



# Northeast Newsletter

Tarrant County - Precinct 3

"Working together for a better tomorrow"



April 2012

Volume 5, Issue 2

## COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

We are indeed fortunate to live in Northeast Tarrant County. Our residents and employers are blessed with an extraordinary quality of life and a business environment that is the envy of the nation. Tarrant County remains one of the fastest growing counties in the entire United States, increasing by 400,000 people within the last decade. We continue to grow at a rate of almost 1,000 people each week. In Precinct 3, we are focusing our efforts on four major priorities: financial, transportation, senior citizens, and economic development.

### Financial

Tarrant County has earned a distinction shared by only 40 counties out of the nation's 3,200: the AAA bond rating. With the high bond rating and relatively low taxes, the Commissioners Court has lowered the tax rate while serving our rapidly growing a population.

### Transportation

A major priority in Northeast Tarrant County is reducing congestion and improving mobility. With Loop 820, Airport Freeway, State Highway 114, and I-35W, we have some of the most congested roads in all of Texas. The high priority projects in these areas are now under construction or will be starting soon. This past February featured our third annual Northeast Tarrant Transportation Summit, which attracted a capacity crowd to the Hurst Conference Center. At each annual event, concerned

residents and business representatives have heard transportation leaders share the latest progress, and have then had one-on-one access to the speakers, city leaders and TxDOT representatives. They also heard about transportation alternatives being implemented in other areas.

Mobility certainly includes the DFW Connector and the North Tarrant Express, but we travel so many other crucial thoroughfares. These road projects include North Tarrant Parkway, Golden Triangle Boulevard, FM 1938, Watauga Boulevard, Precinct Line Road, Pipeline Road, SH 26, FM 156, Brown Trail, Cheek Sparger Road and many others. No area in Precinct 3 has gone without some type of road improvements. During the past five years, we have spoken to over 150 groups in Northeast Tarrant County about transportation. We have also shared this information in great detail with every city council in Precinct 3.

### Seniors Citizens

Senior citizens represent a population that is growing by leaps and bounds in our community. In early 2009 we established a Senior Task Force to study the needs of our seniors in Northeast Tarrant County. They identified four major challenges: transportation, health-care, senior isolation, and employment. That Task Force led us to establish Empowering Seniors in 2009 as an

*Continued on page 6*



COMMISSIONER GARY FICKES

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### Commissioner's Coffee Shop



## COFFEE WITH THE COMMISSIONER

Friday, Apr 13th  
7:30 to 9:00am

Please join me for coffee and donuts!

Northeast Sub-Courthouse  
645 Grapevine Hwy., #6, Hurst, TX



## SAVE THE DATE!

- LifeGift Run  
May 19... (see page 5)
- Empowering Seniors  
Oct. 5, 2012
- Pct. 3 United Way Fundraiser  
Oct. 31, 2012
- NE Transportation Summit  
Feb. 2013

## Question of the Month

**Question:** So you think you know something about Texas longest River, The Rio Grande. Who Named the River?

**Answer on page 6**



## TARRANT COUNTY VOTES



See page 4 of the newsletter for a special insert on elections dates, times and locations as well as other helpful information.

# Spotlight on the Mayor

**John Terrell**  
**Mayor**



**City of Southlake**



John recalls a wonderful youth growing up in Fort Worth where his parents, Tom and Kathy, instilled in him a strong faith in God, love of family, work ethic, service to others and a passion for all things “real estate”. He graduated from Paschal High School in 1980, received a BS in Business Management from LeTourneau University and a Masters degree in Business Management from UTA.

John worked his way through school as a YMCA Summer Camp Director, after school bus driver and by managing his parent’s real estate school. He became the youngest real estate broker in the State of Texas at the age of 20 and began work in residential real estate as well as taught real estate courses for several universities. In 1987, John began a 12 year career with the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific

Railroads where he later led the efforts for real estate in the western half of the U.S. After a 2 year stint in San Francisco, he and his wife decided it was time to move back to family and Texas. They visited Southlake and determined this was the City they would call “home”.

John currently holds the position of Vice President of Commercial Development at DFW International Airport. At DFW Airport, John is responsible for the strategic direction in developing over 6,000 of the total 18,000 acres. This includes management of two hotels, millions of square feet of office and industrial facilities, two 18-hole golf courses and all natural gas exploration and production.

While never having any political ambition, John decided that he wanted to get involved in the Southlake community. He joined the Leadership Southlake program and applied to serve on the Zoning Board of Adjustment in 1999. He followed that service with 4 years on the Planning and Zoning Commission, where he ultimately became Chair. He was encouraged to run for city council in 2004

where he served for the next 5 years. As a result of term limits, the position of Mayor opened up and he decided to continue his service.

John has been happily married to his wife, Joanne for 27 years and has two wonderful children.

John’s many accomplishments include: 2011 Best Government Official and National Real Estate Executive of the year in 2008. He is on the executive boards for North Texas Commission, Northeast Leadership Forum and Carroll Education Foundation among many other professional and civic organizations.

**On a more personal note -**

What do you do for fun? *Spend time with the family at our cabin in Broken Bow.*

Favorite Restaurant? *Truluck’s and Brio’s*

Favorite Movie? *Facing the Giants*

Last book read? *“Decision Points” George W. Bush*

Favorite vacation spot? *Anywhere you can scuba dive, Australia and Montreal, Canada*

People would be surprised to know... *I have been told I do a pretty good Willie Nelson impression, but I only perform overseas!*



## The Tarrant County Child Support Office (TCCSO) Helps Spell SUCCESS for Tarrant County Children

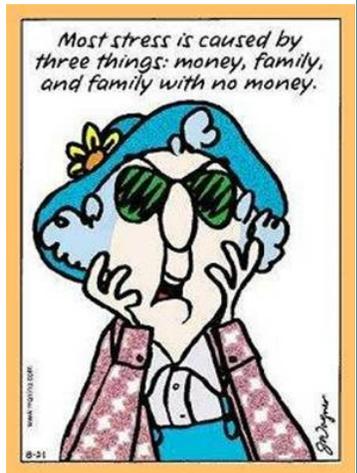
What do you think of when you think of child support? Statistics from the Urban Institution show that child support is the dividing line that keeps many families from experiencing poverty. Children who live below the poverty line are far less likely to graduate from high school and to succeed in life than children above the poverty line. They are more likely to face poor health, substance abuse, aggression and domestic violence. And they are far more likely to require state aid.

Did you know that four times as many divorced women with children fall under the poverty line as married women with children, and that single mothers are nine times more likely to live in deep poverty than the married family? Did you know that across the U.S., child support makes up 35 percent of the family income for poor families not on welfare? But almost 70% of children nationwide, who are eligible for child support, never receive it.

In Tarrant County, we believe that parents should support their children. Here, cases with court ordered child support are referred to the Child Support Office for review from the time their order becomes final. A myriad of administrative activities ranging from phone calls to liens, license suspension and more are implemented to ensure payment of court ordered child support. If those activities are not successful, the case can be referred for legal enforcement and probation. With the aid of the DRO Legal Enforcement and Community Supervision Offices, in 2011, an average of 87% of the cases under review paid child support every month!

We audit child support accounts and produce consolidated pay records, handle customer service for all active cases, and process fees for all the Domestic Relations Offices. We even mediate agreed child support modifications. But the focus at the heart of our operation is the children of Tarrant County. When TCCSO thinks of child support, we think of them, and we think SUCCESS.

Please visit our website for general support information. For payment information on your account, choose Account Search. For questions about your child support account, please call us at 817-884-1475 or email us at: [ChildSupport@tarrantcounty.com](mailto:ChildSupport@tarrantcounty.com).





Commissioner Gary Fickes, Tarrant County - Precinct 3

3rd Annual  
Northeast Tarrant  
Transportation Summit



Thank you for attending our 3rd Annual Northeast Tarrant Transportation Summit!

- Over 600 attendees
- Updates on Major Road Projects
- Keynote Speaker Phil Wilson, Executive Director TxDOT
- Seminars
  - Status of Commuter Rail in North Texas
  - Partnerships and Processes for Successful Road Projects
  - Regional Transportation

*A special thank you to our sponsors, speakers, attendees, and area Chambers of Commerce!*

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Haslet

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Keller

Southlake

For 2013 sponsorship or additional information, visit our website: or call 817-581-3600

[www.NETTRANSPORTATIONSUMMIT.com](http://www.NETTRANSPORTATIONSUMMIT.com)

## Tarrant County Election Information

May 12, 2012 - Municipal/School District Elections  
May 29, 2012 - Primary Elections



### Municipal/School District Elections

May 12, 2012

#### Important Dates to Remember!

- **Apr 12** - Last day to register to vote for City/School Elections
- **Apr 30** - First day of in-person early voting
- **May 4** - Last day to receive application for ballot to be voted by mail
- **May 8** - Last day of in-person early voting
- **May 12** - **ELECTION DAY for City/School Elections!**

### Primary Elections

May 29, 2012

#### Important Dates to Remember!

- **Apr 30** - Last day to register to vote for Primary Elections
- **May 14** - First day of in-person early voting
- **May 22** - Last day Election Dept. can accept an application for a ballot by mail
- **May 25** - Last day of in-person early voting
- **May 29** - **ELECTION DAY for Primary Elections!**

Many Tarrant County municipalities and school districts will be holding elections on May 12, with early voting being held April 30 through May 8. Primary Elections for federal, state, and county offices will be held on May 29, 2012, with early voting held May 14 through May 25.

Due to redistricting, voters may find themselves in a new voting precinct and/or may have new congressional, senate, or state house districts for 2012 elections. In all, redistricting has occurred for the following offices/entities:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congress</li> <li>• State Senate</li> <li>• State House of Representatives</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Commissioners</li> <li>• Justice Precincts</li> <li>• Tarrant County College District</li> <li>• Arlington City Council</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grand Prairie City Council</li> <li>• Everman ISD School Board</li> <li>• Fort Worth ISD School Board</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

**Tarrant County will be mailing new voter registration certificates to all registered voters around April 25 that show the voter's 2012 precinct number as well as district assignments.**

Although some of the information is delayed due to implementation of redistricting court orders, Tarrant County provides voters with several on-line services related to the upcoming elections. In mid-April, potential voters can check the status of their voter registration, view or print a sample ballot, and can find the location of their polling place for both the May 12 municipal/school district elections and the May 29 primary elections.

Once the website has been updated, you can check your polling place by going to the Tarrant County Web Portal at [www.tarrantcounty.com/elections](http://www.tarrantcounty.com/elections). You can click on the "**Look up Your Election Day Polling Place**" link (*link not available until mid-April*). On the Voter Lookup page, follow the instructions on the screen to find your polling place. Or, you can go directly to <https://voterlookup.tarrantcounty.com>.

On election night, periodic updates of results will be posted on the County's Elections Office website as the ballots are counted. To access all this information, go to Tarrant County's website at [www.tarrantcounty.com/elections](http://www.tarrantcounty.com/elections).

Elections administration is one of the most important functions of County government. The Elections Administrator, appointed by the County Judge, Tax Assessor-Collector, County Clerk, the Democratic Party Chair and the Republican Party Chair, oversees voter registration and the conduct of all federal, state and county elections. In addition, the department maintains the rolls of qualified voters, maintains the county's voting equipment, prepares election ballots, and conducts early voting. The County has approximately 921,000 registered voters and nearly 400 polling places.

**For information call 817-831-VOTE (8683)**  
or visit: [www.tarrantcounty.com/elections](http://www.tarrantcounty.com/elections)

Scan this QR code with your smart phone to access voter lookup!



### Helpful Links

Early Voting information available at: [www.tarrantcounty.com/elections](http://www.tarrantcounty.com/elections)

Ballot By Mail information available at: [www.votetexas.gov](http://www.votetexas.gov), or call Tarrant County Elections at 817-831-8683, or visit the Tarrant County Elections website at: <http://tweb.tarrantcounty.com/evote/cwp/view.asp?a=771&q=468191>

#### Election Day information:

- Am I registered to vote? <https://voterlookup.tarrantcounty.com/>
- What are the hours for voting on Primary Election Day? **7 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** (*you must vote at your precinct location*)
- What is my precinct voting location? Information available mid-April at <https://voterlookup.tarrantcounty.com/>

# The American Cancer Society

For 99 years, the American Cancer Society has been dedicated to a world with less cancer and more birthdays.

Its mission is to save lives by helping you stay well, helping you get well, finding cures and fighting back. The Society does this in as many ways as there are candles on a birthday cake.

One big way is through research. The American Cancer Society has played a role in almost every major cancer breakthrough over the past 66 years. In fact, the Society has funded 46 researchers who have gone



Ladies from Texas Health HEB Harris Hospital's "NEAT" program led the warm-up for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of North Texas 5K walk. This year's event is set for Oct. 6 at Las Colinas.

on to win Nobel Prizes for their work.

Help comes in other forms, too. Should anyone in northeast Tarrant County have a question about a cancer diagnosis, our trained cancer information specialists are available to help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The National Cancer Information Center answers questions to empower patients and caregivers with accurate, up-to-date information. We connect them with local programs and services to meet their daily needs.

We encourage you to become involved with us. We have an office in Tarrant County, and we have many events in our area. Get to know us at one of our Relay For Life events near you: April 27 at Cross Timbers Middle School, Grapevine; May 5 at Trinity High School, Euless; May 5 at Keller ISD Athletic Complex; and May 11 at Carroll High School, Southlake.

Join us this fall for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of North Texas, a 5K walk planned for Oct. 6 at Lake Carolyn in Las Colinas, or help celebrate



Jo Pool of Colleyville makes a selection from the food station at last year's Cowtown Ball. The 20th Anniversary Cowtown Ball is planned for Nov. 3 at River Ranch in the historic stockyards.

Cowtown Ball's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Nov. 3 at River Ranch in the Fort Worth Stockyards.

We welcome you to support The American Cancer Society, the Official Sponsor of Birthdays. To learn more about us or for cancer information, visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) or call 1-800-227-2345.

Article provided by Joy Donovan



## Please join **TEAM FICKES** in the LifeGift 2nd Chance Run Saturday, May 19th

**Fun Run/Walk 8:00 A.M. ~ 5K Run 8:30 A.M.**

LifeGift is a non-profit organ procurement organization, that recovers organs and tissue for individuals needing transplants in 109 Texas counties in North, Southeast and West Texas. This year LifeGift is Celebrating 25 Years of saving and enhancing lives!

LifeGift hosts an annual run to heighten awareness of the need for organ donation. Every day about 79 people get the "Gift of Life" while nearly 18 die because a donor was not available. There are over 113,000 people on an organ waiting list.

Four years ago, Commissioner Gary Fickes was given the gift of life. Please join **Team Fickes** in this LifeGift Run and help give those in need a second chance.

If you would like to join **TEAM FICKES** please contact Mary Ann at: 817 581-3600 or e-mail [mrike@tarrantcounty.com](mailto:mrike@tarrantcounty.com)

### Community Volunteers

We have opportunities for volunteers residing in Precinct 3 to serve on the following:

- Child Protective Services Board
- Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District Board
- Tarrant County Historical Commission
- Tarrant County Obesity Prevention Policy Council

If you are interested in serving, please send your resume to Carolyn Sims, [cssims@tarrantcounty.com](mailto:cssims@tarrantcounty.com)



TEAM FICKES is sponsored by



**TARRANT COUNTY CREDIT UNION**

817-884-1470 [www.tarrantcu.org](http://www.tarrantcu.org)

# An Historic Moment In Time

## MARKER PROGRAM CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF TELLING THE REAL STORIES OF TEXAS' PAST



Buffalo Courts is a unique community venture that began in 1933 at West Texas State Teachers College during the Great Depression produced an architectural landmark.

From a lonely stretch of highway to imposing city skyscrapers, most of us have seen the familiar curved-top metal marker telling us that this is an important place in Texas history. This year, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) is celebrating 50 years of placing official Texas Historical Markers in historically significant locations throughout the state, making the marker program itself eligible for historic recognition. The first aluminum marker in the state was placed Jan. 14, 1962 in Tyler at Camp Ford, a Confederate Prisoner of War camp. It was followed by the first Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) medallion placed in Gonzales on March 4 of that year at the Eggleston House, a restored 1840s cabin. A commemorative event in Gonzales in March will acknowledge the important milestone.

Historical markers have been part of the Texas landscape since the 1800s. In 1936, the Texas Centennial Commission placed more than 1,100 markers and monuments around the state to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Texas Revolution, and the establishment of the Republic of Texas. The current Official Texas Historical Marker Program dates to 1962. Since then it has been a popular means of interpreting local and state history, and encouraging heritage tourism.

There are currently more than 15,000 Official Texas Historical Markers throughout Texas commemorating everything from the history and architecture of buildings, to events that changed the course of local and state history, to individuals who made a lasting contribution to the state.

In addition, in 2012 the THC's website will feature updated information and images for many existing RTHL structures after more than two years of research conducted by county historical commissions and THC staff.

For more information, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us), or contact the THC's History Programs Division at 512 -463-5853.

### COMMISSIONER'S CORNER *Continued ...*

annual event. Empowering Seniors in 2011 had over 1,300 participants. The event has presented senior citizens with an opportunity for seniors to have a huge local event with free health screenings, including tests, from four area hospitals, timely workshops dealing with senior issues (Social Security, Medicare/Medicaid, veterans' benefits, identity theft, etc.), lifestyle information from area non-profits and agencies that serve seniors, free entertainment and a meal.

#### Economic Development

As a Commissioners Court, we have focused on quality in the area of economic development. The major growth area for Tarrant County has been Precinct 3 as we have created more jobs and value than any other portion of the County. We assist all the cities in our area in their efforts

to expand existing businesses and recruit new enterprises to our area. We have been pleased to work with the development of Fidelity Investments, Deloitte University, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Cabela's, Grapevine Mills, Gaylord Texan, Legoland Discovery Center, Sea Life Aquarium, Southlake Town Square, Keller Town Center, the Village at Colleyville, Home Town NRH in North Richland Hills, and countless others. Quality development brings long-term value to our communities and helps create a better quality of life for everyone.

As you can see, the quality of life, the excellent schools throughout our area and the expanding employers will continue to make Northeast Tarrant County the premier place to live, work, and raise your family.

*Gary Fickes*



Queen-Bryan facade  
Bryan Texas



Camp Ford  
Tyler Texas



Eggleston House  
Gonzales Texas

### Question of the Month

**Question:** Question of the Month: So you think you know something about Texas longest River, The Rio Grande. Who Named the River?

**Answer:** Explorer Juan de Onate in 1598.

Other Names for the Rio Grande: Rio del Norte, Rio San Buenaventura, Rio Turbio and Rio Bravo

From the source to the mouth, the river drops 12,000 feet to sea level and is 1,896 miles long The Rio Grande has provided irrigation to the Central Valley in New Mexico and the Presidio Valley in Texas/Mexico since the early 1500's

Through the Big Bend area, the Rio Grande flows through 3 major canyons (Santa Elena, Mariscal and Boquillas) with depths exceeding 1,500 feet

### John Harbin Visionary Award Recipients



The Northwest Metroport Chamber of Commerce recognized Denton County Commissioner Andy Eads and Tarrant County Commissioner Gary Fickes for their efforts to improve transportation. Each received the John Harbin Visionary Award at the chamber's 2012 Awards gala.

Look who's retiring!

Mary Ann Rike  
20+ Years!

We wish you all the best!





# Transportation

## Northeast Tarrant County

### DFW Connector Project

Hotline: 877-411-4212

[www.dfwconnector.com](http://www.dfwconnector.com)



Sign up for e-alerts!

-Texas Department of Transportation project manager Sam Swan was recently recognized at the White House as a Champion of Change for his work on the DFW Connector Project. According to the White House website, Champions of Change are those who "are doing extraordinary things in their communities to out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the rest of the world." This acknowledgement was based on the DFW Connector project's innovative techniques used throughout the project, as well as job creation for the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Congratulations!

- Crews recently switched traffic onto new pavement on westbound SH 114 west of Texan Trail. All westbound SH 114 traffic now travels on new concrete pavement from International Parkway to Main Street.

- We recently switched traffic onto the west side of Texan Trail bridge in order to reconstruct the east side of the bridge. The new east side of Texan Trail bridge will be complete in late 2012, and the entire bridge will be complete in 2013. Once construction is complete, the new Texan Trail bridge will be six lanes wide.

Pictured from the left are Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and Champions of Change honorees Paulson Chaco, Henry Perahia and Sam Swan.



### North Tarrant Express

Hotline: 888-683-2015

[www.northtarrantexpress.com](http://www.northtarrantexpress.com)



Sign up for e-alerts!

The North Tarrant Express project is rapidly approaching the point where some level of construction is going on throughout 100% of the 13.5 mile corridor. Motorist and corridor stakeholders will notice regular changes in traffic shifts, lane and ramp closures, and a work zone speed limit of 50 MPH. Drivers are encouraged to set aside the distractions, slow down, grip the steering wheel, and pay attention. There are tens of thousands of cars a day in the corridor and almost a thousand workers. Safety is critical.



### North Tarrant Parkway

NRH 817-427-6400

[www.nrhtx.com](http://www.nrhtx.com)

Keller 817-743-4080

[www.cityofkeller.com](http://www.cityofkeller.com)

The North Tarrant Parkway project is nearing completion, with all travel lanes now open to the public and all traffic signals operational. In addition, the new network of street lights now illuminates the corridor at night, and miles of new sidewalks are already benefiting area residents. The contractor is finishing this 3.5 mile roadway project with irrigation and landscaping. Planting of new trees and sod will occur in increments as irrigation zones are installed.



### FM 1938

TxDot - N Tarrant Office

817-399-4300

[www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)

Westlake 817-490-5717

[www.westlake-tx.org](http://www.westlake-tx.org)

Traffic was switched to the new concrete pavement in late January. With the traffic moved over, the contractor has been working on the old road, removing the asphalt, excavating the excess materials, and preparing the grades to being sub-grade stabilization.



### Golden Triangle Blvd.

TxDot - N Tarrant Office

817-399-4300

[www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)

Fort Worth 817-392-8485

[www.fortworthgov.org/tpw/info/?id=39130](http://www.fortworthgov.org/tpw/info/?id=39130)

Pictured are the new lanes at Alta Vista Road (looking east). TXDOT's contractor, Glen Thurman, Inc, has switched traffic onto the new concrete pavement on the north side of Golden Triangle from Old Denton Road to US 377 and is working on the south half of the roadway.



### Highway 26

TxDot - N Tarrant Office

817-399-4300

[www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)

In the last month a lot of progress has been made and more is in the works with traffic switches to new pavement coming up.

Late last month a partial traffic switch of southbound SH 26 traffic to new pavement was completed from Kimball Avenue to Brumlow Avenue/Pool Road. Construction on the new northbound lanes of SH 26 from Kimball Avenue to SH 114 continues. Construction includes work on driveways, sidewalks and concrete barrier rail. Motorists

will be switched to new northbound pavement from Kimball Avenue to SH 114 by early April, weather permitting.

Construction is continuing on traffic barrier rail and on the new southbound lanes so southbound traffic from SH 114 to Kimball Avenue can be switched to new pavement by mid to late next month, weather permitting.

Once motorists are completely shifted to the new northbound lanes, the southbound lanes can be reconstructed. Throughout construction, two lanes of traffic will be maintained in each direction.



