



**From the corner**

**Ethical use of county technology**



The unfortunate circumstances surrounding the recent resignation of the head of the Central Intelligence Agency reminds us that all public servants, including generals, should be mindful of basic rules of conduct when dealing with government technology and equipment. Some of these common sense guidelines were compiled in a presentation prepared by the County's Human Resources Department, the Information Technology Center, and our Office in 2011. Key points in the presentation include: 1) county technology should be used as a tool to help us do our jobs, 2) county technology should not be used for our personal gain, and 3) we should take reasonable steps to secure confidential information stored on the county's system. You can view the entire presentation by [clicking this link](#).

We would do well to remember these points and to review this presentation from time to time. We should all continue to work together to ensure that we are properly discharging our duties as stewards of the public trust when we use the technology and equipment provided to us. - Vince

**Happy Anniversary!**

**Thank you for your service to the public:**

<b>Kenneth Davis</b>	<b>15 years</b>
<b>Darlene Hadaway</b>	<b>21 years</b>

**Coming Attractions**

Nov. 22-23 Thanksgiving Holidays  
Dec. 4 Commissioners Court  
Dec. 19 County Attorney Open House  
Jan 4, 2013 Pay day changes to Fridays

**Useful Links**

County Attorney <a href="#">SharePoint</a>	County Attorney <a href="#">Website</a>
County Attorney <a href="#">Policy Manual</a>	Payroll reports & benefits <a href="#">on-line</a>
County Personnel <a href="#">Regulations</a>	County Attorney <a href="#">Directory</a>
County Attorney <a href="#">Style Manual</a>	County Attorney on <a href="#">Facebook</a>

**Open House**

Friends, family, and client representatives are invited to attend the annual **County Attorney Open House** December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2 pm to 4 pm.

**Paralegals write training manual**

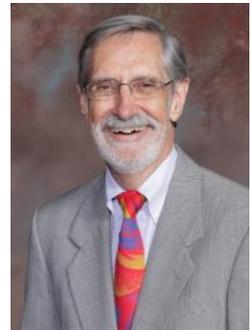


Left to right back row: Trish Eaton, Steve Okorooha, Fran Joubert, Jasmine Poullard; front row Stella Cox, Linda Paniagua, Danell Ortega.

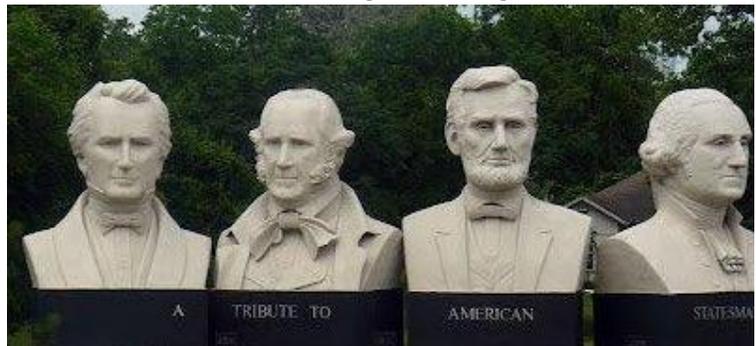
The paralegals in the Protective Services Family Group have completed a two-year project writing a Paralegal Training Handbook for the Protective Services Practice Group. The handbook will serve as a training tool and reference manual for both paralegals and attorneys, helping them understand the procedures and become familiar with the forms used in CPS cases. This project contributes to the Office's strategy of building legacy systems and creating standard practices. Thanks to all who devoted their time to this important project. [Click here](#) to view the manual.

**Clinton Gambill on Wills & Probate**

On Monday, November 12th, Senior Assistant County Attorney Clinton Gambill spoke to a group of senior citizens on the topic of "Wills and Probate" at the Precinct Three Fonteno Senior Education Center. He discussed planning for life and death, how one can exert some control, and making some helpful choices ahead of time. The senior citizens had many questions and everyone recognized the importance of the topic and enjoyed the exchange of ideas about the variables in this inevitable part of life.



**HCAO assists park acquisition**



The park is popularly known as "Mt. Rush Hour".

Senior Assistant County Attorney Jimmy Jones assisted the Precinct Two Commissioner's Office with the acquisition of land for a small park at the intersection of Interstates 10 and 45 where 18-foot concrete busts of Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington sit. Jimmy worked through unusual issues dealing with federal law on the rights of artists. The Chronicle reported on the matter at [Chron.com](#).



The Office of Vince Ryan  
County Attorney

WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE HARRIS COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, BOTH LAWYERS AND NON-LAWYERS, ADHERE TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL ETHICS AS WE SERVE THE PEOPLE OF HARRIS COUNTY AND STRIVE TO BE THE BEST PUBLIC LAW FIRM IN THE UNITED STATES.

# NEWS



Supreme Court to review voting rights act [Kuhf.org](http://Kuhf.org)  
Mount Rush Hour becomes a county park [Chron.com](http://Chron.com)  
San Antonio Judge to head DFPS [Chron.com](http://Chron.com)  
Governor should appoint Houston port board [Chron.com](http://Chron.com)  
Evidence is issue in Supreme Court case [NYtimes.com](http://NYtimes.com)  
Fulbright merges with Norton Rose [Chron.com](http://Chron.com)



"The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts."—Bertrand Russell

## Linda Geffin speaks at Bioneers Conference

Assistant County Attorney Linda Geffin was a featured speaker at a conference hosted by the Houston Bioneers to explore practical solutions to revitalize the community. Linda described the tools that the HCAO uses, including the use of civil remedies to shut down fronts for human trafficking. Human trafficking is a \$32 billion illegal enterprise, the third largest in the world after guns and drugs.

## Garland McInnis on Evidence



On Wednesday, November 14th, Assistant County Attorney Garland "Mack" McInnis Jr. hosted a CLE titled "Nuts and Bolts of Evidence." It covered the basics of introducing and objecting to evidence in trial. He suggested that the rules of evidence be approached as a table

of chapters, e.g. rules 701-706 should be consulted as chapter 7 of the book of evidence. He said that memorizing the topic of each of the 10 "chapters" of the book of evidence will streamline confident use of the rules in trial. Garland discussed Daubert Challenges, and authentication with the Mark, Identify, Authenticate, and Offer (MIAO) formula. [Click here](#) to view all CLE papers offered by the Office of the Harris County Attorney.

## Our computers can talk to you



The newer version of Word currently being installed throughout the Office allows you to hear single words or blocks of text through the Speak command. Add this to your Quick Access Toolbar (located at the top left corner in Word) by doing the following:

Next to the Quick Access Toolbar, click Customize Quick Access Toolbar. Click More Commands.

In the Choose commands list, select All Commands.

Scroll down to the Speak command, select it, and then click Add. Click OK.

When you want to use the text-to-speech command, click the icon on the Quick Access Toolbar.

## Barbara Callistien, marathon runner

Assistant County Attorney Barbara Callistien shows her mementos from her recent trip to New York in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Barbara was originally scheduled to participate in the New York Marathon, but the race was cancelled after she arrived in New York. Barbara is a long distance runner and has run 15 marathons. She recently was awarded a complimentary race by the Harris County Hospital District in recognition of her finishing first place in the 2012 Texas Med 5K. On Saturday, February 9, 2013, Barbara will be participating in the Texas Med 5K with all expenses paid.



## HCAO shuts down Babes-North

Babes-North, a northwest Harris County bar and allegedly a front for prostitution and drugs, has closed. Our Office filed suit on Monday, October 8th, against the so-called bikini bar located at 10610 FM 1960 West, claiming that it was a place where persons go for prostitution and drugs. Susan Fillion was the lead attorney on the case. Others who participated include Melissa Spinks, John McKinney, Oscar Burnias, and Leslie Austin. Fox 26 news reported on the matter at [Myfoxboston.com](http://Myfoxboston.com).

## Testimony ends in redistricting case

The evidence phase of a lawsuit challenging Harris County's Commissioner precinct maps ended Friday, November 16th. U.S. District Judge Vanessa Gilmore may issue a ruling as early as this week. The 2010 census showed the population growth in the west and north was growing faster than that in the south and east, requiring new lines to equalize the precincts at about one million residents each. Plaintiffs claim that the County's redistricting map is illegal and dilutes Latino voting power in Precinct Two. The U.S. Department of Justice pre-cleared Harris County's redistricting map last year, saying it did not violate Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Senior Assistant County Attorney Douglas Ray has been assisting outside counsel Andrews & Kurth in this litigation. The [Houston Chronicle](http://HoustonChronicle) provides additional details.

