAKEMORE**, 25 years; **David DOAN**, 25 years; and, **Gregory SIMMONS**, 25 years. Not pictured are **Charles ATTEBERRY**, 15 years, and **Josh CARPENTER**, 5 years.



10 Years Service

▲ **Camesha BAILEY** (above) celebrated 10 years of service with Collin County as a Justice Court Clerk for Judge **Paul RA-LEE**H. Camesha is assigned to the criminal section of the court, and processes the various motions that request modifications to the Court’s original order. She also sets and manages the examining trial docket, helps maintain the “Past Due” files and issues warrants, to name a few of her duties. She’s also certified by the State Justice Court Training Center as a level 1 Clerk. We extend our congratulations for her years of service.



10 Years Service

◀ **Aaron O’BRIEN** (left) of Information Technology, received his 10-year service anniversary pin from **Tim NOLAN** during Commissioners Court in mid-May. Aaron is a system analyst/developer and has worked heavily to keep *PeopleSoft* running smoothly.



20 Years

◀ **Brandi NORTON ROBERSON** (left) celebrated 20 years with Collin County in mid-May, receiving her service anniversary pin from recently appointed Emergency Manager **Jim McCRONE** during Commissioners Court.



GEM Winners in CCAL

▲ County Court at Law Clerk employees **Angie WILLIS** (left) and **Shanna PORTEE** received GEM awards from County Clerk **Stacey KEMP**. Angie and Shanna were recognized for their exceptional efforts in helping their office complete a quality control project. Between the two of them, over 11,000 documents were reviewed and the project was completed one week before deadline.



Juvenile Detention GEMS

▲ **Carol PENA** and ◀ **Pat ROSS** were awarded GEM awards for their excellent work on updating, reorganizing and restructuring the library and all the books in Juvenile Detention by Superintendent **Jeff FALEFIA** (above, right).

(Continued from page 3)

and **Candace CHILDRESS**.

Right behind them were **Barbara GREATHOUSE's** Busy Bodies with 2,357 miles; **Daphne LYNCH's** The A Team with 2,249 miles; **Daniele McOSKER's** Kind Soles with 2,058 miles; **Michael LANGFUS' The Walking Zombies** with 1,826 miles; **Martha ZAMORA's** Wii Not Fit with 1,685 miles; **Abby SPENCE's** The Walking Dead with 1,664 miles; **LaRay GUERRERO's** The Walking Dead with 1,308 miles; **Laura NAVAS' Kiss My Asphalt** with 1,282 miles; and **Matthew HAWKINS' Walkabouts** with 1,240 miles.

If teams continue to walk as they did during the eight weeks of Walk Across Texas, the potential economic impact is \$1,557,027 and 25 employees could avoid or delay developing diabetes.

Walk Across Texas is sponsored by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and United Health Care.

WAT Round 2 will start in mid-September and conclude before Thanksgiving. Details will be available in August so get your walking shoes ready.....we're Walking Across Texas again.

For more information, contact **Carrie BRAZEAL** at Ext. 4231.

More 'Fallen Heroes' added to wall



Dozens of family members, friends and well-wishers gathered at the courthouse on June 13 for the dedication of an additional eight portraits of Collin County men and women who died in the line of duty, serving their country. Local artist **Colin KIMBALL**, a U. S. Air Force veteran donates his time and talents to the project, and handed over the paintings to the Commissioners Court during the ceremony.



Promotions

◀ (left to right) Sheriff Terry **BOX** recently congratulated **Randy CLARK** on his promotion to Deputy Chief, **Scotty MORRISON** on his promotion to Major, and **Mark SANDERSON** on his promotion to Deputy Chief.

◀ Sheriff Box also congratulated several employees on their completion of the Basic Peace Officer Course in an Oath of Office ceremony. Left to right, **Evelyn PARKS**, **David DAVIES**, and **Christopher PETERSON**.

▼ **Olivia PENSON** recently sworn in as a new patrol deputy by Sheriff Box.



◀ Sheriff Box presented **Mary MURPHY** with her retirement plaque and thanked her for her many years of dedicated service with the Collin County Sheriff's Office.

Retirements



▲ **Bruce FERGUSON** received his retirement plaque from Sheriff Box, and thanks for his years of service.





Recipients of the 2016 Sheriff's Association of Texas scholarships

Sheriff Terry BOX presented the Sheriff's Association of Texas scholarship award to **Lauren ROBERTSON**, **Ashley BURTS** and **Brooke ROBERTSON** from Van Alstyne.

Lauren (above, left) just received her Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems from Tarleton University in Stephenville.

Ashley (center) completed her first year at Hill College in Hillsboro, where she plays softball for the Lady Rebels.

Brooke (above, right) completed her first year on the Dean's List at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. She majors in Kinesiology and minors in coaching, and will be playing volleyball for the Lady Raiders travel team in the fall.

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

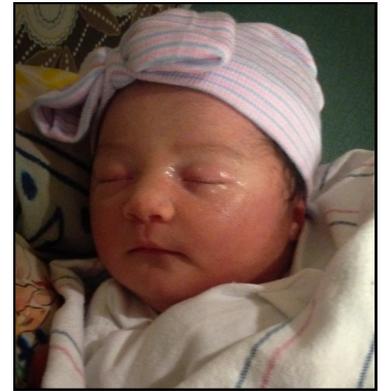


Department. Please submit your articles, anniversaries, announcements, classified ads, good deeds and kudos in plain text email to: publicrelations@collincountytx.gov. We post deadlines for submissions on the Calendar at MyCollinCounty.

► **Camden Brett HELDT:**
Born May 9, 2016;
height 19 ½ inches;
weight 7 lbs. 8 oz. Proud
grandparents are **Mark
and Holly HELDT**
(Auditor's Office).



▲ **Colbie Lynn CADDELL,**
granddaughter of Captain **Terry
McCRAW** of the Sheriff's Office.
Born June 7, 2016; 7.8 lbs., 20 ¾
inches. Proud parents of **Shelby
and Bret CADDELL.**



▲ **Henley Graves KEYS,** born
June 2, 2016; 8 pounds, 2 ounce-
es; 20 ¾ inches long. Grand-
daughter of County Clerk **Stacey
KEMP.**

More Announcements on Back Page ...

► **FOR SALE: CAP**
Strength fitness machine,
\$200, OBO. Contact **Mike**
at 214-686-7080, or mowens@collincountytx.gov
for more details.

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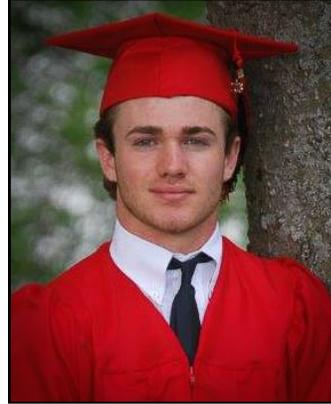


WANTED: Looking for a house or
land in any condition to buy. **John
DANIELS:** Call or Text 972-213-
5045.

BUYING or SELLING? Employees
can post what their selling or
looking to buy here — and on our
Classified page on *MyCol-
linCounty* by sending in an email
with the information to [publicre-
lations@collincountytx.gov](mailto:publicre-
lations@collincountytx.gov). Just
send the information and any
photos attached separately.



◀ **Sydney SKIPWORTH**, daughter of Information Technology's **Caren SKIPWORTH** graduated from Texas A&M University in May with a Bachelors of Science in Publication. She plans on continuing at A&M to earn a Masters degree in Publication.



◀ **Christian NORTON** graduated with honors from Melissa High School. He'll be attending the University of North Texas in the Fall. His proud Mom is **Brandi NORTON ROBERSON**, who works for the county's Emergency Management department.

▶ **Kyle COPELAND** (right), son of **Diane COPELAND**, County court at Law Clerks, graduates from Bonham High School on June 5. Kyle will attend East Central University.



◀ **Brett Lee HELDT** graduated in April from Brigham Young University with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science. In July, he will begin his pursuit of a medical degree at Baylor Medical School. Brett is the son of **Mark and Holly HELDT** (Auditor's Office).

Brittany CUNDIFF (not pictured), daughter of Amy **CUNDIFF**, Court Coordinator for County Court at Law No. 7, graduated from Anna High School on June 4. Brittany will attend Collin College.



◀ Congratulations go out to **Taneiqua LEWIS**, daughter of **Mary LEWIS** in the Sheriff's Office. Taneiqua graduated in early June from McKinney High school, and plans to continue her education at Texas Woman's University in the fall, majoring in Nursing.

▶ **Julie MONGE** (right, center), Teen Court Coordinator, celebrated her Masters degree in International Studies from Southern Methodist University in May, along with her father Antonio, mother Maxima and son, Jordan.



◀ **Hayes MARQUEZ**, 14, grandson of **Lorraine MARQUEZ** in Facilities Maintenance, participated in the Special Olympics in Atlanta in May, winning two silver medals and a gold in swimming. Lorraine says she and her family are so proud of Hayes' achievements, and that Hayes is pretty excited about his medals.