



B. Glen Whitley  
Tarrant County Judge

## Our Seniors Have Earned Our Support

Talk about little things in life that matter. To seniors in Tarrant County it might be as simple as a new toothbrush, bath soap, toilet paper or laundry detergent. When seniors win at Bingo, toiletries often top the list of prizes that are selected.

Living on a fixed income, seniors may have to choose between food or medicine after paying for a roof over their head, and a bottle of shampoo might be a luxury. They may not be able to get to the doctor, or the pharmacy and the market, let alone visit their grandkids.

We should help improve the quality of life of the elderly. It's more than just caring and compassion for older adults. It's about honoring thy father and mother; helping those folks who sacrificed for their children's successes.

We must be keenly aware of access to transportation and preventing senior isolation. Many older adults want to be independent, living at home, and they should if they can do it safely. There are services people can get at home, but it can be difficult to get service to those who need it as they age.

As a county, we strive to expand support for older adults.

Every year we hold the Senior Synergy Expo, financed by the generosity of private and nonprofit sponsors. It's an important event to help seniors, their family members and caregivers learn about healthy living and available services in Tarrant County.

Three years ago, Tarrant County and United Way formed the Tarrant Riders Network (TRN) to increase transportation services. TRN is creating a countywide volunteer drivers



Seniors get wellness checks at the annual Senior Synergy Expo

program, the fastest way to get more passengers to their destination.

Volunteerism and collaboration are strengths of Tarrant County. Some volunteers deliver hot food through Meals on Wheels. Others help at senior centers or drive folks to the doctor.

We must prepare for a growing senior population. Government dollars are not what's needed. Rather, it is the generous donation of volunteer time that can make the greatest difference.

You and I can help our seniors. If you have a relative or a friend in need, direct them to the many opportunities for care. There is a lot of useful information at [www.tarrantcares.org](http://www.tarrantcares.org).

I urge you, in the spirit of giving and compassion, to pay close attention to those who came before us and helped to make Tarrant County such a wonderful place to live, work and raise our children.

## New Medical School: TCU, UNT Health Science Center Collaborate

A proposed MD school in Fort Worth is becoming a reality.

An historic collaboration between Texas Christian University and the University of North Texas Health Science Center means that medical students could start classes as early as 2018.

The new medical school will join the well-established Harris School of Nursing at TCU and the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine at the UNT Health Science Center, and other health-related programs at both schools.

"It creates a great opportunity for the expansion of biomedical research and strengthens the hospitals and healthcare in Tarrant County and North Texas," said Judge Glen Whitley.

The initial funding for the private-public partnership has been secured through a pledge of \$50 million from TCU's endowment and another \$25 million from private donors.

The school expects a full enrollment of 240 medical students when it gets rolling. In addition to the osteopathic school, the UNT facility now has graduate-level programs in physical therapy, pharmacy, public health and biomedical research. The county's JPS Health Network, which has the largest family residency program in the nation, will play a valuable role working with the new medical school.





**AROUND THE  
COUNTY**

# Judge Steve King: A Student of the Law and History



**Judge Steve King  
Probate Court One**

Judge Steve King is a history buff.

He is the judge of Tarrant County Probate Court One. King was first elected 20 years ago and has become a nationally recognized jurist. But, his other passion is as a lifelong student of history.

A sixth generation Texan from Graham, 90 miles north-

west of Fort Worth, King attended the University of Texas playing saxophone in the marching band and studying government. Then it was on to law school at Baylor.

Growing up in Young County, where his grandfather was a lawyer, King had a hankering for the faster pace and the opportunities offered by the big city.

“I had the feeling nothing would ever happen or ever could,” King said of his boyhood home. “I wanted to be in Fort Worth, but I decided early on I didn’t want to be a Dallas lawyer.”

He moved to Cowtown in 1977, where he practiced law and specialized in estate planning.

About the time that King became a probate judge, in 1994, the Texas Legislature began to reform probate and guardianship law.

“There was tremendous social interest in the protection of the elderly,” King said. “The goal was to protect people and give them as much self-determination as possible.”

The Legislature added many sections to the probate code and made guardianship law separate. Texas got “way out in front” of reform and the changes never slowed down, he said.

Some of the changes included requiring that an attorney represent someone being considered for guardianship, that the least restrictive alternative be sought and the default would be no guardianship at all.

The court keeps a close eye on the guardianship cases. It always makes an assessment of the situation, often by using the “fresh, unbiased eyes” of social work or nursing students to gain a unique vantage point.

“Sometimes there are dysfunctional families and we have become a court of dispute resolution and sometimes it is the abusers who are in here litigating,” King said. “Our job is protecting people who are vulnerable.”

King’s other job, self-chosen, is as a local historian. He may have left Young County, but he never forgot it.

In a monograph entitled, *The Northwest Frontier: From Fort Worth to Fort Belknap; From the Trinity to the Brazos*, King covers mid-19<sup>th</sup> century settlers and life west of The Cross Timbers area, the forested regional divide that stretches from Oklahoma to Central Texas.

King writes about the first ranching families and the Oakwood Cemetery, which is the final resting place of Broadway actress Mary Martin, former Texas Governor Samuel Willis Tucker and other luminaries. He details old roads and early forts, Kiowa and Comanche raids and cavalry responses, stagecoach stations, the Butterfield Trail and the Overland Mail Company.

Displayed in his office is a framed document signed by Sam Houston, a sword from the War of 1812, an iron strongbox lined with concrete and other historical gems.

“If you don’t know where you come from, it’s hard to tell where you are going,” said the judge, who often takes visitors on a walking tour of Tarrant County’s 1895 Courthouse. His courtroom and office are in that historic courthouse.

As far as his day job goes as a probate judge, King is concerned about the demographic trends indicating an unprecedented increase in guardianship cases.

As Baby Boomers age, the number of people older than 65 in the nation is expected to reach 71 million by 2030 and the number of people aged 85 and older is expected to reach 15 million by 2040. Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia will become more prevalent and more people will have to be taken care of.

“We will have to cobble together alternatives to keep people going,” King said. Groups with volunteers like Meals on Wheels, that help feed people, and Guardianship Services, which helps to manage care for them, will become essential.

“If that’s what it takes for people to live independently we will have to do it,” he said.



**MAKING LIFE BETTER**

# Guardianship Services Helps Older Adults

Guardianship Services safeguards older adults.

The agency performs a delicate balancing act: It allows seniors as much autonomy as possible, while protecting them from mistreatment and neglect.

Older adults can live in a world of loneliness, despair, illness and occasionally, exploitation. They can have disabilities, dementia, memory loss or physical impairments. Some can even be without medicine or electricity and may not have the money for transportation to get groceries.

“Older adults can face very difficult problems,” said Marnie Stites, the director of resource development and volunteers for the agency, serving 600 older adults a year.

The probate courts, family members, neighbors, friends, neighborhood associations and Adult Protective Services have referred people to the agency, she said.

“It is always preferable to have a family member or friend care for someone,” Stites said. “The agency will become a guardian for a client only as a last resort.”

When someone is referred, a case manager develops an individualized care plan and provides one-on-one care to identify the most important concerns, she said.

They arrange community services, healthcare, housing and any additional benefits. They help older adults function as normally as possible, despite their limitations. By the time people are referred to the agency, though, many are seriously incapacitated.

“Those that can handle aspects of their life, we encourage them to do that,” Stites said. “Clients receive as much or as little help as they need.”

Guardianship Services teaches personal finance skills and makes sure the bills get paid if the clients can't get it done. In 2000, an educational Money Management Program was created to serve as a less-restrictive alternative.

“Some of our clients get the first medical treatment they have had in years and they improve. We have, at times, found a family member and helped a family reconnect, and that's wonderful,” she said.

Conversely, the agency may have to make decisions for seriously compromised older adults who can no longer communicate or implement their desires.

Guardianship Services was founded in 1985 as a pilot project to develop a volunteer guardian program in Tarrant County for adults over sixty years of age. The pilot was successful, and five years later, became a part of Senior Citizen Services of Greater Tarrant County. In June of 1998, it became a separate, nonprofit agency, known today as Guardianship Services, Inc.



A Guardianship Services client with her case manager, hugging everybody's favorite friend: Max the Travelling Teddy Bear.

It is funded by Tarrant County, the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Tarrant County MHMR, the Area Agency on Aging, United Way, grants, program fee income and contributions from individuals and businesses.

Today, the 60 volunteers assisting the 22 staffers are the backbone of much of the work Guardianship Services does.

They visit clients, monitor their environment and make sure they receive regular medical attention, go shopping, listen to stories and report to the client's case manager.

The volunteers help assess the situations in which clients are happiest and they can thrive, Stites said.

“For all our clients, we want to make sure their basic needs are met and that they live in the best environment available to them,” Stites said.

## For Guardianship Information

Guardianship Services, Inc.  
PO Box 11481  
Fort Worth, TX 76110  
[GuardianshipServices.org](http://GuardianshipServices.org)

## To Volunteer

[volunteer@guardianshipservices.org](mailto:volunteer@guardianshipservices.org)





## Tarrant County Older Adults Treated to Valuable Health and Lifestyle Information

This year's third annual Senior Synergy Expo broke all records. More than 2,000 seniors, family members and caregivers jammed the Will Rogers Memorial Center to get health assessments and learn the best way to meet the challenges of aging.

We served twice as many folks as last year!

I want to thank all of you who came to this great event and all the sponsors and vendors who helped to make it such a great success.

We appreciate your support and hope you enjoyed the event.

Whether it is transportation, affordable housing, health issues, support systems or senior isolation, the older adults in our Tarrant County community often need assistance to lead a healthy and happy life.



Seniors attending the Expo took advantage of visiting more than 200 booths to learn about healthier lifestyles.

These are challenges that affect the quality of life.

The Senior Synergy Expo provides vital information and assistance to our parents' and grandparents' generation. They helped us in our lives and the Expo is a chance for us to give back.

We will do an even better job next year providing useful information about services that are needed. Thanks for joining in. Collaboration is one of the great strengths of Tarrant County.

Glen Whitley  
Tarrant County Judge

**SENIOR SYNERGY EXPO**

**THANKS OUR 2015 SPONSORS**

*Title Sponsor*

**Cigna HealthSpring**

*Diamond Sponsors*

JPS Foundation      Star-Telegram

TARRANT COUNTY'S CREDIT UNION

UNT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER      Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital

*Emerald Sponsors*

at&t      BAYLOR All Saints Medical Center at Fort Worth      Blue Cross BlueShield of Texas      BNSF RAILWAY

care@care Insurance Company, Inc.      JAMES + WEST      Klarus Home Care      MONCRIEF CANCER INSTITUTE

RIVERSIDE INN & MEADOWBROOK Memory Care Communities      Seniorific News      SeniorVoice NEWSMAGAZINE

*Sapphire Sponsors*

Ciera Bank ★ Kindred Hospital Tarrant County ★ Kroger ★ Oncor Oceans Behavioral Health Hospital ★ Signature Senior Living ★ STL Medical Supply ★ USMD Health Care

*Ruby Sponsors*

AFLAC ★ Assisted Services, Inc. ★ Brookdale Senior Living  
Emerald Hills Funeral Home & Memorial Park ★ Greenfield Residences of Arlington ★ HEALTHSOUTH  
The Livers Law Firm ★ Home Instead Senior Care ★ River Oaks Health and Rehabilitation  
ServiceMaster-Euleasa ★ Senior Downsizing Experts Keller Williams Realtor  
Texas Health Care - Dr. Larry Tatum ★ United Health Care  
United Way of Tarrant County Area Agency on Aging  
Visiting Angels Home Care, Inc. ★ VITAS Healthcare of Texas



Judge Glen Whitley with Senior Synergy Expo planner Kathryn Rotter. The annual event drew 2,000 people.

Many people took advantage of free health screenings that were offered by local hospitals and healthcare providers.



SERVING OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

# Countywide Volunteer Drivers Program Launches

## Getting Folks Where They Need To Go – The Tarrant Riders Network

There's a new driver in town – and it's you.

A volunteer drivers program to improve transportation for older adults, veterans, people with disabilities and those going to work or job training has begun in Tarrant County.

It promises to become a valuable transportation asset in the county, where only about 800,000 of the nearly 2 million residents have access to public transportation.

Tarrant County and The United Way of Tarrant County, in conjunction with Catholic Charities of Fort Worth, which now provides thousands of rides every month to people who need them, will enlist civic groups, faith-based organizations and individuals to join in this innovative program that depends on the goodwill of the community.

When an older adult or someone with a disability is unable to drive, they still have to get to the doctor, dialysis, grocery store or the pharmacy. Family members often pitch in and provide a ride, but sometimes assistance is not available.

The Tarrant Riders Network, TRN, a community coalition of social service agencies, local government representatives, transportation providers and faith-based organizations, was formed three years ago to improve transportation options.

A needs assessment completed for Tarrant County in 2013 concluded that a volunteer drivers program would be the best way to address gaps in service and increase trip capacity.

“A volunteer drivers program is the fastest way to get additional wheels on the ground and to get people to essential services,” said Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley. “It’s not a government program. Its success will depend on engaging Tarrant County’s collaborative spirit.”

The TRN countywide Volunteer Driver program will be operated by Catholic Charities Fort Worth, with more than \$300,000 in federal funding made available from the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Several years ago, Catholic Charities took over providing rides to people who need them from the American Red Cross.

The volunteer drivers program model is proven nationally and in other urban areas of Texas. Catholic Charities already works with volunteers.

In Tarrant County, if someone lives in Fort Worth, Richland Hills or Blue Mound, they can access bus service or the The-T’s Mobility Impaired Transportation Service (MITS).

If someone lives in another part of the county, they may get a ride from one of a handful of providers, like Handitran in Arlington or the Northeast Transportation Service (NETS). There are a few well-established volunteer driver programs in the county, like Mid-Cities Care Corps.

But many of the transportation services have different age-eligibility requirements for passengers and restrictions related



Door-to-door transportation is sometimes necessary, but many people just need a ride to the doctor or the grocery store.

to the trip purpose or won't travel outside specific geographic areas. Most are booked up and can turn people away.

Taken together, all of the current transportation services in the county can't meet the existing demand for rides, let alone the dramatic increase that will come when the Baby Boomer generation can no longer drive.

In order to participate, all TRN volunteer drivers have to complete a 10-hour training that includes both classroom and on-the-road learning. A criminal background check, proof of insurance and a drug test are required of every TRN driver. Volunteers may use their own cars or drive Catholic Charities Fort Worth vehicles. Volunteers can schedule their own hours.

### Volunteer Drivers Training

Training will be throughout the year in Fort Worth, Arlington and Northeast Tarrant County.

For more information and to register for training, contact Merrissa Kuylen, volunteer driver training coordinator at Catholic Charities at (817) 413-3936 or mkuylen@ccdofw.org.

Fort Worth		Arlington
249 W. Thornhill Dr.	Nov. 19th; 12:30 pm	217 W. Sanford St.
July 16th; 12:30 pm	Dec. 3rd; 6:00 pm	July 21st; 10:00 am
Aug. 6th; 6:00 pm	Dec. 17th; 12:30 pm	Aug. 20th; 10:00 am
Aug. 18th; 12:30 pm	Colleyville	Sept. 15th; 10:00 am
Sept. 3rd; 6:00 pm	1004 Tinker Rd.	Oct. 20th; 10:00 am
Sept. 17th; 12:30 pm	Aug. 5th; 10:00 am	Nov. 17th; 10:00 am
Oct. 1st; 6:00 pm	Sept. 2nd; 10:00 am	Dec. 15th; 10:00 am
Oct. 15th; 12:30 pm	Oct. 7th; 10:00 am	
Nov. 5th; 6:00 pm	Nov. 4th; 10:00 am	
	Dec. 2nd; 10:00 am	



**PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS**

# Tarrant County 11th Annual Back To School Roundup

## Wednesday, August 20th • 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. • Will Rogers Memorial Center

Children equipped with new school supplies on the first day of class are more likely to perform well and succeed.

This year, as many as 10,000 students could get that special start to the school year on Thursday, August 20th, at the 11th annual Tarrant County Back to School Roundup.

The school-supply giveaway starts at 8:00 a.m. and runs to 2:00 p.m., at the Will Rogers Memorial Center at 3401 W. Lancaster Avenue, in Fort Worth, but please note you must be pre-registered ahead of time to participate. Walk ups will not be permitted.

“Education is so important,” said Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley. “Children prepared for school feel real good about themselves and see school as a positive experience. They perform better.”

Tarrant County, Walmart/Sam’s Club and other business and community sponsors are again doing their part for students from families that can’t afford school supplies.

The Roundup is a collaborative effort of Tarrant County, school districts, cities, county public health department, state agencies, nonprofits and corporate sponsors and volunteers entirely funded by private donations and in-kind contributions.

The Tarrant County Commissioners Court is the honorary chair of the event.

Only children between the ages of four and 18 who attend public school and live in Tarrant County are eligible. Additionally, their families must meet the 2015 Federal Poverty guidelines and must show a photo ID, proof of residency and proof that the family income is below the poverty level.

A state driver’s license, identification card or a military identification card is an acceptable photo ID. A recent utility bill can prove residency and a paycheck stub or a letter from an agency, company, welfare office, caseworker, or Social Security Administration showing annual income can be used to show that a child may participate.

Pre-K through 5th grade students will receive a free backpack. There will be musical entertainment, children’s activities and interactive demonstrations. Students can also get haircuts, immunizations, health, dental and vision screenings, and information on education and social services.

The Back to School Roundup is totally volunteer driven. Please consider a donation. For every \$25 raised, one child is served, and all the funds go toward preparing kids for school.

You can mail donations to: Back to School Roundup, PO Box 101463, Fort Worth, TX 76185. You can visit the Tarrant County Credit Union or donate online at: [www.backtoschoolroundup.org](http://www.backtoschoolroundup.org). Your donation is tax deductible.

### Tarrant County Back To School Roundup Pre-Registration Locations and Times

**Wednesday, July 8; 10 a.m. - Noon**

P.L. Dunbar High School  
5700 Ramey Ave., Fort Worth

**Wednesday, July 8; 4 - 7 p.m.**

James F. Delaney Elementary School  
203 Clover Ln., Kennedale

**Saturday, July 18; 10 a.m. - Noon**

Haltom City Public Library  
4809 Haltom Rd., Haltom City

**Wednesday, July 22; 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

**Saturday, August 1; 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.**

Tarrant County Resource Connection  
Conference Center  
2300 Circle Dr., Fort Worth

**Wednesday, July 22; 10 a.m. - Noon**

W.C. Stripling Middle School  
2100 Clover Ln., Fort Worth

**Thursday, July 23; 6 - 8 p.m.**

Everman Public Library  
100 N. Race St., Fort Worth

**Saturday, July 25; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**Wednesday, August 5; 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.**

The Filling Station Christian Center  
3838 Alta Mesa Blvd., Fort Worth

**Saturday, July 25; 10 a.m. - Noon**

Fort Worth Library - Northside Branch  
601 Park St., Fort Worth

**Monday, July 27; 4 - 6 p.m.**

Como First Missionary Baptist Church  
Educational Center  
5228 Goodman Ave., Fort Worth

**Tuesday, July 28; 9 a.m. - noon**

Inspiring Temple of Praise  
2010 E Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth

**Wednesday, July 29; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Parkway Elementary School (Cafeteria)  
1320 W. Everman Pkwy., Fort Worth

**Wednesday, July 29; 4 - 6 p.m.**

Butler Boys and Girls Club  
1201 Luella St., Fort Worth

**Wednesday, July 29; 3 - 5 p.m.**

South Hills High School  
6101 McCart Ave., Fort Worth

**Thursday, July 30; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

EECU – Hulen Branch  
6049 S. Hulen St., Ste. A, Fort Worth

**Saturday, August 1; 10 a.m. - Noon**

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church,  
Parish Hall  
4100 Blue Mound Rd., Fort Worth

**Saturday, August 1; 1 - 3 p.m.**

**Monday, August 10; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

La Gran Plaza – Entrance # 2  
4200 S. Freeway, Ste. 2500, Fort Worth

**Wednesday, August 5; 3 - 6 p.m.**

Eugene McCray Community Center  
1932 Wilbarger St., Fort Worth

**Thursday, August 6; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

H&R Block  
1828 E. Park Row Dr., Ste. A, Arlington

**Thursday, August 6; 3 - 5 p.m.**

All Saints Catholic Church  
200 NW 20th St., Fort Worth

**Thursday, August 6; 4 - 6 p.m.**

**Friday, August 7; 4 - 6 p.m.**

The Potter’s House of Fort Worth  
1270 Woodhaven Blvd., Fort Worth

**Friday, August 7; 4 - 6 p.m.**

**Saturday, August 15; 10 a.m. - Noon**

White Settlement ISD Resource Center  
1000-A S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement

**Monday, August 10;**

**3 - 5 p.m.**

H&R Block  
5411 E. Lancaster Ave.,  
Fort Worth

**Wednesday, August 12;**

**3 - 5 p.m.**

H&R Block  
2804 Cleburne Rd.,  
Fort Worth



❖ **Back to School Roundup Sponsors** ❖

In addition to Walmart/Sam’s Club, other sponsors include Amerigroup, Capital One, Coca-Cola Refreshment Group, EECU, Fidelity Investments, Gandydancer, H&R Block, JPS Health Network, Sid Richardson Foundation, The Ryan Foundation, The Potter’s House – Fort Worth, TXU Energy and XTO Energy. Community partners include Baylor College of Dentistry, Fort Worth ISD, Immunization Collaboration of Tarrant County, Medstar Emergency Medical Services, Ogle School of Hair and Nails – Hurst, Ogle School of Hair and Nails – Arlington, Tarrant County Medical Society Alliance Foundation, Tarrant County Public Health, United Way of Tarrant County and 2-1-1.



**TARRANT COUNTY IS PREPARED**

# Texas Legislature Funds Building and Repairing Roads

The Texas Legislature for the first time in years allocated additional money to repair and build highways, roads and bridges across the state, a long-awaited move that may help with transportation needs in Tarrant County and all of North Texas.

But it is not a done deal, because some of that funding will be up for voter approval in November, when it is on the ballot as a constitutional amendment.

The amendment calls for \$2.5 billion of sales tax revenue to go to the State Highway Fund annually, beginning in September of 2017, but only when the revenue collected exceeds \$28 billion. It also calls for 35 percent of motor vehicle sales tax revenue to go to the highway fund annually, but only when that revenue exceeds \$5 billion, beginning in 2019.

The legislature also ended the ongoing diversion of about \$1.3 billion that was supposed to go to state transportation coffers, but for years has been used for other state budget expenses.

“We are prepared to get some of the new funds into Tarrant County for critical road projects that need to be done, especially west of Interstate 35W,” said Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley.

For the past year, as part of the West Tarrant Transportation Initiative, county officials have met with city and school district leaders in western Tarrant County to assess current and future transportation needs.

The Tarrant County population west of I-35W, and outside Loop 820, is expected to double in the next 25 years. Thousands of homes are slated to be built in east Parker County along the county line. All the development is expected to create a crush of traffic trying to reach the urban core of North Texas.

Staff from the offices of Judge Whitley, Precinct 4 Commissioner J.D. Johnson, Precinct 1 Commissioner Roy Charles Brooks, the county transportation department and the North Central Texas Council of Governments, are participating in the assessment and initiative.

The west Tarrant needs assessment will be shared with the City of Fort Worth, which is in the process of revising its Master Thoroughfare Plan.

In west Tarrant County, roads will have to be widened and some new roads will have to be built. Connectivity between existing and planned roads will have to be improved. In some areas, two-lane county roads will no longer suffice, as area residents try to get to work and as parents and school buses try to get children to school.



Southbound traffic on Business 287. An already congested road in an area of Northwest Tarrant County where the population is expected to double in the next 25 years.

The legislative boost to transportation can be used for construction and maintenance of roads or for right of way acquisition, but it cannot be used for toll roads.

The Texas Department of Transportation, TxDOT, has said it needs \$5 billion annually just to maintain existing Texas roads.

The additional funding goes a long way toward shoring up a depleted highway fund, say transportation advocates. It comes on top of a constitutional amendment approved last November that authorized annual disbursements from the state’s oil and gas production tax collections to the fund. That led to an estimated \$1.7 billion going to the fund just in the first year, enabling projects such as the construction of a new interchange at Interstate 30 and State Highway 360 in Arlington.

“They made a giant stride forward by providing a significant amount of general revenue dedicated to the highway fund,” said Vic Suhm, executive director of the Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition. For the first time in years there is now sustainable funding for transportation that takes the place of money that was borrowed to pay for roads, he said.

“There is still a lot left to be done” Suhm said.

Local TxDOT officials have indicated that there is about \$7.2 billion in needed transportation projects that have been identified on the west side of the Metroplex. Those projects are in various stages of development, but they are not yet funded.



# West Nile Virus is No Longer the Only Concern to Residents

## Mosquito-Borne Illness Season – Get Ready to Say Hello to Chikungunya

It's mosquito season again and health officials are asking everyone to protect themselves and their family.

That means draining all standing water - from empty flower pots and fountains to water collecting in old tires - and to use lots of repellent (with DEET).

As of early July there were no West Nile cases in Tarrant County, though a handful of virus-carrying mosquitos had been identified in various locations.

This year there's a new twist to the fast-flying dive bombers.

There's a new disease threat and it's called Chikungunya. It is a disease found in the Caribbean, Mexico and Africa, that is transmitted when a mosquito bites someone who is infected and then bites someone else.

Last year a person who had travelled outside the United States, returned to Tarrant County, became symptomatic, and tested positive for the Chikungunya virus. The symptoms can include fever, headache, severe muscle and joint pain. Generally lasting only a few days, it can last for weeks and aggravate existing conditions.

The concern is that travelers returning home with the disease could become a source for spreading it, say county health officials. To date, local spread of the disease in the U.S. has only been in Florida.

The last two years have not been terrible years for mosquito-borne illness, with only 16 cases and no deaths from West Nile

**Be A Skeeter Beater**

- ⇒ Drain standing water around your homes
- ⇒ Take extra precautions at dusk and dawn
- ⇒ Have good screens on windows and doors
- ⇒ Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts
- ⇒ Wear mosquito repellent when outside

last year. That's nothing compared to 2012, when there were 275 cases and 11 deaths. That year, Texas had more West Nile cases, 1,868, than any other state.

As in past years, Tarrant County Public Health will work regionally with other local health departments and the Texas Department of Health Services in a coordinated effort to prepare and respond to the threat of a severe bug-borne disease outbreak.

Prevention is still a key component of controlling West Nile or its new best buddy, Chikungunya.

Take steps to stop mosquitos from breeding on your property. Use repellent, but remember that protection varies among products and is affected by temperature, perspiration, getting washed or rubbed off and other factors.

If you are getting bit by mosquitos, do the obvious - remove yourself from the area.

## TARRANT COUNTY CONTACTS

### GENERAL INFORMATION 817-884-1111

**County Clerk**

Criminal / Misdemeanor Records .....	817-884-1066
Probate Courts .....	817-884-1770
Records Intake / Deeds .....	817-884-1062
Records Library .....	817-884-1069
Vital Records: Birth/Death Certificates, Marriage Licenses, and Business Records/DBA's .....	817-884-1550

**District Attorney** ..... 817-884-1400

**District Clerk**

Civil Records .....	817-884-1240
Criminal Records .....	817-884-1342
Family Court / Divorce Records .....	817-884-1265
Jury Services .....	817-884-3820
Passports .....	817-884-2520

**Elections** ..... 817-831-8683

**Fire Marshal** ..... 817-838-4660

**Human Services** ..... 817-531-5620

**Public Health** ..... 817-321-4700

**Resource Connection** ..... 817-531-7600

**Tax Assessor-Collector**

Auto Tag Renewal / Property Taxes .....	817-884-1100
<b><u>Texas A&amp;M AgriLife Extension</u></b> .....	817-884-1945
<b><u>Veterans Services</u></b> .....	817-531-5645
<b><u>Sheriff's Office</u></b> .....	817-884-3009
Jail Information .....	817-884-3116
Victim Information .....	877-894-8463
Warrant Division .....	817-884-1320

**Commissioners Court meets every Tuesday at 10 am**  
**Tarrant County Administration Building**  
**100 E. Weatherford Street, 5th Floor**

County Judge, Glen Whitley .....	817-884-1441
Commissioner Roy Brooks, Precinct 1 .....	817-531-5600, 817-370-4500
Commissioner Andy Nguyen, Precinct 2 .....	817-548-3900
Commissioner Gary Fickes, Precinct 3 .....	817-581-3600, 817-481-8234
Commissioner JD Johnson, Precinct 4 .....	817-238-4400

For additional information, visit: [www.tarrantcounty.com](http://www.tarrantcounty.com)

