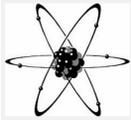




**From the corner: A catalyst for communication**



The recent seminar about unaccompanied children crossing the Texas border demonstrated the important role our Office often plays in bringing together various groups to accomplish great things on behalf of the people of Harris County.

About four weeks ago, as local, state, and federal officials began to deal with the arrival of thousands of unaccompanied children into the United States, our Office determined that lawyers, law enforcement, and the public should be made aware of the many laws that cover this situation and the myriad governmental and nongovernment organizations that will be impacted.

A work group led by John Odam and Terry O'Rourke reached out to non-profit organizations, law schools, federal, state, and county officials, law firms, bar associations, and others to organize the four-hour continuing legal education course held on July 31st. Chief Justice Nathan Hecht, Associate Justice Eva Guzman, nationally known immigration attorney Charles C. Foster, and DFPS Commissioner Judge John Specia were a few of the many who volunteered their time for this effort. The results were outstanding with about 500 in attendance and more than 125 volunteering to provide pro bono legal work to assist with this humanitarian crisis. You can view the complete CLE on our website at [www.harriscountyattorney.net](http://www.harriscountyattorney.net).

In our role as lawyers for the State and the County, and with our many contacts with governmental and nongovernmental agencies, our Office is uniquely situated to be the catalyst for communication among the key officials, organizations, and volunteers to exchange ideas, share information, and develop plans of action about this important subject.

We can all be pleased that we are part of an Office that continues to be "Of Service to All According to Law." - Vince

**Happy Anniversary!**

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

|                    |         |                  |          |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|----------|
| Jennifer Fox       | 1 year  | Michelle Moore   | 3 years  |
| Tiffany McCullough | 1 year  | Marc Ritter      | 3 years  |
| Toni Tyler         | 1 year  | Jasmine Poullard | 7 years  |
| Cheryl Davis       | 2 years | Harrison Gregg   | 15 years |

**Judge upholds game room regulations**



Fred Keys

United States District Judge David Hittner upheld Harris County's game room regulations in an order signed August 5. Assistant County Attorney Fred Keys took lead on the case, supported by Assistant County Attorney Celena Vinson and Paralegal Christine McGee.

A local game room owner, Fabian Elizondo, filed suit against our Office and other County and city officials in an effort to stop enforcement of regulations aimed at shutting down illegal gaming operations. The suit also named District Attorney Devon Anderson, Sheriff Adrian Garcia and Mayor Annise Parker as defendants for their respective roles in enforcing the regulations.



Christine McGee

The plaintiff argued the regulations were vague and unconstitutional. Following a one day trial, the judge dismissed all of the plaintiff's claims. Elizondo owns the Cavalcade Game Room at 1828 Airline, a 24-hour, members-only game room.



Celena Vinson

**Hundreds attend CLE hosted by HCAO**



Above: Hundreds of attorneys and police officers attended the event at HCC.



Left: Prior to the CLE, leaders from participating organizations spoke at a press conference.

Our Office joined other agencies and organizations to host a continuing education course for attorneys and police officers about unaccompanied children crossing the Texas border. The event, which drew about 500 attorneys and officers, took place on July 31 at HCC's South Loop Campus. The event concluded with opportunities for lawyers to volunteer their time and talents to helping these children navigate the justice system. More information is available on our website: [www.harriscountyattorney.net](http://www.harriscountyattorney.net).

**Conmen try to scam County park**

An operation out of Nigeria attempted to con Harris County when checks purportedly payable to "Alexandra Deussen" ended up being sent to Alexander Deussen Park in Commissioner Precinct One. The Precinct forwarded the checks totaling \$5,960 to our Office and asked us to look into it. Compliance Practice Group Manager Randy Smidt confirmed the checks are fraudulent. Apparently the thieves respond to ads on Craigslist by sending too much money on fraudulent paper and then authorize those selling the merchandise to cash the check and send the overage back. We don't know why the con men thought the park was a person. The matter has been referred to the U.S. Postal Inspector for mail fraud investigation.



**Connect5 Five questions for Diana Pacheco**



Diana Pacheco is a paralegal in the Litigation Practice Group. She has been with our Office since 1989.

**What movie would you recommend?** The Notebook.

**What was your favorite TV show in High School?** Hart to Hart.

**What's your favorite hobby?** Hiking, biking, and other outdoor activities.

**Where do you call home?** Houston is home, but "home is where you are."

**What's on your bucket list?** Travel to Alaska and other places. The U.S. has many places that take your breath away.



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.

**Useful Links**

County Attorney [SharePoint](#) | County Attorney [Website](#)  
 County Attorney [Policy Manual](#) | Payroll Reports & Benefits [Online](#)  
 County Personnel [Regulations](#) | County Attorney [Directory](#)

**Coming Attractions**



**Blood Drive**  
 August 19 and 20  
 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
 Civil Court Building  
 201 Caroline, Room 1780

**Hard work doesn't guarantee success, but improves its chances.**  
 -B. J. Gupta

**Christmas in July benefits BEAR**



Franchelle Joubert, Michelle Searles, Operations Coordinator for BEAR, Brenda Wardle, Curtrina Majors, Debbie Dillard, and Leslie Austin show off some of the gifts for the kids.

On July 25, our Office hosted a Christmas in July celebration to collect donated school supplies for kids in need. The event benefited BEAR-- Be A Resource for CPS Kids, a nonprofit dedicated to restoring dignity and hope to abused and neglected children involved in Child Protective Services.

Each year approximately 17,000 children are involved with Child Protective Services (CPS) in Harris County. Unfortunately, more than 1,000 of these children are removed from their homes under emergency conditions. BEAR's programs serve children in CPS care by providing emergency supplies, including diapers, clothes, shoes, car seats, cribs, formula, and school uniforms and supplies.

**Gibbs advocates for removal of dioxins from river**



Lois Gibbs, the environmental activist who made Love Canal a national concern in the late 1970s, spoke at a press conference hosted by Texans Together and the San Jacinto River Coalition last week in Baytown. Gibbs was there to help build support for efforts to clean up several nearby toxic waste pits.

Our Office has urged the EPA to require complete removal of the toxins to ensure residents and the environment are safe from the cancer-causing materials that currently sit in pits along the San Jacinto River.

**Community Outreach: Speaking Engagements**

**Scott Hilsher, July 24**  
 Harris County Retirement Seminar; Sheriff's Academy Wills & Probate

**Linda Geffin, July 29**  
 AARP Woodlake Chapter Human Trafficking

**Scott Hilsher, July 29**  
 Bear Creek Community Center Deed Restrictions

**Scott Hilsher, Aug 7**  
 Tom Bass Community Center Wills and Probate

**In the Spotlight**

**Introducing the HCAO's summer interns**



Christopher Ross

there, Chris served as the Weber State University's Supreme Court Justice and as president of the pre-law program.

Prior to relocating to Houston for law school, Chris was president of Bella Vista Investments, where bought and sold real estate and worked with distressed homeowners.

After graduation from law school, Chris hopes to make Houston his fami-

ly's permanent home. He is an Eagle Scout and serves as a Scoutmaster. Chris is also fluent in Portuguese.



Erin Vincent

Erin Vincent is a rising 3L at South Texas College of Law and an intern in our Public Law Practice Group. Erin holds a bachelors degree in biology from Xavier University in New Orleans, where she graduated with honors.

Erin is the Assistant Editor of the South Texas Law Review and serves

as Secretary of the Black Law Students Association. She excels at legal research and writing and earned the highest grade in her LRW II course.

Erin is also a volunteer teacher for South Texas' Citizen Schools.

Prior to joining our Office as an intern, Erin served as a judicial intern for the Honorable Judge Smoots-Hogan in the 164th Civil District Court.

Christopher Ross is a rising 2L at South Texas College of Law and an intern in our Litigation Practice Group. Chris holds a bachelors degree in Business Administration from Weber State University in Utah. As a student