



From the Corner: Health Matters



Commissioner Steve Radack, County Attorney Vince Ryan, and Commissioner Gene Locke attended the first anniversary of the County Wellness Clinic.

On April 21, I was privileged along with others from our Office to attend the first anniversary of the opening of the County Wellness Clinic. The clinic was opened with the support of Commissioner El Franco Lee, who had a strong interest in the well-being of Harris County employees. Renaming the Center in his honor is a fitting tribute to his life and legacy.

The clinic, located on the 9th floor of 1310 Prairie, provides employees easy access to medical professionals who can help with a variety of common maladies including colds, flus, allergies, minor skin rashes, sprains, and strains. More information can be found [here](#).

Harris County offers a number of other programs that help employees improve their physical well-being. Dancing, aerobics, and Pilates are a few of the exercise classes offered free of charge to County employees. [Click here](#) to see what's available in May.

Check, Change, Control! is a new program focused on helping employees control their blood pressure. Read the article below to find out more.

Other classes offered by the County teach us how to take care of ourselves both mentally and physically. [Click here](#) for more information about the Healthy Actions Medical Plan (HAMP). Those who complete the healthy actions plan receive a higher level of insurance benefits and lower out of pocket costs.

The health of County employees is important to all of us. Healthy employees are more productive, have fewer sick days, and best of all, are able to enjoy life with friends and family both at the Office and at home. We encourage all members of the Harris County Attorney's Office to take advantage of programs offered by the County as we work together to build the best public law firm in the United States. — Vince

Check, Change, Control! launched



Jamie Buchanan, Payroll/ Benefits Coordinator, demonstrates how to check blood pressure.

Harris County, in partnership with the American Heart Association, began Check, Change, Control! on April 25. HCAO employees can enroll online and record blood pressure readings. This program helps people learn about, monitor and manage their blood pressures through a combination of resources. More information can be found on the American Heart Association's [website](#).

Flooding closes County, but work goes on

Torrential rain and severe flooding across the Houston area on April 18 caused most Harris County offices, including our own, to close to the public, but a number of HCAO employees were on duty. Scott Petty prepared the emergency orders the County Judge signed that morning. Barbara Hernandez answered HCAO phones remotely. Robert Soard and Barbara Armstrong



Buffalo Bayou as seen from our office on April 18.

advised purchasing, county commissioners, and others throughout the day. Randy Smidt, Butch Cox, Diana Pacheco, Sumpter Frazier, Darrell Williams and others were at their desks for at least part of the day. Oscar Bunias was in the building and checked on conditions in the tunnel and Conference Center.

More than 17 inches of rain fell in parts of north and northwest Harris County. Estimates count more than 3,500 flooded homes in the county and about \$56 million in damages. The judge's emergency order has been extended to May 10.

5 things YOU didn't KNOW about ME

1. I became a first time grandmother October 2015.
2. My favorite movie is The Untouchables.
3. I'm the fifth of six children and the only girl.
4. I love to play Just Dance with my daughters.
5. My husband and I attended the same high school, but met each other a few years after we both graduated.

Patricia Butler is a paralegal in the Protective Services Practice Group



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.

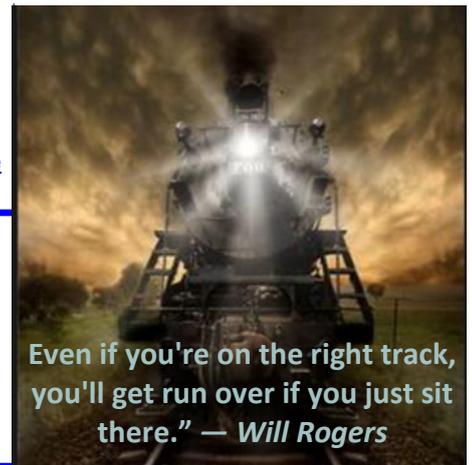


County Attorney [SharePoint](#)
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HCAO Alert Line: 713-274-5289

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Payroll Reports & Benefits [Online](#)
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Coming Attractions:

TDCAA Civil Law Seminar
Wednesday, May 11 to Friday, May 13
Omni South Park Hotel, Austin
[Click here](#) for more information.



Fox completes BP MS150 for third year in a row

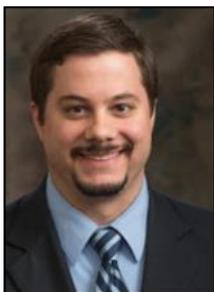


ACA Jennifer Fox participated for the third time in the BP MS150 (a bike ride from Houston to Austin that helps raise funds and awareness for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society) on April 16 and 17. Weather concerns forced the cancellation of the second day of the ride from La Grange to Austin. Jennifer rode 100 miles from Houston to La Grange on the first day and raised \$800 for the cause.

HCAO Conference Center ready for use

The County Attorney Conference Center is outfitted and ready to go, featuring six large screen monitors (two of which are touch screens) touch panel audio and video controls, Blu-Ray video, and wireless connection to presenters' tablets and smart phones. The monitors can display the same scene or different scenes depending on the user's preference. The Center includes a state of the art sound system with wireless microphones and provides space for 200 or can be partitioned to accommodate smaller groups. Contact [CAO Admin Help Desk](#) if you want to schedule the Conference Center.

First Court dismisses arrestee's claims



Keith Toler

The First Court of Appeals has reversed the finding of a lower court and dismissed claims that a prisoner had been injured because of a Harris County deputy's negligent use of handcuffs and a bench during her booking. Harris County maintained that the injuries were the result of the prisoner's intoxication and not because of the use of tangible personal



Clinton Gambill

property. The Court of Appeals rendered judgment dismissing the lawsuit against Harris County, finding there was no evidence to support the plaintiff's claims. The case is *Harris County v. Stephanie Jo Baker*. Assistant County Attorney Keith Toler handled the appeal. Senior ACA Clinton Gambill represented the county at the trial court level.

County Attorney Ryan chosen for Library Award



Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan has been selected from nominees across the United States to receive the prestigious Law Library Advocate Award from the Government Law Libraries Section of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) for his efforts to promote, support and improve the Harris County Law Library. The award will be presented at the AALL annual conference in Chicago on July 17.

The Harris County Law Library, established in 1915, is a part of the Harris County Attorney's Office and is a public library open to both lawyers and non-lawyers. Approximately 63,000 patrons visited the library in 1998, but by 2010 the annual gate count had fallen to 32,073, this despite the fact that Harris County has more pro se filings than any other Texas county. By 2014, the library was back to its 1998 gate count, recording more than 60,000 patron visits per year.

New date for "Family Feud" awards

The Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony has been rescheduled to 3 p.m. on May 18 in the HCAO Conference Center (lower level of 1019 Congress). Join us as we honor our fellow employees for their years of service and have fun playing Family Feud.



Rebekah Wendt appointed ACA



Rebekah Wendt is our newest Assistant County Attorney, having been appointed on May 2 to work in the Environment and Infrastructure Practice Group. Rebekah has worked with our Office for three years as an intern. She earned her Juris Doctorate from the University of Houston in 2015 and her Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy from the University of North Carolina. Rebekah enjoys hiking in state and national parks and is restoring a hundred-year-old sewing machine table.

Interior stairs are open!

Employees may now travel between the 15th, 16th, and 17th floors of the Congress Plaza building via the stairwell. You will need your badges to unlock the doors, both exiting and entering. Cameras are monitoring the stairwells. Please remember city ordinance prohibits smoking in the building and this includes the stairwells and garage.

