

C O N N E C T I O N

Your Source for Employee Information



Green Halloween?

Daniele McOSKER (left) and **Sue MARTENS** used recycled office supply material to create Halloween décor for the **County Clerk's office**. A few spooky trees and a haunted house were created solely from discarded packing material from office supplies — and a little bit of time staging the whole thing.

IT Helpdesk guidelines make sure tech aid is on the way

Your friends in Information Technology would like to remind everyone to help them provide the best service possible by always sticking with these guidelines to resolve network or tech issues:

During normal business hours, call Ext. 4540, email chhelpdesk@co.collin.tx.us or initiate a web ticket through the link for the IT service desk at MYCC for all IT service/help/trouble requests.

It's often tempting to "phone a friend" in IT for a solution, but this can often circumvent our ticketing system and, frequently, further delay a resolution to your issue.

Another negative side effect is the lack of a ticket also skews our IT metrics

when reporting the amount of work the department is actually getting accomplished.

For outages and emergencies after normal business hours and weekends, call the service desk number (Ext. 4540) and follow the menu prompts for the issue.

There have been cases over weekends or nights where users call a cell phone of an IT staffer who may have been out of town or out of the office, and did not draw a prompt response, causing more problems hours later.

Following the correct protocol will prevent those types of issues from ever occurring.

Though everyone in IT is always eager to help fellow co-workers, following

these guidelines will enable IT to provide the most responsive quality customer service possible.

So, here it is in short: **3 methods to contact IT Help**

- ◆ Service Desk **Phone** (During Normal Business Hours and Emergency After Hours): Ext. 4540;
- ◆ Service Desk **Email** (Responded to during normal business hours): chhelpdesk@co.collin.tx.us;
- ◆ Web Portal for Entering Tickets (IT Service Desk Link from **MYCC Homepage**): <http://dcapit-footprt/MRcgi/MRentrancePage.pl>

— **Steve GANEY**, Assistant Director of Information Technology



Mental Health officials honor Collin's MHMC program director

Alyse FERGUSON, attorney director for Collin County's Mental Health Managed Counsel Program, was awarded the Pamela Blumenthal Memorial Award at the 2016 Prism Awards Ceremony held Oct. 17.

The awards are presented by Mental Health America of Greater Dallas.

The Pamela Blumenthal Memorial Award recognizes long-term commitment to quality of care and dedicated delivery of services to people with mental illnesses, and is dedicated to the memory of Pamela Blumenthal, Ph.D., an extraordinary and caring mental health professional who died in 1990.

Alyse also recently received the *Award of Excellence* from the Texas CIT Association during a recent conference in Austin.

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.

37 years Running

District Judge **Angela TUCKER** presents County Auditor **Jeff MAY** with his office's 37th consecutive *Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting*, according to the Government Finance Officers Association.

The award is tied to the Auditor's Office Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.



Commissioner Fletcher graduates from 2-Year Leadership Academy program



Carrie BRAZEAL, AgriLife Extension, and Commissioner Fletcher.

County Commissioner **Susan FLETCHER** (Precinct 1) recently graduated from the Commissioners Court Leadership Academy, sponsored by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's V.G. Young Institute.

This 2-year program builds advanced skills and knowledge for Court members who participate. Selection is based on a competitive process in which interested county judges and commissioners apply to participate in the program.

Commissioner Fletcher is a member of Class VI and graduated on Aug. 12 in College Station.



55 years draws recognition for local housing foundation

County Clerk **Stacey KEMP** presented Rev. **Laverne R. JOSEPH**, D.D., president of the Retirement Housing Foundation (RHF) with a Proclamation in celebration of their 55th anniversary. RHF sponsors Towne Creek Apartments, a 45-unit independent living facility in McKinney for Collin County citizens 62 and older.

'Mileage' increased for Going-the-Extra-Mile

The Commissioners Court has increased the amount of each Going-the-Extra-Mile award to \$250 (net, after taxes), up from \$50.

Collin County's GEM program is designed to recognize and reward county employees for excellence in service. Elected officials and department heads nominate individuals to receive GEM awards, which are posted on MYCC.



JUDICIAL HONORS



296th District Court: Judge **John ROACH, Jr.** (above, center) participates in the North Texas Regional Veterans Court dedication ceremony in September.

A dedication ceremony on Sept. 16 at the Rockwall County Courthouse marked Texas' first region-wide initiative for justice-involved veterans: The North Texas Regional Veterans Court. After successful implementation of Collin County's Veterans Court in 2012, Judge **John ROACH, Jr.** saw the need for a Regional Veterans Court to serve five counties: Collin, Rockwall, Kaufman, Fannin and Grayson.

"We couldn't let a veteran, because of a geographic line, not have a Veterans Court," Judge Roach said.

"In a medium-sized jurisdiction, we just don't have the numbers to support an entire Veterans Court by ourselves," said **Kenda CULPEPPER**, Rockwall County's district attorney. She said informal meetings with Judge Roach to help create the North Texas Regional Veterans Court started about two years ago. Currently, this regional initiative handles the counties' 48 cases but has a capacity of about 65.

The dedication ceremony was attended by numerous veterans, veteran service agency personnel including the Executive Director of the Texas Veterans Commission, all five county District Attorneys, and numerous dignitaries including County Commissioners, County Judges, and keynote speaker Senator **Bob HALL**. Senator Hall formally recognized the efforts of Judge Roach and the five county District Attorneys. Collin County District Attorney **Greg WILLIS** read Governor **Greg ABBOTT's** Resolution commending the program.

470th District Court: The Texas Center for the Judiciary presented Judge **Emily MISKEL** with the Exemplary Article Award at the Annual Judicial Education Conference. The award was for a paper on admitting electronic evidence.



Helping out Meals on Wheels

▲ **Stacey KEMP** and the County Clerk's office filled 13 Harvest Boxes with groceries and supplies to be delivered to Collin County seniors through the *Meals on Wheels* program in September.

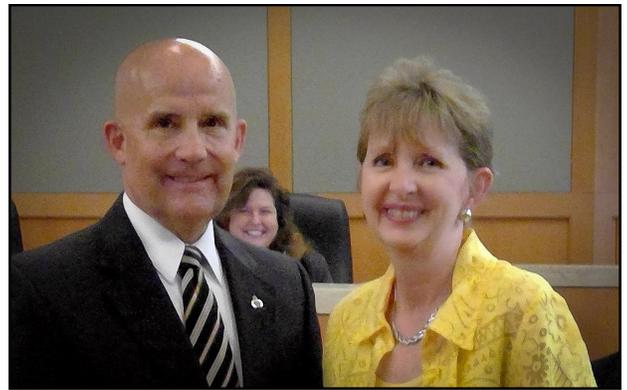


County Court at Law Clerks

▲ County Court at Law Clerks receive service pins: (above, from left) **Tracy CARR**, 10 years; **Kara ADAMS**, 15 years; and **Linda PATRIZIO**, 10 years.

Double recognition

► Congratulations to County Clerk employee **Anna Belle DARLAND** who received a GEM Award and her 15-year service pin.



35 years' service

County Judge **Keith SELF** presented County Extension Agent **Carrie BRAZEAL** with her 35-year service pin during Commissioners court in September. Carrie made sure to tell the audience that she started work for the county when she was "9 years old." Congratulations, Carrie.



10 years' service

▲ **Carmel GOMEZ** recently celebrated 10 years of service with Collin County. Carmel works in Justice Court Precinct 1 with Judge **Paul RALEEH**, as one of three employees who manage the criminal side of the court. Carmel enjoys working with the public and is attempting to create a step-by-step guide that will help other court employees answer criminal procedure questions quickly and efficiently. She has also been responsible for helping the court go "Paperless" and believes she is about 90-percent complete with that task. Carmel is a Dallas Cowboy's and Houston Astros fan who also enjoys collecting Mustang car models. She has two sons, Justin and Paul, and lives in McKinney.



40 years of service

◀ **Janet GRAVES**, an accounting/audit specialist for the Auditor’s office celebrated her 40th year with Collin County. Janet , a native of McKinney, worked for the Tax Assessor’s Office from 1975 to 1986, left for a year, and then came back to work here in 1987. She joined the Auditor’s Office in 1992. She’s worked for two Tax Assessors, three County Auditors, and in four different county buildings: the old courthouse on McKinney’s square, the main courthouse on McDonald Street, Annex A on McDonald Street, and in the Jack Hatchell Administration Building. So you know, only two other people have worked for the county more than 40 years: **Helen STARNES** (41.8 years) and **Judy CONAWAY** (40.6 years).



Some slots still open for Wellness Exams

All wellness forms must be received by Human Resources by **Nov. 30** to qualify for insurance discounts and a lump sum payment.

Collin County offers you the opportunity to reduce your insurance costs in 2017 and in addition receive a \$200 lump sum payment (if eligible) in 2016 for following specific wellness criteria. To take advantage of this opportunity you must have an annual physical, well woman/man exam and a cholesterol screening. Your physician must also complete the section below showing your height, weight and body mass index and certify completion of the medical requirements.

You must also take the Rally Health Survey on myuhc.com.

For those who haven’t set up an exam and lab work yet, call Employee Health to schedule your wellness as soon as possible, as spots are filling up.

For appointments in employee health call (972) 548 5508. Questions? Call **Mike LANGFUS**, PA, at Ext. 5548.

Backing the Blue

County Court at Law Clerks show their support for law enforcement by wearing Back the Blue shirts every Friday at the office.

Outside PeopleSoft access unavailable

External access to PeopleSoft will be closed until **Nov. 9**. Employees will still be able to log on to PeopleSoft via our internal county networks.

More flu shot clinics set

Employee Health is conducting a few more flu shot clinics in mid-November for those who may have missed the last round of vaccinations.

Nov. 14: 7-8:45 a.m., at the Juvenile Detention Center.

Nov. 14: 9-11 a.m., in the Commissioners Courtroom, Admin Building.

Nov. 18: 1-3 p.m., at the Juvenile Detention Center.





Recently Retired ▶

Sheriff Terry **BOX** presented **Patty ADAMS** with her retirement plaque and thanked her for her years of service with the Collin County Sheriff's Office.



20 Years' Service ▶



Mark MITCHELL: 20 years of service.



Tawana HENDRICKS: 20 years of service.

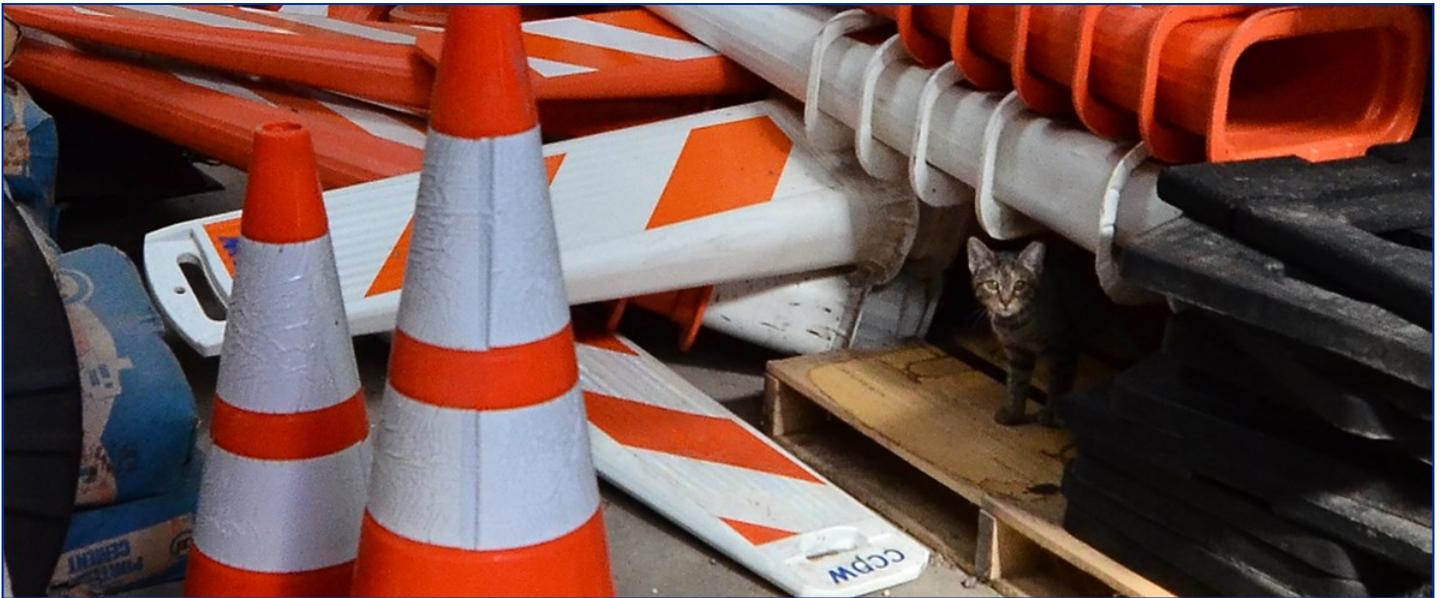


Lt. Frank BUNDICK: 20 years of service.

Promotions ▶

Jarrod JEFFCOAT has been promoted to Lieutenant.
Aubrey SAYLOR has been promoted to Assistant Communications Supervisor.





Clockwise from top, Annabelle performs her rounds at Public Works with three other feral cats, all 'recruited' to help rid the equipment barn of rats from a nearby field off Wilmeth Road; a newly impounded feral cat adjusts to the Animal Shelter and may be available for the "barn cat" program; Annabelle is bold enough to take a look at a visitor in the barn.



THAT BARN CAT!

The Animal Shelter has found a novel way to find new homes for feral cats.

These wild cats normally face euthanasia when they are picked up by Animal Control, since they are virtually unadoptable to the public in general.

Now, the shelter is offering the untamed and incorrigible felines as so-called barn cats for businesses and rural sites where the cats can earn a decent living ridding barns and warehouses of rodents.

When someone has need to "hire" some barn cats, the shelter will spay-

neuter and vaccinate a small squad of recently arrived feral cats and get them ready to go to work. Their ears are notched so that if they run off and are recaptured, animal control officer will know they've had their shots and are at no risk of ... multiplying.

Donations to help cover neutering and shots are appreciated.

Public Works recently hired four feral cats to come work their equipment barn that sees heavy increases of rats when farmers plow an adjacent field.

The idea is, if even two of the cats stick around, their rat problems may simply dwindle, and the cats have a safe place

to come and go.

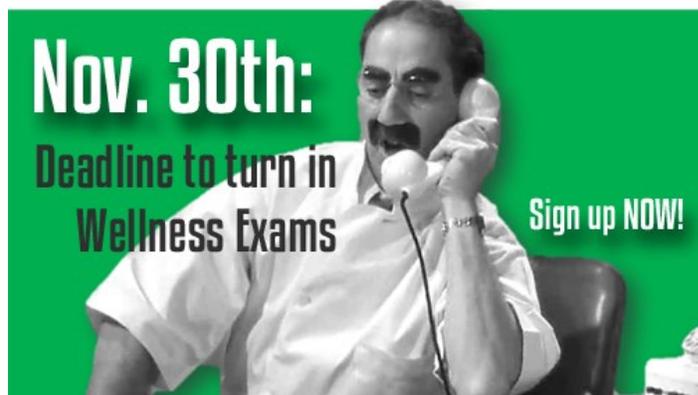
A week into the trial, **Tammi BERNERS**, office coordinator at Public Works, says their new recruits are staying around, though the one female, Annabelle, is the only one who'll show herself to visitors.

Misty BROWN, shelter manager, reminds folks that "these cats aren't your typical cuddly kittens. It's best they're left alone to do their own thing. They are not meant to be house pets."

If you know of anyone who could use some extra paws around the shed or barn, ask them to call **Animal Services at 972-547-7292**.

Announcements

Shelby Rae DOWNS (right) graduated from the University of North Texas in May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. In August, she began her pursuit of a doctor of pharmacy degree at the University of Texas at Tyler. Shelby is the daughter of **Lawana DOWNS** (Sheriff's Office).



The real challenge can be sustaining that weight loss

I've had the privilege of working with employees who made a goal to improve their diet and activity levels. They took it one step at a time and lost weight and feel great. Now the challenge is to maintain that weight loss.

Often sustaining weight loss is more difficult than losing weight in the first place. Especially now, when holidays will soon begin with parties, cookies, and candy that can throw off your weight loss success. That's why it's important to have a strategy in place for tackling these hurdles.

The National Weight Control Registry follows individuals who have lost a significant amount of weight and kept it off for long periods of time.

One strategy they found to be effective in keeping off weight for good is continuing to track food and activity. Tracking is important to do whether you've reached your goal weight or are trying to lose weight.

Tracking your food and activity helps manage weight by:

◆ Keeping you accountable

- ◆ Pointing out exactly where you may be going off you plan
- ◆ Helping you to quickly make changes
- ◆ Identifying patterns and triggers that impact your calorie intake and exercise

Another important strategy is to improve your sleep habits.

Not getting enough sleep can affect your weight by:

- ◆ Making you hungrier
- ◆ Triggering food cravings
- ◆ Slowing calorie burn
- ◆ Making you too tired to exercise

If you are working on managing your weight, let me know if these strategies work for you. I am available to help anyone make a plan for weight loss success and coach you through your plan.

Please contact me to get the support you need to be successful.

-- **Kaila COHEN**, Nurse Liaison for Collin County

The information provided by onsite nurse liaisons is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to be nor should be construed as medical or benefits advice. Onsite health coaches cannot diagnose problems or recommend treatment and are not a substitute for a doctor's care. Individuals should consult an appropriate health care professional to determine what may be right for them.

