



Gavel & Badge

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

September 2024

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT HOLLY WILLIAMSON

Dear Members,

I hope this edition of the Gavel and Badge finds you well. I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your participation and support during our amazing annual conference held in Fort Worth this past June. Your dedication and enthusiasm have made it a truly memorable and successful event.

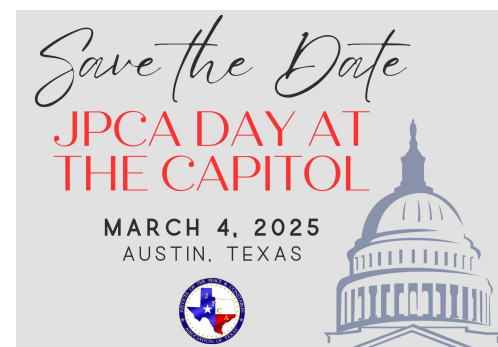
I am thrilled to have the opportunity to serve as your President for the upcoming year. I am looking forward to working with each and every one of you, and I am excited about the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead for our Association.

The energy and passion displayed by our members at the conference were truly inspiring. The insightful discussions, valuable networking opportunities, and engaging sessions have set a strong foundation for the year ahead. I am confident that together, we can achieve great things and continue to uphold the values of justice and service that define our association.

Mark your calendars for **JPCA Day at the Capital on March 4, 2025**. This event will provide a platform for us to engage with legislators and advocate for the issues that matter most to our members and association. We will also have a **WEEK of Legislative Action**, when we will ask each of you to reach out to our legislators, educate and connect, demonstrate our commitment to public service, and strengthen our ties within our communities. Additionally, we are proud to announce the continuation of the **JPCA Week of Service, November 18-22, 2024**. This initiative, started by Constable Bates, will involve a week of service where JP and Constable offices reach out and do a special service project in their community. Stay tuned.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and dedication to our Association.

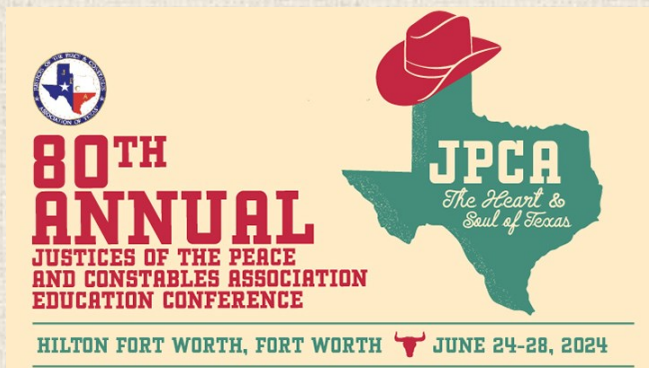
Looking forward to a productive and fulfilling year ahead.



My warmest regards,

President Holly Williamson

REMEMBERING THE FUN IN FORT WORTH



The 80th Annual Justices of the Peace and Constables Association (JPCA) of Texas Conference in Fort Worth had record-breaking attendance with over 500 participants.

Thank you to the board of directors, the Education Committee and the volunteers from Tarrant County, who worked tirelessly to create an unforgettable conference.



**THANK YOU TO OUR PLATINUM SPONSOR -
LINEBARGER GOGGAN
BLAIR & SAMPSON, LLP**

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023-2024 JPCA LEADERSHIP BOARD



President - Constable Chris Bates

President-Elect - Judge Holly Williamson

Second Vice President - Constable Carlo Lopez

Third Vice President - Judge James Kerbow

Secretary/Treasurer - Constable Chad Jordan

Sergeant at Arms - Constable Larry Gallardo

Judge Advocate - Judge Mark Russo

Deputy Constable - Deputy Tim O'Connor

Chaplain - Constable Dwain Read

Court Clerk - Chief Clerk Teresa Koch

Past President - Judge Sergio L. De Leon

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VENDORS & SPONSORS!



LEGENDARY BBQ IN FORT WORTH



FELLOWSHIP & FUN AT BILLY BOB'S IN THE STOCKYARDS



80th ANNUAL JPCA AWARD WINNERS



TA Vines Award

Hon. Sergio DeLeon, Tarrant County

80th ANNUAL JPCA AWARD WINNERS

Constable of the Year:
Michael Orozco, Dallas County



Judge of the Year:
J.R. Woolley, Waller County



Clerk of the Year:
Diana Ramirez, Jefferson County



Best Practices:
Williamson County, Precinct 2



Lifetime Achievement
Hon. Sallie Gonzalez, Cameron County



Wife of the Year
Mrs. Bates, Jefferson County

80th ANNUAL JPCA - SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS



Unsung Hero:
Bronson Tucker, TJCTC



Unsung Hero:
Thea Whalen, TJCTC



Unsung Heroes:
Texas Justice Court Training Center

2024-2025 JCPA LEADERSHIP TEAM



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Judge Holly Williamson

President-Elect - Constable Carlos Lopez

Second Vice President - Judge JR Woolley

Third Vice President - Constable Justin West

Secretary/Treasurer - Constable Chad Jordan

Sergeant at Arms - Constable Larry Gallardo

Judge Advocate - Judge Mark Russo

Deputy Constable - Deputy Tim O'Connor

Chaplain - Constable Dwain Read

Court Clerk - Chief Clerk Teresa Koch

Past President - Constable Chris Bates

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

District 1 - Judge Robert Taylor

District 2 - Judge Francisco Gutierrez

District 3 - Constable Oscar Ugarte

District 4 - Judge Tony Faz

District 5 - Judge Robert Gonzalez

District 6 - Constable H.D. "Dale" Clark III

District 7 - Constable George Morales

District 8 - Constable Malcolm Watson

District 9 - Constable Sammy Knapp

District 10 - Constable Jevonne Pollard

CONTACT INFO FOR YOUR 2024-2025 DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

District 1—

Judge Robert Taylor
500 S. Fillmore, Suite 502
Amarillo, Texas
Off: 806-379-2390

District 2—

Judge Francisco Gutierrez
904 Broadway, Suite 111
Lubbock, Texas 79401
Off: 806-775-1328

District 3—

Constable Oscar Ugarte
424 Executive Center, Suite 100
El Paso, Texas 79902
Off: 915-246-7776

District 4—

Judge Tony Faz
309 Mills ST
Del Rio, TX 78840
Off: 830-774-7579

District 5—

Judge Robert Gonzalez
710 E. Main
Robstown, Texas 78380
Off: 361-767-5205

District 6—

Constable H.D. "Dale" Clark III
100 Weatherford, Ste 460A
Fort Worth, Texas 76196
Off: 817-884-1385

District 7—

Constable George Morales
4011 McKinney Falls Pkwy
Suite 1100
Off: 512-854-9488

District 8—

Constable Malcolm Watson
317 State Highway 132 N
Devine, TX 78016
Off: 830-665-8005

District 9—

Constable Sammy Knapp
920 E. Park Blvd.
Plano, TX 75074
Plano: (972) 881-3070
Metro: (972) 424-1460 ext. 3070

District 10—

Constable Jevonne Pollard
1085 Pearl Street, Room 103
Beaumont, Texas 77701
Office: 409-835-8450

LOCATE YOUR DISTRICT



80th ANNUAL JPCA - ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

The Justice of the Peace and Constables Association of Texas proudly supports the educational aspirations of Texas students through its annual scholarship program. At the 80th Annual Conference, the JPCA Student Investment Fund, Inc. generously donated to 15 high school scholarships totaling \$11,750 and 11 college scholarships amounting to \$8,250.

By offering these scholarships, the JPCA aims to recognize and reward academic excellence, community involvement, and leadership among Texas youth. These scholarships are designed to alleviate financial burdens and empower students to pursue higher education, fostering future leaders who are committed to making a positive impact in their communities.

Graduating High School Seniors:

Chistina Van Stavern

Emily Vento

Andrew Cole

Zoe White

Lilye Ogle

Joshua Green

Kahler Burkley

Lorna Sumner

Kaitlyn Garcia

Clayton Praytor

Saige Owen

Liberty Brooks

Andrew Whalton

Natalie Davis

Camille Hernandez

Continuing College Scholars:

Jacob Milburn

Jackson Kenney

Ricardo Amaya IV

Bailey Whitten

Shawn St. Romain

Diana Vasquez

Victoria Borders

Matyson Barta

Elizabeth Moreau

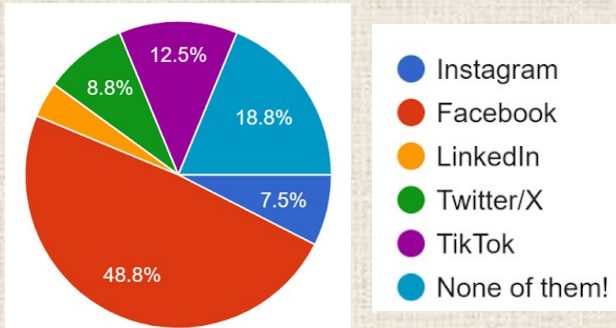
Angelina Van Stavern

Soccoro Rodriguez

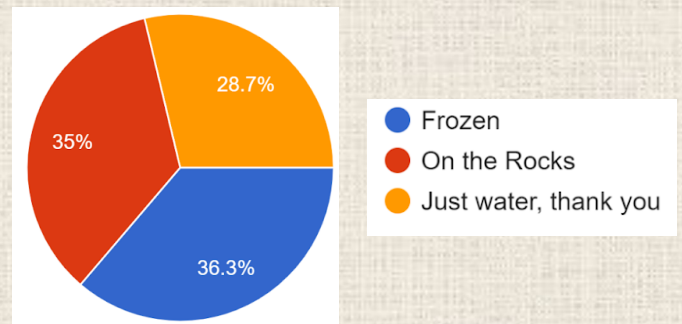


WE ASKED and YOU ANSWERED! FORT WORTH SURVEY RESULTS

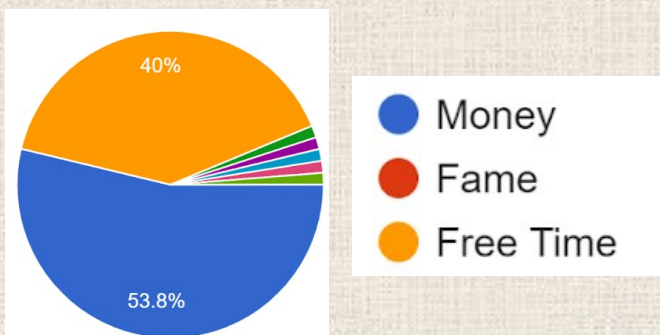
If you had to scrap all social media except one, which would you keep?



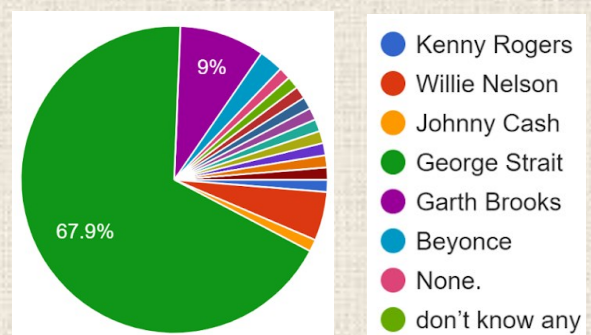
Do you prefer a margarita frozen or on the rocks?



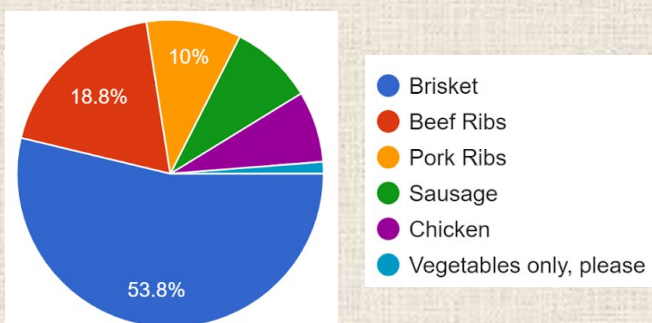
What's one thing you wish you had more of?



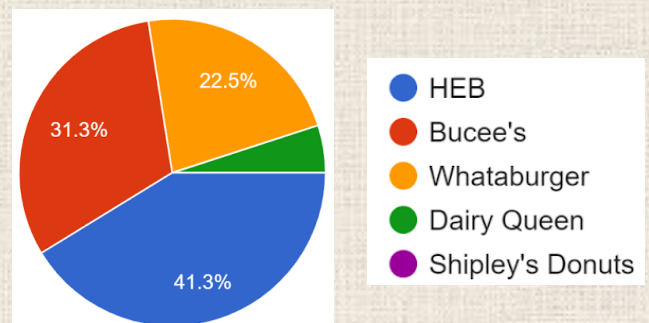
Greatest Country & Western singer?



What's your favorite BBQ meat?



Favorite Texas business?



TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION: SURVEY ANSWERS

- ♦ Defendant was a school friend of judge....during trial she kept referring to judge by his first name...all of a sudden judge used his gavel & loudly told defendant, "I AM JUDGE ###* TO YOU!!! THIS IS NOT BURGER KING, YOU CAN'T HAVE IT YOUR WAY!"
- ♦ Deputy responded to reckless driver call in which the driver was said to have appeared to be "eating her seatbelt".
- ♦ A drunk was in front of a judge. The judge says "You've been brought here for drinking." The drunk says, "Okay, let's get started!"
- ♦ "Yes, those are my pants, but those aren't my drugs!" - answer by suspects
- ♦ 44% of deputies surveyed have stopped a car and found drugs in plain sight, 24% found stolen goods in the backseat, and 12% found the driver nude!
- ♦ 66% of judges and constables have been called a four letter word and 55% have been called "sweetie" while officially on the job. 13% were referred to as "Your Holiness."
- ♦ Lawsuits aren't only about money. 74% of judges have heard lawsuits over pets, 65% over fences, 56% about loans to family or friends, and 27% over clothing.

SHARE YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY RECIPE!

As the festive season approaches, we're excited to gather the best holiday recipes from our JPCA family! Whether it's a cherished family dish, a new twist on a classic, or a sweet treat that brings joy, we want to hear from you.



Follow the QR code to share your holiday recipes and help spread the cheer!



TJCTC—ONLINE EDUCATION MODULES

The Training Center offers FREE online education on a variety of topics, including, but not limited to:

- ◆ 5 Day Challenge to Improve Mental Health
- ◆ Certified Clerk Study Guide
- ◆ Creating Civil Judgements
- ◆ Debt Claim Cases
- ◆ Deferred Disposition and DSC Dismissals
- ◆ Eviction Appeals
- ◆ Garnishment
- ◆ Inquests: Interpreting Toxicology Reports
- ◆ New Judge Toolkit
- ◆ New to the Constable's Office: Constable Deputies
- ◆ Occupational Driver Licenses
- ◆ Options When a Criminal Defendant Doesn't Show Up



Follow the QR code for a full list.

Chaplain's Corner

*By Constable Dwain Read,
Ochiltree County*

If you were asked a question of what is right and wrong?

One might respond, "it depends." Ernest Hemingway said this, "what is moral is what you feel good after and what is wrong is what you feel bad after." So, he is saying that morality is a matter of personal preference, not divine mandate. This can be found in the period of the Judges where it says, "in those

days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Judges 21:25

A Seminary professor once said, "Right is right because it expresses the unchanging nature of God and his will for his creation."

I believe that God is the only true basis for determining right and wrong. I trust that you agree with me.

"Right" as determined by God

consist of moral absolutes. I am saying that what is right is always right; what is wrong is always wrong.

The opposite of this approach is called "Moral Relativism. This is the behavior that what is right and wrong depends on the time, place, person, and situation involved.

As we all serve in our capacities as Judges, Constables, Deputy Constables or Clerks we should strive to always do what is "right"!

DEAR BRONSON—GREAT ADVICE FOR YOUR PRECINCT



QUESTION: We had a small claims case in which a Plaintiff lent her best friend money. They have text messages going back and forth where the defendant agreed to pay interest on the loan. Her friend stopped making payments, so the plaintiff filed a small claim. According to the text messages the defendant had been making payments but it was all interest. Can a judge grant a judgment on the amount she is seeking, or can the judge subtract the payments made even though plaintiff states they were interest only?

ANSWER: The judge should determine the total amount that is due at the time of judgment based on the agreement/contract between the parties – and that is the amount that should be in the judgment. When parties enter into a contract, they are free to agree to any rate of prejudgment interest that is not usurious (exorbitant/more than allowed by law). The judge can determine the total amount due by seeing what amount would be due (including principal and interest) if no payments had been made and then subtracting the amount of the payments.

QUESTION: We received a citation without an address. The officer said the defendant was uncooperative and does not have any identification. We tried to find an address with no luck. What are our options for this situation? Can we still send them to collections/issue warrant if we do not have a way to send them any notices?

ANSWER: A warrant cannot be issued, because there is no way to provide the required notice. There is nothing preventing the case from being referred to collections, but there is a concern that the debt would even attach to the right person if the only identifying information that the court has is a name.

This may be a case to flag for the prosecutor to determine if they want to proceed or not. They may also be able to do further investigation to find the person and provide an address/license or identification number.

QUESTION: Plaintiff is filing a small claims petition and is requesting not to put thier address or phone number. Is this information required?

ANSWER: It is required. If they have an attorney, the attorney can use their address and phone number. Please see TRCP 502.2(a)(2). If the plaintiff has been a victim of family violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, stalking, or child abduction, they can apply to the Texas AG's office Address Confidentiality Program. This allows victims of those crimes to use a substitute post office box address publicly, and then their first class mail (including legal documents) are promptly forwarded to their actual address.

GATHER YOUR TEAM FOR JPCA DAY AT THE CAPITOL!*Save the Date***JPCA DAY AT
THE CAPITOL****MARCH 4, 2025
AUSTIN, TEXAS**

Join our JPCA team and be part of an initiative to represent JPs, constables and their staff from across the state. United we can show our strength in numbers. Help us spread the word about this event!

SUBMIT YOUR STORIES, SHOUT OUTS, and PHOTOS!

Brag about your precinct! Submit your awards, accolades, and success stories to the Gavel & Badge.

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 the QR code (right).

