



DR. ELBA GARCIA  
DALLAS COUNTY  
COMMISSIONER

# Dr. Elba Garcia, Dallas County Commissioner, District 4

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## Message from Dr. Elba Garcia

**Greetings friends and neighbors.** As I enter my third year of service as a County Commissioner for District 4, I am excited about all that we have accomplished and all of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. In this past year we opened Parkland's new E. Carlyle Smith Health Clinic in Grand Prairie and broke ground on the new Grand Prairie Subcourthouse, which will soon be completed. We opened the Twin Hills extension of the Campion Trail in Irving and approved funding for the new Lone Star-Campion Trail connection which will begin this fall. We continued work on the Cockrell Hill water line project and began design meetings for improvements to the intersection of Jefferson Blvd. and Cockrell Hill Rd. Most importantly, we were able to improve services, give County employees a badly needed merit increase and balance

the County's budget - all without a tax increase. I also had the exciting privilege of casting Dallas County's vote in the Regional Transportation Council for an additional \$31 million in funding for the Oak Cliff Streetcar Project. These funds will add a second streetcar to the pro-



ject and allow the line to be extended to Davis in Oak Cliff and to the Convention Center in Downtown. This is a fantastic project that promotes the type of sustainable growth that will drive economic

development in Oak Cliff and Downtown for years to come. I would also like to welcome my new colleague on the Commissioners Court, Dr. Theresa Daniel. Dr. Daniel is the new commissioner for District 1 and I am looking forward to working with her as we move Dallas County forward. In the year ahead I will be working on initiatives like setting up the new Animal Cruelty Unit, supporting Parkland as they complete and sustain improvements in patient care and safety, and addressing Dallas County's badly neglected buildings and infrastructure. There is still much to accomplish and many challenges to face. But we have a great team here at Dallas County. With their dedication and with your support, there is no limit to what we can achieve together.

*- Dr. Elba Garcia*

## Dallas County to form Animal Cruelty Unit



On Tuesday, December 4, 2012 Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia, along with former

Dallas County Commissioner Maureen Dickey, District Attorney Craig Watkins, Gary Griffith representing Safer Dallas Better Dallas and various animal advocates held a press conference announcing a new effort to combat animal abuse. Commissioner Elba Garcia introduced a memorandum of understanding to Commissioners Court that creates an Animal Cruelty Unit within the District Attorney's Office. The Animal Cruelty Unit will focus on the investigation and prosecution of offenders that neglect, torture or kill animals in Dallas County. Commissioner Garcia spearhead-

ed the collaboration, bringing together the District Attorney's Office, Safer Dallas Better Dallas and animal advocates to create the unit. Former County Commissioner Maureen Dickey and her husband, Roland Dickey, committed a \$40,000 donation to help begin the effort. With over 2,500 cases of animal cruelty reported thus far in 2012, animal cruelty is a problem in Dallas County. Cross-reporting, data-sharing, investigation, evidence collection and increasing public awareness will prove effective in the fight against animal neglect, abuse, and killing.

# Dr. Garcia's Annual Giving Ceremony



Gustav Klimt Reproduction by Inmate in Dallas County Jail

On Wednesday, October 17, 2012 Dr. Elba Garcia donated over \$15,000 to non-profit, government and community organizations. This was the second annual donation that Dr. Garcia has made in fulfillment of a promise to dedicate a portion of her County Commissioner's salary towards charitable contributions. There were a total of 25 recipients that provide important services to children, families, seniors,

neighborhoods, animals, and the greater Dallas County community. The theme of the annual event is the "giving tree." This year, an inmate from Dallas County Jail, participating in

the El Centro College Jail Education Art Program, created a reproduction of Gustav Klimt's Tree of Life painting.



## Parkland Moving Forward



Parkland



Parkland Health and Hospital System has been working hard this past year to make critical changes to its performance and operational standards. As the deadline fast approaches for improvements ordered by the U. S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS),

Parkland officials informed Commissioners Court members that they are on track to achieve 97% of the action items under its Corrective Action Plan, also known as "CAP." The goal is to create a deepened commitment to quality care and safety that becomes a

permanent part of the hospital's culture. "I fully support the goals that Parkland is working towards," said Commissioner Garcia. "The residents of Dallas County deserve the highest quality care, and Parkland is developing the team and the facilities that will provide it."

## West Nile Virus Briefing in Court

The Dallas County Commissioners Court got their latest briefing on West Nile Virus on Tuesday, December 11, 2012. The 2012 West Nile season hit Dallas County the hardest ever in the nation, but county officials have learned from their efforts. In 2012 Dallas County experienced 393 confirmed West Nile Virus cases and 19 deaths. In response to the season, there will be several new

efforts. These efforts will include increasing public outreach, education and prevention; expanding mosquito trapping and testing to year-round; increased focus and coordination in environmental mitigation efforts such as larvicide, adulticide and source reduction (breeding habitats); expanded testing capacity in the Dallas County laboratory; updating the mosquito control plan in coordina-

tion with the municipalities, state and federal governments; and review of the forthcoming CDC (Center for Disease Control) analysis of West Nile Virus Outbreak and mosquito control efforts.



[www.DallasCounty.org/hhs](http://www.DallasCounty.org/hhs)

# Domestic Partner Benefits for Dallas County

Beginning January 2013 Dallas County Employees can apply for Domestic Partner Benefits. Commissioners Court passed Domestic Partner Benefits for Dallas County Employees on October 30, 2012. The approval provides benefits for couples who are not married; specifically for employees' domestic partners who would otherwise not qualify for benefits. The insurance stipend will cost Dallas County no more than \$100

thousand dollars a year, a drop in the bucket compared to the total cost of benefits to Dallas County employees. Commissioner Elba Garcia supported the measure and stated that extending healthcare benefits to the uninsured is the right thing to do and also benefits all, in relation to healthcare premiums. With the approval of these benefits, Dallas county becomes the third county in Texas to provide domestic partner benefits,

behind Travis and El Paso Counties. The City of Dallas has provided domestic partner benefits since 2004.



## DWI Taskforce Press Conference

As Chair of the DWI Task Force, Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia addressed the media on Tuesday, November 20th, urging the public to exercise caution during the holiday season. The lesson of the day: If you're going to drink, then do not drive; and if you drink and drive, then you will go to jail. Each year during the holiday season there is an increase in the number of people driving while intoxicated, an increase

in the number of DWI arrests, and an increase in the number of alcohol related fatalities. Commissioner Garcia was joined by DWI Task Force members including Sheriff Lupe Valdez, Dallas County Precinct 4 Constable Roy Williams, Irving City Council Member Rose Cannaday, law enforcement officials from various agencies around Dallas County, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), DWI victims and offenders, representatives

from North Texas Tollway Authority, the Texas Department of Public Safety and Texas Department of Transportation. CareFlite also participated by landing a helicopter ambulance and joining the press conference. Commissioner Garcia and all of the members of the DWI Task Force ask you to remember to think before you drink, at all times of the year.



**Think Before You Decide to Drink and Drive**

## District 4 Spotlight

**District 4 Road & Bridge** - 2012 was a busy year for the Dallas County District 4 Road & Bridge. In addition to projects within the district, the Road & Bridge crew also had several projects outside of the district. When a tornado hit Lancaster in April 2012, the crew was there to assist in cleanup efforts. The Road & Bridge 4 crew has also completed 29 road repairs and resurfacing jobs for other municipalities that saved more than of \$584,000 as a result of completions under budget. In 2012 the crew repaired and resurfaced more

than 150,000 square feet of roads in Dallas County. Several District 4 Road & Bridge employees were also recognized in Commissioners Court as Dallas County employees of the month.



**Replacement Housing** - The Dallas County Replacement Housing Program is designed for families who own a home that has structural damage. Tear-down and rebuild funds are provided through the state and federal government; and administered by Dallas County. The Dallas County Replacement Housing Program provides assistance to mid-to-low income residents in municipalities under 50 thousand in population. There are several cities in Dallas County that qualify and this particular project was in Cockrell Hill. A family in Cockrell Hill recently benefited from the Dallas County Replacement Housing Program and they were able to celebrate the Holiday Season in their new home.





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### District 4

Dallas County District 4 is most of western Dallas County and includes parts of the cities of Dallas, Grand Prairie, and Irving, and all of Cockrell Hill. The northern boundary of District 4 is Interstate 635 and the southern boundaries are the Mt. Creek area of Dallas and the city limits of Grand Prairie.



[www.DallasCounty.org/departments/comcrt/district4/home.php](http://www.DallasCounty.org/departments/comcrt/district4/home.php)

# Dallas County Services & Court Update



**It's Flu Season in Dallas County.** Dallas County Health & Human Services

(DCHHS) Director Zachary Thompson announced that flu vaccinations are low, but that it is still not too late to get vaccinated; especially for children. The flu season usually peaks in February. All flu vaccinations have been located at the Dallas County Health Department at 2377 North Stemmons Freeway, Room 159, Dallas, TX 75027. For more information, please call visit (214) 819-2000, or visit [www.DallasCounty.org/hhs](http://www.DallasCounty.org/hhs)

**Commissioners Court Recognizes Outstanding Dallas County Employees and Names Employee of the Year.** On Tuesday, December 18th Dallas County Commissioners recognized employees with the creation of an Employees Recognition Program. Ray Goin was recognized as the Dallas County Employee of the year. Mr. Goin is a Juvenile Probation Officer in the Dallas County Juvenile Department. He has held that position for the past 21 years and has impacted the lives of a countless number of youths and their families. Commissioner Garcia thanked Mr. Goin for his years of dedicated service to the youth of Dallas County.

**Dallas County Commissioner's Court approves \$2.5 million for Trail Linking Grand Prairie and Irving.** On Tuesday, November 6, 2012 Dallas County Commissioner's Court passed a court order approving an inter-local agreement that provided \$2.5 million dollars towards the construction of a trail connecting Grand Prairie's Lone Star Trail and Irving's Campion Trail. The Campion Trail/Lone Star Connection is a joint project between Dallas County, the City of Grand Prairie and the City of Irving. When completed, the trail will create a continuous 10.9 mile trail project. The trail is expected to be complete in 2013.

**Commissioners Court occurs weekly on Tuesdays at 9:00 AM**