



From the corner: City/County Teamwork



Events from last week illustrate how the City of Houston and Harris County are working together to solve regional challenges.

On Wednesday, March 12th, Houston City Council by a vote of 17 to 0 approved an agreement with Harris County that outlines a partnership to begin designing a Central Processing Center.

The project, funded 70 percent by the County and 30 percent by the City, will provide a centralized facility for processing persons arrested by City and County law enforcement. The facility will provide a place to not only book people into jail but also to connect them with needed social services with the goal to reduce the number who end up in jail. Our Office worked with the Budget Office, the Public Infrastructure Department, and with City representatives in negotiating the terms of the interlocal agreement.

Also on March 12th, Mayor Annise Parker attended her first meeting with the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Established in 2009, the Council was originally made up of County elected officials to work on issues related to criminal justice. In January, Commissioners Court expanded the Council to include the Mayor of the City of Houston as a voting member. The Council has been instrumental in bringing the judiciary, law enforcement, and other County officials together to develop policies to improve the criminal justice system and reduce jail overcrowding. The Mayor will be a valuable addition to the Council by providing the City's perspective and better access to City resources.

Our Office has played and will continue to play an important role in helping meet the challenges that confront our nation's third largest county and fourth largest city not only on criminal justice issues but also a myriad of other issues. We will continue to work with both County and City officials to provide service to all, according to law.

Happy Anniversary!

Thank you for your service to the public:

Glen Van Slyke 24 years
Scott Bresk 27 years

Dieu Appointed Managing Attorney of Family Group



Steven Dieu

Assistant County Attorney Steven Dieu has been appointed Managing Attorney of the Family Group of the Protective Services Group. Sumpter Frazier will continue to practice in the 310th District Court and Steven will continue in the 245th District Court.

Steven has been with the Office since April 2007. In addition to his responsibilities in the 245th, he has served as Court Chief in the 314th Juvenile District Court.

Before joining the Office, Steven was an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Texas from 1994 to 2007. He represented the "A.G.'s Office" in Title IV-D cases on child support. He was Managing Assistant Attorney General in the Houston Field Office from 1998 to 2005. Before that he was with Pennzoil Products Company in the Technology Division. He was selected as the Best Managing Attorney of the Year in 2001.

Steven is interested in optimizing processes and streamlining case flow procedures while continuing to build synergy and teamwork.

HCAO fights Gangs and Game Rooms

Local media picked up on two major cases from our Office last week. The tireless efforts of our team paid off in both cases. Our Office obtained a temporary injunction to ban members of two notorious criminal street gangs from certain Aldine area neighborhoods. The judge ordered 37 members of the gangs to stay out of a .34 square mile area located east of Highway 59 and south of Bush Intercontinental Airport, designated the "East Aldine Safety Zone." The order will remain in effect until trial, set for June 16. Attorneys Celena Vinson and Don Stricklin represented the County, with assistance from paralegal Leslie Austin. You can view the Channel 13 news report [here](#).



Celena Vinson



Leslie Austin



Don Stricklin

Our office also successfully argued against an attempt to stop the implementation of county regulations on game rooms. On Friday, March 14th the district court judge denied an application for a temporary injunction. Game rooms have long been condemned as hotbeds for criminal activity. Fred Keys was the lead attorney on this challenge, with assistance from attorney Jorey Herrscher and paralegal Christine McGee. You can read the Chronicle article [here](#).



Fred Keys



Christine McGee



Jorey Herrscher

HCAO Certifies New Bandit Sign Rangers



Attorney Cedric Loeb facilitated a class of Bandit Sign Rangers on March 12 in Klein. Bandit Rangers are volunteers trained by our Office to collect, discard or document illegal signs.



Five questions for Debbie Breckenridge



Debbie Breckenridge is a Paralegal in the Environmental and Infrastructure Group. She joined our Office in 1997.

What was your favorite TV show in Middle School? That probably would've been Batman.

What was your favorite song in High School? Anything by Led Zeppelin.

Where do you call home? Pasadena, Texas

Who would you like to meet? My favorite author Stephen King.

Are you a cat person or a dog person? Dog person.



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.

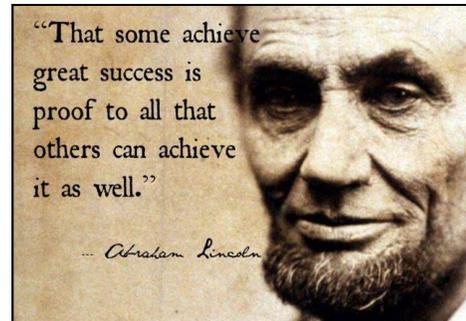
Useful Links

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

Coming Attractions

Java with the Judges

The event is set for 8 a.m. on March 25 at the Civil Courthouse Attorneys' Ready Room, 201 Caroline, 8th floor. Earn .50 MCLE credit. Free for Assistant County Attorneys; no registration needed. [Click here](#) for more information.



Investigators Corner

County Attorney Investigators spend a lot of time on the road. In fact, our investigators drive about 30,000 miles per year on County business, which includes their efforts to locate and interview witnesses, gather evidence, and provide other litigation support. In addition, our investigators are trained and certified police officers who must successfully complete firearms proficiency requirements annually.



Zeke Cavazos and Larry Fox show off their county vehicles, 2014 Ford Expeditions, delivered last week.

Pictured here is our team of investigators with their new county vehicles and just after qualifying.

Top left: Oscar Burnias, Terry Lindner, Karen Dunn, Zeke Cavazos, Larry Fox, and Walt Linoski. Bottom left: Tony Yet, Virginia Garza, Rafael Pruneda, and Joe Strange.



Our annual awards ceremony has been rescheduled for 2:30 p.m. on April 9. Stay tuned for more details.

ACAs Attend Rigorous TDCAA Training



Mimi Han

Assistant County Attorneys Mimi Han and Lina Garcia attended a Train the Trainer course presented by the TDCAA on March 4 – 7. Few attorneys are extended an invitation to attend this selective and rigorous course. Not only were Mimi and Lina required to participate in daily group breakout sessions and impromptu speaking assignments, they also were expected to practice their skills during evenings outside the classroom.

Participants learned the basics of adult learning theory and instructional design methodology. The purpose of the course is to equip attorneys with the ability to make effective and impactful presentations that insure participation and understanding. The course focused on content organization, visual aids, interactive presentations, presentation skills, and overcoming obstacles during presentations.



Lina Garcia

HCAO Collaborates to Host Fraud and Abuse Summit

On February 14, our Office partnered with the Better Business Bureau, Texas Attorney General and Adult Protective Services to hold the Healthcare Fraud Prevention Summit at the United Way. The summit addressed the issues of healthcare fraud as it relates to Medicare and Medicaid. The goals of the summit were to recognize current trends in fraud; describe Medicare and Medicaid compliance issues; identify how complaints are handled; describe how the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services is working to reduce suspected fraud and abuse; and discuss how providers can reduce risk of fraud and abuse for their practice and patients. Approximately 150 people attended the conference. Attorney Cecilia Longoria was responsible for obtaining CLE credit for attorneys in attendance.

Humbert Mass Set for March 26



Dorothy Humbert

Retired Assistant County Attorney Dorothy Humbert passed away on March 8. Many on staff will remember Dorothy as a fun and upbeat colleague who served in our Hospital District, Protective Services, and Compliance Practice Groups from December 1990 to July 2008.

Dorothy's legal career was actually her second. She worked as an OB/GYN nurse practitioner for years before attending law school in her 60s. Upon joining our team, she quickly became close friends with Assistant County

Attorney Scott Hilsher, who will speak at her memorial service on March 26. Scott describes Dorothy as a second mother to him, and recalls many great memories with his running buddy. A Funeral Mass will be held at 10:30 a.m. on March 26 at St. John Vianney Catholic Church in Houston.

Community Outreach: Speaking Engagements

Jorey Herrscher, February 7th Fonteno Senior Education Center Criminal Activity in Your Neighborhood	Scott Hilsher, February 27th Harris County Retirement Seminar Wills
Susan Fillion, February 25th Super Neighborhood #48 Wills & Probate	Susan Fillion, March 11th Kashmere Super Neighborhood Council Wills & Probate