



ONE TO ONE

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A Report to the Residents of Harris County Precinct One ... from Commissioner El Franco Lee

Teen clinic uses innovative efforts to increase male clients

Donald Perkins, 23, a basketball tucked under his arm, meandered through the maze of tables, stopping at practically each site to chat briefly with people manning the health-fair booths.

“Getting information about health care and getting screened are important,” Perkins said.

It was equally important to about 105 other young men ages 13-25 who attended the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Health Clinic’s health fair at the Finnigan Park Community Center and the basketball tournament at the



Donald Perkins, right, collects materials from Adriana Villarreal of Shine Dental at the Baylor College of Medicine Teen Health Clinic’s health fair.

adjacent NFL Youth Education Town on Jan. 21. Organizers used basketball as a hook to get

the young men to the fair.

To play in the tournament, the men were re-

quired to get 15 signatures from the booth attendants, who talked about medical and social

services, passed out brochures and offered health screenings.

Ruth Buzi, the teen clinic’s associate professor and director of social services, said getting proper health care is essential for males.

“Everyone in the field realized that it’s important to include young men in family-planning clinics to be effective in preventing teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases,” Buzi said.

The seven teen clinics — which include Commissioner El Franco Lee’s Northeast Adoles-

(See Clinics on page 7)

April Pools Day promotes water safety to prevent drownings



Corps of Engineers Col. Christopher W. Sallase introduces Bobber the Water Safety Dog at the April Pools Day news conference.

The Precinct One Harris County Aquatics Center, home of an extensive Learn-to-Swim program for children and adults, hosted the April Pools Day news conference to educate people about water safety.

Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee said it’s imperative that everyone knows how to swim, especially those who live in the Gulf Coast region.

“We are trying to make people from the youngest age to the oldest age more comfortable and more adaptable to water,” Lee said.

Last year, 21% of the 90 confirmed drownings in Texas occurred in the Houston area. Most drownings happened in swimming pools. Some drowned in rivers and ponds

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Precinct One

Commissioner El Franco Lee

Comments on past and future activities

As of March 1, Precinct One took on a new look to comply with mandatory redistricting that resulted from the 2010 Census figures. The redistricting map approved by Commissioners Court has been pre-cleared by the U.S. Justice Department, but it is being challenged in a lawsuit. Therefore, we are operating under an interim map drawn by a federal judge in Houston. Precinct One has grown from 827,341 constituents to about 1 million. Also the number of unincorporated road miles maintained by Precinct One increased from 630 to 745, while the bridge feet have grown from 15,579 to 16,258. Unfortunately, some neighborhoods that Precinct One had the pleasure of serving this past decade have been moved to Precinct Two. Precinct Two has committed to continue providing the same excellent service. In turn, Precinct One picked up some communities from other precincts. The Precinct One family extends a warm welcome to the new constituents. You undoubtedly will receive first-class service in road, bridge and park maintenance. That includes continuing some key projects that were in progress in the other precincts. In addition to infrastructure projects, Precinct One constituents can take advantage of various programs offered free to youth, seniors and their families.

Officials: Watch children around any body of water

(Continued from page 1)

while a few drowned in bathtubs or a bucket of water.

Col. Christopher W. Sallese, District Engineer and Commanding Officer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Galveston District, said drowning is the No. 2 fatality for children 13 years and younger.

The Corps and Harris County Precinct One are members of the Safe Kids of Greater Houston Water Safety Team, which consists of 25 organizations.



The American Red Cross and other groups participated in April Pools Day to promote water safety. Officials at the news conference in the Harris County Aquatics Center said Houston leads the state in drownings.

How to be safe

- Never let children swim alone.
- Watch children around any body of water.
- Have children wear a life jacket approved by the U.S. Coast Guard while on boats, around open bodies of water or during water sports
- Enroll children in swim classes.

For more information, visit:
www.safekidsgreaterhouston.org

South Belt-area chamber honors Commissioner Lee

The South Belt-Country Club. Ellington Chamber of Commerce has named Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee as its Citizen of the Year.

Lee received the award at the chamber's 28th annual banquet on Feb. 9 at the Golfcrest

Lee gave credit to the support of the chamber; area mayors and city councils; Sagemeadow, Clear Brook City and Kirkmont municipal utility districts; and school districts. Together, they have improved the area's quality of life.



Marie Flickinger presents Commissioner El Franco Lee with the Citizen of the Year Award.

Traveling Naturalist brings science and environment to life for students

Seated in the front row of about 70 pupils, 10-year-old Meredith Henson waited patiently for her chance to touch a baby alligator held by Precinct One Traveling Naturalist Michelle Myers.

"I like to touch the animals and I got to learn new things," Garden Villas Elementary School fifth-grader Meredith said after Myers' 45-minute-long session Jan. 31 that focused on animals' habits: desert, grassland, forest, wetlands and urban areas. It also featured live creatures that included a baby alligator, a scorpion and a milk snake.

The 21-year-old Traveling Naturalist program, a part of the Precinct One Harris County Street Olympics, is a year-round program that brings nature to life for grade-school pupils

by giving them hands-on experience with living animals. It travels to schools and community centers to help reinforce science and social studies.

Ana Aita-Cherry, who has been a presenter for eight years, said the environmental education program works with teachers to enhance the curriculum.

"What we want to do is make the children aware that nature is everywhere," Aita-Cherry said. "The biggest message we have is that everything in nature is connected."

She said the program last year reached about 17,000 pupils, mostly pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Presentations are given to some sixth- and seventh-graders.

The school districts that participate are Houston, Pasadena, Clear



Michelle Myers, right, lets Meredith Henson, 10, center, touch a baby alligator as Darius Jackson, 11, and Monica Solis, 10, look on during a Traveling Naturalist exhibit at Garden Villas Elementary.

Creek, North Forest, Aldine, Sheldon, Humble, Alief, Klein and Cypress-Fairbanks.

Laura Teatsworth, Garden Villas' science lab teacher who has been responsible for bringing the program to the school the past eight years, confirmed that it reinforces the curriculum. Also, she said, it

helps the students on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness and Stanford 10 tests.

"I really and truly believe that when they come out it's a team effort," she said. "We're working together to accomplish one goal, and that's to educate our kids."

Some students said the learning experience is better when they see the animals alive.

Jan Robles, 11, said the Traveling Naturalist helps with his grades. "I need to know a lot of this stuff because they might just question me about it on tests," Jan said.



Easter egg hunts: Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee, Justice of the Peace Jo Ann Delgado and Constable Gary L. Freeman held their annual Easter Egg Hunts on March 31. Left photo, children in the Pleasantville subdivision rush to gather eggs that morning at Judson Robinson Sr. Park. Right photo, hundreds enjoy the event later that afternoon at El Franco Lee Park in the South Belt area.

Precinct One gardening program helps seniors develop green thumbs

Spring isn't only in the air, but also the ground. That combination from Mother Nature – coupled with the recent abundance of rain – creates growing interest among Precinct One senior citizens who want tastier vegetables, colorful flowers and healthier lawns.

To get those results, seniors are participating in the free, decade-old gardening program offered by the Precinct One Horticulture Department. Darryl Cornwall taught the class for 10 years until George McAfee took it over in December 2011.

"The instructors are really helpful and knowledgeable, to the extent that I am now eating out of my own back yard," said Maudella Doomes, who has been in the Lincoln Park class for two years.

Seniors are taught innovative methods of planting. The classes at four Precinct One

Gardening Classes	
Locations	Times
Lincoln Park	10 a.m. 2nd Wednesday
Hardy Sr. Ctr.	11 a.m. 3rd Tuesday
Tom Bass	9 a.m. 2nd Thursday
Finnigan Park	10 a.m. 1st Friday

seniors' centers cover topics such as planting and maintaining a vegetable or flower garden; fertilizing and watering; caring for a lawn; and pruning trees. Also, the seniors maintain vegetable gardens at three locations.

Seven-year student Linda Riggs, a participant at Tom Bass Park, said she has expanded her garden.



Carroll Figley, left, plants tomatoes at the Hardy Senior Center garden. Valdo Martinez, Eva Taylor, horticulturist George McAfee and Baldemar Rios provide assistance.

"With my abundance of harvest," she said, "I use what I have left over to feed the sick and shut in – a testament to the lessons I've learned from the gardening program."

Carroll Figley, who has been gardening off and on all his life, said he discovered some new techniques at the Hardy Senior Citizens Center class. "Oh yeah," he said, "you never stop learning."

Senior citizens' sock hop evokes fond memories of the past



Henrietta Cage, right, and John Tapscott do the bump at the March 30 senior citizens' sock hop.

Henrietta Cage's teenage desire to own a pair of black-and-white Saddle Oxfords wasn't in step with her family's budget.

"When I was a teenager, I wanted shoes like these," the 1965 Wheatley High School graduate said. "My Momma couldn't even afford to buy them. And they were \$12.95. I paid \$100 for these shoes."

Even though it was a few decades later, Cage got a chance to sport her shoes at the sock hop

held for Precinct One senior citizens March 30 at Finnigan Park. Cage and John Tapscott – a 1960 Wheatley graduate who wore jeans, a white shirt and penny loafers – won the contest for the best outfit depicting the 1950s.

Of course, both stayed on the souls of their vintage shoes while dancing the afternoon away.

In addition to dancing, lunch was served at the event held in the NFL Youth Education

Town gym. The approximately 100 attendees dressed in '50s, '60s and '70s attire.

Tapscott said he wore jeans or khakis, and Stacy Adams shoes in his younger days. One popular trend, he remembered, was altering the heels on his shoes.

"We used to take what they called Stacy Adams and clip the heels to make them half as high as they were manufactured to be," he said. "And they would put taps on them."

Precinct One maintains 6 parks in interlocal agreement with Houston

Boyce-Dorian Park is the latest of six City of Houston parks and two community centers that Harris County Precinct One is maintaining in an interlocal agreement.

Since the agreements started in 1992, Precinct One has provided recreational, social and educational services to hundreds of constituents who use the parks and community centers.

Boyce-Dorian Park

The 9.7-acre Boyce-Dorian Park at 2000 Erastus is adjacent to the Julia C. Hester House, which is undergoing a three-phase renovation that will allow the non-profit community center and Precinct One officials to enhance social and recreational services.



Pfeiffer & Son workers install light poles in Boyce-Dorian Park at 2000 Erastus.

Finnigan Park

The flagship of the city-county projects is the 19-acre Finnigan Park at 4900 Providence in the Fifth Ward, where Precinct One since 1996 has operated a Community Center that provides an array of services. Adjacent to the community center is the NFL

Youth Education Town (YET), which was built in 2004 with \$1 million donated by the National Football League.

The 16,500-square-foot YET — sponsored by Precinct One and NFL Charities, and operated by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston — provides educa-

tional and recreational activities year-round for youth ages 7 through 17.

Lincoln Park

In a project similar to Finnigan, the 7-acre Lincoln Park and its Community Center at 979 Grenshaw St. have been offering the Acres Homes community so-

cial and recreational services since 2008.

Eisenhower Park

The largest city park operated by Precinct One is the 682-acre Dwight D. Eisenhower at 13400 Aqueduct Road, where users enjoy nature trails, biking, picnic facilities, fishing and playgrounds.

Sheldon Park

At the Sheldon Park Sports Complex at 8815 Pineland Road, the precinct has improved the baseball fields over the years.

Hutcheson Park

In 1992, Precinct One took over the 3.5-acre Hutcheson Park at North Loop and Lockwood. It features restrooms, tennis courts and an exercise station.



Roydel Suarez counts the oak trees workers will plant in Precinct One parks.

Saplings will be planted in parks to replace trees killed by drought

The Harris County Flood Control District has given Precinct One 441 trees that will be planted in the precinct's parks that were devastated by the drought.

So far, Precinct One workers have removed 1,000 dead trees from parks. In a related development, Harris County Commissioners Court has allocated \$2 million — divided evenly among the four precincts — to replace trees.

With its \$500,000, Precinct One has hired a contractor to cut and remove trees from Alexander Deussen and Dwight D. Eisenhower parks. Precinct One also will use some of that money to buy replacement trees for parks and road right of way.

Precinct One construction projects

Scott Street

Construction is expected to start this summer to widen Scott Street from Orem Drive south to Beltway 8. The first phase calls for converting a 1.2-mile portion of Scott between Beltway 8 and Alameda Genoa from a two-lane, asphalt street to a four-lane, divided, concrete roadway.

The second phase involves an .8-mile section between Alameda Genoa and Orem that will be converted from two to four lanes with storm sewers.

T.C. Jester

A 1.2-mile section of T.C. Jester Boulevard between Spears Road and F.M. 1960 will be converted to a four-lane, concrete, divided roadway with storm sewers. Redistricting moved this project from Precinct Four's jurisdiction to Precinct One's.

Imperial Valley

Another project that started in Precinct Four involves turning a .34-mile portion of Imperial Valley Drive between Remington Heights Drive and Airtex Drive into a four-lane, concrete, divided road with traffic signals.

HCTRA projects in Precinct One

Widening the toll road

The Harris County Toll Road Authority has started work to widen the Sam Houston Tollway between U.S. 59 South and Texas 288. The 11-mile project calls for increasing the lanes from two to four in each direction, which should significantly enhance mobility in the area.

The plan also includes the installation of an emergency shoulder, renovations to the main-lane plaza and the reconstruction of toll entrance/exit ramps. The estimated construction cost is approximately \$127 million. The work should be completed in about 20 months. Motorists can visit HCTRA's website at www.hctrat.org or Houston

Transtar's website at www.houstontranstar.org to check for any potential lane closures.

EZ Tag store renovations

The Toll Road Authority recently completed renovations to the EZ TAG store at 1855 S. Sam Houston Tollway. The store – located between Texas 288 and Alameda School Road – features a new floor and ceiling, improved lighting, a larger counter and additional lobby space for customers. The renovation program cost approximately \$81,000 and was paid for from revenue from tolls. No tax dollars were used.

TxDOT plans to expand Texas 288 with toll lanes to allay congestion

Harris County Commissioners Court and the Texas Department of Transportation have reached an agreement that calls for widening Texas 288 with a combination of free and toll lanes.

TxDOT officials say the agency is developing plans to construct a toll facility within the grassy median on Texas 288 from U.S. 59 near downtown south into Brazoria County. The proposed toll facility would have limited access points and function as express lanes separate from the existing main lanes. The proposal calls for a direct connection from Texas 288 to the Texas Medical Center. It also includes improving nearby Alameda and Cullen streets. State officials say construction could start after public hearings, environmental documents and construction plans are completed.



Walkers use an 8-by-132-foot pedestrian bridge on Constitution Street that spans a Harris County Flood Control District ditch.



Harris County District Attorney Pat Lykos, left, and Commissioner El Franco Lee visit after the groundbreaking on a forensic genetics laboratory that will open later this year in the Texas Medical Center. The 15,000-square-foot facility will allow county scientists to test DNA evidence. In a related development, Commissioners Court has approved \$7 million for design work on a nine-story tower for the Institute of Forensics Sciences.

Street Olympics Summer Games kicks off June 8 with news conference

The Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics Summer Games officially kicks off June 8 with a news conference announcing the 2012 activities.

The news conference will be held at Mickey Leland Memorial Park. It will include Street Olympics board members and its founder Commissioner El Franco Lee.

Children from Precinct One community centers also will demonstrate some of the traditional games such as hopscotch, foot races, Hula Hoop, kick ball and jump rope.

Lee created the non-profit Street Olympics in 1986 to implement pro-



Boys & Girls County athletes march in the 2011 Parade of Olympians that kicked off the Summer Games Final Event in Reliant Arena.

grams that provide training, support and resources that lead to healthy, productive lives for Houston-area youth. The Street Olympics started with about 200 children competing in the Summer Games.

The Summer Games now involves thousands of children competing at participating agencies,

including Houston Parks and Recreation Department community centers, Boys & Girls Clubs' sites, YMCAs and other community youth summer programs. The top athletes at those locations are eligi-

ble to be among about 3,000 who compete for medals at the annual Final Event at Reliant

Arena in August.

The Street Olympics, which has programs that operate year-round, now reaches about 10,000 youth and young adults annually. The four core components are:

The **Summer Games** that include **3-on-3 Basketball**, **Final Event** and **Bright Futures Fair**.

The **Discovery Camp/Traveling Naturalist Program** offers children a fun and exciting way to learn about nature and the environment.

The **Harris County Aquatics Program** offers Learn-to-Swim sessions and competitive swimming.

The **Northeast Adolescent Program** — a partnership with Baylor College of Medicine, Houston and Aldine school districts, and the Harris County Hospital District — offers free clinics for teens and young adults to address infant mortality, teenage pregnancy and other health and social issues.

Clinics: *Continued from page 1*

cent Program (NEAP) that is under the Harris County Precinct One Street Olympics' umbrella — are working toward that goal.

For 23 years, the clinics have provided medical, educational and social services to underserved teenagers and young adults in inner-city communities. The agencies also organize community health fairs and other events.

The clinics, which have 10,000 unduplicated visits annually, also provide prevention education to 6,000 adolescents

in schools, community centers and detention centers.

The male services include counseling, physical exams, and sexually transmitted disease screening and treatment. Referrals are available to specialized doctors and to community organizations for legal aid, job training and employment.

For young women, there's the Mentors for Mom program that utilizes the Junior League volunteers to teach parenting skills to adolescent mothers.

The volunteers provide information on stress management, baby care, and utilization of community services.

The Baylor College of Medicine Teen Health Clinic provides services for people ages 13-22. At the Cavalcade clinic, the maximum age is 25 and there are all-male services on Tuesday afternoon. For more information, visit www.teenhealthclinic.org.

Lawn Teen Health Clinic	8111 Lawn St.
Ben Taub Hospital	1504 Taub Loop
Cavalcade Teen Health Clinic	3815 Cavalcade
Lee High School	6529 Beverly Hill Ln.
LBJ Hospital	5656 Kelly
Cullen Health Center	5737 Cullen, Su. 200
Chavez High School	8501 Howard

At the health fair, Buzi said the event was designed to get information and services to young men, who normally don't go to the doctor. Through innovative approaches, Buzi said, 18% of Baylor teen clinics' clients are males.

Others agencies that work with the clinics are the Harris County Hospital District, and Houston and Aldine school districts. According to a 1993 national survey, publicly funded clinics documented that on average only 6% of clients were males.

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Precinct One Parks' Reservations

All reservations are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please read the park rules and regulations for reserving pavilions and community buildings prior to making reservations. This information can be found on our website at www.hctx.net/comm_lee/parks.htm.

Refer to the following schedule when making 2013 reservations:

Reservations for the months:	Reservations will be accepted on or after:
Jan. 2013 – March 2013	Monday, Nov. 12, 2012
April 2013 – June 2013	Monday, Jan. 14, 2013
July 2013 – Sept. 2013	Monday, March 11, 2013
Oct. 2013 – Dec. 2013	Monday, May 13, 2013

For southside reservations, call **713-440-1587**. To reserve Deussen Park and Jordan Community Center, call **281-591-6951**.



Ready to garden: Senior citizens listen as horticulturist George McAfee, right, gives gardening instructions at Tom Bass Park. It's part of Precinct One's free gardening classes. See story Page 4.

PRECINCT ONE SITES and PHONE NUMBERS

REGIONAL OFFICES

El Rio Service Center	713.991.6881
Downtown Office	713.755.6111
El Camino Office Annex	713.741.1096
Kashmere Office "Annex 36"	713.675.0004
Leland Office "Annex 31"	713.697.1104
Neartown Office "Annex 1"	713.755.9300
Hardy Service Center	281.820.5151

COMMUNITY CENTERS

Christia Adair Community Center	713.991.6881
Tom Bass Community Center	713.733.3717
Challenger Seven Learning Center	281.332.5157
Deussen Seniors Center	281.454.4108
EFL Community Center	281.464.9708
Finnigan Community Center	713.678.7385
Hardy Seniors Center	281.260.6772
Barbara Jordan Community Center	281.591.6951
Kashmere Office "Annex 36"	713.675.0004
Lincoln Park Community Center	281.445.1617
YET Center @ Finnigan Park	713.676.0519

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Aquatics Program	713.748.7333
Discovery Camp Program	281.332.5157
Northeast Adolescent Program	713.673.1655
Seniors Program	713.733.3717
Street Olympics Summer Games	713.741.0851