



Farewell, so long, good luck ...

District Attorney **Greg WILLIS** and **Susan WEBB** pose for a quick photo during Susan's retirement reception Nov. 30 at the Victim's Assistance section in the Bloomdale courthouse. Susan first started with Collin County in 1974 and worked in other departments (CSCD and a division of roads and bridges). She was hired by the DA's office as the VA Coordinator in January 1994 and remained in there until the end of November.

HOME AT LAST

Vietnam MIA's remains returned 43 years after plane crashed over Laotian border

By **Christie HIX**

After 43 years of searching and not knowing my grandfather, Gilbert Swain PALMER Jr., was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors this November. Although I never had a chance to meet him, I find his story inspiring and feel honored to have experienced this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

On Feb. 27, 1968, Lt. Col. **Gilbert PALMER**, pilot, and Capt. **Thomas WRIGHT**,

weapons systems officer, comprised the crew of an RF-4-C jet fighter -- call sign "Sumo" -- conducting a mid-day unarmed, solo photo-reconnaissance mission through the 17th parallel, which divided North and South Vietnam.

The last contact with the aircraft was shortly after 2 p.m., when Colonel Palmer reported that everything was normal. The last known position of the Phantom jet was over extremely rugged and heavily wooded mountains

southwest of the Ban Karai Pass, in the Savannakhet Province of Laos.

When radio contact could not be established with the Phantom crew by the time its fuel would have been exhausted, a visual and electronic search began, and continued over the target area until dark. The formal search effort ended after several days, and Colonel Palmer and Captain Wright were declared Missing In Action in Laos.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

In 1999, a U.S.-Lao People's Democratic Republic recovery team, were taken by a local villager to a crash site in Savannakhet Province, near the Vietnamese border. Aircraft wreckage from an RF-4 reconnaissance aircraft was found. Additional investigations of the crash site, between 2001 and 2010, recovered human remains and military equipment.



In addition to forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used mitochondrial DNA to identify the remains.



Colonel Palmer's remains were eventually identified last May, from a 3-centimeter bone fragment recovered at the crash site, and matching DNA provided by his brother.

Only three bone fragments were recovered at the crash site, only one of which was found to be human.

Also found at the crash site was a Zippo lighter that belonged to my grandfather which showed signs of corrosion from being exposed to outdoor elements but was in remarkable condition. This was presented to my uncle at the November graveside service.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." – John 15:13

Christie HIX runs the Immunization Program at the county's Healthcare Services.



Rita's Plano Tax Office family: Back row, l-r: **Gerry STOEL, Marcia KUNTZ, Vicki SMITH, Neli ZEDWAR, Adriana SANTOYO, Kimberly WOLFE and Jim REYES**; 3rd row, l-r: **Regina WHITELEY, Wanda FARRELL, Diane FISHER and Tiyana HUGHES**; 2nd row, l-r: **Vanessa MURAVIOV, Shannon UTLEY, Rita EDDS, Suzanne MOORE and Angie MOSSELLE**; Front row, l-r: **Faye DOSIER, Diane KETCHESON-FOX, Laura ULFSPARRE and Jennifer SNAILUM**. Not in pictured: **Pam RHEUDASIL, Angie CHANEY, Mary SANCHEZ, Michelle ARGUELLO, Patricia HARPER, Julie OVERMAN and Debbie PLANTE**.

Meet Rita

Rita EDDS is a motor vehicle clerk at the Tax Assessors office who has been working in the Plano office since January 2007. She has been fighting her third battle with cancer for quite sometime now. Rita is known for being full of life, spirit and love and is an inspiration to everyone she meets.

Her spirit, faith and determination inspire people that have never met her. She has been unable to work since early September this year.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her and her family at this time. Rita is a grand example of this poem...

What Cancer Cannot Do

It cannot cripple Love; It cannot shatter Hope; It cannot corrode Faith; It cannot destroy Peace; It cannot kill Friendship; It cannot suppress Memories; It cannot silence Courage; It cannot invade the Soul; It cannot steal eternal Life; It cannot conquer the Spirit.

In the words of Rita: "It cannot put out the flame! (This Little Light of Mine I'm gonna let it Shine!)"

-- **Regina WHITELEY**

11-11-11 at 11:11:11? Well, pretty close ...

First, we want to thank all of our veterans for their service to our country. But Veteran's Day also coincided with 11-11-11, a singular date sequence that hit the global limelight with significant numerical and end-time references that grew wearisome by the morning coffee break.

It was also a day of love at Justice of the Peace courtrooms throughout the county.

Judge **Paul RALEEH** had 18 weddings scheduled in his Precinct 1 courtroom that Friday morning, including one at 11:00, 11:11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 1:11 p.m.

There was still room for some walk-ins by the time the first couples started coming in at around 10 a.m.

"Today was a record for our office," Judge Raleeh said.

"In my fourth term of office, this wedding schedule beats anything I've ever seen. There were a lot of folks who wanted the 11:11 a.m. slot for their wedding, too. This tops last year's 10-10-10 wedding push."

He wasn't alone.

In Plano, Judge **Johnny LEWIS** of Pct. 3-1 had 16 weddings scheduled.



Patrick MAGNESS and **Brenda CAREY** are all smiles after Judge Raleeh married them in his court just before 11 a.m.

In Farmersville, Judge **Terry DOUGLAS** had six weddings slated at his Precinct 2 office.

Meanwhile, back in Plano, Judge **John PAYTON** of Precinct 3-2 set up two group weddings at 11 a.m. and 11:11 a.m., plus others to follow throughout the day for about 17 or 18 couples.

Brenda TERRELL, Judge Payton's court coordinator, said one bride decided at

the last minute that there were simply too many 11's at one time, so she settled for a 10:59 ceremony.

All told, the county's JP's hitched about 60 couples, hopefully preventing most of the grooms from forgetting those crucial future anniversary celebrations.

See you next year on 12-12-12 at 12:12.



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 atta-boys (and girls) in plain text email to: publicrelations@collincountytx.gov.

The deadline to submit material for the January-February edition is Thursday, Jan. 26, 2012.

Recognition



911 Communicators

Stacey RAINWATER and **Regina RAMON** recently received regional awards from the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Stacey was recognized as 'Telecommunicator of the Year' and Regina was named 'Telecommunications Operations Professional of the Year'. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is comprised of forty-three 9-1-1 centers. Nominees are voted on by supervisors within the NCTCOG region.



County Clerk

Beverly NOPP (right) celebrated 10 years of service in the County Clerk's office; **Barbara WOODY** (above, with County Clerk **Stacey KEMP**) celebrated 25 years of service.



Myers Park

Ed NEWSOME receives his 5-year service pin at Myers Park from Parke Manager **Judy FLORENCE**.

Constable Pct. 2

Precinct 2 Constable **Joe BARTON** recognized administrative secretary **Sharon COLEMAN** for 20 years of public service. Sharon is a life-long resident of



Farmersville. She and her husband, Gary, are parents of four children and grandparents of three. She is also the very accomplished pianist/organist at Trinity Baptist Church in Farmersville.

CSCD Anniversaries

- ◆ **Christine RILEY**, Supervision Officer in Plano, 5 years; and,
- ◆ **Brittany GURNEY**, Supervision Officer at UDCF, 5 years.



(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)



Tax Assessor (McKinney)

Above, from left, **Jennifer BAKER**, 5 years; **Sharon FITZWATER**, 10 years; **Loren NELSON**, 10 years; **Mandy DAWES**, 10 years; **Roy HALE**, 15 years; **Betty GARCIA**, 10 years; and **Kenneth MAUN**, Collin County Tax Assessor and Collector.



Teen Court recognized

Collin County Teen Court received the Spotlight Achievement Award from the Teen Court Association of Texas in November, as shown here by Teen Court Coordinator **Julie MONGE**. The award is given to a Teen Court that has a unique program in place. The county's program has an outstanding group of teen and adult volunteers that volunteer their evenings, and the community has been a great supporter with food donations for training sessions as well as financial donations for student scholarships. Adult judges are practicing attorneys from the area that mentor the teen volunteers. It takes this great group of people to become an outstanding teen court and receive the Spotlight Achievement Award.



Tax Assessor (Plano/Frisco)

Front Row, from left: **Beth POUND**, 5 years; **Angie Lynn MOSSOLLE**, 5 years; second and third rows: **Michelle ARGUELLO**, 15 years; **Mable USREY**, 15 years; **Debbie PLANTE**, 20 years; **Kenneth MAUN**, Collin County Tax Assessor and Collector; and, **Pat HARPER**, 5 years.

Recognition



Back in the (DA's) Office

District Attorney **Greg WILLIS** swears in **Debbie HARRISON** upon her return to the District Attorney's office. Debbie returned to her previous position as Chief of the Civil Division, which handles bond forfeitures, asset forfeitures, and open records. Debbie has an exemplary 15 years of service with the District Attorney's office and we are glad to have her back.



25 Years as Medical Examiner

County Administrator **Bill BILYEU**, left, presented Medical Examiner Dr. **William ROHR** with his 25-year service pin in October at the office on Wilmeth Road. Joining them is Dr. **Sheila SPOTSWOOD**, assistant Medical Examiner. Dr. Rohr is, in fact, the first permanent, full-time medical examiner the county has employed.

Facilities Profile:

John Zoski, building maintenance

John ZOSKI began his employment with Collin County in June 2005 as a Groundskeeper, and was promoted to a Building Maintenance Specialist in February 2008.

John's position covers a variety of duties which include maintaining the interior and exterior of facilities, ensuring lights are working properly, office and furniture moves, assisting with remodeling of county buildings, and performing minor electrical and plumbing repairs and monthly fire safety inspections of elevators.

John assists our technicians with more than basic responsibilities, including plumbing, electrical, kitchen and laundry equipment repairs, detention facility automated door repairs, detention facility intercom and camera repairs, and plays a huge role in preparation for the annual State Jail Inspection.

He is a great asset to our technicians and to the detention facilities in general.

John is part of a team that consists of highly trained individuals that provide a safe environment at the Detention Facilities.

Terry BABBITT supervises the technician team assigned

there, as well as dealing with life safety issues, including CPR and First Aid.

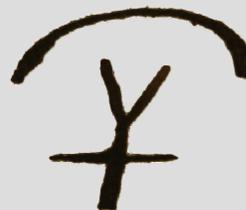
The detention facilities are held at a high standard by the State of Texas and we need a reliable team to keep those standards.

His training allows him to troubleshoot problems with the door and lock operations in the detention facilities, which include diagnosis and repair.

In May 2011, John and the tech team received more training on the Programmable Logic Controls System used in detention, helping them better understand commands to make the doors and locks open and close, understand the inner workings of the intercoms, cameras, and lighting in the clusters and cells.

Dan JAMES, Director of Facilities Maintenance, and the management team would like to recognize John for his excellent work ethic and contribution to Collin County Government and the maintenance of those buildings.

Thanks, John, for a job well done.



Brand Quiz ...

For those interested in checking out the answers to last issue's Brand Quiz, here go: http://www.co.collin.tx.us/public_information/features/branding_quiz_answers.jsp



Sheriff's Office News

Charity tourney nets huge donation



Sheriff **Terry BOX** presented checks in October totaling \$429,500 to four Collin County Charities, money raised during the 19th Annual Sheriff Box Shoot-Out "Fore" Kids Charity Golf Tournament at The Ranch Country Club of McKinney. The charities are: *The Children's Advocacy Center, The Wellness Center for Older Adults, CASA of Collin County* and the *Heard Natural Science Museum*.

The grand total raised for local charities over the past nineteen years comes to \$1,519,000.

Pictured, left to right: **Sy SHAHID** of the *Heard Natural Science Museum*; **Susan ETHERIDGE** of *CASA of Collin County*; Sheriff **Terry BOX**; **Carolyn RICE** of *The Wellness Center for Older Adults*; and **Lynne McLEAN** of *Children's Advocacy Center*.

Congratulations to **Teresa CAMPBELL** who recently was honored with a Retirement Reception & received a plaque in celebration of her 14 years of dedicated service with the Collin County Sheriff's Office.



Patrol Deputies **Coby OWEN** (above, left) and **Jeff FLOURNOY** were sworn in by Sheriff Box in November.



New Patrol Sgt. **Jason EVANS** recently received his Sergeant's badge.

New Detention Lt. **Chris GANN** was presented his Lieutenant's badge.



Stacey RAINWATER (left) received a Challenge Coin from Sheriff Box for winning the "2011 Silent Hero Award" from TX-NENA.

More Sheriff's News on next page.

Sheriff's Office News cont.



New Detention Sergeants **Donald DYER** and **Jarod JEFFCOAT**. Received their new sergeant badges from Sheriff Box.



Heart of Seniors award winner

Sheriff **Terry BOX** has been named the first recipient of the "Heart for Seniors" award presented by **Carolyn RICE**, Executive Director of the Wellness Center for Older Adults.

The award was established to honor and recognize community leaders who have exhibited extraordinary support for seniors. The Wellness Center is one of the four Collin County charities Sheriff Box supports with proceeds from the annual Sheriff Box Shoot-Out "Fore" Kids Golf Tournament.

The Sheriff also received recognition from Plano Mayor **Phil DYER** of the City of Plano with a proclamation declaring "Collin County Sheriff Terry Box Day" in Plano for Thursday, Oct. 20, 2011."

Another proclamation was presented to him from County Judge **Keith SELF** and the County Commissioners for his philanthropic efforts benefiting seniors and also for his lifetime of service in law enforcement.



Sheriff **Terry BOX** (above, center) was honored in October by the Department of Defense with the presentation of a Patriotic Employer Award from Mr. **Larry THOMPSON** (left), for his support of employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserves. Detention Officer **Paul KOTASENSKI** (right) nominated Sheriff Box for this award.

Deputy **John HOLTON** (right) received an anniversary plaque for 30 years of dedicated service with the Collin County Sheriff's Office.



Transfer Deputy **Jeremy CHANDLER** (left) sworn in by Sheriff Box in mid-November.

Our humble homage to old (now retired) software

By Bret FENSTER

Once upon a time long ago there were only paper maps that cartographers had to hand draw, a painstaking process that took years to complete. When new features were required, the process began anew.

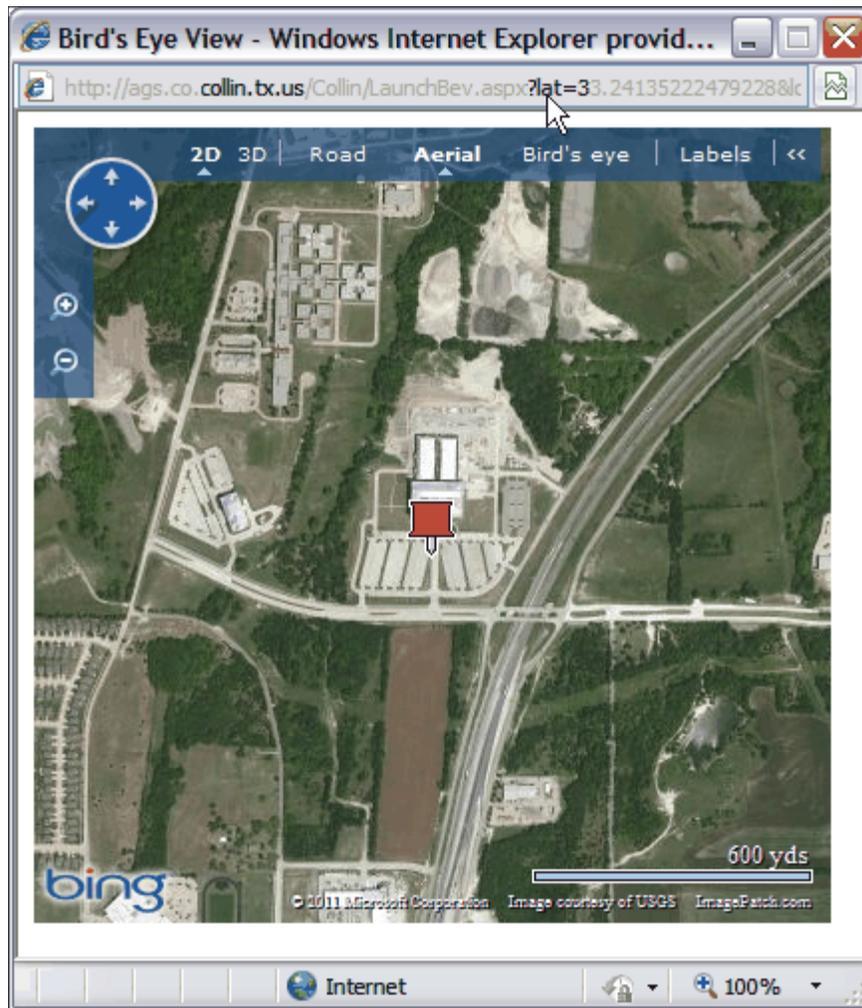
In the late 20th century, Geographical Information System (GIS) technology enabled the creation of maps that were easily updated and printed for those that needed them. After that, internet mapping technology began to develop and new software was created.

GIS professionals embraced this modern notion of sharing maps over the web which freed them from producing cartographic products for every special map request.

At this point, everyone could design their own custom map.

In the early 21st century, Collin County began developing an internet map server using ESRI's ArcIMS (Arc Internet Map Server) technology to meet the needs of departmental requests and to rapidly serve the county's rapidly expanding GIS database to the public at large.

In 2004, the Collin County ArcIMS was deployed. This was a custom interface that allowed the public to quickly map addresses and to look up Collin Central Appraisal District parcel information.



All types of geographic information became available at the click of a mouse. Election information such as Commissioner precincts, voting precincts, Justice of the Peace and Constable precincts were rapidly displayed. Other valuable information like ZIP codes and aerial photography, plus up-to-the-minute city limits and road information were also available to the general public.

In this age of ubiquitous online maps, it's easy to forget what it was like in the old

days when you didn't always know if there was a new road available to plan an easier route to where you wanted to go.

This original mapping system was turned off this year and replaced with a new version of mapping software. Collin County GIS is very proud of the statistics that were recorded during the long tenure of our original map server.

Since 2005, pageviews on the web were tracked and stored with a subscription service.

Here's a few statistics we recorded:

- 4,177,897 page views (3rd most visited site for Collin County - #1 site on the busiest day recorded)
- 1,386,484 parcel queries
- 171,705 custom maps printed by internal and external users.

The underlying platform for this server technology has endured since 2000, but things change and we have now developed a new mapping website based on ESRI's latest internet map server developments.

The maintenance support for our old friend, ArcIMS has been discontinued and we must align with our software vendor ESRI as we strive to deliver the best internet mapping experience possible.

This new version runs faster and takes advantage of the whole computer screen, while dynamically sizing to immediate demands.

Google Streetview and Bing maps offer new perspectives on recent imagery letting the user explore their world more completely and efficiently.

In short, when you click, you get a map faster.

Please visit our new "Son of ArcIMS" site here: <http://maps.collincountytx.gov/main.html>

Creatures



HALLOWEEN 2011



Above,, top to bottom: two entries in the great pumpkin contest — from **Seth TER-RAZAS** in Facilities and **Monika ARRIS** in Budget; top right, the staff of the Treasurer's Office in *The Wizard of Oz*: **Melanie HUMPHREY** (Lion), **Pam DUGGER** (Scarecrow), **Judy TRUEBLOOD** (Dorothy), **Debbie BRANNON** (Tin Man) and **Sharon BUTLER** (Witch); left, **Brenda CAVENDER** poses next to a Brenda-like skeleton with matching travel mug, purse, bangles and hairdo, created by her coworkers in the County Clerk's office.



Genealogy search leads to family reunion on national TV

By Rebecca HIPP

Several months ago Ancestry.com requested FaceBook users to submit their story on how the website helped them locate a loved one. Here is the story I sent them:

"Found Half-brother on Ancestry.com- hasn't met him yet..."

In June 2010 I had an introductory membership to Ancestry.com. I began looking up information prior to 1958 on my father and his siblings. During research of my father, who died in 1975, I discovered another members tree that listed some similar information.

The details were entered by my half-brother.

I contacted him through email and he responded within a few days. Then I received a phone call from him and we have been in constant contact ever since. He has also contacted surviving members of our father's family and has been instrumental in collecting a wealth of family information that we never could have gained on our own.



Rebecca HIPP with show host Anderson COOPER.

I had not been able to arrange a visit in person with him, due to the cost of travel to his home in South Carolina, but we both looked forward to a meeting.

In early November, a call from a San

Francisco public relations firm, wanting to know if my brother, David Foster, and I would be willing to release the story to the media. Then, I was invited on the Anderson Cooper show, which airs on ABC. I was flown to New York City in mid-November to tape the show, whose theme that day was: What are you thankful for? It aired on Nov. 23.

During the taping, Anderson Cooper asked about my experience and whether I wanted to convey a message to my brother, David. I had a sneaking suspicion that they would have David at the show, too – and they did. I worked hard not to be a blithering idiot on national TV.

While I had known about David for years, it took me roughly 35 years to find him. When people say "never give up on your dreams," or "your time frame and God's time frame are not the same," I couldn't agree more.

Rebecca Hipp is a security guard supervisor at the University Drive Courts Facility.

So you know ...

My Collin County, your Intranet for many forms, policies and procedures across various departments, has gotten a recent facelift and added more content.

We're posting more employee-related news — we've even made the *Employee Handbook* easier to find — and we've got more plans in the works.

All you have to do is type in "mycc" in your browser, and you're there.

Here's a list of what's currently available:

- ◆ **Service Anniversaries & GEM Award winners;**
- ◆ **Employee Discounts;**
- ◆ **Classified Ads** (this is the last Connection that we'll publish Ads in, so you can get it out there and sell your items quicker);
- ◆ **Did You Know?** feature with time-sensitive deadlines and information from Human Resources & other departments.
- ◆ **Feature photos** of various departments and events, plus our calendar of **events** and **announcements** to keep you up-to-date on what's going on. Email your submissions, photos and news to publicrelations@collincountytx.gov.



Announcements/Classifieds

Announcements

Dustin BAXTER, son of **Allen and Sheryl BAXTER** (District Attorney's Office) proudly shows off his new Aggie ring with Dad. Dustin received his ring in mid-November. "Now, if we can just get that diploma..." says Mom.



For Sale / Services

TUPPERWARE: Have you seen Tupperware lately? No need to host or attend a party to buy Tupperware these days. Order online at www.my.tupperware.com/jmccarty or contact Jamie McCarty at jmccarty@my.tupperware.com or 214-471-3852.

WELDING: Portable and in Shop Welding. Providing welding repairs or modifications on your equipment, truck, tractor, trailer, fencing, or any other project. Contact David McCarty at 972-837-0641 or email djmccarty54@yahoo.com

GRANDFATHER CLOCK: Approximately 7 feet tall, from Germany (1983); good working condition, \$900 or best offer. Contact Maria Julian at 972-359-9154.

PHOTOGRAPHY: We specialize in on-site photography of babies, high school seniors, family portraits, campaign photos and more! We also offer graphic design of cards, postcards and announcements. Contact Jessica Griffith at 903-520-1856 or through www.ilgphotographyonline.com. You can also check out our most recent work on Facebook!

WANTED: Looking for running and non-running lawn mowers. Call 214-726-5780.

LOSE WEIGHT: Melt inches – and get healthier. Join the Body By Vi 90 Day Challenge. Can you commit for 90 days to the Visalus Sciences challenge and change your life? Visit ronaldjames.myvi.net, or ronaldjames.bodybyvi.com, and call 507-726-3700 for more information. Then contact Ron James, Independent Distributor to learn more. 214-733-2575 or email ron602010@live.com.

TRUCK FOR SALE: 2004 Chevrolet Silverado LS Extended Cab. 74,185 Actual Miles. Never had major mechanical or any



body work and has current stickers; Summit White exterior with cashmere cloth Interior (No door dings); 295-hp, 5.3-liter V-8 (regular gas) - 4 Speed Auto; AM/FM/ Satellite/CD/Cassette with On Star/XM capable; tilt and cruise with steering wheel controls and driver info center; dual front bucket seats with divider console and tinted glass; Westin running boards with electric seats windows and doors; has chrome Chevy bow tie in the grille and HID headlights and fog lamps; 20" chrome OEM "Chevrolet" rims with practically brand new Michelin tires (<10,00 miles); has been garaged 90% of the time with all maintenance. Call Randy at 972-390-1684.

FURNITURE: Antique draw leaf table with 4 chairs; excellent condition. \$500. Call Judy at 972-571-3186, after 5 p.m.



FOR SALE: Pro-Form 350S Cross Trainer treadmill; excellent condition; \$135. Antique Ironrite, \$75. Call Pam at 214-908-9219.

PARTY SUPPLIES: Need tables, chairs, sterno's, coolers or a Margarita Machine? Contact Lorrie at 903 267 2500 for all your party supply needs.

CANDLES: Scentsy Wickless Candles are great gift ideas. This great product is also good for your office since there are no open flames. Go to my website at www.scentsy.com/jenniferbrooks

and check out the Latest/Greatest thing. Order online or call me with an order. I will be happy to help you out. 469-323-4681.

MOTORCYCLE: Blue 2007 Honda VTX 1300R, rarely used; only 732 miles and in great condition. New Battery. One adult owner located in McKinney, Texas. 5-year warranty through 2012. The motorcycle has been kept under the garage/carport and has been covered. Asking \$5900. Call or text 972-369-2331.



NOTE: Check the Classifieds online at MyCollinCounty (MYCC) for more up-to-date offerings.