



ONE TO ONE

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A Report to the Residents of Harris County Precinct One ... from Commissioner El Franco Lee

Street Olympics Summer Games kicks off its 28th year



Above left, Olympians anxiously await their turn during the Hula Hoop competition at the Harris County Street Olympics Final Event last year at NRG Arena. Right, opponents square off in the 3-on-3 Basketball Championship Tournament at Fonde Recreation Center.

On June 13, the Harris County Street Olympics' Summer Games kicked off its 28th year of helping youth have a fun and productive school break.

"A 10-week summer represents the most vulnerable period of the year for a lot of young people who don't have the luxury of vacations and camps," Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee, Street Olympics founder, told youth agencies' representatives who provide the Summer Games preliminary rounds of competition. "So you are a stopgap for those things."

The Summer Games was started in 1986 as part of the

Street Olympics, which is designed to implement programs and provide training, support and resources that lead to good health and productive lives for Houston-area youth.

The Summer Games now involves thousands of children competing at about 40 participating agencies' sites, including Houston Parks and Recreation Department community centers, churches, Boys & Girls Clubs' sites, YMCAs and other summer youth programs.



The Summer Games is filled with recreational and educational activities that include a basketball tournament; swimming lessons and a friendly, competitive swim meet; a day-

long trip to Discovery Camp at Deussen and Challenger Seven Memorial parks to teach youth about nature and the environment; and an Olympic-style Final Event in August that involves traditional "street games." Also at the Final Event will be a complementary Bright Futures Fair, an educational

opportunity for the young athletes to learn more about health, safety and careers.

"I would hope you understand that small, incremental pieces of assistance ... that seem to be really incidental might be the only way you can reach a young person who may be in desperate need of help," Lee said to agency representatives at an April 11th luncheon to inform them about the Summer Games.

Jessica Arriaga, community youth specialist at the Cleveland-Ripley Neighborhood Center in Pasadena, said the agency has about 80 students in

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Precinct One

Commissioner El Franco Lee

Comments on current and future activities

Hurricane preparation

June marked the beginning of hurricane season. Since we live in the Gulf Coast area, it's important to know that safety starts with preparation. There are a number of resources that provide a hurricane preparation list, including the National Hurricane Center's website at www.nhc.noaa.gov. If you plan on riding out a storm, remember to get necessary supplies in advance such as gasoline for your vehicle, food, water, flashlights, batteries and radio. For those who prefer evacuation, please plan your routes and leave early to avoid traffic jams.

Mud Gully detention update

The Harris County Flood Control District is expected to start construction in September on Phase I of the Mud Gully detention basin in the South Belt area. The work on the 168-acre site along Beamer Road and South Hill Drive calls for excavating 500,000 cubic yards of soil materials. That will create a wet-bottom basin to maximize storage volume with a 6-foot water depth to promote habitat and avoid stagnation. A weir structure will be constructed to allow overbank storm water to flow into the basin. The project will provide 279 acre feet of immediate storage volume during a flooding event and will allow for the relocation of an underground pipe-

line. The ultimate basin design goal is 1,550 acre feet of volume storage. It is designed to mitigate future channel improvement to the Beamer Road ditch (Mud Gully Channel) and future selective clearing along Clear Creek through Friendswood. Phase II design is expected to begin after a contract is awarded for Phase I construction. It's expected to take up to 365 days to complete the project, which is in partnership with Galveston County.

Hardy Toll Road extension

The long-planned Hardy Toll Road extension into downtown continues to move forward. But before the segment can be built, two things have to happen: relocation of existing

railroad tracks, and the reconstruction of three intersections where neighborhood streets now cross the railroad. The rail relocation is expected to be completed this summer. Once that is done, the rail intersections at Collingsworth, Quitman and Lorraine will be rebuilt so traffic can move east and west without having to stop for trains. Reconstruction for the Lorraine intersection will take the street under the tracks, while Collingsworth and Quitman will be built as bridges over the tracks. Each intersection reconstruction is expected to take 15 to 18 months to complete.

About 5,000 youth expected to take part in Summer Games

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its summer program. The center has been participating in the Summer Games for about five years.

"Well, it gives the children the opportunity to have something to do recreationally and it gives them some physical activity for the summer. They enjoy it," she said.

About 5,000 youth, ages 6 to 17, will participate in the Summer Games, Discovery Camp and Learn-to-Swim programs over an eight-week period.

At each participating agency, youth will compete in traditional street games such as kickball, hopscotch, Hula Hoop, jump

rope, softball throw and foot races. The best athletes at each agency qualify for the Final Event on Aug. 8th at NRG Arena.

"It's (Final Event) just a fun day," Ariaga said.

Benetria Bateman, with B's Children's World Academy, said her agency has been participating in the Summer Games for about 12 years.

"Oh, they love it," she said. "And they have won several medals (at the Final Event). They look forward to it every year."

In addition to the Summer Games, Street Olympics has programs that operate year-round. It reaches about 10,000 youth,

teens and young adults annually. The four core components are:

The **Summer Games** that include **3-on-3 Basketball**, **Final Event** and **Bright Futures Fair**.

The **Discovery Camp/Traveling Naturalist Program** provides a fun and exciting way to learn about nature and the environment.

The **Harris County Aquatics Program** offers Learn-to-Swim sessions and competitive swimming.

The **Northeast Adolescent Program** – a partnership with Baylor College of Medicine, Houston and Aldine school districts, and the Harris Health System – offers free clinics for teens and young adults to address infant mortality, teenage pregnancy and other health and social issues.

Students in Precinct One enjoy Earth Day activities

Eliab Castelan queried intern Holly Hollingshead about the small snake she held gently. The now sixth-grader was equally enthusiastic about other science-related presentations that day.

"I made 100 on my progress report on science," Eliab, 11, said to express his interest in science. "I like chemistry and space – and a lot of stuff."

He earned that grade at his school, the Houston Academy, a magnet school in the Aldine Independent School District.

The hands-on activities with the snake – held on Saturday, April 26th – were at the Earth Day celebration at Deussen Park.

Eliab was among 111 students who attended the annual event, which is designed to

teach students about nature and the environment. It's sponsored by Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee and the America's Promise Alliance.

Derek Greene, science specialist at Houston Academy, said his 62 students got a chance to connect the science vocabulary they learn in school with a real-world experience.

"Often times with the things relative to life science, we have no animals at school," Greene said. "(Today) they got a chance to actually touch these snakes, alligators and things of that nature to sort of make those applications."

Other students were from the Julia C. Hester House, Lincoln Park Community Center and the NFL Youth Education Town at Finnigan Park.



Holly Hollingshead, left, with the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center, shows a snake to Eliab Castelan, 11, at Earth Day on April 26th.

The students visited learning stations that included the "Build a Habitat," "Scavenger Hunt," "Everything in Nature is Connected," and "Water: A

Never Ending Story."

Intern Hollingshead was a presenter for the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center. Also, present were the Downtown Aquarium,

the Bayou Preservation Association, the Harris County Flood District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Terrance Ewing, 10, now a sixth-grader with the Hester House, said: "It's fun doing the science experiments because you learn new stuff and you have fun at the same time."

Hundreds of youth seek Easter goodies at egg hunts

Plastic Easter eggs dotted the ball fields at Judson Robinson Sr. and El Franco Lee (EFL) parks on April 12th as hundreds of children waited patiently on the sidelines for permission to start the hunts.

The colorful eggs – filled with candy – were welcoming sights at the Annual Easter Egg Hunts sponsored by Precinct One Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee, Precinct Two, Position One Justice of the Peace Jo Ann Delgado and Precinct Two Constable Chris Diaz. But even more appealing were the elusive golden eggs – one for each hunting section that separated the children by age.

The golden egg finders – four at each park – received Easter baskets stuffed with



Above, youth seek Easter eggs at Robinson Park. Below, the search is on at EFL Park.



toys and goodies.

Amber Amaya, 10, was one of the lucky winners at EFL Park in the South Belt community.

"It was shocking and surprising," Amber said. "It's a nice Easter gift."

At Robinson Park, one winner, Jasmin Gonzalez, 7, said she was happy to find the golden egg and she enjoyed the event with her family.

Robinson Park was the site of the first Easter egg hunt. In addition to children from the Pleasantville community, youth also were bused in from Lincoln Park, Julia C. Hester House, Clinton Park and the NFL Youth Education Town at Finnigan Park.

Paris comes to Kashmere Gardens during April Spring Tea

Melvenia McNeil hoisted her tea cup and saucer above her head like an athlete showing off a first-place trophy. Then she practically did a slow, 360-degree turnaround to show the cup's inside, which was painted with pink roses and green leaves on a gold background.

That was enough to wow the judges to name it the No. 1 tea cup at the seventh annual April in Paris Spring Tea held at Mickey Leland Memorial Park on April 30th.

"I'm surprised," McNeil said. "I thought there would be one prettier than mine."

Mary Nowlin's cup was second and Louise Truitt's finished third.

The contest was one of the many features at April in Paris,



Melvenia McNeil shows the inside of her award-winning tea cup at the April in Paris Spring Tea.

where seniors were immaculately dressed in spring fashion complete with stylish Sunday hats. For that morning, they helped transform Leland Park into a Paris sidewalk café

where they dined on a spring cuisine while enjoying musical entertainment and poetry.

"Welcome to the April in Paris," said Harris County

Commissioner El Franco Lee, who sponsored the event. "If you like this event and events like these, just give me a show of hands."

The seniors raised their hands and then applauded.

"So we will keep on keeping on," Lee responded.

The event also featured a best-hat contest. Henrietta Cage took first place, Wilma Richard won second and Gloria J. Jolivet earned third.

"I'm a person who, when I see something I like, the Lord lets me have a few pennies to get them," Cage said about her hat and matching dress. "I like to wear hats. I have maybe 100 hats. Last year I won second place."

Contest to grow biggest cabbage pits husband against wife

The Precinct One Seniors Gardening Program's cabbage-growing contest turned out to be a classic case of the student beating the teacher. In this competition, there definitely were no hard feelings because they are a husband and wife team.

Millard Hodge, the first-place winner in a contest to grow the biggest cabbage in a pot, conceded that he learned a lot about gardening from his wife, Vertie, who took second in the competition among seniors at Tom Bass Community Center. Ruth Gray was the third-place

winner. "Well I feel good because I'm training my husband," Vertie Hodge said with a laugh. "See I came up on a farm. I did my farming from 12 years old till 18."

And even though the wife has given her husband a lot of pointers while working in their 4-year-old garden at home, both give credit for their green thumbs to George McAfee, who teaches the gardening classes for seniors at Tom Bass and two other Precinct One senior centers.

"My garden is just as beautiful," the wife said. "Because of George tell-

ing us how to set our plants out and keep them watered, I'm doing a better job than I've ever done."

The seniors were given a small cabbage plant and a 15-gallon container to grow the vegetables. The judging to see who had the biggest plant took place March 10th at Tom Bass Park's community garden.

The winners were given certificates and gift cards: \$25 from Pappas Bar-B-Q for first place, \$20 from Luby's for second and a free buffet and beverage from Golden Corral for third.

Millard Hodge said



Millard Hodge, left, won first place in the Tom Bass Park Seniors Program's cabbage-growing contest. Taking second place was Hodge's wife, Vertie, center, while Ruth Gray won third.

he and his wife visit keeping the bugs away. Tom Bass Park every Thursday to attend gardening classes or to work in the seniors' community garden. His strategy for winning: (maximum) growth," he said. "It's time to eat."

Health and Fitness Day promotes active lifestyles for Precinct One seniors



Patricia Haydel, foreground, exercises to Leroy Mobley's commands at the Tom Bass Park Performing Arts Pavilion.



Darryl Hailey, left, a Walgreen's pharmacy manager, gives Dat Doan a glucose test.



These seniors are all smiles during the early-morning 5k walk.

About 250 Precinct One senior citizens converged on Tom Bass Park on May 16th for the annual Health and Fitness Day.

"I'm trying to get it (health) under control," said Bob Rose, who attends the Tom Bass Community Center's Seniors Program. "I do strength training and yoga (at the center)."

Health and fitness are key components of Commissioner

El Franco Lee's Seniors Program, as all seven centers have exercise rooms. There are classes for weight training, yoga, Zumba, line dancing and Tai Chi.

Seniors also can get instructions on nutrition and other health-related issues.

This event, however, brings all the centers' seniors together for exercise, vital sign check-ups and other pertinent information.

mation.

"It is so nice to communicate and be with my people – my people being my age group," said Patricia Haydel, an eight-year retiree who attends Lincoln Park's Seniors Program. "I think the instructors are fabulous. One of the reasons I get out the bed is because I know I have something planned for the day."

The seniors started with a

5K walk through the park.

There also were health booths set up at the pavilion that offered blood-pressure checks and glucose tests. Also information was available for preparing for hurricanes and cooking with healthy herbs.

"I exercise every day at El Franco Lee Community Center," Dat Doan said. "I go to the doctor often."

Swimming organization honors HCAP's Coach Means

Johnnie "Coach" Means, director of the Precinct One Harris County Aquatics Program (HCAP), has been inducted into the Texas Swimming and Diving Hall of Fame. In addition, he was given the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Means, also HCAP's head swimming coach, was recognized for his community involvement that centered on his storied swimming and coaching career that dates back about 50 years.

"I feel good about it," Means said about the honor. "I was really pleasantly surprised that I was even considered for the award."

Means has dedicated his life



Coach Johnnie Means provides instructions for his swim team.

to teaching youth how to swim and working as a water safety instructor. "We have taught thousands of kids lifesaving skills and what we call water-

proofing them," he said.

The nonprofit organization, dedicated to the preservation of Texas aquatic history, also honored four other people during an April 12th reception in Houston.

For Means, his life-long

affinity for swimming started at

Yates High School, where he was an all-state swimmer. He attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., on a swimming scholarship.

In the early 1960s, Means began his professional career as a water safety instructor and started an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) competitive swim program at the then all-black South-Central YMCA.

In the mid-1960s, he took a swimming coach job at Texas Southern University, where he coached several All-Americans and one of the top National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) teams for more than 25 years.

He also worked as an area

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NFL YET member wins Houston-area Boys & Girls Clubs' Youth of the Year

At age 18, Gary McCallister, a Wheatley High School senior, mapped his career path long before graduation. In a few weeks, he will take the first step to implement that plan: Enter the U.S. Army with the goal of becoming a combat engineer.

McCallister's focused mind and his many involvements in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston at the NFL Youth Education Town (YET) at Finnigan Park were the reasons why he was selected the 2014 Youth of the Year of Greater Houston.

The Boys & Girls Clubs honored McCallister for promoting service to the club, community and family; academic success; strong moral character; life goals; and poise and public speaking ability.

"I'm very pumped up for the opportunity," said McCallister, who has participated in the club since he was 11. "I'm so glad the Boys & Girls Clubs selected me to be Youth of the Year. Words can't explain how proud I am that they see me as having the capability to be someone."

McCallister was pre-

sented the award April 10th at the YET, which is funded by Precinct One and the National Football League Charities, and operated by the Boys & Girls Clubs. Houston Texans quarterback Case Keenum recognized McCallister at the presentation.

McCallister now works as an intern with the Fifth Ward Enrichment Program.

"He comes to help smaller kids with their homework," said John Robinson II, director of the Boys & Girls Club at the YET. "He helps with the nutrition class.



Texans quarterback Case Keenum, left, and Gary McCallister, the Boys & Girls Clubs' Youth of the Year, meet the press.

He deserves that award." compete for regional recognition. Five regional winners each receive a \$10,000 scholarship and compete nationally.

The National Youth of the Year receives up to an additional \$50,000 scholarship and is installed by President Obama. Those winners participate in state competitions, where the winners each receive a \$1,000 scholarship and

Precinct One and health officials collected household hazardous materials

Precinct One celebrated Harris County residents also Earth Day on April 26th by can use the permanent disposal facility at 6900 Hahl Road near Household Hazardous Waste U.S. 290 and Gessner in Houston. Collection for unincorporated residents.

For the HazMobile, the waste is collected on a first-come, first-served basis until the mobile unit is full. Residents must have the waste in original containers that do not exceed 5 gallons. Items accepted are fertilizers, pesticides, paint-related materials, household cleaners, fuels, antifreeze, pool chemicals, glues and solvents, used motor oil and filters, batteries and thermometers.

The next event is planned for Oct. 24th in the northeast Beltway 8 area. Unincorporated

gas cylinders, smoke detectors, washers, dryers, refrigerators, freezers and air conditioners. For more information, call 281-560-6200 or visit www.CleanWaterways.org.



Workers collect hazardous materials from a vehicle on April 26th.

Means taught 3 generations of swimmers

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supervisor for the Houston Parks and Recreation Department's swimming pools.

In 1992, Means and Harris County Commissioner El Franco Lee started HCAP to teach youth how to swim. Means also coaches HCAP's competitive team, the Mighty Dolphins.

"Because of the drowning elements in the Gulf area, we found that a lot of minorities need swimming lessons more than anybody else," Means said. "And that was one of the

motivating factors for commissioner and me to start this program."

HCAP, which serves more than 2,000 youth annually, has produced nationally ranked swimmers and Olympic trials participants. Many swimmers have earned college scholarships in both academics and swimming.

"I have kids now who I'm coaching that I have also coached their grandparents, believe it or not," Means said. "I also taught their parents."



Wheatley High School's Structural Learning and Living students play musical chairs at Finnigan Park during a festive-field day to thank the youth for their volunteer work at the park. Finnigan is one of the sites that the 15-student class visits for community-based vocation instructions. The class teaches the students how to work so they can find jobs. At Finnigan, they clean windows, sweep and vacuum.

Precinct One construction projects

Fitness Court

An outdoor fitness court with a canopy is being designed along the walking trail on South McGregor Way near Oakcrest Drive. The concrete pad will feature exercise equip-

ment and a water fountain.

T.C. Jester extension

Construction to extend T.C. Jester Boulevard for 1.25 miles from Spears Road to FM 1960 is expected to start in the last quarter of the year. The

work involves a four-lane, divided, concrete road with a traffic signal.

Lockwood improvements

Workers are expected to start a construction project in the last

quarter of this year to improve Lockwood Drive from North Lake Houston Parkway to the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. The 2-mile project calls for a four-lane, divided, concrete road with a traffic signal.

El Franco Lee, Commissioner

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Precinct One Parks' Reservations

All reservations are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please read the park rules and regulations for reserving pavilions and community buildings prior to making reservations. This information can be found on our website at hcp1.net/parkreservations.

Refer to the following schedule when making 2014 reservations:

Reservations for the months:	Reservations will be accepted on or after:
July 2014 - Sept. 2014	8 a.m. Monday, March 10, 2014
Oct. 2014 - Dec. 2014	8 a.m. Monday, May 12, 2014

For southside reservations, call **713-440-1587**. To reserve Deussen Park and Jordan Community Center, call **281-591-6951**.

PRECINCT ONE SITES and PHONE NUMBERS

REGIONAL OFFICES

El Rio Service Center	713.991.6881
Downtown Office	713.755.6111
El Camino Office Annex	713.741.1096
Kashmere Office "Annex 36"	713.675.0004
Leland Office "Annex 31"	713.697.1104
Neartown Office "Annex 1"	713.755.9300
Hardy Service Center	281.820.5151

COMMUNITY CENTERS

Christia Adair Community Center	713.991.6881
Tom Bass Community Center	713-733.3717
Challenger Seven Learning Center	281.332.5157
Deussen Seniors Center	281.454.4108
EFL Community Center	281.464.9708
Finnigan Community Center	713.678.7385
Hardy Seniors Center	281.260.6772
Barbara Jordan Community Center	281.591.6951
Kashmere Office "Annex 36"	713-675.0004
Lincoln Park Community Center	281.445.1617
YET Center @ Finnigan Park	713.676.0519

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Aquatics Program	713.748.7333
Discovery Camp Program	281.332.5157
Northeast Adolescent Program	713.673.1655
Seniors Program	713-733.3717
Street Olympics Summer Games	713.741.0851

www.HCP1.net

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

- 3D virtual tours of park pavilions
- Online reservation system for park facilities
- News stories and photos from recent Precinct events
- Translation button provides more than 50 language options
- New high-definition photos of each park
- Fully compatible with mobile devices

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