



Gavel & Badge

The Official Newsletter for the Justices of the Peace and Constables Association

February 2024



Inside this issue:

District Updates and Awards	2—3
Love Blooms in Bell County	4-5
Juvenile Diversion Program Requirement, Upcoming trainings, Chaplain's Cor-	6-7
Clerk Shoutouts, Annual Conference, JPCA Mission Statement, Social Media Sites, Contact Info	8-9
JPCA Hires New Political Lobbyist	10

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT BATES

By Constable Christopher Bates, Jefferson County, Precinct 2

Hello JPCA Family!

I am so excited to start the new year off with great expectations for our amazing association! As always, I am truly honored to serve as your President of JPCA.

I first want to thank all the offices that participated in the "JPCA Day of Service Event"! So many great community service projects were displayed on the JPCA Facebook page to showcase the work done across the State. Because of the success of the event, we will ask that all JP and Constable Offices participate in the "JPCA Week of Service" beginning April 22 and concluding April 27. I ask that during this timeframe each Constable and JP Office choose to do community service in their Precinct, take pictures, and make a post on social media with the hashtag #JPCAServes. I am looking forward to this great event!

We have also kicked off training through our amazing Texas Justice Court Training Center. If you have not signed up to receive your hours, there are still opportunities. Please visit the training center website for more details. Also make sure to thank the Training Center Staff for doing a great job when you see them!

I want to personally invite you all to the 80th Annual JPCA Conference in Fort Worth, Texas! We are planning to have an amazing conference for you. The conference will start June 24 and conclude on June 28. We look forward to providing Education, Networking, and Fellowship for you all.

Lastly, I just want to thank EVERYONE for supporting JPCA and being great representatives in your communities. JPCA is the largest organization in Texas with the most county elected officials. Because of that, JPCA Is Truly "The Heart & Soul of Texas!" Thank You and Be Blessed!



JUDGE MACK CREATES FIRST TRAUMA INFORMED JP COURT IN TEXAS

District 8 - In November 2022 Judge Wayne L. Mack, Justice of the Peace Pct. 1 for Montgomery County, began implementing a trauma-informed, trust-based approach in his courtroom to improve the quality of outcomes and handling of cases.

Judge Mack has recently completed Phase II of training by the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development to become a Trust-Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI®) Practitioner.

As a Practitioner, Judge Mack intends to incorporate the insights learned to ensure that every person who provides any service to the youth and adults served by his court is aware of the impact of trauma and is trained in trauma-informed practices.



“We have to understand that trauma is real, and it affects people in different ways. We have to be able to recognize it and respond to it in a way that is compassionate and effective. That’s why we’ve implemented a trauma-informed, trust-based approach in our courtroom. We want to make

sure that everyone who comes through our doors feels safe, heard, and understood. We want to help them move forward in a positive direction. Justice Courts being highest volume court in Texas are on the front-line of truly being able to have a positive and lasting impact on the lives of citizens.”

2024 CT JPCA TRAINING SEMINAR FOR JPs, CONSTABLES, and CLERKS

District 7 - On March 27, 2024, Bell County will play host to the Central Texas Justice of the Peace and Constables Association (CT JPCA) Education Conference. This one-day seminar promises a unique blend of professional development, networking opportunities, and delicious barbecue.

The afternoon will feature training sessions featuring Bronson Tucker with TJCTC and a TCOLE certified trainer. These sessions are designed to fulfill mandatory training hours for judges and constables while providing valuable insights into the latest legal and enforcement practices.

All CT JPCA members can enjoy free access to the conference, lunch, and training sessions.

Non-members are welcome to attend for \$30, which includes the conference, lunch, and a year of membership.

DORA OLIVO MAKES HISTORY IN FORT BEND COUNTY

District 10— Dora Olivo, an 80-year-old attorney, educator, and former state representative, has dedicated nearly five decades to public service, always guided by her unwavering faith.

She was appointed in October 2023 as the first Latina justice of the peace for Precinct 4 in Fort Bend County in over 10 years. Olivo's journey into public service began through her involvement with the church. Witnessing Latino residents facing obstacles in the voting process, she and her husband, Victor, along with

fellow church members, established the Southwest Voter Registration Education Program. This grassroots initiative aimed to educate the community about the voting process, voting registration, and civic rights.

One of Olivo's significant contributions during her tenure as a state representative was her dedication to supporting local alternative education schools. Recognizing the challenges



within these learning environments, she collaborated with school officials to identify issues and develop effective solutions. Olivo's commitment to genuine education for all students underscored her dedication to creating positive change.

JUSTIN WEST APPOINTED TO STATE COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

District 10—Governor Greg Abbott appointed Constable Justin West to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) for a term set to expire on August 30, 2029. The Commission establishes and enforces standards to ensure that the people of Texas are served by highly trained and ethical law enforcement, corrections, and telecommunications personnel.

Justin West of League City is the constable of Precinct 4 in

Galveston County. He is a member of CLEAT, the National Constables and Marshals Association, and the JPCA of Texas. Additionally, he is a member of the League City Lions Club and a Zone Chair for the Lions Club District. He is a former board member for the Bay Area Council on Drugs & Alcohol and the Refuge for Women Texas Gulf Coast. West received a degree in Information Technology and Security from Western Governors University.



HONEY, WILL YOU SERVE MY CITATIONS?

Love often finds its way into unexpected places, and for Patricia "Pat" and Theodore "Ted" Duffield, it blossomed amidst the halls of justice at the Bell County Sheriff's Office. Their journey together, marked by years of service in the U.S. Army and local law enforcement, culminated in a shared commitment to public service and a historic milestone for Bell County.

Pat and Ted, both veterans of the U.S. Army stationed at Fort Cavazos (formerly Fort Hood), began their individual journeys

in service to their country. Fate, however, had other plans for them, and it wasn't until they became members of local law enforcement that their paths finally crossed.

Pat, with an impressive 23-year tenure as a patrol captain for the Belton Police and later with the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, and Ted, who served as an officer with the Harker Heights Police Department and later as a deputy with the Bell County Sheriff's Department for eight years, found themselves drawn together by a shared

dedication to upholding the law.

Their journey took an interesting turn when Pat threw her support behind Ted's run for Bell County Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1, in 1994. Ted's victory was not only a testament to his qualifications but also a reflection of the unwavering support he received from his loving wife.

In a remarkable twist, Pat, inspired by Ted's dedication to public service, decided to make her own mark in the



HONEY, WILL YOU SERVE MY CITATIONS? story continued



realm of elected positions. In 2019, she ran for the office of Bell County Constable, Precinct 1, and made history as the first female constable in Bell County.

Despite Pat outranking Ted in the army, their professional roles complement each other in the world of public service. In 2018, Constable Duffield officially took office, paving the way for a new chapter in their shared commitment to their community.

However, the Duffields' impact extends beyond their professional roles. For over two decades, they have been spread-

ing holiday cheer to thousands of children in Bell County. Decked out in red and white, Pat and Ted have been a familiar sight during the Christmas season, donning Santa and Mrs. Claus costumes to bring joy to the hearts of children.

While their black robes and khaki uniforms symbolize their commitment to justice, the red and white of the holiday season showcase their dedication to bringing happiness to those they serve. The Duffields' love story, rooted in a shared commitment to service and community, continues to inspire those around them, leaving a lasting legacy in Bell County.

“Judge Duffield’s love for serving his community is trumped only by his love for his wife, Pat.”

- Judge Cliff Coleman, Bell County, PCT 2

UPCOMING TJCTC TRAININGS AND SEMINARS

Court Clerks:

Experienced Personnel
Galveston: Feb. 26—28,

Experienced Personnel
Denton: March 20 - 22,
Denton, TX - Embassy
Suites Denton

Constables:

Virtual 20 Hour Civil Pro-
cess: Feb. 12 –15, 2024

Galveston 20-Hour Civil
Process - In-Person Pro-
gram: May 5—8

Justices of the Peace

Denton 20 Hour
March 17 - 20, 2024

Inquests and Medical Ex-
aminer Workshop
April 7 - 9, 2024 at the
Austin Doubletree

Chaplain's Corner

*By Constable Dwain Read,
Ochiltree County*

Busy highways and the num-
ber of cars on the roads today
just keep increasing. If you
travel anywhere across our
country, you will run into con-
struction areas on our high-
way system.

You are hard pressed to drive
any distance without getting
into road construction

There usually is a lot of con-
gestion and many times we
get aggravated and our tem-
pers flare with the delays
caused by that construction.

If you were driving down a
highway and saw a sign that
said " Danger" would you slow
down and proceed with cau-
tion?

It is unfortunate that Satan
does not post danger signs up
for us along the way in our
lives as he leads us down dan-
gerous roads. Contraire, he
wants us to be carefree and
not consider any consequenc-
es for our decisions or actions.

The Bible on the other hand
does post danger signs.
Sin came into this world in
Genesis 3 and changed every-
thing, beginning with Adam

and Eve and for humankind.
1Pet 5:8 says be sober, be vigi-
lant; because your adversary
the devil, as a roaring lion,
walketh about, seeking whom
he may devour.

We need to be on the look out
for those warning signs in life
that warn us of that "Danger"
that is in our paths.

We serve a God that his word
says he neither slumbers nor
sleeps in Psalms 121:3.

I pray as you serve in your ca-
pacity in government you will
always look out for the warn-
ing signs in life.



CLERK SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight on Clerks—shoutouts from their JP or Constable

“Clerk Benjamin Garza is currently working as a Senior Level Clerk for the El Paso County Justice of the Peace, Pct. 1 with Judge Robert Pearson for the past eight years. His tenure with the County extends to almost 20 years as he was

originally hired as an Intermediate Office Specialist in May 2004. Ben is the type of individual who will stop whatever he is working on to assist or help others.”-Constable Oscar Ugarte, El Paso County

“Cynthia Rivera is the first Administrative Specialist for the Constable Precinct 1 Office. She prides herself in working tirelessly every single day to carry out our objectives. She is

always ready to assist the public and helps our Precinct in every aspect needed,. Cindy is most deserving of recognition, not only for her professionalism, administrative skills, and positive attitude, but for her drive and unwavering commitment to make a significant impact in our work environment as well as with the public.”

-Constable Oscar Ugarte, El Paso County

FOLLOW JPCA ON FACEBOOK and TWITTER (X)

Receive regular updates and monthly member spotlights by visiting the JPCA Facebook page. Be up to date with members, events, awards, memorials, and trainings!

Facebook: <https://tinyurl.com/ukfjs6cp>

X: <https://twitter.com/jpcaoftexas>

SUBMIT YOUR STORIES, SHOUT OUTS, and PHOTOS!

Has your office been rewarded or recognized for success? Do you want to give a shout out to someone in your office? Have you seen or heard a case that would be of interest to others?

Share your funny stories, heartwarming moments, and educational anecdotes with other members. Photos are always welcome!

Send items via email to Sylvia.Holmes@Traviscountytx.gov
Or by using this QR code



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE 80th ANNUAL JPCA CONFERENCE

Hilton Fort Worth
815 Main Street
June 24—28, 2024



CJIS PASSWORDS EXPIRED IN 2023; RESETS NEEDED FOR 2024

Many courts had their CJIS passwords expire over the holidays, and the CJIS office wants to let you know who to contact for help. Emails are below.

Online CJIS/EDR password resets and re-activation: GRP_CJIS_SITE@dps.texas.gov

Corrections need to be emailed to: corrections.cjisjjs@dps.texas.gov

You can also contact your CJIS Field Auditor if you have additional questions. Their contact information can be found on their website on the CJIS Field Auditor Region List:

<http://tinyurl.com/2p8zse22>

YOUTH DIVERSION PROGRAMS REQUIRED BY JANUARY 2025

The Texas Youth Diversion and Early Intervention Act [HB 3186], adopted by the 88th Texas Legislature, requires each justice and municipal court, to adopt a written plan that diverts juveniles accused of a misdemeanor punishable by fine only (other than a traffic offense) to diversion services for up to 180 days, rather than face formal criminal prosecution.

The statute became effective January 1, 2024, with the Youth Diversion Plans effective January 1, 2025 (Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 45, Subchapter E).

Diversion can be an Intermediate Diversion or a Judicial Diversion. An intermediate diversion is offered before charges are filed with the court.

A judicial diversion is offered once charges are filed with the court (CCP Art 45.310).

The eligibility requirements and processes are the same for both diversion types.

Juvenile: Person is older than 10 years of age and under 17 years of age at the time of the offense.

Offenses: Class C misdemeanor or fine only criminal offense occurring on or after January 1, 2025. Civil offenses, traffic offenses, as defined by Ch 521 of the Transportation Code, or any Rules of the Road offense are NOT eligible for diversion.

Previous Diversion: a) Juvenile has not been diverted in previous 365 days. The 365 days begins with the date of the previous diversion agreement (CCP Art. 45.304).
b) Juvenile has not had a previous unsuccessful diversion (CCP Art. 45.304).

Prosecutor: Prosecutor must agree to diversion (CCP Art. 45.304).

Written Consent: Parent AND juvenile must consent in writing to the terms of the diversion. The signed affidavit will attest that the child has never had a previous unsuccessful diversion in another court.

The plan you choose to use must be in writing and maintained on file for public inspection.

Your court can create an individual plan or all courts in the

county may create one plan for everyone to follow.

CCP Art 45.306 outlines many available diversion strategies including but not limited to:

- Teen Court;
- Educational Programs;
- Alcohol/drug testing;
- Self-improvement programs such as anger management, conflict resolution classes, etc.;
- Juvenile Case Manager services including court classes. Court classes;
- At-risk youth services;
- Work or job skills training;
- Alternative academic programs (including GED);
- Mental health screening and clinical assessment;
- Restitution not to exceed \$100 (property offenses under Title 7 of the Penal Code);
- 20 hours of community services; and/or
- Any other strategies deemed appropriate by the Juvenile Diversion Coordinator.

Courts may also enter into agreements with Community Service Agencies to provide diversion strategy services.

BUFFY CROWNOVER HIRED AS NEW JPCA LOBBYIST

Buffy Crownover is a lobbyist and public affairs expert known for her forward-thinking abilities in negotiation and strategic alliances. Working inside the Texas Capitol for over 14 years gave Buffy time to nurture and cultivate relationships with a strong base of trust, respect, and credibility. She is solutions-orientated and believes in being thorough and persistent.

Buffy is one of the few staffers who served members from both parties and leadership of the largest caucuses including: Texas House Republican Caucus, House Democrat Caucus, Mexican American Legislative Caucus, and the Texas Legislative Black Caucus. Her collaboration and relationship-building skills enable her to spearhead the passage of statewide legislation and build grassroots campaigns.

During the 81st Legislative Session (2009), Buffy worked for the House Minority Leader, Representative Jim Dunnam, as his Legislative Director and Committee Director for the Federal Economic Stabilization Funding Committee. The committee appropriated and monitored the spending of the 2008 stimulus funds coming to Texas. This presented Buffy with the opportunity to work in appropriations and with almost every state agency in Texas. During the 82nd and 84th Legislative Ses-

sions, Buffy served as Committee Director the House Committees on Border and Intergovernmental Affairs (2011) and Natural Resources (2015). These opportunities helped her build her skill sets on how to oversee and pass legislation focused on strong policy.

Buffy spent the 83rd Legislative Session working in New York City at the Department of Education (DOE). In her first role, she led the Gates Foundation Measures of Effective Teaching Study with over 75 teachers and 35 schools participating.

Buffy also had the privilege to work for Representative Charlie Geren during the 86th Legislative Session (2017) where she was not only his Chief Policy Advisor but also ran his Committee on House Administration. This experience gave her the opportunity to serve all 150 House members by establishing House rules and procedures, helping to oversee the House Business Office, creating employment policies, conducting new member orientation, and planning member holiday and family events.

These roles not only gave her professional and personal rapport with legislative members, but they also perfected her skill sets for collaboration, active listening, and team building. She rounded out her time at the Cap-



itol serving as Chief of Staff to Representative Rhett Bowers, who led the Dallas Delegation. When Buffy began lobbying, she quickly grew a client list as diverse as her relationships and experience including companies, associations, and non-profits. She focuses on getting organizations where they want to be by accomplishing their long-term goals through legislative and regulatory practices.

Buffy is a native of Waco, Texas and is a proud graduate of Baylor University where she earned her undergraduate and master's degrees. She currently prides herself on being mom to two girls and a boy, who keep her life full. In any spare time left over, she enjoys playing tennis and practicing Pilates.