

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTNY CRIM MCKAMIE BROWN YOUNG ANIMAL CNT
 McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF HARTSELL

DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/13/10 DATE OF ARTICLE 8/8/10 NEWSPAPER FWST

Weddings/Engagements/Anniversaries

ANNIVERSARIES



Gafford

Rosemary and Leroy Gafford recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on August 5, 2010.

Rosie, the former Rosemary Thornhill from Dallas, is retired from the City of Euless where she was City Secretary. She is a skilled bridge player with a Bronze Life Master ranking and still actively plays in tournaments. A Buckner alumni and a graduate of the University of Texas, Roy is also a retired Colonel in the US Army Reserves. He was in the oil and water treatment business for 35 years. Roy plays golf weekly and is an avid online chess player. Together they love to travel, taking trips several times a year.

They have three daughters, Becky Journey, Sandy Vecchio, Nancy Gafford and one son, Larry Gafford, who all reside in the DFW area. They also have three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTNY CRIM MCKAMIE BROWN YOUNG ANIMAL CNT
 McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF HARTSELL

DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/13/10 DATE OF ARTICLE 8/8/10 NEWSPAPER FWST

Tarrant got millions in stimulus cash

Federal funds to GOP

senators question the need to spend \$454,200 on new lights at a Euless ball field.

By Anna M. Tinsley
 atinsley@star-telegram.com

Thousands of North Texans call it the Crown Jewel of Adult Softball.

But to former Republican presidential nominee John

McCain, spending \$454,200 in federal stimulus funds to replace lighting at Softball World, a city park in Euless, is a prime example of how the government is wasting taxpayer dollars.

"Playing in the glow of stimulus funded lights — now that's something completely new," according to a "Summertime Blues" report written by Sens.

McCain, R-Ariz., and Tom Coburn, R-Okla. "One would think that the teams using the fields should just pay higher fees for the light renovations instead of the American taxpayer, most of whom will never see Euless, Texas, no matter how bright the new lights are."

But many who live in the Northeast Tarrant County city said that more than 100,000

people use or visit the city park each year and that the lighting is a proper use of stimulus funds.

"This is ridiculous," said

Richard Hopkins, who plays outfield with the Diamond Softball Club at the park about three nights a week. "A lot of people go to the park to play or watch, and this is a need.

"The lights are definitely antiquated, they are more than 25 years old. This will help make them energy-efficient," he said. "It's unfair that they singled out the one park in Euless."

100 projects criticized

The McCain/Coburn report citing "100 Stimulus Projects that Give Taxpayers the Blues" came out last week, naming the top projects that some leaders believe aren't the best choice for stimulus funds.

At No. 99 was Softball World, a project expected to be finished within a year and save or create 2.8 jobs.

Other Texas projects listed in the report include researching the public's impression of the stimulus; helping fund the 2009 International Accordion Festival in San Antonio; and studying the weather on Venus at San Antonio's Southwest Research Institute.

"Torrential, misdirected government spending is not the way to (create jobs)," according to the report. "Generating record-breaking national debt is not an investment in our children's and grandchildren's future and will not lead to any long-term recovery." This comes as thousands of projects nationwide have drawn funding from the national stimulus program.

Since last year, nearly \$220 billion has gone to stimulus projects nationwide through nearly 40,000 contracts, more than 170,000 grants and more than 1,300 loans, according to recovery.gov, a website set up by the government to show where stimulus funds are going.

Texas got \$14.3 billion in contracts, grants and loans, second only to California, which drew \$23.4 billion in stimulus aid. More than 100 grants and more than two dozen contracts, went to Tarrant County, records show.

But because of the large population here, Texas ranks 48th in stimulus dollars per person — with an average of \$985 per person

— behind only Virginia, with \$872 per person and Nebraska, with \$943 per person, according to McClatchy calculations.

Local impact

Cities, schools, museums and schools are among the Tarrant County entities that received federal stimulus help in the past year.

Tarrant County itself received more than \$3.5 million to reduce crime, improve services in cases of violence against women, reduce diesel emissions and more. And cities throughout the county pulled in millions of dollars to help with everything from reducing crime to starting "green" infrastructure projects. Funding also covers promoting energy conservation, preserving law enforcement jobs and combating the flow of drugs from Mexico.

Some funds in Fort Worth, for instance, will be used for a greenhouse gas inventory, parking lot lighting, a pilot project using solar hot water at city facilities, even a traffic signal project to help predict the flow of traffic and automatically adjust signal timing. "This allows us to do some pilot projects around the city," said Sam Steele, sustainability administrator for the city.

Other recipients include the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, \$16,435; Theatre Arlington, \$16,434; and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Association, \$50,000.

At the Arlington theater, for instance, the money helped keep the community theater afloat during tough economic times, when management had already cut the number of paid staffers from seven to four.

"This grant saved our butts," said Todd Hart, executive producer of the theater. "Without it, we wouldn't have closed our doors, but we probably

would have had to cut some programs — educational and outreach — which we certainly didn't want to do. ... People think \$16,000 isn't a lot of money, but when you are a company as small as ours, \$16,000 is huge."

"This helped us through a very difficult time that would have been even harder for us."

At the museum, the grant money helped pay salaries of two conservators whose positions normally were funded by an endowment. "When the stock market dropped nearly 50 percent, the endowment — like thousands of endowments across the country — was 'underwater,' and there were no earnings from the endowment to fund their salaries and benefits," said Tracy Greene, a museum spokeswoman.

Groups that help children also benefited from millions of stimulus dollars nationwide.

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITYATTNY CRIM MCKAMIE BROWN YOUNG ANIMAL CNT
 McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF HARTSELL

DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/13/10 DATE OF ARTICLE 8/8/10 NEWSPAPER FWST

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Fort Worth received more than \$42,000 to maintain jobs and ensure that mentoring programs continue; the Lena Pope Home received \$25,225 to help provide special education and services to disabled children; and the Texas Boys Choir was given \$153,766 for public education programs and to help disabled children.

At the Lena Pope Home, the money was used last year for tutoring and specialized reading instruction for special-education students at the Chapel Hill Academy Charter School — something that without the grant, "it's very unlikely we would have been able to do at all," said Todd Landry, executive director of the children's agency.

And at the Texas Boys Choir, the stimulus money helped pay for tutors for youth who needed extra help, provide stipends to teachers and purchase computers, said Dollie Blewins, executive director. "It was truly a gift for us and we put it to good use," she said.

Local charities also drew tens of thousands of grant dollars.

The Tarrant Area Food Bank landed more than \$100,000 to help with the emergency food assistance program costs; the Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County picked up \$31,000; and the Salvation Army in Fort Worth received more than \$140,000.

Education and research

Local schools and research efforts received millions of dollars.

More than \$88 million went to the Fort Worth school district to help educate children with disabilities and special needs, replace aging kitchen equipment, support early childhood education, update technology, make sure homeless children have equal access to education, avoid deep job cuts and even buy two dozen hybrid buses. "This came at a critical time," said Tracy Marshall, executive director for grants and development.

"Our state funding is continually being reduced and we have been in budget shortfalls. The impact to the students would have been bigger" without the grants.

In Arlington, the school district also picked up more than \$60 million for similar efforts, including early childhood education, helping children with disabilities, ensuring homeless children have equal access to education and replacing aging kitchen equipment.

The University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth received more than \$5 million in grants to help with research touching on diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, even alternatives to estrogen replacement therapy in menopausal women. Grant

money also went toward scholarships for disadvantaged students. Much of the funding allowed expanded research into various topics, said Glenn Dillon, vice president for research at the health science center. "Clearly it has helped move those projects forward," he said.

Texas Christian University received nearly \$1 million to help with research involving phosphoric acids and give financial aid to students. And the University of Texas at Arlington landed more than \$10 million to help with research on topics such as fibrotic tissue and new ways to perform delicate surgeries, as well as promoting energy conservation, providing scholarships for disadvantaged students and funding a federal work study program.

Separate from the grants, dozens of contracts were issued to local companies, ranging from the \$56,900 job for Cardinal Roofing to restore a roof on a federal courthouse to more than \$5 million for Bell Helicopter Textron to move forward with tilt-rotor test rig development and delivery.

Locally, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control in Grand Prairie received a \$3.5 million contract to develop the Integrated Smart-BEAR power system for the Air Force. That contract essentially requires those workers to find ways to integrate renewable energy resources into the power grid of the Basic Expeditionary Airfield Resources base, said Craig Vanbebber, a spokesman for Lockheed.

"This is a step in the direction of being able to help our customers ... reduce their consumption," he said.

Staff writers Eva-Marie Ayala and Darren Barbee contributed to this report.

Anna M. Tinsley, 817-390-7610

DISTRIBUTED TO:

PAGE 1 OF 1

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTN CRIM MCKAMIE BROWN YOUNG ANIMAL CNT
McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF HARTSELL

DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/27/10 DATE OF ARTICLE 8/20/10 NEWSPAPER FWST

NORTHEAST CLICK

500 pounds of catfish. Even if catfish is your fave, you likely don't want

that much of it. But for junior anglers, the Wilshire Park Pond at 315 Sierra Drive in Euless will be stocked with 500 pounds of catfish. Prizes will go to various age groups and categories, and parents can fish after the children's competition. It's set for 9 a.m. to noon Saturday. 817-685-1429.

MAYOR CITY CNCL CITY ATTN CRIM MCKAMIE BROWN YOUNG ANIMAL CNT
 McDONALD COLLINS C. BARKER GETCHELL LIBRARY ADMIN LIBRARY REF HARTSELL

DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/27/10 DATE OF ARTICLE 8/23/10 NEWSPAPER FWST

Belt-tightening time for three cities

☐ Hurst, Euless and Bedford must make tough choices as they adopt budgets.

By Terry Evans
 tevens@star-telegram.com

Falling property values and slumping sales tax revenues are leaving officials in Hurst, Euless and Bedford with difficult choices, including not filling open positions while trying to maintain city services.

Property tax rates would increase in Hurst and Bedford but remain the same in Euless if the city councils adopt city staff members' budget recommendations, which also include cutting other expenses.

Bedford and Hurst will have public hearings for their budgets

Tuesday, Euless on Aug. 31. All three cities will adopt budgets by Sept. 14.

Hurst

Leaving five full-time positions vacant is one way that the city is dealing with its budget woes, along with a 4.3-cent increase in its property tax rate.

The proposed \$30.8 million general fund budget is about 1.2 percent lower than last year's \$31.2 million budget, Finance Director Clay Caruthers said. Five vacant full-time positions, but no police officers, were eliminated. Other eliminations were in engineering, fiscal services and the municipal court.

Caruthers said a tax rate increase to 57.8 cents per \$100 of assessed property value has been proposed. That would mean about \$1.80 more per month for the owner of a property with the average assessed value, \$133,000, Caruthers said.

He pointed out that Hurst provides a 20 percent homestead exemption, something that Caruthers discussed with the council.

"Some cities may have a lower tax rate but don't even offer a homestead exemption," he said.

In Southlake, a \$15,000 homestead exemption was available for all property owners in the fiscal 2009 budget but was left out of the 2010 budget and isn't proposed for the 2011 budget, city spokeswoman Pilar Schank said.

The Fort Worth City Council, struggling to make up a \$77 million budget shortfall, has talked about cutting property tax homestead exemptions.

Caruthers said Hurst anticipates no service-level reductions.

"We're basically trying to spread the workload out and become more efficient wherever we can," he said.

See the budget at ci-hurst.tx.us.

Euless

If not for a car rental facility with several companies operating from it at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, the city would have a tougher time dealing with the shortfalls in its general fund revenue.

The proposed \$29.7 million operating budget is 0.58 percent below last year's, Finance Director Vicki Rodriguez said. She said seven vacant positions were not funded, bringing the payroll down to 374 positions.

Keeping the tax rate at 47 cents per \$100 assessed valuation was challenging in the face of a 5.2 percent decrease in Euless' total assessed property valuation, coupled with a projected 12.5 percent sales tax revenue decrease.

"We're balancing the budget by using other revenue sources until the economy turns around, but we're not dipping into our reserves," Rodriguez said. "We had already done some cuts, like travel and training, some supplies. ... We asked our departments to take it down to the bare minimum."

See the budget at www.eulessstx.gov.

Bedford

Times are so tough in Bedford that it is cutting what is usually sacrosanct: the Police Department.

The city is not filling a patrol officer vacancy and a public service officer position as part of budget cuts that also include leaving five other jobs vacant in building inspections, community service and public works.

The proposed \$27.2 million general fund budget includes a \$61,000 increase in operating expenses for the library that opens in early 2011, City Manager Beverly Queen said.

"Our total spending is down across the entire budget," she said. "At this point the only thing we don't know is what water and sewer rates will be. Those final budget figures won't arrive until early September, but we anticipate an increase in those rates."

The tax rate must increase roughly 2.8 cents per \$100 of valuation to raise the same amount of revenue as last year, when property values were about 4 percent higher, she said. If the council accepts that and sets the rate at 49.2 cents per \$100 of valuation, the tax bill on the average home in Bedford, which has an assessed value of about \$146,000, will increase about \$2.29 per month. Last year's average residential valuation was \$147,942. The city's contribution to employee health savings accounts would also be eliminated, Queen said. The proposed budget preserves hours and services at all city facilities but includes minor fee increases, she said.

See the budget at the public library, 1805 L. Don Dodson Drive.

This report includes material from the Star-Telegram archives.

Terry Evans, 817-390-7620