

FRI days

FERGUSON ROAD INITIATIVE – SERVING FAR EAST DALLAS

SPRING 2016

Expanding Horizons

in this issue

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FRI President's Report

News About Crime and Safety
Is All Good

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Greater Casa View Area Plan

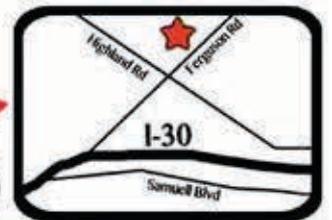
City of Dallas Befriends Area
Seniors With New Appointments
to the Senior Affairs Commission



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The mission of FRI is to transform Far East Dallas into a safe, beautiful, prosperous and proud community by inspiring hope and working together to achieve a shared vision.

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ON THE COVER

*FRI*days editorial staff discovered this photo posted to the Casa View Neighborhood Facebook page. We reached out to the photographer, and asked permission to use the image for our spring cover. The photo was taken using a camera-equipped drone by Far East Dallas native John Visser. As it turns out, John is a 1973 graduate of Bryan Adams High School and earned a degree in general Engineering from the United States Air Force Academy in 1977. Thank you, John, for sharing this great image of the distinctively mid-century neighborhoods of the Ferguson Road corridor.

Advancing the Vision



by Vikki J. Martin, President, Ferguson Road Initiative

Thumbs Up to Success – The biggest Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) accomplishment of the year, sliding in on December 17, 2015, is the APPROVAL of the White Rock Hills Community Recreation Center (CENTER)

Feasibility Study and Master Plan. The proposed 30,000-square-foot facility and surrounding amenities located at 2229 Highland Road will cost approximately \$35 million. By listening to residents through surveys, focus groups, community outreach and workshop meetings, this CENTER will address the specific needs and gaps in resources for Far East Dallas. The CENTER will be completed in phases, with phase one to include water features, a teaching kitchen, recreation and fitness areas, multipurpose rooms for culture and art, and outdoor fitness and picnic areas. Later phases include an outdoor amphitheater and a sitting area adjacent to the Trinity Forest Spine Trail extension and park, allowing hikers, cyclists and runners to connect with the city of Dallas trail system. We sincerely thank Council Members Tiffanni Young (District 7) and Mark Clayton (District 9); Dallas Park and Recreation Department board appointees Sean Johnson (District 7) and Becky Rader (District 9); and Park and Recreation Director Willis Winters and board President Max Wells for their ardent support in bringing these much-needed services to Far East Dallas.

“Invest in things for the long term and have a long horizon and the flexibility.”

Jerry Yang, founder of Yahoo!

work with neighbors to plant the produce most desired and provide training to create 21st-century job skills. Perhaps most important, they would work to transform the currently unused property into a beautiful green space and vibrant hub for the community, providing programming for adults and young people that includes how-to workshops and community volunteer days. The development of an urban farm is attractive to FRI on two levels. First, it would provide an immediate and visible interim use of the property, showing progress toward our goals as we await the completion of the Park Department’s purchase of the two adjacent apartment properties next to the CENTER’s land, which will increase the size of the CENTER from 3½ to 7 acres. Second, it would immediately address community residents’ need for access to sustainable, fresh produce.

If you are interested in learning more about the urban farm project or joining the community start-up team, please contact us at: communityconnection@fergusonroad.org.

In addition to completing our urban farm partnership, FRI is seeking partners in the areas of health and wellness, youth and senior services, STEM and STEAM training, arts, and environmental opportunities.



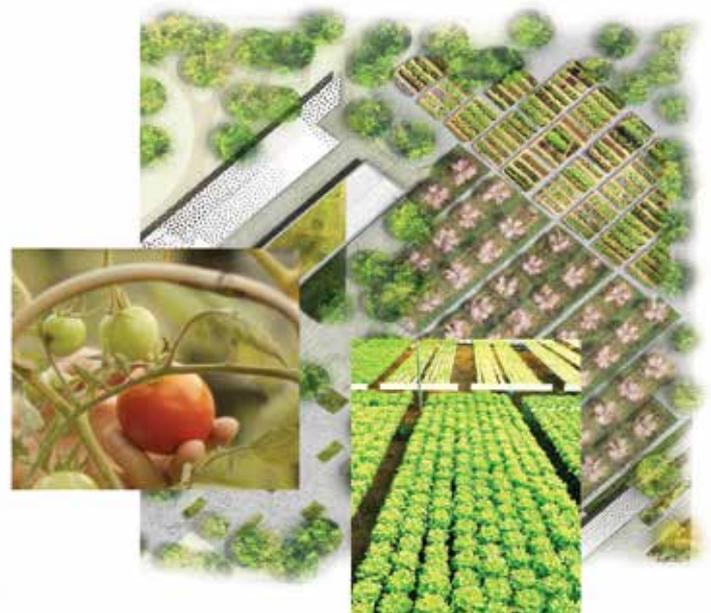
Pictured from left to right: Larry and Jean Streeter, Alexis McCain, Nicole Miller, Susan Walker, Bobbi Bilnoski, Andrew Streeter, Ed Snyder, Armando Marquez, Gary Lawler, Debbie Van Zant and Vikki J. Martin.

Below is a conceptual vision of a sustainable urban farm.

CENTER Partnerships and Programs – Our research over the course of the last 12 months revealed three key gaps in resources needed in the Far East Dallas community: access to medical services; recreation and fitness programs; and sustainable, fresh food sources. Did you know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has designated several locations within our boundaries as “food deserts”?

As a positive interim use of our parkland and with the support of the Park Department, FRI is building a partnership with a nonprofit organization to break ground on an urban farm – potentially as early as this fall. The organization is focused on using urban agriculture to help create a more food-secure city by providing healthy and affordable produce in neighborhoods where options are currently limited. This farm would employ organic, intensive farming methods to grow food for sale and donation within the community.

The organization would employ area residents,



Next Steps

2016 will be a very exciting year for FRI. We need YOUR help to:

- Complete a fundraising strategy for leveraging available resources
- Complete a 501(c)3 organization to manage the CENTER process
- Transition the FRI stakeholder board to a fundraising board
- Secure partners to bring programs to the CENTER
- Scope out a master timeline
- Determine how the site will be managed

This is an exciting opportunity in the life of FRI. We are looking for partners that can not only provide financial assistance but, more important, offer expertise as we move forward to lead the fundraising campaign for the CENTER.

Our needs include funding for expenses and site development, as well as specific expertise we will need along the way:

- Lead signature gift – \$3 million to \$5 million
 - Land acquisition site control of adjacent properties
 - Naming rights on the facility and grounds
- Professional services (in-kind or granted)
 - Major gifts fundraising consulting services
 - Design and construction documents
 - Backbone operational funding for FRI
 - Board governance and development training
 - Project management assistance
 - Staff support and training

Help match us with a funding partner or investor who believes in community building and economic revitalization on the local level. FRI anticipates 2016 to be a very productive and exciting year.



Come worship with us!

Schedule of Services

Sunday

9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASS

10:00 A.M. WORSHIP & CHILDREN'S WORSHIP

5:30 P.M. WORSHIP

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Recognition for a Job Well Done



by Mari L. Madison

Each year the Dallas Historical Society recognizes individuals and organizations that help to foster growth in the city of Dallas. The Awards for Excellence in Community Service recognize those who have demonstrated generosity of spirit, civic leadership and ability to encourage communitywide participation. An award is given in each of 12 categories.

On a Thursday in November 2015, the Historical Society held its 34th annual Awards for Excellence luncheon, where it recognized Vikki J. Martin and the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) with the award for Volunteer Community Leadership. This award is given to an organization whose generous gift of self has enriched the community.

"I had the honor of representing our tremendous organization," said Martin, president of FRI. "We were in very esteemed company, as the Historical Society also honored folks like Matrice and Ambassador Ron Kirk, Football Hall of Famer Tim Brown, Big Thought Executive Director Gigi Antoni and education advocate Marnie Wildenthal. I am so very proud of the good work we have accomplished together."



Kit Sawers and Vikki J. Martin, president of FRI.

The board and members of FRI are humbled to be recognized and applaud Martin for her tireless enthusiasm and leadership. We are grateful to Jay Krishnaswamy, CEO of Doctors Hospital at White Rock Lake, and Doug Hunt, owner of Access Self Storage and Truck Rental, for sponsoring tables for FRI board members and friends to join in the festivities held at the Fairmont Hotel. Watch Martin's speech by scanning this QR code.





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The News About Crime and Safety Is All Good



by Kerry L. Goodwin

Crime statistics can make your head spin, and sometimes explode. What are we trying to measure? Over what time period? Whose numbers are they and, more important, what are we trying to show or demonstrate? In short, the question is “How do we measure the climate of crime in a community?”

Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) has tracked overall and violent crime in Far East Dallas for more than 17 years. This was first done through Operation *Weed and Seed*, a 10-year federally funded U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) crime-fighting grant program (from 2000-2011), awarded to two FRI target areas: White Rock Hills and White Rock East.

During the 1990s and into 2000, crime in our community was out of control. The DOJ invested in our community because we had a serious crime issue and because FRI was willing to work with the Dallas Police Department (DPD), shoulder to shoulder, in solving this problem.

mobilized average citizens to work together to look after one another through crime watch and Volunteers In Patrol programs. Carol Hurley, who helped start the Casa View Heights Crime Watch (1156), said, “According to Lt. Alan Bull, DPD Northeast Division Geographic Commander, Casa View Heights Crime Watch 1156 achieved a 70 percent reduction in their crime stats following the inception of their VIP program.”

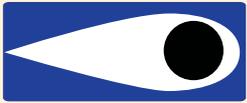
Dallas has turned the corner. The graph below, based on DPD numbers, tracks serious offenses over a 15-year period and demonstrates that we are winning the fight against crime. The climate of crime in our neighborhoods continues to show a decline, and we are becoming a safer community.

“When I was a lieutenant stationed at DPD Northeast Division, I worked closely with the Ferguson Road Initiative leadership and community. It was clear from day one that this was a group that sincerely wanted to improve their community and make a difference in the lives of their residents,” said DPD Chief David Brown. “By taking a stand to ‘stamp out crime’ and promote public safety, Far East Dallas is now seeing quality economic development return to the area after more than two decades of serious blight and decline.”



Enjoying Coffee with Cops at McDonald’s are McGruff the Crime Dog, Deputy Chief Andrew Accord, Charlotte Suiter and FRI President Vikki J. Martin.

MORE EYES LESS CRIME



The percentages below show the effect of citizen action in reducing serious offenses.

White Rock Hills

41%
drop over
15 years

White Rock East

50%
drop over
15 years

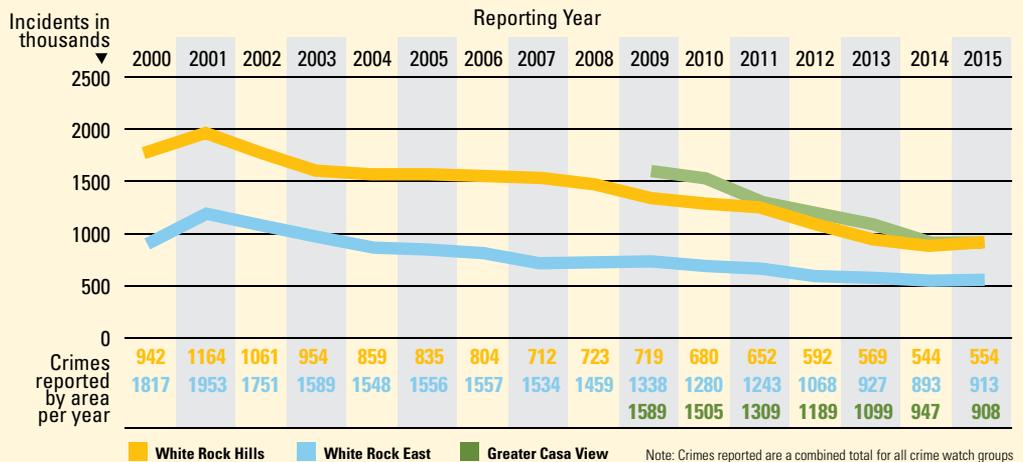
Greater Casa View

43%
drop over
7 years

“Just prior to the beginning of our 2-Points Weed and Seed grant, our neighborhoods had some of the highest incidences of violent crime and drug trafficking in the nation,” said Ellen Childress, Truett Crime Watch chairperson. “Through the advocacy of FRI, a lot of sweat equity on the part of our community and our collaboration with DPD, we were able to get a handle on crime. We worked together to ‘rebrand’ ourselves from being known as the ‘2-Points’ community to the White Rock East area of Dallas.”

When FRI first formed in 1998, there were only five identified homeowner and crime watch groups in Far East Dallas. Today, there are more than 35 that have

Change in Incidents of Serious Offenses Over Time





Officers from DPD Northeast Division attend a Braeburn Glen Crime Watch gathering.

Choose Your Role in Safety

Keep this partnership active and vibrant. Volunteer with these programs:

Crime Watch – Join and be an active member of your area crime watch.

VIP – In the Volunteers In Patrol program, citizens patrol their own neighborhoods and report any suspicious or criminal activity to the police.

CHIPS – Citizens Helping in Parking Solutions trains citizens to write handicapped parking citations at local malls or shopping centers.

COPS – Citizens Offering Police Support. Volunteers work at the police department substation conducting various office and clerical tasks.

VRT – Volunteer Response Teams relieve officers of less critical and time-consuming duties, such as 311 follow-ups, freeing police to respond to emergency calls, perimeter control, etc. These trained volunteers are able to respond on short notice as needed.

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The Joy of Jingles



by Gary Lawler
Charlotte "Jingles" Suiter, a longtime friend and supporter of Far East Dallas, passed away in January. She was the definition of a

compassionate and giving soul, touching the lives of everyone around her.

Suiter worked with many North Texas charities including Toys for Tots, Ronald McDonald House and Santa Cop. She also helped children receive immunizations and worked with various back-to-school programs.

She is probably best known for her work in public relations for McDonald's, where she hosted family events such as bingo and karaoke. She will also be remembered for her ever-present goldenrod coupons for freebies at McDonald's.

Most people were unaware of Suiter's given name, knowing her only as Jingles the Clown or Mrs. Claus.

She spread joy and warmth wherever she went and will be remembered for her beautiful smile and generous spirit.

"Jingles' well-deserved title was *CHO (Chief Happiness Officer) for the McDonald's Corporation at Jim Miller and Highland roads,*" said Ferguson Road Initiative President Vikki J. Martin. "FRI will miss working with her. Thank you, Jingles."



Charlotte Suiter and Larry Ingram.

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Spring Brings Progress for Greater Casa View Area Plan and More



by Mike Nurre

Members of the Greater Casa View Alliance (GCVA) have been busy working toward some exciting milestones and events for 2016 – including final preparations to present the Greater Casa View Area Plan to the

Dallas City Council for approval.

This plan, created with the input and feedback of area residents, includes recommendations for street improvements, commercial development and projects for the city of Dallas to consider in city planning. Once approved by the city council, the plan will be on



Scan here to download the GCVA Area Plan.

record with the City Plan Commission as a road map for the future of Greater Casa View.

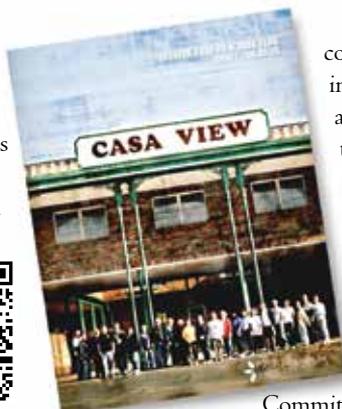
GCVA committees have also been hard at work to bring exciting new events to the community. Open in April, The Marketplace DFW, run by Kirk and Kim Lovett, brings a European-style outdoor market to Greater Casa View. Located at Ridge Pointe Fellowship and San Francisco De Asís churches at 11440 and 11540 Ferguson Road, respectively, the market features local food and produce as well



as crafts. The Marketplace DFW also runs the outdoor markets in downtown Garland and Mesquite. Get ready to come out to shop at the Greater Casa View market on the second Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Coming in October, GCVA and Mindy Niehaus of Nathan Grace Real Estate will host a tour of Cliff May-designed mid-century modern homes. This will be an opportunity for Greater Casa View to showcase these beautiful homes throughout the area. Be sure to check out the Cliff May Home Tour Facebook page or Dallas Cliff May on Instagram for more details.

GCVA's Code Committee has announced a unique focus on code



compliance in select GCVA neighborhoods to both inform neighbors of Dallas code requirements and address ongoing code violations. This will begin after training is conducted by the city's Code Compliance department. In addition to GCVA's own projects and initiatives, the group also became a member of the Greater East Dallas Chamber of Commerce, where GCVA Co-chair Mike Nurre serves on the board and as chair of the Economic Growth and Development

Committee. Nurre and GCVA were also featured in a December 2015 *Lakewood Advocate* article spotlighting Greater Casa View as a great place to live and work.



Scan here to read the article.

The Greater Casa View Alliance is an assemblage of leaders who have been consistently serving in their neighborhood associations or crime watches and are committed to the broader betterment of the Greater Casa View area. This group serves as a bridge for all neighborhoods to create a single voice for the community. To learn more, see:

www.greatercasaview.org.



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Roadways Are Offering a Smoother Ride These Days

by Jennifer Afflerbach



Many residential streets in the Ferguson Road Initiative readership area are being repaved. Street repairs have been made on the thoroughfares of Ferguson Road, Buckner Boulevard and Garland Road. Resurfacing is also underway on sections of Gus Thomasson, Peavy, Oates and Shiloh roads.

Area leaders working with Dallas City Council members Tiffinni Young, District 7, and Mark Clayton, District 9, have brought attention to these much-needed street repairs in Far East Dallas. And there are more to come.

Improvements to Highland Road north of Ferguson Road are scheduled to start later in 2016. The existing asphalt roadway will be turned into a two-lane concrete roadway with curb and gutter from Ferguson to just north of the Primrose at Highland Meadows Apartments. Included in the project will be indented parallel parking, sidewalks (including mid-block crosswalks), landscaping, enclosed storm drainage improvements and lighting. All of the improvements are planned to be constructed within the existing street right of way.

The \$2.9 million Highland Road project was included in the city's 2012 bond program. The design is about 65 percent complete, and construction is anticipated to be finished in late 2017. These improvements will enhance the future home of the White Rock Hills Recreation Center at 2229 Highland Road.

A city bond election scheduled for 2017 could bring more needed funds to Far East Dallas for street improvements. Now is the time for neighborhoods to speak up to get projects on the needs inventory list for consideration in that bond election.

Bond funds are used for the construction of new capital projects, such as new roadways and alleys, roadway and alley reconstruction projects, etc. Maintaining the streets, such as pothole repairs, refreshing

After repeated patching, Shiloh Road at Oates Boulevard was recently rebuilt from the ground up.



roadway striping, etc., typically comes from general and operating funds.

Clayton told FRI that he is going to advocate for a larger share of bond money for District 9.

"There is need all through the district . . . I will see how I can best stretch the money," he said.

Clayton advises residents to contact 311 to report issues related to street repairs and all other city services. The 311 system creates a record of all needs, and that record is used to allocate resources. Items appearing on the needs inventory list are generated, in large part, from service requests. So the more neighbors who report a problem, the better the chances of getting the repair on the needs inventory list. As Clayton explained,

"The city has a few billion dollars in capital improvement needs. The best-case scenario is a \$600 million bond package for the entire city, not just District 9. As a citizen, you have to advocate for your needs for them to be prioritized. Citizens are urged to call 311 to report issues with city services and request that an item be considered for the needs inventory list."

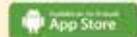
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City of Dallas Befriends Area Seniors

With New Appointments to the Senior Affairs Commission



by *Ellen Childress*

Those of us who are getting older have some new, very knowledgeable and energetic friends at Dallas City Hall. Here in Council District 7, our council member, Tiffinni Young, appointed Cannon Flowers to the Senior Affairs Commission (SAC). In Council District 9, council member Mark Clayton appointed Mary Sparks to SAC.

Flowers now heads the Communication Committee for the SAC. The leadership team for the White Rock East Area Plan and I met with Flowers and Sparks last fall and set an initial agenda for the SAC.



Cannon Flowers and Mary Sparks.

First, explore the best ways to communicate with our senior citizens to help them find the assistance they need to remain in their homes as they get older. Second, locate or develop accessible and affordable transportation for seniors. This led to the creation of the East Dallas Seniors Coalition with a goal of focusing the attention of Dallas on the best care for our senior citizens. We are open to new members from any area.

Dallas, Dallas County and the state of Texas plus the private sector have many resources of varying degrees of requirements and ability

to provide. For example, the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Visiting Nurse Association of Texas' Meals on Wheels and the Senior Source are just three agencies that can offer assistance to senior citizens and can be reached by dialing 211. Our recent Ferguson Road Initiative Community Connection Town Hall and Annual Election meeting recognized our Senior Affairs Commission. At the meeting, Flowers spoke about the needs of many of our senior citizens and presented the background and potential capability of the SAC to gather these many resources, locate the people who need the services and turn the city of Dallas' focus on the elderly and their desire to "age in place"

instead of being forced into assisted living. Sometimes the difference between being able to remain at home or go to assisted living is as simple as how to change a bulb in a ceiling light fixture.

Our new SAC appointees have their sleeves rolled up and are ready to go to work for the elderly citizens of Dallas. They need input from every senior citizen in this city about which services and amenities are needed the most and why they are needed. It has already been established that here in Far East Dallas, we have pockets of low-income elderly, food deserts, no accessible public transportation in some areas and lack of medical services in other languages. Armed with a clear knowledge of what our senior citizens need and want, the SAC members can then work with our mayor and city council to start responding to the growing needs of a rapidly growing population of older people.

The Senior Affairs Commission meets at noon on the second Monday of each month at city hall. The meetings are broadcast by Time Warner Cable: Channel 99; AT&T U-verse: Channel 99; Verizon: Channel 47; and online through the city of Dallas portal. The meetings are open. Please attend if you can and if you have information or questions that will assist our SAC commissioners.

Add Information or Reach Out for Help

Meanwhile, if you need any type of assistance or you wish to help a neighbor or friend or add to the information your Senior Affairs Commissioner might need, you can reach Cannon Flowers, Council District 7, at cannon.flowers@dallascityhall.com, or Mary Sparks, Council District 9, at mary.sparks@dallascityhall.com. If you need more immediate help from the city, county or state, please dial **211** and tell the operator what you need, and you will be connected to the appropriate agency. If you would like a copy of the *Seniors Blue Book*, published by Kathleen Madsen, which encompasses a huge array of services for the elderly plus housing information, please call **Ellen Childress, at 214-324-3778**, or email ejchildress1942@gmail.com. Or call the Seniors Blue Book office at **972-382-9900**. Free copies are available.



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White Rock Center of Hope, Doing Good in the Neighborhood



by Kimberly Humphries

The White Rock Center of Hope (WRCH) is a grass-roots coalition of individuals, churches, and civic and social organizations united to

provide local assistance to neighbors in need. These volunteers are dedicated to making a difference in people's lives by providing a place where the community can work together and satisfy basic human needs.

At WRCH, located on Garland Road just east of Peavy Road, neighbors helping neighbors fed and clothed nearly 9,400 people in 3,400 local households last year. This work benefits the families receiving assistance as well as the over 250 volunteers who forge friendships and serve their community. Volunteering at WRCH gives widows, widowers and retirees a social and service opportunity, keeping them actively engaged physically and mentally in their community.

What started as a food pantry serving two ZIP codes in East Dallas now covers five. Approximately 60 percent of all clients come from 75228. Those who qualify for assistance have access to food once a month, clothing four times a year, emergency rent or utility assistance once a year, as well as Christmas joy, school supplies and bus passes to help with health care and job opportunities and empower self-sufficiency. Merchandise for WRCH's Resale Shop comes from donations of



Clients shop for clothes at WRCH Clothing Closet.

unwanted but still useful items. Food, clothing and household goods are sorted by purpose. All food goes to the Food Pantry.

Linens and most clothes, shoes and coats go into the Clothing Closet, where neighbors can select what they need. The Resale Shop annually provides more than \$300,000 to help fund WRCH's community services. These funds help pay client rent and utilities and supplement foods not donated to the Pantry.

WRCH's programs are made possible through volunteers and donations. To turn your trash into treasure and help a local family or to volunteer call **214-324-9285** or visit whiterockcenterofhope.org.



From left to right: Alice McLean, Patsy Chalmers, Pauline Millender.



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Uplift School Uplifts Community



by Gary Lawler

For decades, the White Rock Hills community has been cursed with an eyesore at the northwest corner of Ferguson Road and Interstate 30. First, there were the rotting remains of the Fair Park Inn, followed by an unsightly vacant lot.

However, that will soon change. Uplift Education, a network of high-quality public charter schools, requested a zoning change that would allow them to locate a free public primary school at that site. The Dallas City Council approved their specific-use permit application on February 10.

Building will take place in phases, with a maximum 85,000-square-foot floor area and a maximum height of 40 feet. The campus will be nicely landscaped along Ferguson, turning that corner into an attractive entryway into White Rock Hills.



The school will accommodate 648 kindergarten through fifth-grade students at full capacity. This campus will serve as an additional feeder to Uplift Luna Preparatory in Deep Ellum, which currently serves grades six through 12. Uplift has 34 schools on 17 campuses across North Texas, serving 14,000 scholars with 1,510 dedicated teachers, staff and

Uplift Luna Primary School, master plan.

administrators. For the past seven years, 100 percent of Uplift graduates have been accepted to college.

To avoid the congestion that the pickup and drop-off of students from Ferguson Road would create, the school will provide entry for these purposes via Samuell Boulevard and Valley Glen Drive on the north side of the site. Entry from Ferguson Road will be limited to visitors, special guests, etc.

Like St. Pius X Catholic School and Bishop Lynch High School, Uplift provides an important educational option to area families. Having more options, along with improving Dallas Independent School District schools, makes our community a good place to raise children.



Uplift Education students volunteer for FRI's communitywide litter cleanup event.



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Truett Elementary School Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony



by Dan Micciche

The ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate Truett's building additions is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19, 2016.

In 2013, the Dallas Independent School District board of trustees approved \$13 million to cover additions and improvements at George W. Truett Elementary School, including 24 new classrooms, a science lab, an updated library, a gym and computer labs. The renovations added 55,000 square feet to the school and will accommodate up to 1,400 additional students.

"These new spaces are just amazing," said Truett Elementary School Principal Terre Evans. "It's rejuvenated a lot of people."

The improvements at Truett are just one part of a revival taking place around Ferguson Park. Bishop Lynch High School continues to make progress on its \$33 million five-phase campus expansion and renovation plan, and this past October, school and community leaders celebrated the dedication of the new softball complex at Ferguson Park across the street from Bishop Lynch and adjacent to Truett.

Planning for the softball complex began three years ago when Bishop Lynch formed a partnership with the city of Dallas to improve and fund the initial improvements to the fields as well as certain costs to maintain them in exchange for priority scheduling rights.

When all the construction at both campuses is done and the landscaping is completed, the two campuses will provide Far East Dallas with a beautiful oasis of learning and recreation.



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City of Dallas Sidewalk Replacement Program ... Residents Save 50%



by Dee Anna Hanchey

Many residents don't realize it, but Dallas city code requires property owners to replace sidewalks and approaches when they become unsafe. And while concrete work can be expensive, the city of Dallas offers a cost-sharing program that cuts the owner's sidewalk bill in half.

For North Lake Highlands resident Sharon Sugarek, the program was the perfect way to address a few uneven sections of sidewalk at her Woodbridge home.

"I thought, 'This is great! I don't have to find a contractor to do this small job,'" Sugarek said.

Soon after she heard about the program, she submitted her request and received a confirmation explaining that a Public Works Department employee would come out to assess the job.

"Once you get the estimate, you can decide whether to do it," Sugarek said.

She also said that although the job may not be initiated for several months, residents do have to pay their share up front – in her case, around \$340 for the two to three sections that were replaced.

"You have to be patient, but it's worth it," she said.

The city of Dallas splits the cost of residential sidewalk replacement 50-50 and covers 100 percent of the cost of adjacent barrier-free ramps. While the city does not share the cost for new driveway

Another recent replacement under construction on Highwood Drive in Casa View Heights.



approaches, many homeowners choose to add this component in conjunction with the other work. By taking the initiative to invest in our community, homeowners can play a powerful role in revitalization.

In addition to the significant cost savings, the program offers enhanced safety, curb appeal and the convenience of having the Public Works Department handle all permits, safely dispose of old concrete and replace damaged sod. It also includes a one-year warranty.

To learn more, call **214-948-4287** or visit dallascityhall.com/departments/streetservices.

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Community Helps Fire Victims



by Carol Ann Ravert

Caring folks in neighborhoods throughout Far East Dallas helped nine families who were victims in two separate devastating fires in December. Vikki J. Martin, president of Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI), said, *"I am constantly amazed at the incredible people who live in*

Far East Dallas who are committed to helping people in need."

Vikki Martin, Ellen Childress and Susan Walker were actively involved in providing beds and belongings for 22 people from eight families impacted by a two-alarm fire in the early morning of Dec. 8, 2015, at Casa Bella Apartments on Peavy Road.

Mac Lawson, owner of Casa Bella apartments and a Ferguson Road Initiative Founder's Circle member, said, *"The families of Casa Bella were traumatized by the fire. Two families lost everything, and all lost their beds. The beds, pillows and linens that FRI secured for them were very helpful."*

The 16 beds that were needed were either donated by the community or purchased by FRI with funds raised in the community. Immediate responses came from email and Facebook requests for dining room tables, cookware, pillows, sheets, blankets and other necessary items.

C. Alcantara, apartment fire survivor, said, *"Thank you to Casa Bella and to FRI for providing three beds for my family to sleep on. We are truly blessed that nothing major happened to any of us, but were very sad when all of our belongings were damaged. If it weren't for these donations, I don't think we would have beds to sleep in. God bless you all for your kindness."*

A house fire in Casa View Haven on Dec. 22, 2015, left another family without a home or any of their belongings, not even their wallets. All were hospitalized. A neighbor, Amanda Buckley, president of Casa View Haven HOA, coordinated efforts to provide assistance, including Christmas gifts for the children. *"We were absolutely overwhelmed with the amount of donations, gifts and funds gathered for the Ramos family,"* Buckley wrote in her update to the community.

Far East Dallas folks are quick to respond and pull together to help others and build more compassionate neighborhoods. To stay in touch with FRI neighborhood events and learn about ways you can help, follow the FRI Facebook page at [facebook.com/fergusonroad](https://www.facebook.com/fergusonroad)

or sign up for NewsFlash by emailing

communityconnection@fergusonroad.org.



Watch the local news coverage on CBS Channel 11 by scanning this QR code.



Generosity Keeps Area Residents Cool



by Jennifer Afflerbach

Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI) is facilitating a program to provide air conditioners to relieve low-income families from the intense summer heat. Cheryl Burnett, who lives on Hatcher Street in Dallas, said of her air conditioner, *"It's nice. It gets the whole house cold. I love it."*

The North Texas Air Conditioning Initiative, funded by a private donor, provides free window-unit air conditioners to homeowners in the greater Dallas-Fort Worth area. To be eligible, applicants must own their home, live within 30 miles of downtown Dallas and lack air conditioning. Recipients must be able to pay the costs to operate the unit.

With this assistance, 10 households in Dallas have received the units since the program began in 2013. *"Anything FRI can do to help folks in our community improve their quality of life, we're dedicated to doing,"* said FRI President Vikki J. Martin.

"It's very helpful for me in summer with the heat," said Harold Johnson, a resident on Exeter Avenue. He was referred by a church after his air conditioner was stolen. *"It was a blessing for me. I sleep a lot more comfortable at night. I appreciate it very much,"* Johnson said.

Recipients have been referred by organizations such as San Francisco de Asís Episcopal Church, Meals on Wheels and Gentiva Hospice. Priority is given to applicants who are elderly, infirm or have young children.

Venita and Willie Smith, who live on Hillburn Drive, heard about the program from a Meals on Wheels volunteer. *"I'm happy with it," Venita said. "It works good. It's wonderful."*

To apply or to refer someone in need, call FRI at **214-324-5116**.

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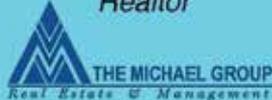
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Spreading Good News



by Mari Madison

A sentiment has spread across the country that the local “mainstream media” only report sensationalized bad news that boost ratings. Many people have just tuned out ALL news. The lack of positive news has instilled an undercurrent of negativity in their daily lives, including how they feel about their own neighborhood.

Ferguson Road Initiative’s news magazine *FRIdays* is dedicated to countering negative perceptions by sharing the positive progress made by countless volunteers through years of grass-roots efforts to aggressively address crime, safety, business degeneration, urban blight and failing schools by building alliances with law enforcement, city leaders, schools, the apartment community and social service agencies to revitalize and strengthen the Far East Dallas community.

FRIdays covers positive local news to foster pride in the community and encourage participation in bringing to life the vision of an urban village, a place of safety and beauty where people want to live and raise their families. By encouraging others to work together, get involved and invest in the future, progress will spread this vision all the way to the northeast horizon.

This nonprofit publication is produced and edited with the help of volunteer writers, editors, photographers, proofreaders and ad sales. And as such, *FRIdays* is not dictated by ratings and profits. It fills a local news void as the only magazine circulated in the area. It is mailed

biannually to all 17,000 single-family-household carrier routes located in the 75228 and 75218 ZIPcodes.

How can a small nonprofit organization afford to publish a 20-page full-color magazine? It can be done because each issue of *FRIdays* is self-funded by the support of local advertisers who together cover the full cost of printing and postage. No FRI membership funds are used. *FRIdays* is an excellent, affordable way for local businesses to reach the entire Far East Dallas community – and support the growth and vitality of their marketplace. For advertising rates call Maria at **214-324-5116**.

In an increasingly paperless world, why “waste” all that paper? The answer lies in the desire to reach out to all those who live in the area. While FRI is building an electronic media following through its website, emailed FRI NewsFlash, Facebook page and Twitter feeds, that following only numbers in the thousands. The only way to reach the entire community of tens of thousands is through the mail. And *FRIdays* makes a valuable statement. June Kornder, a first-time attendee at the recent FRI Town Hall meeting put it this way:

“I had heard about FRI and thought how nice, but didn’t really take it seriously. At 84, I have seen many efforts with good intentions fall by the wayside for lack of funding.” Holding up her copy of the magazine, she continued, “It was receiving this lovely, well-written magazine that convinced me this organization means business and has the financial support to make a difference.”

In the pages of *FRIdays*, readers will find many ideas for investing in large and small ways in the future of Far East Dallas. You are encouraged to join the movement. Good news, renewal is rising over the horizon.



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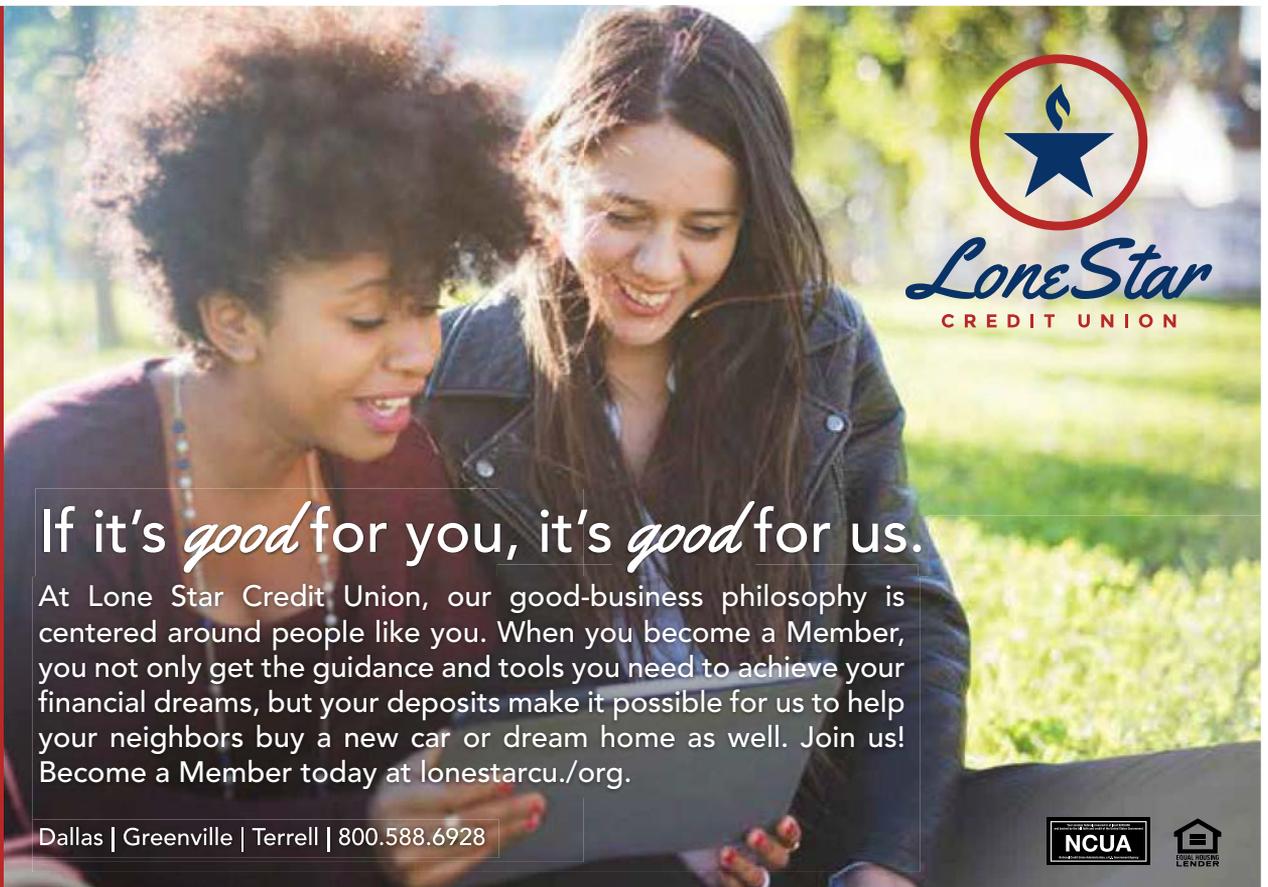
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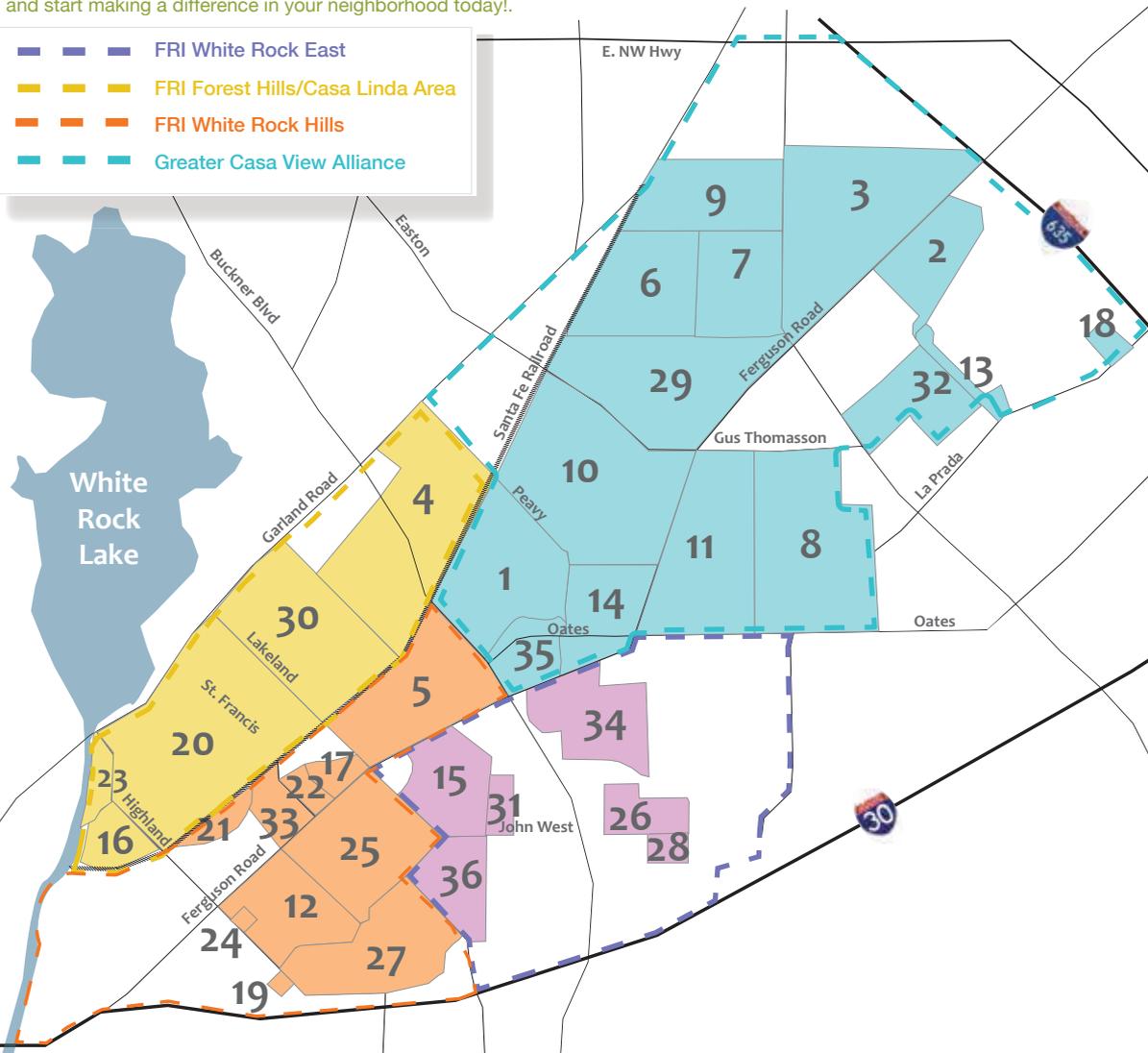
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- 34 - Truett CW
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