



# ONE *TO* ONE

JUNE 2017 | ISSUE #1

## A LETTER FROM YOUR COMMISSIONER

**Dear Constituent,**

**PUBLIC SERVICE IS MY PASSION.** After 26 years in the Texas Senate, six years on the Houston City Council, and now as Precinct One Commissioner, I remain committed to improving the lives of constituents and fighting for important reforms that benefit all Harris County residents. I am working hard to create better-paying jobs, more economic opportunities for all, a fairer criminal justice system and increased access to quality and affordable health care. I also am dedicated to ensuring that everyone's voice is heard at the ballot box, advancing equitable investment in infrastructure and providing access to quality programs and services for all Precinct One residents.

This newsletter gives a glimpse into what's been happening around Precinct One and what's ahead for this summer.

As the son of a yardman and a maid, I was raised to believe that every person who works hard and plays by the rules ought to have the chance to succeed in our economy. I stand by that principle today as I seek to fulfill our core mission: to better the lives of the people of Precinct One. I appreciate this opportunity and I look forward to advancing our mission.



Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, right, takes the oath of office on Jan. 1 with his wife, Licia Green-Ellis, holding the Bible.

Sincerely,  
*Rodney Ellis*

COMMISSIONER RODNEY ELLIS



## PRECINCT ONE CENTERS OFFER AN ARRAY OF ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS AND SENIORS

Olympic gold medalist Simone Manuel, right, talks to young swimmers during the Make a Splash Tour in Houston to promote the importance of children taking swimming lessons to prevent drownings. The two-day tour stopped at two Precinct One centers. **FOR THE COMPLETE STORY, SEE PAGE 4**

## DR. KING'S LEGACY IS HONORED IN HOUSTON'S FIFTH WARD

Precinct One's commitment to community was in top form for our MLK Day of Service, where dozens of residents and staff members joined together to help clean the historic Evergreen Cemetery and build a house frame for Habitat for Humanity. Precinct One offers its deep gratitude and thanks to all who came out on January 16 to give back, build a better community and honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy.



Commissioner Rodney Ellis joins volunteers who helped clean the historic Evergreen Cemetery.



Volunteers at Finnigan Park stack frames made for a house for Habitat for Humanity.



Dr. Mustapha Debboun, left, director of Harris County Mosquito Control, gives Commissioner Rodney Ellis a tour of the Skeeter School Bus, which is used to educate children about the insects.

## Protect yourself from mosquitoes this summer!

**SUMMER IS A GREAT TIME TO ENJOY THE OUTDOORS.**

But as temperatures rise and rain falls, Harris County's mosquito population grows. Follow these guidelines to help protect yourself and your family from mosquito-borne illnesses such as the West Nile and Zika viruses.

### Personal Protection

- ▶ When outdoors, use an EPA-registered insect repellent containing the active ingredient DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, IR3535 or 2-undecanone. Follow instructions, including reapplication.
- ▶ If possible, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

### Mosquito-Proof Your Property

- ▶ Remove/empty containers that can hold water such as tires and flowerpots.
- ▶ Change water in birdbaths and pet bowls every 3 to 5 days.
- ▶ Keep rain gutters free of debris.
- ▶ Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes outside. Use air conditioning, if possible.

Harris County Public Health (HCPH) says the best defense is to "Prevent the Bite Day and Night." Visit [hcphtx.org](http://hcphtx.org) online or call (713) 440-4800 for more information.

# Street Olympics—making a lasting difference in young lives

It is one of our most celebrated and memorable opportunities we provide for our youth—the Harris County Street Olympics Summer Games.

Starting this month, the “games” provide youth with an unparalleled learning experience designed to foster healthy competition and raise their self-esteem.

Throughout the summer, children at participating Street Olympics youth agencies will compete in a myriad of games, including jacks, kick ball, foot races, hula hoop, hopscotch and jump rope. There’s also 3-on-3 basketball, a friendly swim meet and daylong nature adventures at Challenger Seven Me-

morial and Deussen Parks.

The best athletes are invited to the exciting Final Event on August 4 at NRG Arena, where some 2,000 contestants will compete for gold, silver and bronze medals.

The nonprofit Street Olympics was founded in 1986 by the late Commissioner El Franco Lee.

“Our Street Olympics programming has touched the lives of thousands of young people by providing them with positive educational and social opportunities,” Commissioner Rodney Ellis said. “I’m committed to continuing this great program, which helps our youth make constructive choices that lead to successful lives.”



Commissioner Rodney Ellis offers some physical-fitness pointers to youth while joining them in the hula hoop demonstration at the Harris County Street Olympics Summer Games kick-off on June 7.



## CIVIC LEADERS GATHER FOR BREAKFAST MEETING AT TOM BASS

PRECINCT ONE HOSTED a “Civic Leaders Breakfast” that brought together Super Neighborhood presidents, ministers and other community leaders to share information, concerns and camaraderie with Commissioner Rodney Ellis and many staff members. The March 31 gathering at Tom Bass Park included discussions about how the Precinct’s skilled professionals engage our communities through enhanced programs, special projects, beautiful parks, bustling community centers and other important services.

**Photo Above:** Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis discusses issues affecting Precinct One and Harris County at the Civic Leaders Breakfast.

# Precinct One community centers host exciting activities for kids and seniors



**Above:** Krystal Davenport, left foreground, and Ricky Taylor-Garcia, both 17-year-old students at Quest Early College High School, demonstrate a noise pollution exercise to The Rhodes School-Tidwell Campus students at the Earth Day Celebration. **Left:** Commissioner Rodney Ellis was presented a check from the USA Swimming Foundation to help HCAP, which provides free learn-to-swim lessons to some 3,000 children annually.

**P**roviding enriching educational and recreational opportunities for our children, young adults and seniors is central to Precinct One's mission of improving the lives of the people we are privileged to serve.

Our nine community centers provide a variety of programs and services—recreation, exercise, arts, nutrition and social services—for residents of all ages. Each center conducts special activities as well as trips to cultural, historical and educational

sites throughout the year.

We have hosted many exciting events so far this year, including an Earth Day celebration, a competitive “Knowledge Bowl,” a fashionable Spring Tea and more. We also were honored to host Olympic swimmers on May 12 when the Make a Splash Tour visited the Harris County Aquatics Program (HCAP) to promote safe swimming for low-income residents and children of color.

At Precinct One's annual Earth Day Celebration on April 22, students learned about recycling, animal habits, the harmful effects of sound pollution and other environmental concerns. The event at Deussen Park is part of Precinct One's far-reaching Environmental Education Program, which provides year-round educational and recreational services

**Precinct One Seniors Program:** Precinct One's Seniors Program continues to provide recreational, educational and social programs that promote wellness and lifelong learning opportunities. Contact a center for further information.

- **Cavalcade**, 3815 Cavalcade St., Houston, 77026. 713-675-0004
- **Deussen Park**, 12303 Sonnier, Houston, 77044. 832-927-2100
- **El Franco Lee Park**, 9500 Hall Rd. Houston, 77089. 832-927-2190
- **Finnigan Park**, 4900 Providence St., Houston, 77020. 713-678-7385
- **Hardy**, 11901 West Hardy, Houston, 77076. 281-260-6772
- **Hester House**, 2020 Solo St., Houston, 77020. 713-274-1394
- **Lincoln Park**, 979 Grenshaw, Houston, 77088. 281-445-1617
- **Tom Bass Park**, 15108 Cullen Blvd., Houston, 77047. 713-733-3717



## PRECINCT ONE ACTIVITIES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

for our youth at parks, in schools and at special events.

Senior activities are extremely popular at our centers, particularly the annual Spring Tea, which was held April 26 at the Hardy Senior Center. Women dressed up in colorful dresses and Sunday hats and men donned their fine suits to enjoy the tea and luncheon, which featured singing, a drama sketch, a poetry reading and raffle. Not only did the audience hear from Commissioner Rodney Ellis, they also received a warm welcome from his wife, Licia Green-Ellis, who

promises to wear a hat next year!

These are just a few of the activities and events we offer year-round to Precinct One residents. Stop by a center or visit our website at [hcp1.net](http://hcp1.net) for more information.

**Above:** Morgan Atkins, center, jumps for joy after one of her Julia C. Hester House teammates correctly answers a question at the Knowledge Bowl. **Left:** The audience claps to the beat of the music at the annual Spring Tea held April 26 at the Hardy Seniors Center.

## YEAR-ROUND YOUTH PROGRAMS

**PRECINCT ONE OFFERS A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS** that provide educational, recreational and other activities year-round for our youth.

In the summer, children attend the centers during the day for an array of activities that include free swimming lessons, sports, chess and field trips. Our summer programs are off and running but there may still be time for young people to get involved in swimming and nature camps.

The Harris County Aquatics Program offers Learn to Swim classes to youth ages 6 and older

who reside in Precinct One.

Session 1 will be held June 5-29 and Session 2 is July 3-27.

Class locations include the Harris County Aquatics Center, Attucks Middle School, Julia C. Hester House, Kashmere High School and Davis High School.

Registration information can be found under the "Helpful Links" tab on the Precinct One website — [hcp1.net](http://hcp1.net) — or by calling 713-748-7333.

Precinct One also has an Environmental Education Program that offers a one-day Discovery Camp.

For more information, contact:

► **Challenger Seven Learning Center,**  
832-927-1175

► **Deussen Learning Center,**  
832-927-2110

During the school year, our community centers provide after-school programs. For more information, contact a community center:

► **Finnigan Youth Education Town,**  
4900 Providence St., Houston.  
713-676-0519

► **Hester House,** 2020 Solo St.,  
Houston. 713-274-1394

► **Lincoln Park,** 979 Grenshaw,  
Houston. 281-445-1617

# Advocating for reforms that create a fairer, more effective criminal justice system

**R**eforming our broken justice system to ensure that our neighborhoods are safe and all people are treated equally and fairly under the law is one of the major civil rights issues of our time—and a top priority for Commissioner Rodney Ellis.

U.S. District Judge Lee Rosenthal recently issued a landmark decision

finding that Harris County's bail system routinely discriminates against poor misdemeanor defendants and violates their constitutional rights by keeping them in jail simply because they cannot afford to make bail. Unfortunately, the County Attorney has appealed the judge's wise ruling. Commissioner Ellis voted against an appeal as well as paying expensive outside attorneys who have already

received some \$3 million in taxpayer dollars to fight the lawsuit.

Commissioner Ellis believes it's time to stop defending the indefensible, settle the lawsuit and enact needed reforms. The County's resources can be better spent investing in community-centered, smart-on-crime prevention strategies that improve public safety without betraying our fundamental values.

## ON THE FRONT LINES OF WORKING TO ENSURE ACCESS TO QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE HEALTH CARE

**A**ccess to affordable, quality health care is a critical issue in Harris County, where nearly one million people are uninsured, despite significant gains in coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

There have been intense efforts to dismantle the ACA and restructure Medicaid, which

would have disastrous results for Harris County. Precinct One has been on the front lines of the fight to defend the right to quality, affordable health care for all people.

We co-organized community forums with local Congressional leaders and had ACA enrollment navigators at community centers in January. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and Commissioner Ellis co-hosted the "Keep America Healthy—Save the ACA" community forum, where residents and health care professionals shared their personal testimonies about the life-saving power of the ACA and their fears about losing it. Earlier this year, Congressman Al Green and Commissioner Ellis held a telephonic-town hall where residents called with questions about the ACA and other health care matters.

Precinct One understands that the best way to preserve health is to ensure that all residents have access to quality affordable health care.



▲ At the "Keep America Healthy – Save the ACA" community forum, Amy Esdorn, center, describes how the Affordable Care Act helped her. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, left, Anna Nunez, Marlin Phillips and Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis listen to her testimony.

## Investing in equitable infrastructure improvements

**F**rom flood control to transportation to parks, Precinct One is committed to making effective and equitable investments that build a stronger foundation for all of our residents.

Our efforts include building sidewalks to schools, working on flood control efforts and repairing and expanding roadways.

Investing in infrastructure also means maintaining our popular parks and making improvements in them, such as the recent addition of a colorful splash pad at El Franco Lee (EFL) Park, a first for a

Precinct One park.

“This is a great addition to an already wonderful park that serves so many people,” Commissioner Ellis said at the April 8 ribbon-cutting for the splash park, which is open annually April-October.

Another signature project—“Safe Routes to School”—involves installing sidewalks near a number of schools in the Houston, Spring, Aldine and Pasadena districts.

Precinct One also is working on other infrastructure improvements. For questions about roads and bridges, visit [hcp1.net/Information/Road-Bridge](http://hcp1.net/Information/Road-Bridge).



Cutting the ribbon for Precinct One's first splash park are South Belt-Ellington Chamber of Commerce President Kay Barbour, Jacinto Mayor Ana Diaz, Constable Christopher Diaz, Justice of the Peace Jo Ann Delgado, Commissioner Rodney Ellis and Chamber Chair Marie Flickinger.



### WORKING TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

#### PROMOTING ECONOMIC FAIRNESS

is a priority for Commissioner Ellis, who has long supported a living wage that helps put people on a better path to opportunity. It is an uphill battle, but he continues to work on efforts to raise the minimum wage. Recently, he put principle into practice in Precinct One, raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. It's a small step that leads by example and sets a precedent for all employers in Harris County to offer a livable wage. “There is more work to be done to ensure that our economy works for everyone and that hard-working families can live and thrive in Harris County,” he said.



**Rodney Ellis, Commissioner**

Harris County Precinct One  
1001 Preston Ave., Ste. 950  
Houston, TX 77002

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**



Email **[compct1communication@hctx.net](mailto:compct1communication@hctx.net)** to receive electronic newsletters.

Like us on Facebook: **[facebook.com/CommissionerPrecinctOne](https://facebook.com/CommissionerPrecinctOne)**

**Visit our website: [hcp1.net](http://hcp1.net)**

## PRECINCT ONE SITES & PHONE NUMBERS

### REGIONAL OFFICES

El Rio Service Center 713.991.6881  
Downtown Office 713.274.1000  
El Camino Office Annex 713.741.1096  
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  
713.738.8484  
Tom Bass Community Center 713.733.3717  
Challenger Seven Learning Center  
832.927-1175  
Deussen Seniors Center 832-927.2100  
EFL Community Center 832.927.2190  
Finnigan Community Center 713.678.7385  
Hardy Seniors Center 281.260.6772  
Julia C. Hester House 713.274.1394  
Barbara Jordan Community Center  
281.449.3240  
Cavalcade "Annex 36" 713.675.0004  
Lincoln Park Community Center  
281.445.1617  
Finnigan Park YET 713.676.0519

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

Aquatics Program 713.748.7333  
Discovery Camp Program 832-927-1175  
Northeast Adolescent Program  
713.673.1655  
Seniors Program 713.733.3717  
Street Olympics Summer Games  
713.741.0851