

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTN Y CRIM MCKAMIE RIDGWAY(2) DECK BROWN
YOUNG McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF ANIMAL CNTR

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INSIGHT

A Eules organization seeks long-term care for pet parrots, which can live for 50 years

Helping feathered friends find way to new homes

Story and Photos By **KELLEY CHINN** kchinn@star-telegram.com

Kathryn Jones started with four birds, then people started giving her their birds.

"We needed to find a solution for them because they will outlive us," Jones said. With proper care, parrots can live more than 50 years in captivity.

Parrots and People was founded by Jones to create long-term solutions for companion birds. "We've been around for 10 years, and I think we've taken in a total of about 85 birds. I could take in 85 birds a month if I had the facilities and the cash," she said.

The Eules-based nonprofit organization uses volunteers to help care for the birds, provide foster care or adopt the birds. But it's not a simple process.

"Volunteers clean cages before they're ever allowed to take a bird, and we usually let the bird pick the person because if the bird really likes that person they will never have a problem with that bird," Jones said.

Still, Jones is careful about where the birds are placed.

"Our birds aren't for sale. There are people who've entrusted us to make the right decision for them," she said.

Online
■ Hear Kathryn Jones talk about Parrots and People and see additional photos at www.star-telegram.com/videos.
■ To find out more about the organization, visit their Web site at www.parrotsandpeople.org.
521 Essex Place



Kathryn Jones, founder of Parrots and People, holds two of her first parrots, Sammie, left, and Crackers.

STAR-TELEGRAM/KELLEY CHINN

"We've been around for 10 years, and I think we've taken in a total of about 85 birds. I could take in 85 birds a month if I had the facilities and the cash."

Kathryn Jones, founder of Parrots and People

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EULESS

Man honored for saving jumper

Police received more than 100 calls about the would-be jumper, but only one person tried to help.

By MARK AGEE
rimagee@star-telegram.com

Casey Randolph was driving home one Monday early last month when he saw a weeping man step over the railing of Euless' Main Street overpass and prepare to jump onto Texas 183.

Randolph, 26, of Euless hastily parked his car along Main Street and pulled the 19-year-old man back onto solid ground, and then held the man down until police arrived.

"I tried calling out to him, but he acted like he didn't hear me," said Randolph, a graduate student in nursing at Texas Wesleyan University. "I just started praying about what I should do. His hands were off the rail so I grabbed him."

At this week's Euless City Council

meeting, Randolph was recognized with a Lifesaving Award for the "act of bravery" on Feb. 4. The council and those in attendance gave him a standing ovation.

Police received about 100 calls from motorists and bystanders who saw the jumper, but Randolph was the only person who approached the man, police Lt. John Williams said.

The distraught man was taken to John Peter Smith Hospital's mental health facility and is receiving treatment, Williams said.

"There is no doubt he is alive today because of the actions of this young man," Williams said. "That was no small man he pulled back over that railing, either."

Randolph said he thinks lots of people would have done what he did.

"He didn't fight me or anything. I never felt like I was in any danger," Randolph said. "He was just crying, and I

"There is no doubt he is alive today because of the actions of this young man.

Lt. John Williams, Euless police

was just praying for him."

Randolph's mother, Janace Verlei, traveled from Odessa for the ceremony, which coincided with her son's 26th birthday celebration.

She said his biggest fear was that he would hurt the situation by getting involved.

"I think God placed him at the right time and place to help," Verlei said. "I'm proud that he was willing to put himself out there when other people are afraid to get involved in the others' struggles."

MARK AGEE, 817-685-3821



Casey Randolph sits near the spot on the Main Street overpass over Texas 183 in Euless where he saw a weeping man step over the railing and prepare to jump. The Euless City Council presented a lifesaving award to Randolph for pulling the 19-year-old to safety and holding him until authorities arrived.

STAR-TELEGRAM/
LAURIE L. WARD

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EULESS

Multitasking has become a way of life for one-woman job bank

Her list of jobs and job descriptions can go on for pages and pages.

By TERRY LEE GOODRICH
tgoodrich@star-telegram.com

EULESS — Evelyn Daniel is the go-to person for can-do.

Your motorcycle broke down and you need it hauled? Call Daniel, owner of Cyclone

Motorcycle Rescue. If you need Swiss skin care — or organic nutrition products — Daniel sells them.

Her slogan for her house-keeping and personal organization business is "Let's Get It Together." She works seasonally as a receptionist at an H&R Block in Bedford. Toss in volunteer work for charities, and

Daniel has a finger in more pies than you'll find in some bakeries.

"Somebody asked me, 'How can you have five jobs?' I have to," said Daniel, 51. "I can't depend on anybody to take care of me. We have to be responsible for ourselves because big business and Uncle



Evelyn Daniel, a longtime motorcycle aficionado, is used to working a variety of jobs. "Somebody asked me, 'How can you have five jobs?' I have to," she says.

STAR-TELEGRAM/LAURIE L. WARD

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Sam are not going to do it.”

Daniel, a native of Lamar, Ark., grew up in northern Colorado, the middle child of seven children. The Eules woman — who nicknamed herself “Fetch” — credits her father, a lumberjack, and her mother, a waitress and driver of a logging truck, for her work ethic.

In the 34 years since she graduated from high school in Temple, she has juggled many other jobs in Texas.

Among them:

- Co-operating a crop-dusting business in Laredo.
- Selling roses at bars in San Antonio.
- Waitressing in Texas border cities.
- Bookkeeping for a Raymondville trucking firm.
- Detailing automobiles in Grapevine.
- Catering for a Grapevine bakery.

None of this is what she dreamed of as a little girl.

“I wanted to be a secretary when I grew up. I took typing in high school, but I couldn’t type. I *still* can’t type; I hunt and peck,” she said with a laugh.

But she was a whiz in her general business course. Her

“I’ve always had more than one job and a variety of jobs. And I’ve been blessed with jobs I loved.

Evelyn Daniel

project was planning an itinerary and budget for a motorcycle trip to go camping in the Rockies — an indicator of her love affair with motorcycles.

In 1992, she moved from San Antonio and bought a Grapevine house on “a handshake and a prayer,” she said. After do-it-yourself improvements, including roofing and drywall, she sold it at a big enough profit to pay cash for a new home in Eules, a washer and dryer — and a slot machine for her long-time boyfriend, Tom Faoro. He loves his black Harley-Davidson as much as she loves her blue Kawasaki.

They started the motorcycle rescue and transport business three years ago, a plan hatched after Faoro’s motorcycle broke down on a weekend. They have an en-

closed motorcycle trailer and haul for AAA and various dealerships, helping riders who are stranded or need their motorcycles moved elsewhere.

Daniel’s motorcycle mania extends to volunteerism, like being the North Texas liaison for the Ride for Kids, a national fundraiser for research on pediatric brain tumors.

Last year, Daniel was chosen 2007 Client Service Coordinator for a nine-office district of H&R Block.

“She was just phenomenal,” said Sue Ellen Kucharski, Daniel’s former office manager.

At Grapevine’s Palace Theatre, Daniel was named Volunteer of the Year in 2003.

“She was dependable, willing to learn all jobs, whether greeting or ushering or popping popcorn,” said Elspeth McDonald, former theater manager. “She was always smiling.”

In Daniel’s work, “I’ve always had more than one job and a variety of jobs,” she said. “And I’ve been blessed with jobs I loved.”

TERRY LEE GOODRICH,
817-685-3812

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Barnett Shale

Drilling deep for answers about the natural gas boom in North Texas

March 19, 2008

Eules organizes gas leasing forum

With energy companies approaching property owners for gas leases, the city of Eules is sponsoring the **Eules Gas Lease Forum**, 7 p.m. Thursday April 17 at the First Baptist Church Eules, Worship Center, 1000 Airport Freeway in Eules.

Speakers:

- Ed Ireland, executive director of the Barnett Shale Energy Education Council, will give an overview of the drilling process and speak on the economic benefits of Barnett Shale production. The council, formed last year, is funded by energy companies.
- **Bob West**, a partner in the Whitaker, Chalk, Swindle and Sawyer, LLP law firm, will give tips on what to look for in a lease and how to approach negotiations with energy companies. Several neighborhoods have hired West in recent months to represent them in, or advise them on, talks with energy companies on a gas lease.
- Representatives from Chesapeake Energy, Dale Resources, XTO Energy, and Arrington Oil "will be on site to answer questions," the city says in a news release.

"With the influx of gas leasing occurring in our neighborhoods, the need for more information about Barnett Shale, the leasing process and neighborhood negotiations is great," the city says. The forum will "give residents an opportunity to ask questions and get responses directly from the source."



Here's more information about the Oakwood Terrace community in south Eules, which is organizing.

"We have not yet received any offers as a group," Dale Heisch, an organizer reports. Dale Resources has been offering leases in the neighborhood since last Spring, he said. "They have raised their last offer... (to) \$5,000 per acre or \$1,000 lot minimum, with 5-year primary term, 20 percent royalty."

Cheaha Land Services also has contacted the group, Heisch reports, "but we have not negotiated with them yet either." The group plans to meet soon.

[Click here to visit the Oakwood Terrace web site.](#) To join the group, you may send its organizers an email at EulesOakwood@yahoo.com.

[Click here to read the City of Eules' gas drilling ordinance.](#)

-- Scott Nishimura

(Photo: Glass bluebird awards for attendance at Oakwood Terrace Elementary)

Posted at 12:04 PM in [Arrington Oil](#), [Chesapeake Energy](#), [Dale Resources](#), [Eules](#), [Oakwood Terrace \(Eules\)](#), [XTO Energy](#) | [Permalink](#)

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MAIN STREET



WHO WE ARE...

6 The number of code enforcement officers in the city of Euless.

Source: city of Euless

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Martha Jean Whitener



EULESS — Martha Jean Whitener, 88, a loving aunt, sister-in-law, grandmother and friend, completed a long battle with Alzheimer's disease on Tuesday, March 18, 2008, in Bedford.

GRAVESIDE SERVICE: 10 a.m. Friday in Moore Memorial Gardens. Visitation: 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home.

MEMORIALS: In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to First United Methodist Church, 106 N. Main St., Euless, Texas 76040.

Jean was born March 15, 1920, in Cresson. She worked as a secretary for the Euless Water Department and was a member of the Euless Historical Society.

Jean had been a member of the First United Methodist Church in Euless for over 60 years.

Jean was preceded in death by her twin sisters, Anna Fay and Ella May; her daughter, Nancy Whitener Estes; and her husband, Leon Whitener.

Jean will be remembered as a woman who loved God, her family and her friends and will be deeply missed.

The family sends a special thank-you to VITAS Hospice.

SURVIVORS: Sister-in-law, Evelyn Himes; niece, Shirley Melson and husband, Lin; son-in-law, Richard Estes and wife, Pam; granddaughter, Holly Estes Castillo and husband, Eleazar; great-granddaughters, Isabeth and Ava Castillo; granddaughter, Stacy Estes; great-nephews, Matt and Mark Melson and their families; great-niece, Kelly Melson; and many dear friends.

Moore Funeral Home-N. Davis Drive

Arlington, 817-275-2711

View and sign guestbook at

www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

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REGIONAL ROUNDUP

EULESS

Man dies in house fire; cause being investigated

A Euless man died in a house fire early Wednesday. The two-alarm fire was reported about 3:45 a.m. Wednesday in the 800 block of North Atkerson Lane, the Euless Fire Department said. Authorities had not identified the man, who was pronounced dead at the scene, but said he appeared to be in his 60s. Investigators had yet to determine the fire's cause.

Erin Eidenshink

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Blogging the Barnett Shale

Keep up with fast-paced developments in the booming Barnett Shale natural gas field:

- North Arlington group sees \$15,000 lease offers.
- South Arlington group organizes ahead of offers.
- Euless to host city-sponsored gas-drilling forum.

These and more on the Barnett Shale blog at www.star-telegram.com/blogs

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EULESS

Firefighters find man's body in burning house

The 62-year-old man's body was found at the front of the home.

By MARK AGEE
rimagee@star-telegram.com

EULESS — Firefighters found a man dead early Wednesday while battling a house fire in south Euleess, officials said.

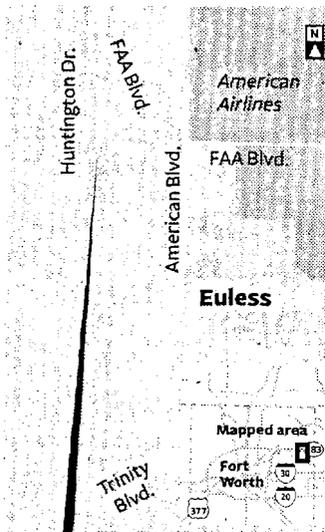
Investigators are not sure how the 3:45 a.m. fire started at the house at 832 Atkerson Lane, said Melissa Thomas, a Fire Department spokeswoman. It took 54 firefighters from four cities about 30 minutes to put the fire out, officials said.

An autopsy is planned to determine the cause of the man's death. He was identified by the Tarrant County medical examiner's office as Frank Dusek, 62.

Investigators believe the blaze started in the living room, Thomas said. Dusek's body was found in the front of the house, according to a news release.

Officials said the home did not have working smoke detectors.

Police and firefighters carried more than a dozen guns out of the single-story brick home. The removal of weapons from a possible crime scene is routine, Thomas said.



The body of a 62-year-old man was found near the front of the home in the 800 block of Atkerson Lane in Euleess.

STAR-TELEGRAM/TIM BEDISO



Euleess firefighter Scott Evans removes firearms from the house on Atkerson Lane. More than a dozen guns were found. S-T/R. JEENA JACOB

Smoke detectors

■ The Atkerson Lane home where the fire occurred had no working smoke detectors, officials said. The devices double the chances of escaping a house fire. Smoke detectors should be tested and the batteries replaced every six months. Safety experts also recommend replacing smoke detectors that are more than 10 years old.

■ Euleess firefighters plan to canvass the neighborhood next week to test smoke detectors and provide installation of a detector or batteries if needed. For more information, call the Euleess Fire Department at 817-685-1600.

Source: City of Euleess

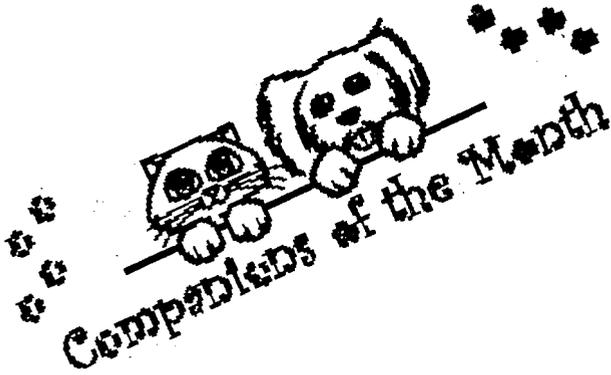
MARK AGEE, 817-685-3821

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OLIVER



Oliver is a handsome Lab about 6 yrs old with a shiny black coat. Oliver is house broken, has nice house manners, is crate trained, and likes to ride in the car. He sleeps all night on his doggy bed in his foster's bedroom.

Eules Animal Services
1517 Westpark Way
Eules, TX 76040
(817)685-1594

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FROM THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP



Mayor Saleh
Eules

THE CITY OF
EULESS

Many times you have heard us say that volunteers are our most valuable assets. Our volunteers continue to surprise us with the many hours of service they give to the city. In January 2002, the President of the United States challenged all Americans to dedicate at least two years or 4,000 hours over the course of their lives to serve others at home or abroad. In 2003, President Bush created the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation to find ways to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making in our nation. The Council comprises leaders in government, media, entertainment, business, nonprofit and volunteer service organizations as well as community volunteers. The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation created the Presidents Volunteer Service Awards program as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service. Recently, we honored special volunteers from the Eules Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association with the Presidents Volunteer Service Awards from the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation. This is the third year that members of our Police Academy Alumni Association have received these awards.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

EULESS GAS LEASE FORUM SLATED FOR APRIL

EULESS, TEXAS —With the influx gas leasing occurring in our neighborhoods, the need for more information about Barnett Shale, the leasing process and neighborhood negotiations is great. The City of Eules has coordinated a Eules Gas Lease Forum to give residents an opportunity to ask questions and get responses directly from the source.

The Eules Gas Lease Forum is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 17

at First Baptist Church Eules in the Worship Center, 1000 Airport Freeway in Eules.

Presenter Ed Ireland, executive director of the Barnett Shale Energy Education Council will give an overview of the drilling process, the benefits it provides to our community and the economic benefits. Robert West, a partner in the law office of Whitaker, Chalk, Swindle and Sawyer, LLP has extensive experience extensive experience in business, real estate, and oil and gas transactions.

His presentation will focus on tips for neighborhoods negotiating leases and important clauses to look for in the lease.

In addition, representatives from Chesapeake, Dale, XTO and Arrington will be on site to answer questions the audience may have, which will be the main focus of the forum.

For more information please call 817-685-1623.

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RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Cities must make up for pension shortfall

Changes to the Texas Municipal Retirement System cause several area cities to face big increases in payroll contributions.

By **BILL TEETER** and **ADRIENNE NETTLES**
 bteeter@star-telegram.com, anettles@star-telegram.com

The massive retirement system that covers many of the state's municipal workers is calling on Texas cities to help shrink a \$2.9 billion shortfall, and now the cities must figure out how to handle increased costs.

Reducing benefits for retirees or increasing taxes are among options open to the cities, but administrators say they won't know the effect of changes to the Texas Municipal Retirement System until they start work on next year's budgets.

In most cases, city officials say they doubt the increased pension costs will mean property tax rate increases. But whether cities will curtail retiree benefits remains an open question.

The costs are going up because the municipal retirement system has changed the way it calculates two common annually repeating retirement plan features: cost-of-living increases and the updated service credit, which increases retirement benefits by taking into account pay raises late in an employee's career, said Bill Wallace, a TMRS

spokesman.

The funding shortfall, called an "unfunded liability" by accountants, is not unusual for public pension funds, said Eric Henry, the retirement system's executive director. It is more efficient for pension funds to operate with slight gaps between assets and future projections, Henry said.

TMRS maintains a separate account for each city's retirement funds. Many of the accounts were falling farther behind each year under the old actuarial rules, which allowed cities to fund cost-of-living increases and updated service credits when they were accrued, Wallace said.

Under the new rules, they must be funded in advance.

"For a lot of cities the unfunded liability was getting larger, not smaller, especially cities with a lot of retirees," Wallace said.

Fort Worth is not a member of TMRS and maintains its own pension fund. But the city has had its own pension troubles and has been grappling with a projected \$410 million shortfall.

Each TMRS member city receives a letter each year that lists the percentage of the city payroll that must be paid into the fund the following year. The retirement system mailed letters last month with preliminary figures for 2009 that included large rate increases for many cities. Some smaller cities reported declines.

The final numbers for 2009 should be mailed in May.

Cities can choose to cover the entire increase in one year, phase in the increase over eight years or reduce retirees' benefits to reduce the city's contribution.

In Tarrant County, Dalworthington Gardens faces the largest percentage-point increase. It now pays 16.72 percent of its payroll into the retirement system; that number is projected to increase to 23.97 percent next year, a difference of 7.25 percentage points.

Arlington is paying 14.66 percent of its payroll into the retirement system this year, but next year's payment is projected to be 21.72 percent, an increase of more than 7 percentage points. If Arlington covered the increase in one year and left benefits unchanged, it would cost the city about \$7 million more next year, said April Nixon, Arlington's management resources director.

Most cities, unsurprisingly, are planning to take advantage of the eight-year phase-in option.

That's the case in Hurst, where the contribution rate could increase from 15.66 percent to a projected 22.42 percent. Hurst will have to carefully evaluate the cost-of-living increases it gives to retirees each year, City Manager Allan Weegar wrote in an e-mail.

Wallace said TMRS plans to pay off the \$2.9 billion deficit over 30 years. The payoff may not happen as planned because the system's financial situation will change over the years, but aiming at the target strengthens the plan, Henry said.

"It gives us a safety margin in shooting for paying it off over an amortization period, because it is too hard to know what is going to happen over the next 30 years," Henry said.

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Some examples

In coming months, area towns and cities will begin deciding how to cover increased retirement costs for their employees as they work on next year's budgets.

Below is information about municipalities whose contribution rates could increase by at least 5 percentage points.

Dalworthington Gardens

Eligible employees: 27

Current contribution: 16.72% of payroll

Projected contribution: 23.97% of payroll

What's being considered: City Administrator Melinda Brittain says city staffers are researching all options to address the increase. Research will then be presented to the City Council. "Predicting an impact to the city or employees would be premature at this time," she said.

Arlington

Eligible employees: 2,417

Current contribution: 14.66% of payroll

Projected contribution: 21.72% of payroll

What's being considered: No decisions have been made about how the city will deal with the projected increase, said April Nixon, management resources director. An employee task force has been appointed to help the city with decisions about the retirement system changes.

Pantego

Eligible employees: 38

Current contribution: 14.63% of payroll

Projected contribution: 21.50% of payroll

What's being considered: "Depending on the financial impact, I am sure we would probably elect to phase in the changes," City Manager Doug Davis said.

Hurst

Eligible employees: 336

Current contribution: 15.66% of payroll

Projected contribution: 22.42% of payroll

What's being considered: The city plans to phase in the increase over eight years, City Manager Allan Weegar said. Hurst will try to find ways to minimize rate increases, absorb them into budgets and pay for increases with existing revenue. One goal is to keep the city's benefits unchanged, he said. "It is premature to have a final recommendation until we have analyzed all the information provided by the actuaries and TMRS," Weegar said.

Cleburne

Eligible employees: 321

Current contribution: 13.97% of payroll

Projected contribution: 20.49% of payroll

What's being considered: City Manager Chester Nolen said he expects to consider the TMRS option that allows the city to rescind its updated service credits to maintain a rate similar to what is now in place, instead of increasing it. "We are working to identify the number of both active and retirees that would be affected," he said.

Benbrook

Eligible employees: 109

Current contribution: 15.22% of payroll

Projected contribution: 21.14% of payroll

What's being considered: Benbrook expects to phase in the increase over eight years. That would cost the city about \$20,000 more per year, City Manager Andy Wayman said.

Grapevine

Eligible employees: 542

Current contribution: 13.26% of payroll

Projected increase: 18.78% of payroll

What's being considered: If the projected increase is phased in over eight years, it would cost Grapevine about \$200,000 more per year, a city official said. Once the city receives final numbers on its contribution, it will know better the steps it needs to take, the official said.

Eules

Eligible employees: 383

Current contribution: 14.26% of payroll

Projected contribution: 19.72% of payroll

What's being considered: If phased in over eight years, the projected increase would cost Eules about \$119,500 more per year out of a city budget that runs about \$97.5 million this year, said City Manager Gary McKamie. That should allow the city to continue offering updated service credits and maintain benefits, he said. "That is a small number compared to our overall budget. As with any other cost increase it will compete for funding," he said. How the city will find the money is unknown, though McKamie said the increase by itself should not affect the property tax rate.

Haltom City

Eligible employees: 304

Current contribution: 14.03% of payroll

Projected contribution: 19.28% of payroll

What's being considered: Finance Director Joel Welch said Haltom City is likely to phase in the increase over eight years. "If they just tried to swallow the elephant all at once, it would take a 4 1/2-cent increase in the tax rate, but I just don't see the council doing that," Welch said. Haltom City offers updated service credits, and there will be discussions about whether to change that part of the city's pension plan, he said. "There has been no discussion about modifying our [retirement] plan at this point," he said.

North Richland Hills

Eligible employees: 500

Current contribution: 13.41% of payroll

Projected contribution: 18.60% of payroll

What's being considered: City Manager Larry Cunningham said the city might consider changing its retirement plan, but he expects no major effect on the city budget. "It may be we can look at the updated service credit provisions. I would not see that this would have an overall adverse impact on our budget. I don't see that this would precipitate any increase on tax rates or water rates or anything else," he said. Other escalating costs are creating bigger headaches for North Richland Hills. "It's not as much as the fuel price increases," Cunningham said.

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Texas Municipal Retirement System

- More than 820 Texas cities use the retirement system.
- Its three sources of funds are: money paid by employees, matching funds from the city and the return on investments made by the fund.
- Employees covered: 132,000
- Retirees covered: 30,000
- Assets: \$14.7 billion (as of February)
- Unfunded liability: \$2.9 billion (in 2006)

What's changing?

- Pension costs are going up for cities because the retirement system has changed the way it calculates cost-of-living pay increases and updated service credits.
- Cities can turn the two benefits on or off at will. Until now, TMRS accounted for changes in these benefits each year. Most cities leave the benefits in place, and under its new system TMRS will assume the cities will leave them in place indefinitely.
- Also affecting the retirement system are changes in federal accounting procedures.

Source: Texas Municipal Retirement System

Texas Municipal Retirement System

Member cities pay a percentage of their payrolls into the retirement system each year to fund retirees' benefits. The percentage is increasing, in some cases significantly, to reduce the system's \$2.9 billion shortfall.

City/Town	Percent of payroll 2008	Percent of payroll 2009*	Percentage point change
Dalworthington Gardens	16.72%	23.97%	7.25%
Arlington	14.66%	21.72%	7.06%
Pantego	14.63%	21.50%	6.87%
Hurst	15.66%	22.42%	6.76%
Cleburne	13.97%	20.49%	6.52%
Benbrook	15.22%	21.14%	5.92%
Grapevine	13.26%	18.78%	5.52%
Eules	14.26%	19.72%	5.46%
Haltom City	14.03%	19.28%	5.25%
North Richland Hills	13.41%	18.60%	5.19%
Richland Hills	13.08%	17.83%	4.75%
Weatherford	13.98%	18.65%	4.67%
Stephenville	12.49%	17.02%	4.53%
Glen Rose	12.63%	16.95%	4.32%
Saginaw	14.37%	18.66%	4.29%
Keene	9.94%	14.16%	4.22%
River Oaks	12.42%	16.03%	3.61%
Mineral Wells	7.53%	10.98%	3.45%
Granbury	11.22%	14.58%	3.36%
Keller	12.18%	15.33%	3.15%
Mansfield	10.36%	13.45%	3.09%
Burleson	11.28%	14.27%	2.99%
Forest Hill	10.42%	13.26%	2.84%
Azle	8.20%	10.81%	2.61%
Colleyville	11.64%	13.93%	2.29%
White Settlement	8.18%	10.47%	2.29%
Lake Worth	7.75%	9.95%	2.20%
Argyle	10.71%	12.62%	1.91%
Everman	6.72%	8.49%	1.77%
Watauga	10.45%	12.13%	1.68%
Crowley	7.78%	9.07%	1.29%
Decatur	12.10%	13.31%	1.21%
Highland Village	9.60%	10.80%	1.20%
Westworth Village	5.17%	6.03%	0.86%
Flower Mound	12.09%	11.25%	0.84%
Trophy Club	12.32%	13.08%	0.76%
Springtown	6.36%	7.05%	0.69%
Haslet	11.84%	11.19%	0.65%
Godley	6.10%	5.45%	0.65%
Kennedale	10.31%	10.94%	0.63%
Sansom Park	4.45%	4.93%	0.48%
Roanoke	9.35%	9.74%	0.39%
Hudson Oaks	5.89%	5.45%	-0.44%
Blue Mound	3.85%	3.32%	-0.53%
Westover Hills	5.86%	4.47%	-1.39%
Westlake	8.76%	7.32%	-1.44%
Southlake	12.52%	14.02%	-1.50%
Joshua	3.58%	1.93%	-1.65%
Alvarado	5.81%	4.02%	-1.79%
Rhome	5.97%	4.04%	-1.93%
Tolar	8.86%	6.64%	-2.22%
Northlake	7.54%	4.04%	-3.50%

*Projected

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Looking for a fun spring outing? Just pick a weekend - any weekend

CALENDAR

Get out, get cultured,

get excited

at Northeast Tarrant's

many festivals

APRIL 5 AND 6

Weekend celebration at Bob Jones Nature Center, Southlake

Two events coincide with April's monthlong celebration of the opening of the nature center.

"We just feel like it's a good time of year, the spring," said Connie Cooley, first vice president of the historical society. "And it's in celebration of a wonderful new facility."

■ The Southlake Treasures in Your Attic Antiques Appraisal Fair is an *Antiques Roadshow*-type event hosted by the Southlake Historical Society and the nature center. Residents can get their valuables — including art, silver, pottery, linens, Indian artifacts, rare books, old photographs and sports memorabilia — appraised.

When: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 5

Cost: Southlake Treasures is free, with appraisals costing \$5 each. Appraisal tickets can be purchased at the event and in advance at the Southlake Public Library at 1400 Main St. in Southlake Town Square.

■ Explore the Cross Timbers involves a nature hike, a talk about the area ecosystem by University of Texas at Arlington professor Richard Francaviglia, and a performance by the duo Tejas.

When: 1:30 to 4 p.m. April 6

Cost: \$10, tickets available at the library and at the event.

Where: Both events are at the nature center, 355 E. Bob Jones Road, Southlake.

Information: 817-223-9606,
www.southlakehistory.org,
www.bjnc.org

ENTERTAINMENT

Save this calendar of Northeast Tarrant County's spring festivals

Star-Telegram

Spring has arrived, and so has festival season.

At least one event will take place each weekend in April in Northeast Tarrant County. The last weekend, April 25-27, will bring in some of the most popular festivals — Arbor Daze in Euless and Art in the Square in Southlake — as well as new events in Haltom City and Richland Hills.

APRIL 12

Spring Into Nash Farm, Grapevine

At the sixth annual event, visitors can go on hayrides, make crafts, watch blacksmithing and historic plowing demonstrations and help plant the spring garden on the farm, built in 1859. The theme is "Growing Together!"

The outdoor event educates children about life in Grapevine's founding days. "It's kind of a festival to kick off spring," said Lisa A. McCowan, media relations manager for the Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau.

When: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Nash Farm, 626 Ball St.

Cost: Free.

Information: 1-800-457-6338 or
817-410-3185; www.grapevinetexasusa.com.

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APRIL 18-19

A weekend of wine, Grapevine

Many people don't realize Texas is fifth among wine-producing states. "This is a great wine and culinary destination," McCowan said.

■ The jazz wine train will take visitors on a two-hour ride toward Fort Worth as they are feted with wine tastings and jazz music.

When: The train leaves at 6:40 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Where: Grapevine Cotton Belt Depot, 705 S. Main St.

Cost: \$55 a ticket

■ During the Blessing of the Vines, priests pray for a new harvest at Delaney Vineyards. The event starts with a procession that the public can participate in.

When: 11 a.m. Saturday

Where: Delaney Vineyards, 2000 Champagne Blvd.

Cost: free

■ After the blessing, participants can start on the 16th annual New Vintage Wine and Gallery Trail, in which they can sample the fare at eight local wineries and visit local art galleries.

When: Noon to 5 p.m.

Where: Various establishments

Cost: \$45, with complimentary shuttle

Information: 1-800-457-6338 or 817-410-3185; www.grapevintexasusa.com

APRIL 25-27

Art in the Square, Southlake.

The ninth annual event features 140 juried artists selling their wares; entertainment, including country band Carolina Rain; Fun Zone, an area for younger teens featuring inflatables and rides; and Kid's Korner, with face-painting and sand art. New this year is Art Off the Vine, a wine-tasting event featuring wines from Australia, Texas, Italy and California.

Event co-chairwoman Carmen Evans said the event offers activities for every age group.

"It's fun. It's addictive," she said. "I find it hard to go home."

When: 4 to 10:30 p.m. Friday, April 25; 10 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Saturday, April 26; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, April 27.

■ Art Off the Vine is 6 p.m. April 25; 4 and 6 p.m. April 26; and 3 p.m. April 27.

Where: Southlake Town Square

Cost: Art in the Square is free; Art Off the Vine is \$20, tickets available online starting April 1.

Information: www.artinthesquare.com

APRIL 26

Baker Days, Richland Hills

The city will celebrate the Baker family, which founded the city in 1946, with a parade and celebration. The event will also feature Lance Tahmahkera, the great-grandson of Quanah Parker, who will talk about Comanches.

The land was originally a Comanche hunting ground. The Baker family used it as a tree farm. Brothers Ed Baker Sr. and James Baker Jr. built the first four houses here, starting Richland Hills.

"The Historical Society wanted to do some kind of celebration and recognition of the Baker family," said Jeane Grisham, president of the Richland Hills Historical Society.

Organizers are looking for parade entries, including youngsters on bicycles and skateboarders who would be willing to dress in 1950s-style clothing.

When: 10 a.m.

Where: The parade will start at the Richland Hills Visitor's Center and Museum, on 6724 Baker Blvd., and continue to Wesley Way, just past Handley-Ederville Road. The celebration will be at the museum.

Cost: Free

Information: 682-225-2984 or 817-284-8043.

Spring Sports Fest, Haltom City

A sports festival in which children can participate in Junior Olympics skills competitions; Aquafina Pitch, Hit and Run; and the NFL Punt, Pass and Kick. Bands, bounce houses and food will be available.

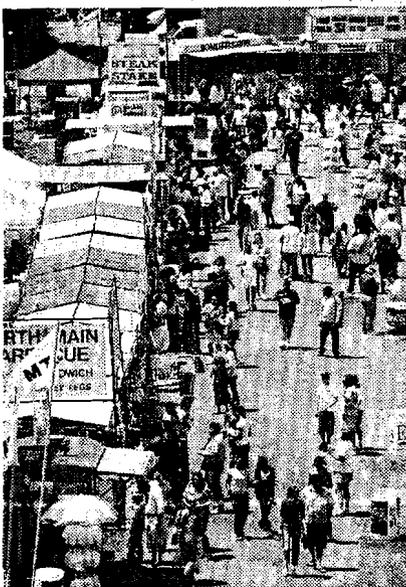
The city usually had a spring festival around Easter. Because Easter came early this year, the city staff decided to have a sports theme, parks and recreation Director Tom Henry said.

When: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday

Where: Haltom City Recreation Center and Broadway Park, 4839 Broadway Ave.

Cost: Free

Information: 817-831-6465, www.haltomcitytx.org



Arbor Daze returns to Euless in April with plenty of entertainment options and free trees for visitors. S-T ARCHIVES/M.L. GRAY

ARTSNET Main Stage, performances are planned by bands such as Havana NRG, and Crawfish and King Creole. A community stage will feature local dance groups and cheerleaders, and a Kidz Zone will have games and entertainment. New this year is a fishing tank. The event kicks off with a fun walk, sponsored by the Citizen's Fire Academy, at 7:30 a.m. Saturday, April 26.

"It's to celebrate trees and to teach children the important of trees in the urban areas," said Michael Davenport, Euless' special events coordinator. Plus, "Some people think of Euless as a community by the airport. We're so much more than that."

When: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., April 26; 2 to 6 p.m., April 27

Where: City Hall Campus, 201. N. Ector Dr.

Cost: Free

Information: www.arbordaze.org

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APRIL 26-27

Arbor Daze, Euless

The 20th annual event features the Forestry Village, which will teach kids about the importance of trees and give away free trees to visitors. On the

MAY 16-18

Main Street Days Outdoor Adventure, Grapevine

Outdoor activities — including scuba diving, kayaking, wall climbing, bungee jumping and carnival rides — come to Main Street. Plus, there will be bands on four stages, BMX bikers and a lumberjack show.

The 24th annual event kicks off the summer and promotes Grapevine as a premier outdoor destination.

"It's just great for family and for kids," McCowan said.

When: 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Friday, May 16; 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Saturday, May 17; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday, May 18

Where: Downtown Grapevine

Cost: \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors 62 years and older; \$5 for children 6 to 12; free for children 6 and younger; \$15 for weekend pass pin; \$20 for souvenir weekend pass; Free on Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Information: 1-800-457-6338 or 817-410-3185; www.grapevinetexasusa.com

JESSICA DELEÓN, 817-685-3932

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An unexpected end to an unexpected path

By GARY FICKES

Special to the Star-Telegram

That Saturday was going to be a great day for the Fickes family.

Our middle son, Corey, was to be married that night to a wonderful woman. Even though I had been in the hospital for the previous 30 days, my doctor let me come home two days before the wedding.

I would not attend, but I could visit with family and friends beforehand.

Corey and his brother, Chris, arrived early that Saturday. I was fixing breakfast — my first non-hospital food in weeks — when the phone rang. My wife, Cathey, answered it. I paid no attention. I was doing something important: making the perfect over-easy egg.

As I prepared to take my first bite, my sons surrounded me. One snatched my breakfast, and the other took away my iced tea.

"What are you doing?" I asked. "Give me my food back."

Chris said I couldn't eat anything. The telephone call was from the hospital's transplant coordinator. They had found a liver, and I needed to rush back to Methodist Dallas Hospital.

What an amazing day: I'd share Corey and Kacey's wedding date with the miracle of an organ transplant.

17,000 Approximate number of Americans on a waiting list for a liver transplant.

6,500 Liver transplants performed in the United States in 2005.

98,346 Patients on waiting lists for an organ transplant

Sources: American Liver Foundation, Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network

Bad news, good news, bad news

My saga began in 2002 when I was diagnosed with a hereditary liver disease known as hemochromatosis, which causes the liver to accumulate excess iron. My doctor said that of all the major liver problems, this was the easiest to treat — but not cure.

I would need to go through a series of phlebotomy treatments (old-fashioned bloodletting), which would bring my iron levels down to an acceptable range and stop additional liver damage. This could take up to two years and require check-ups every six months for the rest of my life.

That all sounded fine. I've got a disease that's treatable, one that I inherited from my parents. I expected to get it under control within a short time. I can live with this.

Oh, and there's one other thing, the doctor said.

"You have about 35 years of accumulated liver damage that is not repairable. You will probably need a liver transplant within the next two to five years."

Fast-forward to 2007.

Dr. Jeffery Weinstein with the Liver Institute at Methodist Dallas Hospital tells me that without a successful transplant, my life expectancy is only six to 24 months. Now take that information home and tell the family!

Liver disease is horrible. One day, you're on top of the world. Two days later, you're in the hospital.

After more testing than one could imagine, the doctors (specialists in livers, respiratory, cardiac, kidney, gastroenterology, hematology, and psychiatry, as well as a social worker and financial specialist) meet every Thursday to evaluate your case.

Their concerns: Will a new liver give you the ability to extend your life in a positive way? Are you physically and mentally able to survive the transplant surgery and recovery period?

These questions matter because if you have past heart-related problems or kidney problems, you might not be the best candidate for a transplant.

One of the surgery team requirements before proceeding with any transplant is that you have a full-time, committed caregiver who will always be with you during your pre-surgery period and the post-surgery recovery. My wonderful wife, Cathey, and daughter, Jennifer, serve as my caregivers.

The surgery team also wants to know if you're able to pay for the items that your health insurance might not cover. They don't want you to be worried about financial issues as you go through recovery. If there is a problem, they can offer different avenues to take and work toward solving that problem.

Having completed this evaluation process, I felt good about my ability to receive a new liver and survive. But how foolish of me not to consider what twists and turns a diseased liver might take.

And then I woke up . . .

Jan. 15 started like most Tuesdays. It's Commissioners Court day. Corey and I always meet for breakfast in downtown Fort Worth. We met at the Corner Bakery on Main Street, enjoyed breakfast and departed.

I don't remember much from that point at 8:30 a.m. until I woke up at 1 a.m.

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Becoming an organ donor

To learn more about organ donation, or to find out how to register to become a donor, go to www.organdonor.gov.

By the numbers

Transplants of all organs

28,352 in 2007.

14,395 Organ donors in 2007.

Source: Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network



Gary and Cathey Fickes in January 2007.

STAR-TELEGRAM ARCHIVES/BRIAN VENEZIA

Saturday, Jan. 19, in the intensive care unit at Methodist Dallas Hospital.

During those four days in between, I had driven from the Corner Bakery to the County Administration parking garage, attended the County Commissioners meeting and returned to my Southlake home. I laid down in bed to rest, and then, I was told later, Cathey found me on the floor of my closet at 4 a.m. Wednesday.

She dressed me and took me to the emergency room at Harris Methodist H.E.B. I was put on a kidney dialysis machine, a breathing tube was inserted — a process called intubation — and I was put into ICU. Early Thursday morning, I was transported to the Liver Institute at Methodist Dallas Hospital and put into ICU.

The first thing I remember is waking up at 1 a.m. Saturday. I felt good, other than having a dry mouth and a tremendous thirst. Later that day, the nurses helped me sit in a chair and visit with family.

The next week, everything started to crash again. I had never had any kind of kidney problems before, and now I was back on dialysis for the second time in a week.

They now were talking about a kidney transplant as well.

I also developed a major respiratory problem. The hospital contacted the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and within hours, a group of doctors from the CDC arrived and were examining me.

My lungs were retaining water. My heart had developed atrial fibrillation. When I told my doctor that I had seen quite a lot of his colleagues in the previous few days, he said: "Gary, that's not a good thing."

In the next days, I was intubated again. I really don't remember what happened. But by the end of January, they had removed the tubes, and I realized that something very special had happened.

I realized that everything was going to be OK.

I can't give an exact time when I knew this, but I did and still have a tremendous feeling of warmth. It's as if I were surrounded by friends, relatives and people who just want to help and are all praying for you and your family.

This is the point when you know that you've been to the edge and, with the help of many others, have decided to turn away and come back home.

Not over yet

On Monday, Feb. 4, I was told that most of the problems I had in the previous two weeks were past, and that if the next liver had the proper blood type, I would undergo the transplant.

What a great way to start the week! After I'd waited 10 days for a donor liver, my doctor, Jeffery Weinstein, suggested that I could go home and wait. This meant I could sleep in my bed, eat something other than that wonderful hospital food and visit with relatives and friends in town for Corey and Kacey's wedding.

But less than 36 hours later, I was in that kitchen, working on that egg, when my breakfast was taken from me.

I had a date with my new liver.

The real hero in this whole process is neither me nor a doctor — it's the donor and the donor's family. This family was forced to endure the tragic loss of a loved one.

They had been asked to make what is probably the toughest decision: Did they want to approve the removal of a life-support system so that the vital organs could be used to extend the lives of others?

A week after the transplant, I watched the wedding video.

What a wonderful day for Corey and his bride, Kacey. I had received my liver at 6 a.m. Sunday, only 10 hours after they had exchanged their lifetime vows. They started their new life, and I started mine.

Thank you to everyone who cared and made a difference.

And please consider being an organ donor.

GARY FICKES OF SOUTHLAKE IS THE TARRANT COUNTY COMMISSIONER IN PRECINCT 3, WHICH COVERS NORTHEAST TARRANT COUNTY.

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REAL ESTATE

TRANSACTIONS

Arlington

1. Office lease

1400 W. Mayfield Road

The Law Offices of Lee Pierson leased 950 square feet from PS Tax Specialists.

Broker: Bill Jordan of Moss Jordan & Associates represented the landlord.

2. Industrial lease

3403-3405 Ave. E

Mass Movement, a logistics company specializing in fitness equipment, leased 23,203 square feet. Landlord is Arlington-based Avenue E Partners.

Broker: David Easterling of CB Richard Ellis represented the landlord.

Colleyville

3. Office lease

4012 Gateway Drive

Premier Laser Partners leased 1,060 square feet at Gateway Office Park from California-based Platt Investments.

Broker: Bill Jordan of Moss Jordan & Associates represented the landlord.

Eules

4. Office lease

310 S. Industrial Blvd.

Aerotech Holdings, a maker of airplane and helicopter parts,

leased 3,467 square feet in the former Sante Rehabilitation building. The company will use it as administrative office space. The building is completely leased after renovations.

Brokers: Renee Efimoff and Gary Walker of SCM Real Estate Services in represented the landlord, Bardin Investors.

Fort Worth

5. Lancaster Lofts

1324 E. Lancaster Ave.

Artist space totaling 2,354 square feet on the first level of the redeveloped 1925 Lancaster Lofts is now leased, and the building is nearly filled. The upper three floors of the building are loft apartments.

The first floor has an art school and five other artists.

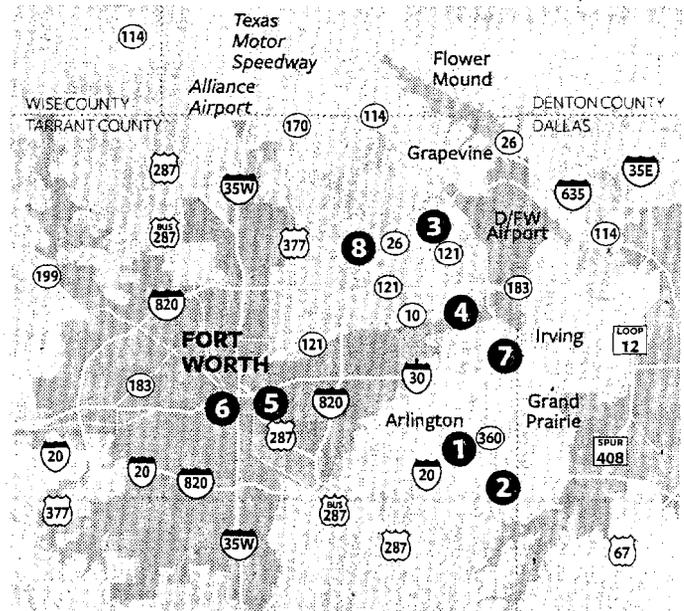
Brokers: Mark Joeckel and Judy Nitzinger of SCM Real Estate represented the landlord.

6. Property sale

1901 Windsor Place

Fort Worth-based real estate investor Conti Partners bought and is leasing the 141,118-square-foot office/warehouse. The deal included 5.5 acres.

Brokers: J. Searcy of Coldwell Banker Commercial Searcy



STAR-TELEGRAM

Vasseur Group represented the buyer. Trey Fricke and Mark Graybill of Lee & Associates represented the seller, limited partnership IRG Gardens.

Grand Prairie

7. Office lease

2080 N. Texas 360

Priority Power Management, an energy management and consulting services firm, leased 2,543 square feet.

Broker: Kurt Cherry of PM

Realty Group represented the landlord, Carrier 360 Office Associates.

North Richland Hills

8. 8201 Mid-Cities Blvd. Office lease

Kathy Thompson, an attorney, has leased 1,235 square feet. Crest Haven Properties L.P. is the landlord.

Broker: Russ Webb of Stream Realty Partners represented the landlord.

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Going for the green

Golf courses link with Audubon to help preserve natural habitat

By JAKE BATSELL
Staff Writer
jbatsell@dallasnews.com

Jay Stine thinks of the bobwhite quail as an old friend.

So in a bid to boost the species' dwindling ranks, Mr. Stine is finding some of them a home at the golf course where he works.

Mr. Stine, course maintenance director for Brookhaven Country Club, released more than 400 quails this year at the Farmers Branch course, which maintains about 15 acres of natural prairie habitat.

"It kind of serves as an oasis in the middle of the city where wildlife can exist," he said.

Brookhaven is among a growing number of North Texas golf courses introducing measures to attune courses with their natural surroundings.

In the Dallas area, golf courses' environmen-

Green golf courses

More than 30 North Texas golf courses are enrolled in Audubon International's eco-friendly certification programs. Here are some of them:

Certified signature sanctuary

(Most rigorous requirements, integrated into course design and construction)

- Tierra Verde Golf Club, Arlington

Certified cooperative sanctuaries

(Meet required standards to protect water quality, conserve natural resources and provide wildlife habitats)

- Timarron Country Club, Southlake
- TPC Craig Ranch, McKinney

Actively working toward certification

(Certified in one of six categories)

- Bear Creek Golf Club, Dallas
- Cowboys Golf Club, Grapevine
- Hackberry Creek Country Club, Irving
- Indian Creek Golf Course, Carrollton
- Iron Horse Golf Course, North Richland Hills
- Mansfield National Golf Club, Mansfield
- Plantation Golf Club, Frisco
- Fossil Creek Golf Course, Fort Worth
- Keeton Park Golf Course, Dallas
- Lake Park Golf Club, Lewisville
- Pecan Hollow Golf Course, Plano
- Royal Oaks Country Club, Dallas
- Tenison Park Golf Course, Dallas
- * ■ Texas Star Golf Course, Euless
- Walnut Creek Country Club, Mansfield

Other area courses enrolled in the program include Brookhaven Country Club in Farmers Branch and the Meadowbrook and Chester W. Ditto public courses in Arlington.

SOURCE: Audubon International

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tal efforts include sprinkling fairways with treated wastewater, planting drought-tolerant turf grasses and creating habitat for wildlife.

The nonprofit group Audubon International has certified three North Texas courses for their environmental efforts, and 15 more are nearing certification.

In the past year, nine Dallas-area courses have joined Audubon's cooperative sanctuary program, which now has more than 30 enrolled members in North Texas. It takes one to three years to achieve the program's seal of approval.

The eco-minded push might seem mismatched with an industry known for hypermanicured, chemically engineered swaths of green.

But Audubon program manager Joellen Zeh said about 13 percent of the nation's 16,000 golf courses have joined the program. Nearly 4 percent of the 16,000 have been certified.

"There's been an upswing in interest in the environment," Ms. Zeh said. "We have been seeing an increase in enrollment and activity."

The TPC Craig Ranch course in McKinney and Timarron Country Club in Southlake already are certified as Audubon cooperative sanctuaries.

Then there's Tierra Verde Golf Club, a municipal course in southwest Arlington, which landed an even bigger stamp of approval in 2000 as an Audubon signature sanctuary.

Mark Claburn, Tierra Verde's superintendent, said conservation helps his course spend 40 percent to 60 percent

less on water each year than the typical North Texas course.

"We do think it's the way the industry's going, because it makes more sense," Mr. Claburn said. "You're going to save money in the long run, because you don't have to do as much" to maintain the course.

In Dallas, watering the pub-

lic Cedar Crest Golf Course with treated wastewater since 2005 has saved the city more than 210 million gallons of drinking water, said Bob Johnson, water recycling manager for Dallas Water Utilities.

Such milestones are encouraging for an industry that has long drawn scrutiny for its massive water consumption and destruction of native vegetation, said Jeffrey Jacoby, Dallas staff director for Texas Campaign for the Environment.

"Traditionally, golf courses have not been the most environmentally friendly neighbors," he said.

"Obviously, there's a long way to go, especially for golf courses," he said. "But every step is a progression."

Mr. Stine hopes at least 50 of the 400-plus bobwhite quails he released at Brookhaven will survive among the course's wildflowers and native grasses, which are free of fertilizer and chemicals.

Dirk Lemasters, a Brookhaven golfer who was on hand for the release of the quails, said he appreciates the earthy touch.

"I do like the natural environment," Mr. Lemasters said. "I'll see a lot of different wildlife, and I enjoy seeing them when I do play. It's relaxing."

Staff photographer Natalie Caudill contributed to this report.

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House fire likely accidental, authorities say

EULESS — A house fire last week in which a man was found dead may have started because of an electrical problem, a fire official said Wednesday. But fire investigators said the cause of the blaze at 832 Atkerson Lane is still undetermined, according to Euless Assistant Fire Chief Robert Isbell. "We're 99 percent sure, but investigators have listed it as 'undetermined' because they are not 100 percent," Isbell said. Firefighters found Frank Dusek, 62, near the front of the home as they battled the fire. The fire was reported at 3:45 a.m. March 19, and it took 54 firefighters from four cities to extinguish it. The house was destroyed. Investigators believe that the fire started in a living room. Officials have said that the home did not have working smoke detectors.

— Domingo Ramirez Jr.

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2008 SUMMER CAMPS & CLASSES

City of Euless Sports Camps

Description: Texas Star baseball camp, baseball skills camp, British soccer camp, skating camp, golf and tennis camps

When: Varies

Deadline: Varies

Ages: 5-15

Cost: \$30-\$99

Location: Varies

Info: Heidi Taylor, 817-685-1666

Parks at Texas Star Baseball Camp

Description: Fundamentals instruction from former college and professional players

When: 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. July 14-17

Deadline: June 6

Ages: 5-14

Cost: \$90

Location: Parks at Texas Star, 1501 S. Pipeline Road, Euless

Info: Heidi Taylor, 817-685-1666; PACS@ci.euless.tx.us; www.euless.org/pacs

Euless summer camps

Description: Traditional day camps, art camps, leadership camp, sports camps and more

When: Varies

Deadline: May 3 for Euless residents, May 7 for non-residents

Ages: 4 and up

Cost: Varies

Location: Midway Rec Center, 300 W. Midway Drive, Euless

Info: 817-685-1666, 81; www.euless.org/pacs

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Super Saturday's free tax help

IRS service office

819 Taylor St., Fort Worth, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

IRS VITA center

Shadowbrook Apartments, 2020 S. Cooper St., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For other VITA centers open on other days, call 211 or 800-906-9887 or go to www.irs.gov.

AARP Tax-Aide

- Arlington Central Library, 101 E. Abram St., 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 817-459-6900, no appointment required. *
- Eules Public Library, 201 Ector Drive, call 817-685-1489 for an appointment; appointments are also available on Tuesday evenings.
- For 37 other locations in Tarrant County open on other days, call 888-227-7669 or go to www.aarp.org/taxaide.

Online

File with online help through AARP or the IRS Free-File program:

- AARP launched an easy online tool to help people file for the rebate at www.aarp.org/stimulus.
- Nonfilers and those earning under \$55,000 also can use the IRS Free-File program, which uses third-party vendors like TurboTax, to file electronically at no cost. The program can be found at www.irs.gov.

What to bring

- Photo identification.
- Verification of Social Security number of the taxpayer, spouse and qualifying children through a Social Security card, or a letter, notice or annual statement from Social Security or the Veterans Administration.
- Form 1099 from Social Security or Veterans Administration or if the 1099 is not available, a monthly statement and/or the amount of the monthly benefit.
- Proof of any other income, taxable or nontaxable.

Source: Internal Revenue Service

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OBITUARIES

Rachel A. Fuller



EULESS — Rachel A. Fuller, 90, passed away peacefully Wednesday, March 26, 2008.

FUNERAL: 2 p.m. Saturday at First Baptist Church of Euless. Interment: Shannon Rose Hill Cemetery. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at Lucas Funeral Home in Hurst.

Rachel, the daughter of Walter Pierce and Blanche Godfrey Hand, was born Sept. 18, 1917, in Burlison. She was a Euless resident for 70 years and a member of First Baptist Church of Euless for 67 years. She was a cafeteria manager for the Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD.

She was preceded in death by her husband, W.W. Fuller. **(Bill)**

SURVIVORS: Daughter, Lanette Hosey and her husband, Charles; granddaughters, Jill Bratton, Robin Tusa; six great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and sisters, Mabel Hanes, Margaret Hand and Mary Skyles.

Lucas Funeral Home

Hurst, 817-284-7271

View and sign guestbook at

www.star-telegram.com/obituaries

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OUT AND ABOUT

SPRING IS REVVING UP FOR RELAYS, RACES AND SO MUCH MORE

A relay, a race weekend and several other events turn fun into good deeds.

April in Texas is about as good as it gets when it comes to the weather, so why not enjoy it all night long?

April 18 and 19 are the dates set for the Northeast Tarrant County version of Relay for Life, the American Cancer Society's overnight event.

* Held this year at Trinity High School in Euless, the relay begins at 6 p.m. Friday and ends at 7 a.m. Saturday. Participants work in teams, taking turns walking laps of the track all night long in hopes of rack-



JOY DONOVAN
 jdonovan@star-telegram.com

ing up pledges from supporters.

The Web site, www.netarrantrelay.com, boasts 83 teams so far. Chairing this year's Northeast Tarrant County version of the cancer society's signature fundraiser is Traci Church of Euless.

A luminaria ceremony honoring those fighting cancer and in memory of cancer victims is scheduled for 9 p.m., and a Fight-Back Ceremony is set for midnight. No one should be worried about getting sleepy — too much excitement. Planned are several bands, an Elvis impersonator, dancers, children's activities and special entertainment at 2 a.m.

This year's goal is \$250,000, which is \$10,000 more than last year's total. There's still time to organize a team to help reach the goal. Just check the Web site or call Traci at 817-980-1484.

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TRANSPORTATION

Officials: Trans-Texas is dirty word, but need is real

Is the Trans-Texas Corridor still viable, given widespread opposition?



Online exclusives

What do you think: Post a comment on this report at star-telegram.com/comments

Honkin' Mad: For more transportation and traffic coverage, check out star-telegram.com/blogs

By GORDON DICKSON
gdickson@star-telegram.com

FORT WORTH — The Trans-Texas Corridor is now so controversial, merely uttering the words in most political circles is taboo.

"We're calling it a 'regional loop' because you can't say 'Trans-Texas Corridor' in the state of Texas anymore," said Michael Morris, transportation director for the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

"The Trans-Texas Corridor is a lightning rod," he told visiting state representatives this week while explaining how the corridor would connect to regional highways by 2030.

Opposition to the proposed construction of a \$184 billion network of toll roads during the next 50 years is

so strong statewide that lawmakers now question whether it's wise for the Texas Transportation Department to continue planning the huge project in its current form.

But transportation officials say they must press on. While opposing views must be respected, the state can't afford to ignore its growing traffic problems, Texas Transportation Commissioner Ned Holmes of Hous-

“That does not diminish the need for mobility in the state.

Ned Holmes, Transportation Commission member from Houston

ton said this week.

"Clearly the Trans-Texas Corridor name has developed some controversy in and of itself," Holmes said. "That does not diminish the need for mobility in the state."

In the past two years, the Metroplex region and the Houston region both have created more jobs than any state in the union, he said.

"Texas is unique in its growth patterns. If we don't plan for Texas' growth patterns, we won't have a chance to meet those needs," he said.

Criticisms with merit

Despite Morris' hesitation to mention the Trans-Texas Corridor by name, North Texas leaders generally back the plan. Most are desperate to fix the region's growing traffic problems, clean up the air and keep the economy going in the nation's fourth-largest metropolitan area.

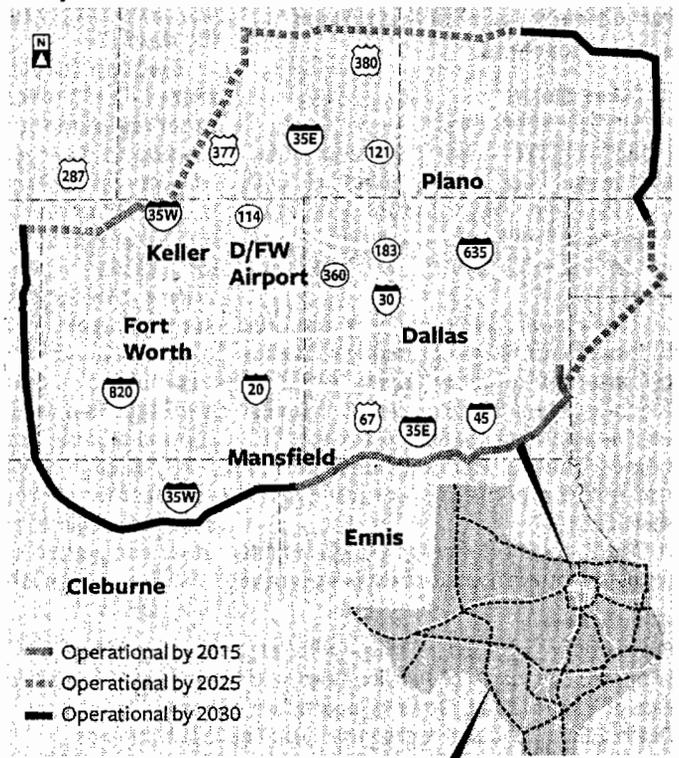
Elsewhere in Texas, common criticisms are that the corridor plan would take too much property out of the hands of private landowners, impose tolls in rural areas where drivers don't want them and turn over control of Texas roads to private, often foreign-owned companies.

"To say that the term Trans-Texas Corridor is tainted is an understatement," said state Rep. Vicki Truitt, R-Keller. "There are some positive components of the Trans-Texas Corridor, but those have been overshadowed by all the negative."

What makes good sense to her would be separating freight truck traffic from passenger traffic and routing it around major metropolitan areas, she said.

"The plan for marketing the Trans-Texas Corridor and properly seeking public input regarding the plan were flawed and poorly executed," she said. "Rumors about the plan were left unchecked and facts became obliterated by fiction in the minds of many."

Proposed Trans-Texas Corridor



Area planners have incorporated the proposed statewide Trans-Texas Corridor into their long-term highway plans, creating an outer loop around Dallas-Fort Worth. Many North Texas city and county leaders support the Trans-Texas Corridor plan, but they don't mention it by name because it's so controversial.

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Lawmakers may consider passing new laws during the 2009 legislative session to curb the Transportation Department's ability to advance the Trans-Texas Corridor and other privately run toll projects, according to state Sen. Kim Brimer, R-Fort Worth. One option: a ban on foreign investment in Texas roads.

What's in a name?

Some people who supported building Interstate 69 from Laredo to Houston and east Tex-

as now oppose the plan to build it as a part of the Trans-Texas toll road, Holmes said. About 14,000 people have submitted comments on the I-69 proposal, state records show.

Thousands of others submitted comments during public meetings in summer 2006 on the first leg of the Trans-Texas Corridor — a proposed Interstate 35 reliever route from Dallas-Fort Worth to San Antonio. Even so, that project is still under study and could be under construction by 2012, according to a master plan developed by the Spanish firm Cintra.

State officials have even considered that perhaps the name itself has become too symbolic. Without the fancy name, the argument goes,

“To say that the term Trans-Texas Corridor is tainted is an understatement.

Rep. Vicki Truitt, Republican from Keller

would there be widespread resistance to adding lanes along gridlocked I-35?

“The Trans-Texas Corridor designation has begun to develop a life of its own that has muddled some of that support,” Holmes said. “But I believe the support is still out there. We simply need to find a mechanism to tap into that support.”

Transportation Commission Chairwoman Hope Andrade of San Antonio added: “Yes, it's a viable project. We're moving forward on it. We have to just be firm and committed to do what we believe is the right thing in preparing our state for the next 25 to 50 years.”

GORDON DICKSON, 817-685-3816

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