



DR. ELBA GARCIA
DALLAS COUNTY
COMMISSIONER

Dr. Elba Garcia, Dallas County Commissioner, District 4

SUMMER 2014

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- New Parkland CEO 2
- Grand Prairie Youth Boxing 2
- More Trails On The Way 2
- Road Repairs in Cockrell Hill 3
- Dental Center In Grand Prairie 3
- West Nile Virus & Chikungunya Virus 4

Message from Dr. Elba Garcia



Dr. Garcia Meets With President Obama & Other Local Officials

Friends and Neighbors,

This has been a busy 2014 for me and for Dallas County. There have been many wonderful accomplishments so far this year. We have kept our momentum in reaching out to constituents, continuing construction projects, attending community events, giving presentations and providing important services. I have highlighted a few of these important efforts in this issue. There have also been several

ongoing issues that are close to my heart.

This past July, I had the opportunity to meet with President Obama, U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Governor Rick Perry, Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings, County Judge Clay Jenkins, and Grand Prairie Mayor Ron Jensen to discuss the humanitarian crisis at the border. While we may not have all agreed on any single course of action, we all agreed that this issue needed to be

addressed both in an immediate fashion, while also acknowledging systemic and long-term domestic and diplomatic issues that must be addressed through comprehensive immigration reform. I am committed to addressing these challenges and working in partnership with those who wish to find appropriate and meaningful solutions.

September is budget season in Dallas County. Fortunately, our budget outlook is strong and allows us to continue to strengthen our services while also keeping the same tax rates. We have also had to consider Parkland's budget. In 2008, voters approved a one cent tax rate increase to take effect in 2015. This will help Parkland pay for moving into the new facility next year. Lastly, I am committed to continuing my efforts to increase government transparency. We are currently working to reform our Dallas County purchasing process to provide the transparency that the tax payers expect and deserve.

Dr. Elba Garcia



Elder Financial Safety Center Established

Dallas County Commissioners celebrated the creation of an Elder Financial Safety Center in Dallas. An older adult is more than two times more likely to be the victim of financial exploitation versus physical or sexual assault and the vast majority of financial exploitation cases go unreported. Elderly financial crime victims are 3 times more likely to die after the crime than younger adults and 4 times more likely to have to move into a facility following victimization. Financial Safety for older adults affects housing,

health choices, transportation, property crime, fraud and exploitation. The Elder Financial Safety Center will provide an innovative and comprehensive system of financial security for older adults. Through prevention services such as individual education and financial counseling, protection services through monitored guardianship and prosecution of offenders against the elderly, older adults in Dallas County will now have access to the vital resources necessary to ensure their security and protection. The center was made possible by a generous \$3.9 million grant from the W.W. Caruth Jr.

Foundation at the Communities Foundation of Texas and is a collaboration between the Senior Source, Dallas County Probate Courts and the Dallas County District Attorney's Office. Commissioner Elba Garcia was pleased to sponsor the resolution in Commissioners Court. If you are an older adult seeking the help to increase your income or decrease your expenses, or you have been the victim of financial fraud or exploitation, or you know of an incapacitated older adult in need of guardianship protection, The Elder Financial Safety Center can help. For more information call (214) 525-6130.

Youth Boxing In Grand Prairie



GPPD Youth Boxing Champions

Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia joined Chief Dye

in congratulating youth champions from the Grand Prairie Police Youth Boxing Program. This year there were eight champions that competed in three tournaments, including the first female boxing champion for the program. Police Officers and volunteer coaches supervise the program and eligible students compete in silver and golden gloves matches. The Grand Prairie Police Youth Boxing Program was developed under the vision and leadership of

the Grand Prairie Police Department (GPPD) and the program is aimed to provide youth mentorship and activities that stimulate youth to become productive community members. The program is in coordination with and supported by Grand Prairie Independent School District. Students must maintain an adequate GPA and may be provided tutoring through a mentorship program. Last year, Dr. Garcia became a sponsor of the GPPD Youth Boxing Program.

Community Meets New Parkland CEO



Dr. Fred Cerise, Parkland CEO

Dr. Fred Cerise, new Parkland CEO, made visits to several cities throughout Dallas County and specifically visited the District 4 cities of Irving, Grand Prairie, and Dallas (Oak Cliff) in order to introduce himself to the community, establish new relationships, listen and understand needs and address past deficiencies. Dr. Cerise

was most recently an associate dean for clinical affairs at Louisiana State University and after hurricane Katrina he oversaw the turnaround of the Interim New Orleans Hospital, which replaced the public hospital destroyed by the storm. Dr. Cerise mentioned several challenges that he faces in his new role as CEO of the Parkland

Health and Hospital System including putting together a new budget, finalizing the construction of the new hospital facility, increased patient treatment standards, improving Parkland's relationship with the community and the increased reliance on community based patient clinics. He said that he is looking forward to the job.

District 4 Trails - Oak Cliff, Irving & Grand Prairie



Old Rail Lines Will Become Chalk Hill Trail

Efforts are underway to transform old rail lines in Oak Cliff into the new **Chalk Hill Trail**. An inter-local agreement between Dallas County and the City of Dallas approved \$3.7 million for trail. Dallas County will lead the project development. The Chalk Hill Trail will take 2-

3 years to design and build. Construction on the **Lone Star Connection**, a trail connecting Campion Trail South in Irving and Lone Star Trail in Grand Prairie, began August 10th. \$2.5 million was approved for construction and when completed will form a contiguous 10.9 mile trail.

Coombs Creek Connection is a multimodal pathway connecting bike and pedestrian lanes as part of the larger IH-30 Margaret McDermott Bridge over the Trinity River. Dr. Garcia contributed \$2 million from her Road & Bridge 4 office in order to fund construction of the bridge's pedestrian and bike lanes.

District 4 Road & Bridge - Cockrell Hill

Dallas County Road & Bridge 4 crews have completed milling and overlay (resurfacing) work on Jefferson Boulevard in Cockrell Hill. The project is on Jefferson Blvd. from the intersection at Cockrell Hill Rd. to the western city limits and on the east end of Jefferson Blvd. from just east of the intersection at Gilpin to the intersection at Burns. This work, along with the new curbs and gutters near Gilpin, are a dramatic improvement to this stretch of Jefferson Blvd. in Cockrell Hill. In

August, Commissioners Court also approved Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to replace sewer and wastewater mains for Cockrell Hill Rd. CDBG funds allocated to Dallas County also support the County's Replacement Housing Program (RHP). The RHP demolishes substandard housing that is too dilapidated to be economically repaired and replaces it with a new 1,000-square-foot home. This program is only operated in a few of the County's smaller cities (under 50K Pop.) For more information about this program, please call (214) 653-6884. All of these great pro-

grams could not happen without the leadership of Cockrell Hill City Officials. Thank You!



Jefferson Blvd in Cockrell Hill After Resurfacing

Grand Prairie Dental Center Opening

In May, Dr. Elba Garcia joined Community Dental Care, city leaders and community partners to celebrate the grand opening of a new Community Dental Care clinic in Grand Prairie. The clinic is located inside of Parkland's E. Carlyle Smith Health Center and is providing access to important dental services. These services are essential to the Grand Prairie community. Tooth decay is the most preva-

lent chronic disease in both children and adults. Dental pain is the number one cause of absenteeism in most school districts. The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) states that 42 percent of children ages 2 to 11 have had tooth decay in their primary teeth, while 59 percent of adolescents ages 12 to 19 have had decay in their permanent teeth. For more information about Community Dental Care services

and appointments please call (214) 630-7080.



August Awards & Election Workers Compensation



August Awards

Commissioner Garcia was recognized twice in August for her community service. She was recognized by Keep Irving Beautiful

and was given the Green Government Award for her work to expand trails in Dallas County. She also received the Heroe En La Comunidad (Hero in the Community) Award from the Texas Rangers (MLB) Foundation for her commitment to the community. The Texas Rangers also donated \$500 to DFW International Alliance in her honor.

Elections Judges & Clerks Compensation

Dallas County Commissioners Court raised the pay for County elections judges, alternate judges, and clerks. The court order, approving the increase stated that: "There are several reasons why it is becoming more difficult to recruit and retain a well-trained and motivated election workforce for polling places. These jobs require individuals to be more technology proficient, while at the same time being physically demanding. Pollworkers are also concerned about making a living wage commensurate for the increasingly difficult job duties they have to perform." The court order raised the pay for elections judges from \$9 an hour to \$11 an hour and for alternate judges and clerks from \$8 an hour to \$10 an hour.



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Child Protective Services' Adopt-A-Room Project



Adopt-a-Room: Dr. Garcia and staff recently donated money and time to refurbish and decorate two Texas Department of Family Protective Services (FPS) visitation rooms. The rooms are used by parents for supervised visitation of their children. The FPS "Adopt-A-Room" project invited individuals and organizations to donate resources and spend time refurbishing visitation rooms that were in serious need of updating to make them more comfortable for children and families.

Dallas County Health & Human Services Update



2014 West Nile Virus Season

West Nile Virus (WNV) season lasts from April to October. So far in 2014 there have been 3 WNV cases and zero deaths. In 2013 there were 19 cases and 3 deaths and in 2012 there were 393 total cases resulting in 19 deaths. The numbers have improved as Dallas County Health & Human services has increased public awareness and abatement strategies, but the risks still exist so please remember the 4

Ds: Dress, DEET, Drain standing water (including gutters), and remember to stay inside at Dawn and Dusk when mosquitos are most active.



Chikungunya Virus (CHIKV)

The Chikungunya Virus is transmitted to people by mosquitoes. The virus causes high fever and severe joint pain that starts suddenly. It can also cause headache,

muscle pain and rash. CHIKV does not often result in death, but the symptoms can be disabling, and some people may get severe complications. There is no specific medication available to treat CHIKV and there is no vaccine to prevent it. Avoiding mosquito bites is the key to avoid CHIKV. The mosquitos that transmit CHIKV are different than West Nile Virus mosquitoes. They are black with white stripes and they are aggressive daytime biters. Dallas County Health & Human Services efforts to fight CHIKV - **SSLAPP: Surveillance, Source Reduction, Larvicide, Adulticide, Public Awareness and Personal Protection.** For more information, please call (214) 819-2000, or visit www.DallasCounty.org/hhs