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## LETTERS, FAXES AND E-MAILS TO THE EDITOR

### Apply pressure

Every week, College Sports Television carries a Conference USA football game that undoubtedly would interest fans in this area because four Texas schools are members of C-USA. But the cable company that has the franchise for Euless and other area cities doesn't carry them. And what about the Mountain West Network, which is scheduled to carry TCU games?

Inasmuch as the cable company is granted an exclusive franchise, isn't it time for city officials to apply some pressure in the right places?

**John L. Ashinhurst, Euless**

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**Dale L. Douglass**



**KERRVILLE** — Dale L. Douglass, 74, formerly of Eules, passed away Saturday, Sept. 23, 2006.

**Funeral:** 1 p.m. Wednesday at First United Methodist Church in Kerrville. Burial: Garden of Memories Cemetery. Arrangements are under the direction of Kerrville Funeral Home.

In 1955, she moved to Eules, where she owned and operated Eules Florist for 39 years.

She was preceded in death by son, Stephen Douglass.

**Survivors:** Her husband, Frank; son, Dr. Cary Douglass and wife, Amanda; grandchildren, Will and Nick Douglass; and her extended family, Victor and Martha Milting, Margaret Hivick, June Graves and Fred and Sybil Ricketts.

Kerrville Funeral Home  
Kerrville, (830) 895-5111  
View and sign guestbook at  
[www.star-telegram.com/obituaries](http://www.star-telegram.com/obituaries)

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**EULESS**

**Council narrowly  
approves slight  
tax-rate reduction**

**By NOOR ELASHI**  
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

EULESS — The city's property tax rate will drop slightly next fiscal year.

The City Council voted 4-3 Tuesday in a second reading to cut the tax rate to 48.95 cents per \$100 of assessed property value, down from this year's 49.17 cents.

Opposing the tax rate were council members Charlie Miller, Carl Tyson and Glenn Porterfield. They argued that the property tax could go lower.

The tax bill for the owner of an average-priced home will increase to \$519.13 from \$509.85 this year. The calculations include a 20 percent homestead exemption. The average home value increased to \$132,567 from \$129,595 this year.

On Sept. 12, council members approved an \$80.1 million budget, which includes the much-debated \$10 million in employee benefits. Last year's budget was \$73.8 million.

The tax rate and budget will take effect Sunday, when the fiscal year begins.

Noor Elashi, 817-685-3854  
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## NORTHEAST TARRANT BRIEF

### UTA Symphony to play free concert

**EULESS** - The University of Texas at Arlington Symphony Orchestra will present *And God Made the Whales* and other pieces in a free concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at the Villages of Bear Creek Amphitheater, 1951 Bear Creek Parkway.

The orchestra, conducted by Sergio Espinosa, will be accompanied by recordings of sounds from the Atlantic Ocean. The performance will include a presentation about whales and how they communicate. 817-685-1666.

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**TRANSPORTATION**

# Rides for those who need them

■ The free rides are available in Hurst, Euless and Bedford. But they must be booked 48 hours in advance.

**By NOOR ELASHI**  
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Desperately need a ride? Well, it could be free.

One of United Way of Tarrant County/Northeast's newest projects — HEB Transit — offers transportation to low-income residents who need to be picked up and dropped off within the city limits of Hurst, Euless and Bedford.

The transit system, which began operating Aug. 1, was introduced Wednesday during the United Way's 14th annual Report to the Community at the Hyatt Regency DFW hotel.

Nearly 150 people applauded the efforts of the nonprofit organization that provides social services to local

communities. They gave a standing ovation to mark the 10th anniversary of the Northeast Volunteer Dental Clinic and the announcement of its new name — the Michael Wehrle Volunteer Dental Clinic, after the dentist who helped found it.

The need for transportation for low-income workers in Northeast Tarrant County became clear through a survey United Way officials conducted in 2004. After additional research early last year, volunteers decided to start a transportation system to serve residents in Hurst, Euless and Bedford, said Henry DelCastillo, the HEB Transit project chairman.

"The general feeling when we started was this is hard to tackle. Now it's a reality," DelCastillo said.

Residents must apply and meet certain qualifications to get a transit pass. After that, everything can be arranged through a phone call, said James Powell, HEB Transit project manager.

The rides, which are free, need to be booked at least 48 hours in advance. Residents may get morning and after-

**IN THE KNOW**

## HEB Transit

- Operating hours: Monday - Friday 6 to 10 a.m. and 2 to 6 p.m.
- For information on qualifying for a pass, call 817-283-8746, ext. 41, or 817-399-7500
- Other United Way programs include Teens Networking for Tomorrow, Haltom City Senior Isolation Demonstration Project and JPS Health Center.
- United Way of Tarrant County  
[www.unitedwaytarrant.org](http://www.unitedwaytarrant.org)

noon rides Monday through Friday.

"Our main focus is getting people to their jobs, but we're not restricting it to that," Powell said.

Tammy Dittmer of Euless, whose family has one vehicle, is among the residents who now use HEB Transit. For the past two weeks, the mother of one son has gotten rides to her job at Target in Hurst, and she's really loving it, she said.

"They called me three times already to check if I needed anything else... I feel like they really care," Dittmer said.

Noor Elashi, 817-685-3854  
 nelashi@star-telegram.com



STAR-TELEGRAM/LAURIE L. WARD

Georgia Kidwell, left, chairwoman of the JPS Northeast Advisory Board, announced that the Northeast Volunteer Dental Clinic has been renamed in honor of Dr. Michael Wehrle, right, who helped found it.

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## City & School Libraries Celebrate with Joint Meeting

Library professionals from the three public libraries and 28 school libraries of the Hurst-Eules-Bedford ISD recently held a joint luncheon at the Bedford Public Library.

The informal luncheon was in keeping with an annual tradition, begun many years ago, to provide a forum for these working professionals to come together at the beginning of each new school year to share ideas and information regarding their individual programs.

"HEB students benefit from the close working relationship between the public and school libraries," Barbara Richardson, coordinator of media and technology for HEB ISD, said. "School librarians are made aware of the vast resources available to their students through their public libraries, while public librarians are kept in the loop of school reading lists and research assignments that may impact their young patrons."

Jeanne Green, Community Services Supervisor, and Carrie



Glindeman, Youth Programming Assistant, both of the Bedford Public Library, hosted this year's event. Also in attendance

were Beverly McCalmont, Youth/Outreach Services Coordinator at Eules Public Library and three Hurst Public Library professionals, Beverly Kirkendall, Library Manager, Youth Services; Terri Bonow, Library Manager, Adult Services; and Rosalyn Reyna-Rodriguez, Assistant Librarian/Youth Services.



Deborah Rogers pictured above with trophy for the most students complete summer reading program

The HEB ISD Library Services program sponsored the luncheon.

During the luncheon, Deborah Rogers of Lakewood Elementary School was awarded a trophy for having the most students complete the summer reading program at the Eules Public Library.

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## A New Chapter of The Lions Club: H.E.B.



The Northeast Times recently met with the New H-E-B Chapter of The Lions Club. Pictured above are members of the H-E-B Lions Club: Justine Green, Jennifer Haring of Farmers Insurance, Casey Coon Farmers Insurance, Gary Landers Eules P.D, Bob Freeman Eules P.D, Kay Tinguely Administaff, Pam Hernalsteen HEB-ISD. Ed Stebbins, John V. Long Edwards Jones, Mike Culpeper Retired FWPD. If you would like to join the Club or would like more information please contact: Mrs. Green at 817.372.5902 or email: [jharing@farmersagent.com](mailto:jharing@farmersagent.com)

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# New GM For AMF Eules Lanes



Lets all Welcome Mr. Rusty Dickinson the New General Manager of AMF Eules Lanes, pictured above with Mrs. Cheryl Newman AMF Eules Lanes Youth Director. We would like to thank Mr. Dickinson and AMF Eules Lanes for their support of the Northeast Times .

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# FROM THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP



**Mayor Saleh  
Eules**

**EULESS** The city of Eules along with all other cities in North Texas begins our fiscal year in October. We have just completed our budget cycle and voted on the tax rate. Our city was able to decrease the tax rate while planning many new services for our citizens.

We are proud of the recently completed renovation of the Finance and Human Resources building located on the city campus. Citizens may pay their water bills there and apply for employment. Our next project is the Public Works facility currently under construction and estimated to be complete next fall. Once that is complete, all Eules facilities will either be new or renovated.

The Library is the center of activity for all our citizens. Not only does it house some of the latest books, CDs, audio books, videos, DVDs, computers with internet access, ESL classes and unique works of art but also many varied and interesting programs.

September will feature special science programs and a visit with four Texas mystery writers. The Eules Library Foundation will hold a book sale on September 29, 30 and October 1. The library meeting room will be filled with assorted reading materials and some great "finds."

Eules citizens will travel to the DFW Airport to greet our returning military members the week of September 18th through the 24th. That really is a special time and we invite all citizens and friends to participate.

The city will hold our bi-annual Crud Cruiser HazMat Collection on Saturday, September 23. Eules citizens may dispose of hazardous materials that day at the library parking lot from 9-11 a.m.

We have many programs for all citizens in our Recreation Department and we refer you to the city newsmagazine, Eules Today. It lists all the times and places. It can be found online at [www.eules.org/eulesstoday](http://www.eules.org/eulesstoday).

This month, we close September with the UTA Symphony Orchestra Performance of "And God Made the Whales" at our Villages of Bear Creek Amphitheater. Come and enjoy!

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**SYMPHONY PERFORMANCE:** The University of Texas at Arlington Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sergio Espinosa, will perform "And God Created the Great Whales" by Alan Hovhaness along with other selected pieces from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Saturday at the Villages of Bear Creek Amphitheater, 1951 Bear Creek Parkway in Euless. The orchestra will play along with recordings of whale sounds from the northern Atlantic Ocean. A University of Texas at Arlington faculty member will give a presentation about these creatures of the sea and show children how whales communicate with each other. The event is free and open to the public. For information, call 817-685-1666 or visit [www.euless.org](http://www.euless.org).

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## TRANSPORTATION

# Corridor plans are released

A master plan for the Trans-Texas Corridor, a proposed toll road and rail line from the Oklahoma border to San Antonio, was released Thursday by Cintra Zachry, the project management firm. To read the plan, visit [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov).

## Parts could be under construction in 5 years

By **GORDON DICKSON**  
STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

A rail line looping around the west side of Fort Worth would be under construction no later than 2016, possibly accompanied by a half-circular toll road stretching from Alliance Airport to southwest Fort Worth and Mansfield, a Trans-Texas Corridor master plan unveiled Thursday shows.

The release of the long-

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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awaited financial and development plan comes two years after the Texas Department of Transportation hired a private firm, Cintra Zachry, to alleviate traffic on Interstate 35 over the next 50 years.

For Tarrant County residents, the plan promises less congestion along Interstate 35W, as vehicles — mainly trucks — are lured to the Trans-Texas Corridor by speed limits of up to 85 mph and higher load limits. The combination of roads and rail line would form a skeletal structure for eventual development of the Alliance Airport area to the north, southwest Fort Worth and Johnson County to the south.

The 1,600-page document shows a rail line curving west of Fort Worth through Parker and Wise counties. Construction would begin between 2012 and 2016. A parallel toll road would follow sometime between 2017 and 2055.

But there's also the possibility that both the road and rail line could be built sooner and closer to Fort Worth, Cintra Zachry officials say. The private company has notified the Texas Department of Transportation that it would like to begin developing the area, possibly within five years, although a detailed study was not yet ready for the master plan.

The master plan shows a proposed connector road leading roughly from Texas 114 near Texas Motor Speedway to Farm Road 1187 in southwest Fort Worth to Texas 360 in Mansfield.

"It's a living document. We anticipate it will be updated, possibly a couple times per year," said Phil Russell, the Transportation Department's turnpike director.

Overall, the master plan shows the proposed toll road beginning at I-35 on the Oklahoma border, stretching around the east side of Dallas and then running roughly parallel to I-35 east of Waco, Austin and San Antonio.

The master plan offers a detailed analysis of the costs of building the Trans-Texas Corridor, plus detailed projections about how many motorists might use each segment of the 370-mile-long corridor, how much they might pay and how that money would pay for the roads over time.

Among the highlights:

- Parts of the toll road — 260 miles' worth — would be under construction within five years and open by 2014.

- Tolls would be about 15 cents a mile for cars, 59 cents for trucks. At that rate, a 145-mile, one-way trip from south of Mansfield to Austin would be \$22 — or for truckers, \$85.

- Initially, the roads would be two lanes in each direction, with cars and trucks sharing space. Eventually, the corridor would be expanded to feature two truck-only lanes and three car lanes in each direction. There would also be room for freight and passenger rail, and underground pipes for water, electricity, petroleum and other utility lines.

- Total cost of designing and building the corridor would be \$8.8 billion, up from previous estimates of \$7.2 billion.

- Private companies would pay that cost, plus fees totaling \$1.9 billion, in exchange for the

right to collect tolls for 50 years. The state Transportation Department would use the money on other work.

- Railroad companies can't be forced to use new tracks, but more than half of all cargo would likely be diverted to the new corridor, according to Cintra Zachry estimates.

- While it's considered a privately funded project, a third of the road construction and design costs — about \$3.2 billion — would be in the form of federal transportation loans. The federal government would be repaid over 35 years, with interest.

The \$3.2 billion would double the number of projects funded by Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loans since Congress created the program in 1998.

"It's a loan program made possible by federal gas taxes paid by everyone in America, including citizens in Texas," Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Ric Williamson of Weatherford said. "Since Texans only get back 70 percent of federal transportation taxes ... we'd be remiss if

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## TRANSPORTATION | NORTHEAST TARRANT COUNTY

# Getting to and from

■ Van service provides a vital transportation link for needy residents of Hurst, Euless and Bedford.

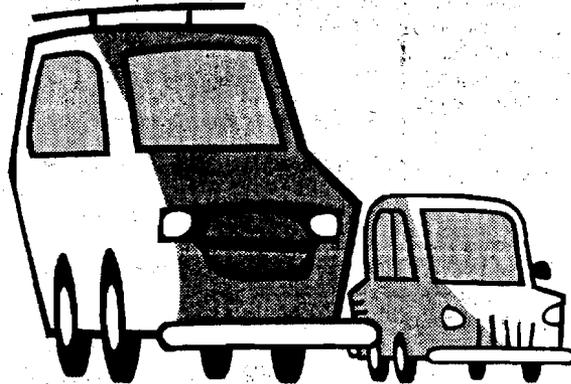
United Way of Tarrant County and several churches and social service agencies have joined in an effort to fill what several surveys have shown to be a crucial need: transportation to and from work, doctors offices and other locations for needy residents of Hurst, Euless and Bedford.

HEB Transit launched its on-demand van service in August. It's a good step, and it's about time.

Only one city in Northeast Tarrant County — Richland Hills — has public transit. The Trinity Railway Express commuter train passes through the area on its route between Fort Worth and Dallas. Grapevine voters will decide Nov. 7 whether to begin collecting a sales tax that will allow their city to have commuter rail service on a future route between Fort Worth and D/FW Airport.

For members of the 1,300 households in Hurst, Euless and Bedford with no vehicles, and for others with limited or unreliable access to private transportation, the problem remains how to get to work or even get to the train station. You can't hold a job if you can't get there on time every day.

HEB Transit aims to resolve that



THE SEATTLE TIMES/PAUL SCHMID VIA MCT

problem by allowing people to receive transportation vouchers from five agencies: Catholic Charities, the Christian Connection, the NEED Center, St. John the Apostle Catholic Church and Workforce Solutions. First-year pilot funding totaling \$110,000 comes from United Way, the North Central Texas Council of Governments and the Tarrant County Workforce Board.

Van rides are provided by appointment only, and for now only to and from locations in Hurst, Euless and Bedford. Riders also have access to the TRE stations in far northeast Fort Worth. One of those, the CentrePort station, connects them with a shuttle service to D/FW Airport and its thousands of jobs.

It's a start — one that will enable these agencies to begin to explore the need and demand for public transportation in Northeast Tarrant County.

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we missed an opportunity to get that loan."

■ Cintra Zachry will keep a special relationship with the Transportation Department for years to come. The state paid the company \$3.5 million for the master plan, and it awarded Cintra Zachry a \$1.4 billion contract to build a portion of the corridor near Austin.

Otherwise, the state has no obligation to hire Cintra Zachry for any other work, but it could award the company part or all of the \$8.8 billion project without putting it out to bid.

It's a new way of doing business. In the past, the Transportation Department awarded contracts to the low bidder. Now, a private firm is selected based on the "best value" for the state — which can include price, but also factors such as ability to work quickly — to manage the entire project.

Cintra Zachry has already said it wants exclusive rights to build the rail line around Fort Worth, and the outer highway loop around Dallas-Fort Worth.

Even so, officials say, Cintra Zachry has expressed interest

all along in sharing the workload for other portions of the Trans-Texas Corridor with other private developers.

Cintra Zachry will also update the master plan, perhaps once or twice a year, for a yet-to-be-set fee.

"We wanted a long-term partner," said Amadeo Saenz, the Transportation Department's assistant director.

■ With the release of the master plan during Thursday's Texas Transportation Commission meeting, Transportation Department officials say they'll likely release financial documents soon that have been the subject of a freedom of information lawsuit filed by the Texas attorney general's office.

The lawsuit calls for the Transportation Department and Cintra Zachry to release financial and development details for the Trans-Texas Corridor.

Cintra Zachry had argued that the information involved trade secrets, but the release of the master plan likely nullifies that argument.

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