



“YOUR SOURCE FOR EMPLOYEE INFORMATION”

Collin County Connection



County night light

The courthouse and administration buildings light up nicely as Facilities crews turned on the outdoor lighting and set up Christmas trees for the holiday season. See page 2 for the courthouse’s 22-foot tree.

Vote Center project a county success

Collin County Elections and Information Technology departments carried off a successful Election Day Vote Center project for the Nov. 3 Special Election. The county was selected by the Texas Secretary of State’s office to participate in this pilot project, in which we were the largest urban county in the nation to tap the vote centers approach.



IT’s **Greg ELLIOTT**, **Lanette SAETRE** and **Melinda CLANCY** answer phones in the command center on Election Day.

precinct lines and were able to vote based on which location was most convenient.

In conjunction with the vote centers, the county also introduced the use of electronic poll books and a polling site wait line monitoring system. The use of electronic poll books delivers

On Election Day, registered voters in the county were able to go to any one of 57 polling locations to cast their ballot in the constitutional election, no longer bound by

recurring cost savings for the county by eliminating printing costs associated with

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Vote Centers

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producing paper poll books.

The Information Technology department provided technical configuration, support and training services for the project. Election specific technical expertise was provided by **Joyce LALLY** and **Jake SHEPHERD**. Nearly all IT staff personnel had some role to play in the project as either technical field support or command center staff.

Sharon ROWE, elections administrator, described the Vote Center experience as a great success.

"Many county offices contributed to making it a success -- IT, GIS, Facilities, Purchasing, Budget -- everybody really came through for us," she said. "Election officials were ready to go, and the voters were truly checking and double-checking to see if they could go anywhere on Election Day and vote."

She also praised her 12-person staff for taking on the pilot program with a can-do attitude while also working on the redistricting of voting precincts for the coming new year.

Sharon added that she's still waiting to see a statistical analysis of the vote center concept, and the Secretary of state will decide if this kind of system will be used on a statewide scale in the future. But some tools employed in November could definitely help out future elections, vote centers or not.

IT's installation of an online "traffic light" dashboard to tell voters where heavy or light traffic was at each polling place is something that could come in handy in the future, even if the vote center concept isn't put into place, she said.

"This was a true collaborative effort that stands to have long term rewards for the citizens of Collin County," she said.

— **Greg ELLIOTT**



Try putting the star on this one...

Part of the Facilities crew who helped put up the county's Christmas trees for the holiday season pose in front of the 22-foot tree in the main courthouse building on Friday, Nov. 20. A 12- and a 6-foot tree went up in the Jack Hatchell Administration Building, and a 6-foot tree was set up at the University Drive Courts Facility. That's 42 feet of tree, folks.



A new look for Constable 1

Deputy Emmanuel GRIFFIN (left) and **Lt. Mike COOK** are wearing Constable Paul ELKINS' Precinct 1 new uniforms. After many years of wearing the French blue uniform Constable Elkins new uniform is the LAPD blue shirt with grey stitching around the *epaulet* and LAPD blue slacks with grey stitching down the seam of the trousers. The uniform boasts a newly designed patch that was developed by Constable Elkins and staff.

Red Ribbon Week

After the speeches, substance abuse fight goes on

By **Grace J. RAULSTON**

Red Ribbon Week has wrapped up for all general purposes but the problem of our children and other family members abusing drugs and alcohol still remains.

My office calendar is still full, and all of the Collin County counseling agencies and school counselors are still busy — very busy.

Red Ribbon Week is a nationwide observance of drug prevention activities and is held during the end of October each year.

My heart goes out to all of the families and individuals who struggle with substance abuse and dependency. This is a terrible epidemic that strikes anyone, anywhere.

This terrible disease maims and kills our loved ones, tears at the very heart and soul, and causes endless tears from pain and loss.

All of the Collin County School Districts should receive a standing ovation for their efforts year round to educate and support the families this disease touches.

Don't think for a moment that Red Ribbon Week is the only time of the year when the school districts recognize the problems and dangers Collin County residents may face.

They work tirelessly in the community to provide help to the children and families in crisis.

Our greatest resource — our children — are the target. Dope dealers seem to have a mind-set of 'get them while they are young.'

I am speaking from my personal and professional experience in working directly with individuals and the children/teens of Collin County. I am also speaking upon my experience in working with area professionals who have the same passion for helping Collin County individuals, children, and teens. Together we are all speaking from the heart.

I was asked a question by a parent during an adolescent assessment that still resounds in my head: "What could I have done to prevent this from happening?"

If you have loved and nurtured your child as you know you should, made a reasonable effort to educate yourself on the dangers that present themselves to your child when you are not present. And if you have taken some action to discuss with your child what they can do when these dangers present themselves -- you have done quite a bit already.

Please believe this, we are all in this together our hearts and prayers are with you. We are here to help. All you have to do is ask. We are a great community and offer a plethora of resources to aid and strengthen the family, the individual, and even the professional.

Grace J. Raulston is a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor with Collin County's Substance Abuse Program.

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: twyatt@collincountytx.gov.

Classified ads and personal announcements are published on a first-come, first served basis and, of course, available space.

The Deadline to submit for the January/February issue of the Connection will be **Friday, Jan. 20, 2010.**

1st Picnic draws more than 300

More than 160 employees – plus their families -- gathered at the Myers Park & Event Center for the Collin County Employee Appreciation Picnic in early November.

Balloon artists, face painting, hay rides, bounce houses, a fire safety clown skit, an Animal Services adoption booth, and a variety of local vendor booths combined to make a great, family event.

Of the 80-plus door prizes donated from local businesses throughout McKinney for drawing giveaways, party goers received tickets for air travel and sporting events, a Dallas Cowboys jersey, new Metro PCS and Verizon phones, restaurant gift certificates, and more. And let's not forget the barbecue, prepared by Atmos Energy.

Also, a great many chose to pit their culinary skills against their co-workers in two

contests:

Chili Cook-Off Winners

Grand Champion: **Theresa KING**, County Clerk's Office;
1st Place, No Beans: **Linda JOHNSON**, B-Shift Detention Center;
1st Place, Meat & Beans: **Theresa KING**, County Clerk's Office;
1st Place, Spicy: **Mike OWENS**, Sheriff's Office.

Bake-Off Winners

Grand Champion: **Theresa KING**, County Clerk's Office;
1st Place, Pies: **Jeff DURHAM**, Special Projects;
1st Place, Cakes: **Theresa KING**, County Clerk's Office;
1st Place, Cookies & Brownies: **Jeff DURHAM**, Special Projects

3-mile walk for the cure

Participants from the Collin County Tax Office and Friends in the Susan G. Komen's Three-Mile Breast Cancer Walk in October were (back row, l-r) **Amy NOCKTONICK, Reggie BAIN, Melissa SMITH, Booter SMITH, Reggie GREEN, Sandy CLINE;** (front row, l-r) **Ronna JOHNSON, Laura AKINS, Angela SPEER, Ofelia GUZMAN, Cathy MALONE, Rosanna STRICKLAND.** Not pictured: **Mindy MALONE.** The McKinney, Plano and Frisco offices raised \$1,600 in donations for the event.



Employee Picnic



From a chili cook-off, to adoptable pets, showing off babies, rooting for Texas to beat Oklahoma (which they did) — or just getting a plateful of barbecue, November's Employee Appreciation Picnic at Myers Park & Event Center proved to be a pretty good way to spend a fall afternoon. More photos from the event are online at [My Collin County](#).



Sheriff's Office News

Sheriff's Shoot-out "Fore" Kids raises more than \$106,000

Sheriff **Terry BOX** presented checks totaling \$106,648 to charities in October, raised in his annual golf fundraiser, Shoot-Out "Fore" Kids.

Representatives from the following Collin County Charities were: Children's Advocacy Center, Geriatric Wellness Center of Collin County, CASA of Collin County, and the Heard Natural Science Museum.

Donations were divided equally between the four charities, with each receiving \$26,662. "Each year I am extremely proud to present checks to these worthy charities, and I commend them all for the services they provide to the citizens of Collin County," Sheriff Box said.

The grand total raised over the past seventeen years benefiting Collin County charitable organizations comes to over \$971,000.



▲ (l-r): **Lynne McLEAN** of Children's Advocacy Center, **Susan ETHERIDGE** of CASA/Collin County, **Sy SHAHID** of the Heard Natural Science Museum, Sheriff **Terry BOX**, and **Carolyn RICE** of the Geriatric Wellness Center.

New transfer deputies ...

Sheriff Box recently swore in five new Transfer Deputies in two separate ceremonies. **Kelly BEAN**, **John HUNT**, **Jordan WEBB**, **Kenneth STRODER** and **Jessica TAYLOR**.



(l-r) **Jordan WEBB**, **Kenneth STRODER** and **Jessica TAYLOR**.



Retiring

◀ Detention Officer **Jerry CHILDERS** retired from the Collin County Sheriff's Office in late September. Sheriff Box commended Jerry for his dedication with the SCORE Program during his tenure.



▲ **John HUNT**



▲ **Kelly BEAN**



▲ Back Row (l-r): Sheriff Box, **Crystal & Joseph STULTS**, **Dick TAYLOR**. Front: Trenton, **Cierra, & Jenny DAVIS** of Lakeview Crime Watch, Wylie.



▲ Sheriff Box (l) with **Lisa WRIGHT** of Enderby Gas Co. of Princeton.



2009 National Night Out winners

Sheriff Box announced the 2009 winners of the 26th Annual National Night Out, held in October. Winners for the Community Watch category were: **New Hope Neighborhood Crime Watch** and **Lakeview Crime Watch** of Wylie.

The winner for the business category was **Enderby Gas Company** of Princeton.

Winners of each category were presented with a 2009 crime watch sign.

◀ (l-r) Sheriff Box, **Gene FOWLER**, **Johnny HAMM**, **Judy PARMELEE** & **Patricia Fowler** of New Hope Neighborhood Crime Watch.

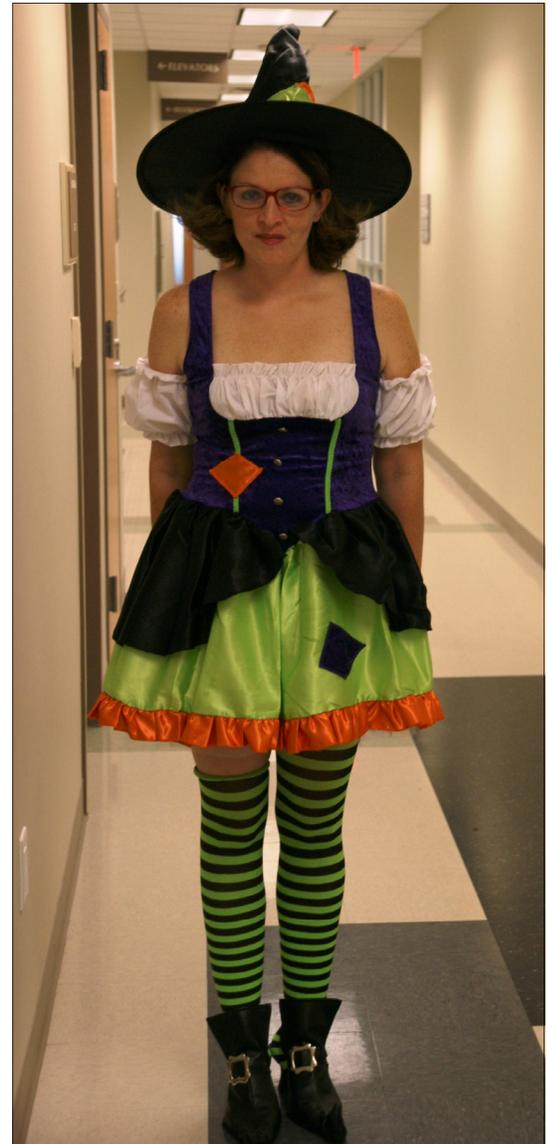


20 Years Service

◀ Lt. **Eddy DENT** (l) and **Patty ADAMS** (r) were recently honored with a reception commemorating 20 years of service with the Collin County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Box congratulated each one individually and praised them for their dedicated service.

Casual Friday?

Halloween brought a whole new look to county offices and casual Fridays — and maybe a few double-takes from residents and co-workers this year. Unfortunately, we didn't have near enough room here, so we posted all the photos we took (and those sent in) on My Collin County.





Judy Florence **New Myers Park & Event Center director**

I work at Myers Park and Event Center as the manager of pets, people, projects and activities.

I've worked here since: September 2009

I hope to: Add to the overall vision of Myers Park and Events Center through my love of McKinney, Collin County, parks, agriculture and management skills.

I live in: Chambersville (McKinney), about 8 minutes away from the Park.

I'm married to: Danny Florence

We have 2 children: AJ who is 18 and Bailey, 14.

My hometown is: McKinney, I graduated from McKinney High School.

My hobbies are: Running kids and attending all their activities; when I get time I like to piddle around (shop/ explore new areas) with good friends, read, watch movies, and am beginning to dabble in photography.

I'm most proud of: Being married to the same wonderful man for almost 22 years

When I was a kid, I wanted to grow up to be a: a rancher's wife, or veterinarian.

My hero is: Jesus Christ.

The best advice I was ever given: When I had my first child my mother-in-law told me that amongst all the advice I would get as a new mother, I should follow my heart because I would always know what was best for my child.

My favorite music: I am a very eclectic lover of music, from old Rock 'n Roll by Lynyrd Skynyrd and Boston, to Sinatra and Michael Buble, to Pat Green and Lady Antebellum, to Broadway musicals.

My favorite type of food: Boiled Shrimp and Steamed artichoke. Fondue and Italian run a close second; favorite comfort food is *Jim's Pizza*.

I always wanted to learn: Photography and take formal dance classes (in another life I would be taller and graceful) .

I'm an avid fan of: My kids teams; Johnson Middle School all sports; McKinney North Bulldogs and Frozen Ropes baseball teams

If I could vacation anywhere, I would go to: Europe, at my pace. New York, any chance I get!

My favorite spot to visit in Texas: Austin and the Hill Country Area.

The best book I ever read: *The Shack*, and *Water for Elephants*.



Passport Fair

The District Clerk's Office held their first Saturday Passport Fair in October, churning out almost three dozen passport applications in just a few hours. There are plans to make it a quarterly Saturday event for added convenience to residents. Pictured from left to right are **Becky LITTRELL, Tammy BLEDSOE, Patricia CRIGGER** and District Clerk **Hannah KUNKLE**. The next fair is slated for Jan. 9, 2010.

Recognition



Anniversaries

Janet VALENTINE, 15 years
Catherine CURE, 20 years

Retirements

Annette PASLEY retired Oct. 30. Annette was a valued member of the support staff in the Plano office for 10 years. **Carol WILSON** will retire on Dec. 31. Carol is a support staff supervisor in the Plano office with 20 years of service with the CSCD, and several years prior experience with the Collin County Sheriff's Office. The CSCD staff wishes much happiness to Annette and Carol in their well-deserved retirements.

Promotions

Kim PALMER was promoted to the position of Supervisor at the Collin County CSCD Minimum Security Offices in October. Kim graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University with a Bachelors degree in Social Work in December 1994. Before coming to work here, she was employed with the Collin County Tax Assessor's Office for four years. Kim began her career with Collin County CSCD as a Supervision Officer in March 2001. She was later promoted to a specialized caseload and supervised the SCORE and SCORE Aftercare caseload until her recent promotion. Kim's hard work, dedication, and passion will serve her well in her new position.



District Attorney's Top Gun

A new Top Gun for the District Attorney's Office had been awarded. The award was presented to Deputy Chief Criminal Investigator **Chad SMITH** (left, with John ROACH) on Nov. 12. The winner is decided by taking the qualification scores from the spring and fall qualification rounds and combining them. Smith scored a combined total of 489 out of 500 points. He received a personal plaque, a \$250 check, his name added to the Top Gun plaque, and bragging rights for a year.



DA's Intern and Volunteer Programs

The Collin County District Attorney's Internship and Volunteers In Prosecution programs have been busy. The summer sessions pulled in 1,724.25 volunteer hours from both programs from May to September. The programs have received a grand total of 5,232 hours since June 2008, and the number continues to climb. If you're interested in learning more about these programs, contact **Amanda ALLEN** at Ext. 4337.

DA's Office Anniversary Recognition

The Collin County District Attorney's Office awarded several anniversary pins in November. **Alyson DIETRICH** (below, left) received her 10-year pin (her actual anniversary is in August), **Tracy HUGHES** (right) received her 25-year pin, **Lisa GONZALEZ** (below, right) received her 10-year pin, and **Ben SMITH** (below, center) received his five-year pin. Congratulations to all of you.





Citizen Prosecutor Academy Graduation

The Collin County District Attorney's Citizen Prosecutor Academy Class X graduated Nov. 12, with 41 Collin County citizens who participated in the ten-week program -- and got an inside look into how the DA's Office operates. For more information about this program, contact **Amanda ALLEN**, Ext. 4337.

15 years service

Billy POWELL, bailiff for County Court at Law Number 5, received his 15-year Service Pin from Judge **Dan WILSON**



during the Nov. 9 Commissioners Court session. Powell began his service with the County in November 1994 as a detention officer at the Sheriff's Office where he also served as a training officer and in the Honor Guard. In 2000, he went to work as bailiff for the 380th District Court; in January 2007, to County Court at Law Number 5. Congratulations to Billy for his years of outstanding and dedicated service



Birthday gift basket?

District Clerk **Hannah KUNKLE** (2nd from left) was honored on her birthday by her employees through a large donation of food items for the McKinney Food Pantry. Also pictured, from left: **Becky LITTRELL**, **Patricia CRIGGER**, and a volunteer from the Food Pantry.

Announcements

Avery Alyn EAVES:

All of God's grace in one precious little face. **Tiffany** (Const. Pct. 4) and **Barry EAVES** joyfully announce the arrival of their daughter, **Avery Alyn EAVES**. Born Aug. 18, weighing 7 lbs., 13 oz., and 19-inches long. Tiffany is also welcomed by proud big brother, **Preston**, and grandparents **Dale** (DA's Ofc.) and **Barbara INGRAM**, and **Jerry** and **Sondra EAVES**.



Clint RUTLEDGE, son of **Debbie RUTLEDGE** in Public Works, has been named "Young Farmer " for his 11-county District by Farm Bureau Insurance, and will be automatically be nominated for the state award later this month.

Sophieya Aundrane

GRANT: Born Aug. 31, 2009, to **Shane** and **Shirlane GRANT** (Teen Court Coordinator); 6 lbs, 13 oz., and 19 inches long. A Sweet Bundle of Joy.



Services

TAXIDERMY: Alexander's Taxidermy, specializing in all mammals and birds. Check us out at www.alexanders-taxidermy.com.

For Sale

NAP MATS For Kids: Custom Made. Call Marilyn Van Pelt, 972-540-1456 or 214-783-3854. Prices: Nap Mat without name, \$30; Nap Mat with embroidered name, \$35; Mats, made using your choice of fabric, can be made to fit a 1- or 2-inch mat. 1-inch mat comes with purchase. Mat covers are removable and washable. ▶



GREAT DEAL: Take over my Sprint Unlimited Wireless Data/Internet Plan contract - \$52.81 month. The contract is until May 2010. You will not have to pay activation, just transfer to your name. Can meet at any Sprint Wireless Store and they can do it in a matter of minutes. The USB Wireless Card I will give you for free and

it's worth over \$100! The contract is for Unlimited Data/Internet and cost a total of \$52.81 per month which includes all taxes and fees. Any questions contact **John DANIELS**, Ext. 4547.

SCOOTER/ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR: Nearly brand new only has few hours on it. Asking \$2000. For information, call Sherry, Ext. 5038, 214-207-5446 or 972-784-7860. ▶



SCENTSY WICKLESS CANDLES: Great gift ideas or start a new business. This great product is also good for your office since there are no open flames. Go to my website at www.scentsy.com/jenniferbrooks. Order online or call in an order. **Jennifer BROOKS**, 469-323-4681.

2005 FORD FREESTAR SES mini-van: New tires, V6, rear air. Excellent condition. White with gray interior. Approximately 94k miles. Asking \$7600. Call **Carrie BRAZEAL** at 214-686-7138 or Clif at 214-287-4583.

▶ **WEDDING GOWN:** Demetrios Wedding Gown, \$500 (Original price \$1400); Size 10, already bustled, worn on April 11, 2009. Please call 214-402-8118.



Honda Accord EX 2000: \$6,900 obo; 96K Miles; driven by adults only and housed in a garage; waxed on a regular basis; wheels purchased this year; new alignment; ABS brakes are new; used to go to and from work each day; has had regu-

lar oil changes and one a couple weeks ago as scheduled; bought from a local, reputable dealership; driven by non-smoker; exterior and interior in excellent condition; taffeta white, tan cloth interior, sun/moon roof, CD player, keyless entry, power windows/locks/mirrors and seats. Call 469-233-9815.

One Full bed (double) size: 3-inch memory foam topper; only used for 3-4 months before buying a Tempur-pedic mattress. \$50 or best offer. Contact Sherry Lewis at Ext. 3364.