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FALL 2014



Building a Healthy Far East Dallas

in this issue

Fostering a Healthy Future for Far East Dallas!

So Many Heroes

Hospital and Local Clinic's Healthy Partnership

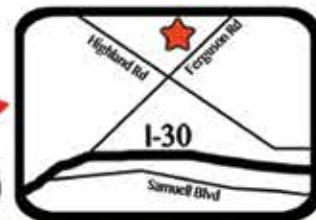
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FRIdays

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ON THE COVER
 A vision of the transformation coming to the corner of Highland and Ferguson roads. From burned-out apartments and illegal dump site to the Regional Recreation Wellness Center, it's time to explore the possibilities and make a plan. Photography courtesy of Stacey Callaway and art direction by Mari Madison. We say a special thank-you to Trica Moon of Gold's Gym White Rock for helping us line up our yoga models. A BIG thank-you to Sheri Cherokee of Alpha Omega Yoga, Kristen Vrabel, Iris Hafitlang of Yoga Bliss Dallas and Molly Tigue for getting in the weeds with us.

Fostering a Healthy Future for Far East Dallas



by Vikki J. Martin, President, FRI

This issue of *FRI*days is themed Health & Wellness because I have exciting and important updates to share on the progress of our Regional Recreation Wellness Center (CENTER). The CENTER will have programs for all generations and will be located at 2229 Highland Road near

Ferguson Road. In the last issue, we announced that the City of Dallas allocated \$125,000 to fund a feasibility study and business plan.

Regional Recreation Wellness Center Feasibility Study and Business Plan – The City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department (PARD) recently selected the Jacobs Engineering Group to conduct the feasibility study and business plan for the CENTER. A nationally known engineering and land-planning firm, Jacobs has a solid track record for building sustainable recreation centers. Moreover, Jacobs has previous experience working in our community as they were the firm that created the lower Ferguson Road infrastructure design plan back in 2005.

So what is a feasibility study, and why do we need one? We already know that just about everybody would like to see a nice new 60,000- to 100,000-square-foot wellness and recreation center in our community, right? So why do we need an expensive plan? Why can't we just use the \$125,000 to start construction? All good questions. The answer lies in the old adage, "Fail to plan, plan to fail." The feasibility study and business plan will help us determine the CENTER's construction and operational costs, programs, site design, construction schedule, financing and sustainability strategies. Already, Jacobs' proposal for the study/business plan shows that they understand that we want the CENTER to serve as a community anchor that attracts neighborhood retail and boosts our local economy.

Horticulture Center Groundbreaking Postponed Until Jacobs' Study/Plan Completed – In a related matter, in the spring edition of *FRI*days, I reported that FRI and the Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Society (DABS) are working toward a partnership to move the DABS Horticulture Center from Balch Springs to the CENTER site.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think, in 1995, that the crime-ridden, burned-out, trash heap at the corner of Highland and Ferguson would ever turn into something like this!" Vikki J. Martin

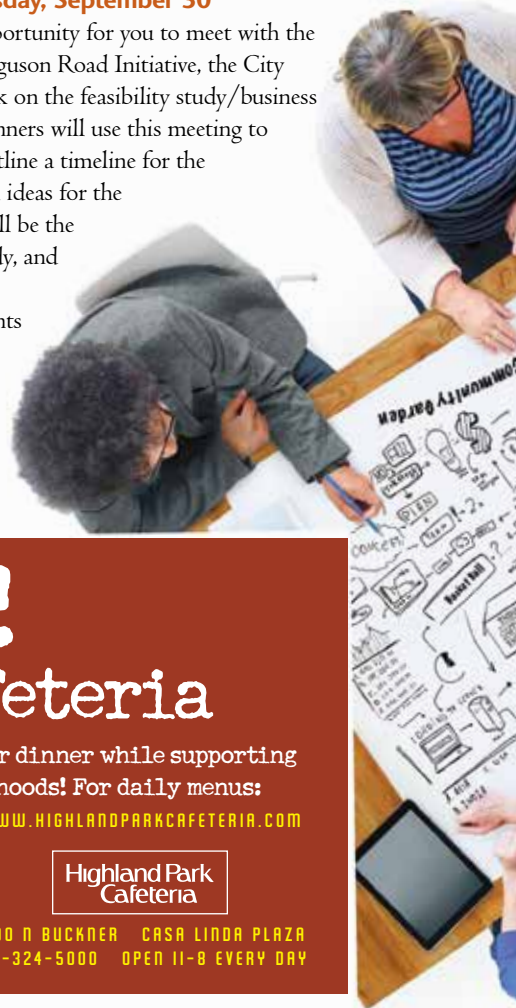
However, due to higher-than-expected costs involved in preparing the site for the Horticulture Center, the DABS board of directors recently decided to wait until the Jacobs feasibility study/business plan is completed spring 2015 before approving construction.

Feasibility Study/Business Plan Road Map

Now is the time to make your thoughts and ideas heard! A main component of the feasibility study for the CENTER is making sure the plan reflects the vision of our community. The backbone of the feasibility study process is a series of three public meetings, held every couple of months starting at the end of September and running through early spring 2015. We will update this schedule on www.fergusonroad.org as dates and locations are confirmed. Use these meetings to provide your ideas and feedback and to engage in discussion with the planners about the CENTER. The final version of the feasibility study will be shaped by your input at these meetings. Your voice is what will make the CENTER unique, so speak up!

First Meeting is Tuesday, September 30

This meeting will be an opportunity for you to meet with the representatives from the Ferguson Road Initiative, the City of Dallas and Jacobs as work on the feasibility study/business plan begins. The Jacobs planners will use this meeting to recap their work to date, outline a timeline for the study and gather your initial ideas for the CENTER. This evening will be the launch of the feasibility study, and I hope everyone will attend. Please join us for refreshments and good fellowship as we begin to plan our Regional Recreation Wellness Center!





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Community Meeting One

When: Tuesday, September 30, 2014, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Where: Rosine Hall at the Dallas Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road Enter at Gate 1 (Main Gate), located at Garland Road and Whittier Avenue. Parking and entry into the Dallas Arboretum will be free. Gate opens at 6 p.m. A big thanks goes to our community partner, the Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Society, for hosting this first meeting!

Join us Online and Stay Informed

This meeting will be the first of three community meetings where you can share your vision for the CENTER. The details of the remaining meetings are being finalized.

FRI will use social media to keep you informed. Join the conversation and stay informed!

-  Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fergusonroad
-  Follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/fricommunity
-  Sign up for our NewsFlash by emailing communityconnection@fergusonroad.org

Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) Seeks "50 @ \$50" on North Texas Giving Day



by Mari Madison

September 18 between the hours of 6 a.m. and midnight "get up and give" to the can-do organization making a BIG difference in the quality of life in Far East Dallas!

If you wait on City Hall to take notice, you will wait forever. This was the conclusion the leaders of FRI came to almost 20 years ago. So they took action and started being the squeaky wheel of Far East Dallas. They have succeeded, and now City Hall is listening.

When you donate to FRI on North Texas Giving Day (formerly DonorBridge), think of it as an investment in *your* quality of life – increased property values, better shopping, improved streets, more private investment and city amenities like libraries and, now, Dallas' first Regional Recreation Wellness Center.

This year FRI is looking for "50 @ \$50," that is 50 first-time givers with a donation of \$50. Additionally, it is our goal to retain all 96 former donors and ask them to consider increasing their contributions from last year. On September 18, get up, go to www.northtexasgivingday.org and give to Ferguson Road Initiative.

For those without a computer, just drop by the White Rock Hills Branch Library (9150 Ferguson Road) between the hours of 11 a.m. and 7:45 p.m., and FRI office manager, Maria Valenzuela, will help you make your gift from our donation station. For those with smartphones, just scan the QR code below.

JOIN us from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the library as we watch the leaderboard and celebrate our success together!



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Scan this code on 9/18/2014 to go directly to FRI's giving portal.

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So Many Heroes



by Gary Lawler

On May 16, developers Gary Hasty and Ed Spears held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Heroes Housing, their new facility for homeless veterans. Attendees included Dallas City Council Members Carolyn Davis and Sheffie Kadane, U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Elena Fowler of state Rep. Helen Gidding's office, Bill Coleman of Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI), Bernadette Mitchell of the City of Dallas Housing Department and the Bryan Adams Junior ROTC.



Eddie Bernice Johnson cuts ribbon

Congestive Heart Failure Clinic Now Open in East Dallas

The Congestive Heart Failure Clinic is a physician-directed and nurse-managed environment where congestive heart failure (CHF) patients can receive specialized care for the management of congestive heart failure.

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Hasty credits his wife, Kendra, for initiating the project. Through her work with the Veterans Administration (VA), he learned about President Obama's Homeless Veterans Outreach Initiative and gap financing for veterans housing through the VA and the City of Dallas Housing Department.

For their initial project, Hasty and Spears were looking for a small apartment complex in a transition neighborhood when an investor told them about the old 31-unit Heritage House apartments at 2122 Highland Road. They liked having a site in East Dallas because it is a mature community, has a lot of veterans living here and has amenities such as White Rock Lake and the Dallas Arboretum, along with good transit and freeway access.

Hasty met with Davis, who steered him to FRI. Hasty says FRI's help was needed to get City Council approval for funding.

Housing for veterans at Heroes Housing is provided by vouchers from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH). Through this program, Heroes Housing provides furnished apartments with bills paid, including DirectTV.

According to an early resident, U.S. Army veteran Robert Jones Jr., that is not all they provide.



Ed Spears (left) and Gary Hasty (right) with resident Robert Jones Jr., U.S. Army

"Homeless vets do not have a lot to reach out to. The HUD-VASH program is one of the best programs to help vets get back on their feet. We need more than a handout, we need stability and support. I looked at other veteran housing sites. This area had a good variety of nearby shopping, along with transit for job interviews and trips to the VA Hospital. Living and sharing with other vets gives us peer support."

Perhaps the most visible aspect to area residents is how Hasty and Spears have converted the declining, partially burned complex from blighted to beautiful, from a shameful scar in the community to a star-spangled glory.

At the time this was written, Heroes Housing was looking for donated beds, cleaning supplies and other household goods. If you would like to help, call Sonia at 972-322-5668.



Eddie Bernice Johnson with Bryan Adams Jr. ROTC

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Hospital and Local Clinic's Healthy Partnership Carries On a Tradition of Service to the Community



By Mari Madison

The charm and character of Far East Dallas is rooted in the postwar optimism that blossomed into the thriving middle class of mid-century America. One reason the area retains this vibe is the number of early private and public institutions that remain, decades later, committed to applying the same can-do collectivism to solve the community's current challenges. One of today's is health care. Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake (Doctors Hospital) has become deeply rooted in the Far East Dallas community by providing 55 years of quality health care, offering numerous educational classes and screenings and participating in many local events.

Supporting the community is the hospital's core value. Doctors Hospital makes evident that they care completely for the community by partnering with over 28 local community organizations to develop localized solutions that address the area's specific needs.

The latest of these partnerships addresses the problem of providing affordable health care to all. With less than 3½ miles separating Doctors Hospital and Mission East Dallas (MED), all it took was the perfect opportunity to bring the two health care providers together in a partnership to address the needs of the underinsured.

Started through Project Access Dallas, a former initiative of the Dallas County Medical Society to provide compassionate care for the community's uninsured, the alliance between Doctors Hospital and MED resulted in the sponsorship of a recent Chief on the Beat health and safety fair at Lake Highlands High School. Going forward, the combined efforts of the two organizations are anticipated to help provide much needed primary medical care in an appropriate setting for members of the Far East Dallas community who are underinsured or uninsured.

"Our hospital was founded with a vision to improve the community and provide quality care," says Jay Krishnaswamy, chief executive officer at Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake. "We are excited to collaborate with a clinic that focuses on an underserved patient population and creates a medical home to ensure they get the medical care they need."

"Emergency room care is expensive and not where patients need to go to have their care managed," says Charles Wiltraut, chief executive officer at MED. "We can be the first point of care by providing these services in a clinic setting. We all have a role and a responsibility in the health care safety net. By working together, we can help each other fill in any gaps and make our community healthier."

"The teams from Doctors Hospital and MED meet monthly to review quality data in an effort to foster a healthier community. We share ideas for additional services, care delivery, processes and more. One outcome from our meetings was the recent opening of the Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake's Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Clinic. We identified a large need for patients with chronic CHF to have convenient access to a clinic that specializes in the treatment and care of the disease," says Eric Boon, interim chief operating officer at Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake.

Doctors Hospital opened its doors in June 1959 as a community medical/surgical hospital with 50 beds and 75 employees dedicated to serving the community by providing quality health care.

"We are carrying on that mission 55 years later and pride ourselves on maintaining the community hospital feel while doing our part to help improve the well-being of people living in the Far East Dallas area," says Krishnaswamy.

Today, the full-service, 218-bed medical/surgical hospital and acute care facility offers more than 40 wide-ranging specialties, from cardiology and orthopedics to gynecology and obstetrics. The facility also includes a women's imaging center with advanced screening and diagnostic equipment and a level II neonatal intensive care unit for sick or premature newborns.

Keeping true to their commitment to quality, with the rapid developments in medical science and technology, Doctors Hospital has continually invested in new technologies and treatment capabilities. Recent improvements include:

- Enhancing their website with InQuickER, an online service where noncritical patients hold their place at the ER while waiting at home.
- Completing a \$745,000 renovation of the Wound Treatment Center that included the installation of two hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) chambers.



HBOT chamber

- Renovating the Emergency Department, including a remodeled front lobby, updated patient treatment rooms and a modernized registration area.
- Expanding its surgical services to include robotic surgery with the da Vinci® Si-e Surgical System.
- Opening a Congestive Heart Failure Clinic, a physician-directed and nurse-managed environment for CHF patients.

Doctors Hospital has earned numerous awards and accreditations over the years. The hospital is an accredited Chest Pain Center by the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care and has also been awarded the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® Gold Plus Performance Achievement Awards for Heart Failure and Stroke. Doctors Hospital is an Accredited Center under the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program of the American College of Surgeons and American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, and it received the Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification program.

Mission East Dallas Fills a Need for Medical and Dental Care



by Dee Anna Hanchey

When Brenda Jones went in for her diabetic checkup in May 2013, she was feeling defeated. In addition to type 2 diabetes, she has arthritis – and at over 400 pounds, it was difficult for her to get around without a wheelchair. But with the medical guidance of Dr. Christopher Berry at Mission East Dallas (MED), Brenda found the hope and strength to change her lifestyle, improve her health and help others do the same.

Like many employed adults without insurance, Jones was turned away from several clinics when she first suspected she had diabetes. Her income was too high to qualify for aid, but too low to absorb the cost of private insurance or out-of-pocket medical expenses. MED, located at Oates and La Prada drives, was established in 2002 through the collaborative efforts of area churches and volunteers to provide primary and preventive care on a sliding-fee scale and to serve as a medical home for patients like Jones with chronic conditions.

Even though Dr. Berry had managed to get her diabetes under control with insulin, Jones knew she needed to lose weight.



Dr. Christopher Berry



Dr. Berry treats a MED patient



Brenda Jones holds a picture of herself at her heaviest

By October 2013, her diabetes was completely diet-controlled, and it has been ever since. Today, Jones is not only a patient at MED – she’s also on the board of directors, along with other patients who make up 51 percent of the clinic’s governing board.

According to the clinic’s executive director, Charles J. Wiltraut, Jones’ story is just one of many that illustrates the importance of community medical clinics like MED.

“We just want to get the message out that we are a professional medical and dental practice for all – we work with you if you have insurance or don’t have insurance,” Wiltraut said.

All too often, he said, low-income or uninsured patients delay medical or dental care until it can’t wait any longer. This not only puts a strain on local emergency room resources, it also does a disservice to the patient by failing to catch medical and dental issues in their early stages or keep chronic conditions in check.

That’s why MED and Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake are working together to help noncritical emergency room patients find a medical and dental home. Currently, MED already averages about 145 to 150 new patients a month, and Wiltraut expects that number to grow as more patients are referred to the clinic through the Doctors Hospital partnership. To accommodate the growing need, Wiltraut said the clinic is looking at ways to extend hours, add days and expand their square footage. They also welcome involvement and support from the community.

“If you need a medical home, come to us. If you’re looking to volunteer or do some mission work, our doors are open. And for every \$20 you donate, it takes care of one office visit for our poorest patients,” Wiltraut said. “That’s impactful.”

Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) applauds the partnership between Doctors Hospital and Mission East Dallas as yet one more example of the shared community vision of fostering the health and wellness of Far East Dallas. FRI is proud to count both these organizations as Community Connection partners and thanks them for their financial support – Doctors Hospital at White Rock, Founders Circle Member, and Mission East Dallas, Business Member.

For additional information, visit www.doctorshospitaldallas.com or call 1-800-887-2525 to find a physician.

To learn more about Mission East Dallas, donate or get involved, visit www.missioneastdallas.org.



MED staff and volunteers testing blood sugar at the Chief on the Beat health and safety fair.

“Everything in my life was hard. Turning over in bed was hard. It was just a difficult life,” she said.

That’s when Dr. Berry gave her a straightforward plan to lose a pound a week – eat 2,000 calories a day and keep a log. Jones was skeptical. But as the pounds came off, it made her want to do more – so she started walking laps in her office building.

“I had to use two canes to walk, but I would get up out of my wheelchair, and I’d make a lap. It was kind of humiliating using two canes, but at that point I didn’t really care,” Jones said.



Truett Elementary – A Work in Progress



by Ellen Childress

According to DISD, bids have been put out for the construction of the new addition to George W. Truett Elementary. The design calls for a two-story addition with 26 classrooms, two art rooms, a library, a second gym and more. The original building has been completely renovated with a large cafeteria, new windows,

new roof and, for the first time in years, heating and cooling on the second floor. Fire alarms and the PA system now work in the remaining portables.

The school, built in 1956 for about 500 students, was named for George W. Truett, first pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas. In 2009, the Truett Area Crime Watch became aware of years of neglect. Water was coming through the ceilings and pouring down the walls when it rained. One of the portables served as a restroom with floors rotted out from urine and feces, and no work order had been turned in on the school in a decade or more.

In spite of a second-story addition to the school in the 1960s, Truett was bursting at the seams with over 1,000 children. Principals have come and gone at an alarming rate, leaving problems behind. The school seemed doomed to fail. However, with the help of then Trustee Bruce Parrott and newly elected Trustee Dan Micciche, we succeeded in getting DISD's attention and renewed hope for this wonderful school. The strong community support for Truett Elementary has been joined by the Ferguson Road Initiative, Dallas



Artist rendering of the new addition and the front entry.

City Council Member Carolyn Davis and state Rep. Eric Johnson, in addition to Truett alumni and their parents.

Construction of the addition will begin in a few months and literally turn the school around. The new entrance will face Inadale Avenue instead of Gross Road. A sweeping, curved, two-lane drive will circle the school from Gross to Peavy roads and will have enough turnouts for school buses and bricked areas for the children to wait for pickup. One of the courtyards has become the focus of the Dallas Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the First Baptist Church for an outdoor classroom with a brick pathway, patios, tables and chairs, and gardens. A geothermal heating and cooling system will be installed where the remaining portables are located, and there will be at least two play areas established as the design allows.

New Principal Terre Evans will be leading Truett into this exciting year ahead. She has calmly taken on the challenge of this school with its 1,000-plus students representing 38 countries. Truett piloted the first Reading Partners program in DISD, with students tutored by volunteers from the community as well as students from nearby Bishop Lynch High School through their community service hours.

Bishop Lynch and the City of Dallas are partnering this year to redesign and refurbish the softball and soccer fields at Ferguson Park, next to Truett Elementary and across Inadale Avenue from Bishop Lynch. The Bishop Lynch girls softball team will then move its activities to Ferguson Park, and our little ones will benefit from Bishop Lynch volunteers coaching their teams as well.

Truett Elementary is a unique school in the DISD system, and after two years under the remarkable leadership of Principal Jonathan Smith, this school is making a comeback beyond the hopes and dreams of those seeking the best for the children in our community. We expect a great year ahead under Evans' leadership and big strides in the development and success of our students, faculty and administrators.



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Caring for Kids Goes a Long Way



by Mari Madison

Reading daily headlines can be disheartening, with all sides – government, corporations and the public – claiming the other is broken. Reading Partners of Dallas is an example that proves this claim false, and volunteer efforts in Far East Dallas have helped to launch this citywide success story.

Reading Partners, a national nonprofit one-on-one mentoring program, helps kindergarteners through third-graders learn to read. Partnering with local city governments and school boards, it organizes and places volunteer tutors in schools with high percentages of children from low-income families.

When the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) was faced with low test scores in 2012, it invited Reading Partners to set up pilot programs at two elementary schools in Far East Dallas – George W. Truett and Bayles.

Georgia King has lived behind Truett for 48 years and is one of the original volunteers, mentoring one day a week in between spending time with her grandchildren. *“All four of my children attended Truett when it was a Blue Ribbon School,”* she says.

Mary Oboyle, a volunteer with AmeriCorps who administered the program, explained the structured curriculum. *“The 150 easy-to-follow lessons are designed to teach multiple literacy skills, and it tells you step by step what to do.”*

King helped second-grader Stephanie Balderrama improve her reading and comprehension. *“The lesson plan has the student read a book, tell the mentor what it was about, learn a word in a list and use the word in a sentence,”*

King explains. “Stephanie is very bright but can be easily distracted. She learned how to slow down and not to skip over the words she didn’t understand.”

Reading Partners now has 10 sites across Dallas, and it receives financial support from the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. From 2013 to 2014, students who participated in the program showed an 85 percent improvement in reading scores, and principals noted schoolwide progress as well. In May 2013, the DISD board of trustees voted to continue its partnership through the 2014 school year.

King thinks the program also has a positive impact on the community. *“If we all pitch in, we can make Truett a Blue Ribbon School again,”* she says. *“Reaching this goal will go a long way in revitalizing Far East Dallas.”*

It is not too late to volunteer for the fall semester. Sign up today at www.readingpartners.org/dallas.



Stephanie receives a hug from King



Scan the code below to view a video about the Reading Partners program.



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White Rock Hills Branch Library Celebrates 2nd Anniversary



by Gary Lawler

What a terrific asset the White Rock Hills Branch Library has become. The slogan that the Ferguson Road Initiative used during the Grand Opening was “A Dream Come True,” and that slogan still fits two years later. The library has become a place for reading; to meet friends; to use computers;

to hold special events; and to check out books, DVDs, books on tape, etc.

Rene Navarro comes to the library about twice a month with his daughter Alyssa. *“She likes to read mystery stories while I use the computers. We enjoy visiting the library together, and I like it that Alyssa reads more now.”*

The celebration was provided through the White Rock Hills

Library Friends and was a City of Dallas “Go Green” event, with city departments on hand to provide information on how to be more environmentally sensitive.

Nothing Bundt Cakes in Casa Linda Shopping Center provided cupcakes to all who attended.



Rene and Alyssa Navarro



Reyes DeLira, Sabrina Quiñonez and family celebrate the library's birthday



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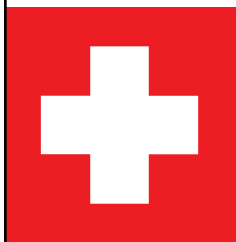


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Upcoming Library Events

PAWS – READ Therapy Dogs

Sherill Tippins, author
Sat., Sept. 13, 3:30-5 p.m.
 White Rock Hills Library
 9150 Ferguson Road

OASIS Computer Classes for Seniors

Saturdays, 10 a.m. – noon
Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27
 White Rock Hills Library

Fall Book Sale

Books, DVDs, CDs, etc.
October 8 through 11
 Lochwood Library
 11221 Lochwood Boulevard

Guest Speaker

Dallas Federal Reserve
Thur., Oct. 23,
6:30 p.m.
 Lochwood Library

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are the backbone of FRI. Here are some volunteer opportunities:

The Economic Development

Committee needs individuals with expertise in finance, fundraising, commercial development, landscape design and publicity.

The Branding and Communications

Committee needs volunteers to help with advertising sales for the news magazine, event planning, branding and social media expertise.

The Membership Committee

is looking for volunteers for data entry and management, conducting membership renewal calls and calling on businesses and corporations.

The Finance and Operations

Committee seeks someone familiar with SalesForce.

To find out more about these opportunities, contact the FRI Community Connection at www.communityconnection@fergusonroad.org or call 214-324-5116.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program a Boost to the Local Economy



by Kerry Goodwin, state Rep. Eric Johnson's office

The United Way of Greater Dallas recently released data on FRI's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program outcomes for 2014. FRI, in partnership with state Rep. Eric Johnson and Foundation Communities, located at the White Rock Church of Christ, successfully completed and submitted over 1,285 tax returns representing refunds exceeding \$2.3 million. Participants had these things to say about their experiences:

"It's quick and easy, the tax preparers are competent and courteous" and "I truly appreciate and benefit from this service and enjoy this group of tax preparers."

FRI VITA volunteers have completed nearly 5,000 returns in seven years totaling \$8,258,044 in refunds. Looking deeper, 7 percent of the taxpayers served reported living in a household with someone who has a disability, 13 percent have struggled to repay a payday loan and 50 percent were planning to use their refunds to catch up on bills. The average refund was over \$2,000. *"Helping people receive the money they are due also brings that money back into the Far East Dallas economy. With figures in the millions of dollars, that's a significant impact,"* stated VITA site coordinator Maria Valenzuela.

FRI and our partners served in collaboration with the United Way's Community Tax Center initiative spearheaded by the Foundation Communities. In total, this year the combined operation of seven centers prepared over 10,000 returns worth \$15,421,024 in refunds.

FRI extends thanks to the White Rock Church of Christ for hosting the center, the University of Texas at Dallas for providing volunteer tax preparers and the Episcopal School of Dallas for donating computers to our program. This year FRI boasted more than 50 volunteers for VITA.

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Greater Casa View Alliance Works to Improve Community



By Lee Barron

More than 100 residents attended a town hall meeting to learn about the updated Greater Casa View Area Plan (GCVAP), which had been revised to address community concerns revealed in a recent online survey.

The event, held June 17 at Bryan Adams High School, was the final of three town hall meetings organized by the Greater Casa View Alliance (GCVA). The purpose of the meeting was to present the final draft of the GCVAP and solicit any additional feedback before the plan is sent to the City of Dallas Planning Commission.

Presenters Amanda Buckley and Mike Nurre reviewed the plan for the attendees and discussed the proposed solutions to address residents' concerns. After approval from the Planning Commission, the group's goal

is to have the plan accepted by the City Council by the end of the year.

The GCVAP was revised to address community concerns discovered in the results of an online GCVAP opinion survey completed by more than 230 residents. The issues receiving the most votes were the need for Ferguson Road street improvements, area beautification/signage and the Casa View Shopping Center.

A majority of the respondents indicated a preference for locally owned businesses over corporate chains and expressed a desire to see more restaurants and retail shopping at the center. The center's business manager is a member of the GCVAP Advisory Committee and has facilitated meetings with the center's owner to address the residents' requests. These efforts are in the early stages and there is a lot of work ahead to attract the kinds of businesses that GCVA and the local residents want to see.

Another topic discussed at the meeting is the status of the former Casa View Library building. The current zoning classification is for neighborhood retail, and a request has been made to change it to commercial retail. GCVA is opposed to the zoning change without deed restrictions, but the group continues to work with the owner to ensure the building remains a positive asset to the community.

GCVA has also identified two upper Ferguson Road locations for an additional farmers market and will be meeting with representatives from a local provider soon.

To view the latest GCVAP presentation, visit www.greatercasaview.org and click on Public Meeting.



Artist rendering of a refurbished Casa View shopping center.

Casa View Attends Housing Plus Workshop



by Amanda Buckley, Casa View Haven

Representatives from the Casa View community were among the city staff and community leaders invited to participate in a workshop hosted by the Dallas City Council to learn about improving distressed neighborhoods.

More than 300 attendees filled the Dallas Public Library on June 26 for the Housing Plus Workshop, an initiative aimed at building a coalition of partners to address Dallas housing issues. Planning expert John Fregonese led an active voting and prioritization presentation, followed by a neighborhood visioning exercise conducted in breakout sessions. Participants in the Casa View work group included Dallas City Council Member Sheffie Kadane, City Planner Luis Tamayo and residents Robert Curry and Christopher Jackson.

At the end of the hour-long session, each table presented its conclusions to the group. The Casa View group's main areas for improvement included education, commercial development, green space and safety. They also presented ideas for partnering with the city in



Housing Plus Workshop's visioning exercise

residential and community reinvestment incentives and enhanced ordinance programs. *"It's wonderful that Casa View is being recognized as an innovative community with creative redevelopment strategies," said Curry. "Just to be included in the process shows the city is listening to us and wants to hear what Casa View has to say."*



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FRIdays Editor Passes the Torch



by Kim Bonfadini

After years of dedicated service keeping residents of Far East Dallas informed on the activities of the Ferguson Road Initiative, Gary Lawler has stepped down as editor of *FRIdays* and Mari Madison has taken his place.

Lawler became the editor in 2003 and has guided the evolution of *FRIdays* from a 12-page black and white newsprint newsletter covering southern Ferguson Road to a 20-page full-color glossy paper news magazine reporting on the entire Ferguson Road corridor.

"We can't thank Gary enough for all of his work throughout the years," says Vikki J. Martin, president of FRI. "While Gary is stepping down as editor, rest assured he's still a vital member of FRI and will now devote his efforts to special projects."

Madison is a longtime resident of Far East Dallas. For more than 30 years, she has supported the community she calls home, and as editor of *FRIdays*, she'll have the opportunity to contribute on a larger scale.

"FRI has an amazing story to tell," says Madison. "My vision for FRIdays is to tell the stories of those individuals, organizations and businesses that have contributed to and benefitted from FRI, as well as inform the community on FRI's upcoming initiatives."

Madison is a marketing communications consultant, specializing in strategic branding campaigns for a range of corporate clients. She offers businesses of any size economical access to strategic communications and outside-the-box creative solutions to help clients effectively speak with their customers. Madison's work has been recognized in national design publications and juried competitions. www.mlmdesignstrategies.com

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Hanging Its Star on Positive Change

by *Jennifer Afflerbach*



Lone Star Credit Union has a rich history in the Dallas area, and particularly in the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) community. Founded as Lone Star Gas Employees Credit Union in 1967, it has expanded from serving the energy industry to offering financial services to 11,000 members and 30 major employee groups.

In 2007, the credit union received permission to serve any resident or business within a 10-mile radius of the Dallas branch on Ferguson Road.

The credit union's board members have expertise ranging from management to entrepreneurship in fields such as energy, insurance and shipping. They are veterans, family members and even a second-generation graduate of Bryan Adams High School.

Lone Star Credit Union staff has demonstrated its dedication to the community by volunteering 120 hours in the 2013-2014 school year, working with children at Bayles Elementary through the DISD Reading Partners program.



Lone Star Credit Union, 7508 Ferguson Road

The credit union has partnered with GreenPath, Inc. to help members achieve financial wellness. The nonprofit company offers confidential and anonymous services that include debt counseling and budgeting. Additionally, Lone Star Credit Union will soon offer prepaid, reloadable youth cards that can help teach teens how to budget and spend responsibly.

Lone Star Credit Union has been in the FRI community since 1981. President/CEO and FRI board member Jerry Clancy stressed the credit union's commitment to the revitalization of the area.

"I've seen the rise and fall of property values along with crime rates increase, and FRI provided the venue for a collaborative, cohesive community organization where everyone can come together and address these issues," Clancy said. "As a result, we have seen increased property values, declining crime rates and economic development. With an economic and culturally diversified community that defines FRI, Lone Star Credit Union wants to be a part of this change as we provide an array of financial products and services needed for this area."



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Richard C. Wootan, M.D.
White Rock Surgical



Scan this code on 9/18/2014 to go directly to FRI's NTGD portal.

Community Connection

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

I want to join the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) Community Connection.

(Check your desired membership level below.)

Individual and Nonprofit Membership:

- Household @ \$50 per year
- Nonprofit and Churches @ \$70 per year
- Neighborhood Associations @ \$70 per year
- Patron @ \$100 per year

Business Membership:

- 1 to 10 employees @ \$175 per year
- 11 to 50 employees @ \$375 per year
- 51 to 100 employees @ \$575 per year
- 101 to 500 employees @ \$1,275 per year
- 501+ employees @ \$2,775 per year
- Apartments @ \$1 per unit



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FOUNDER'S CIRCLE

I want to join the FRI Community Connection Founder's Circle by making a multiyear pledge.

This includes a complimentary membership at the appropriate level.

Level of Support (check one):

- \$1,000 per year for 3 years (\$3,000 total)
- \$2,500 per year for 3 years (\$7,500 total)
- \$5,000 per year for 3 years (\$15,000 total)
- \$7,500 per year for 3 years (\$22,500 total)
- \$10,000 per year for 3 years (\$30,000 total)

Benefits:

- Donor plaque and quarterly recognition in the FRI E-Blast
- *All the above plus* semi-annual recognition in the *FRI*days news magazine
- *All the above plus* your logo on the FRI website and a 15% discount on *FRI*days news magazine advertising
- *All the above plus* recognition at public business and community meetings
- *All the above plus* a permanent banner on the FRI website and recognition at ALL special events

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Date: _____ Name: _____ Title: _____ Email: _____

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FRI is deeply indebted to our Founder's Circle Members, who are members who have made an annual pledge to FRI for three years.

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(As of July 31, 2014)

If you are a member and do not see your name, please contact the FRI office at 214-324-5116 so that we can correct our records. Forgive us for this oversight.

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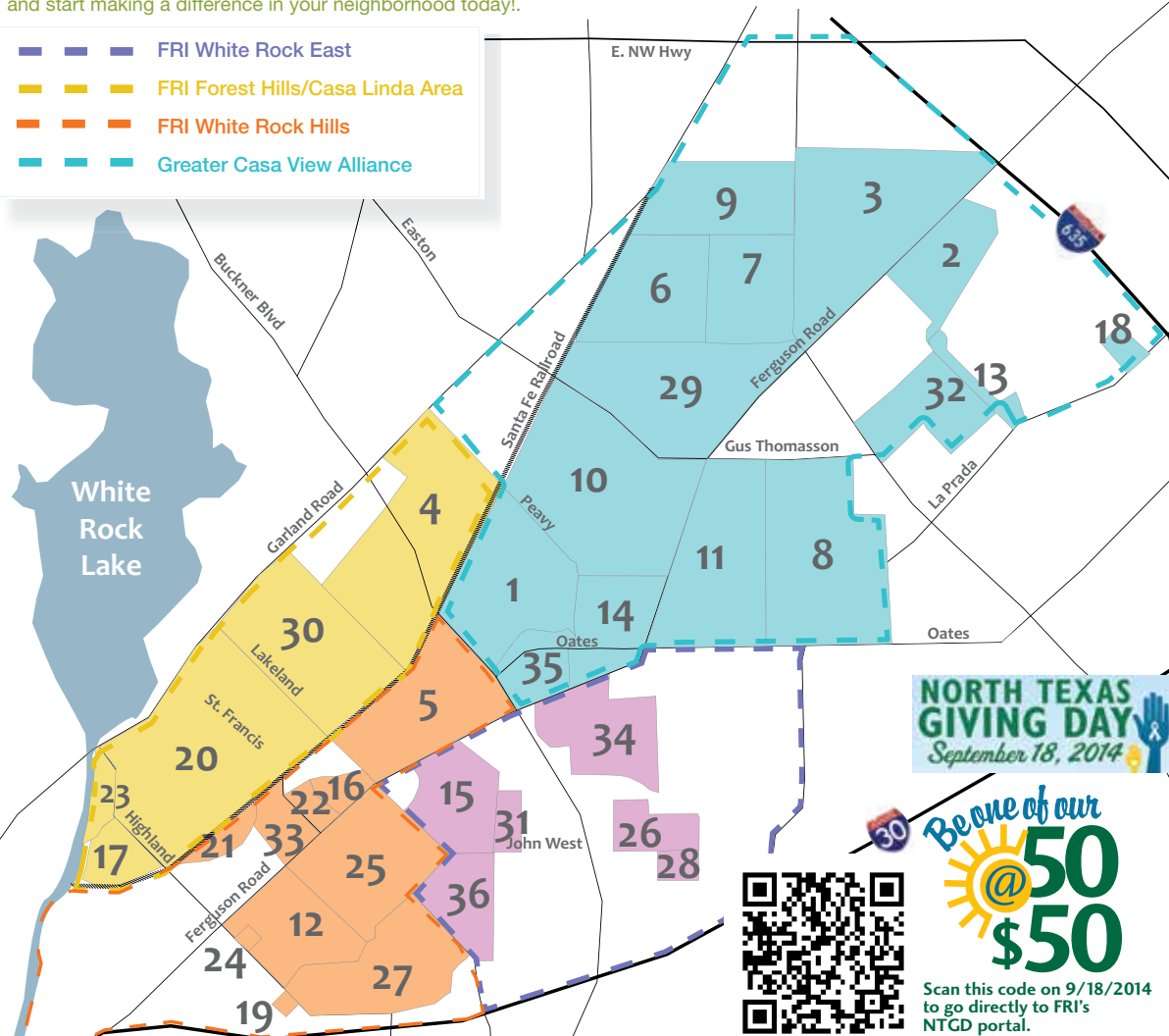
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- FRI Forest Hills/Casa Linda Area
- FRI White Rock Hills
- Greater Casa View Alliance



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- 3 - Briarwood NA (1258)
www.briarwoodna.com
- 4 - Casa Linda Estates NA
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- 6 - Casa View Heights CW (1129)
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- 9 - Casa View CW 1115
- 10 - Casa View Haven NA (1135)
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- 11 - Casa View Oaks NA
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- 13 - Club Manor NA
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- 14 - Crestview Park NA
- 15 - Eastwood Hills NA
www.eastwoodhillsdallas.com
info@eastwoodhillsdallas.com
- 16 - Enclave at Ash Creek HOA
- 17 - Enclave at White Rock HOA
- 18 - Fairway Estates HOA
- 19 - Forest Creek OA
- 20 - Forest Hills Association
www.foresthillsdallas.org
- 21 - Forest Meade HOA
- 22 - Forest Oaks NA
- 23 - Highland on the Creek
- 24 - Highlands Apartments CW
- 25 - Hillridge CW
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- 26 - Hillview Terrace NA
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- 27 - Lakeland Hills CW
214-967-5084 (Voicemail)
- 28 - Light Pointe Place HOA
- 29 - Little Casa View
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- 30 - Little Forest Hills NA
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- 31 - Skyline Heights CW
- 32 - St. Andrews CW
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- 33 - Stonegate at Forest Hills
- 34 - Truett CW
www.truettareacw.org
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