

Williamson County Commissioner Terry Cook



NEWSLETTER
June 2023 Volume 7 Issue 6

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In Commissioners Court



The Message

Ahhhhh, Summer on my patio



Ya know all those posts on NextDoor of “What kind of snake is this” and you look at some distant, fuzzy image of a snake? Well, my husband and I had one of those moments on our patio where I have lots of flower pots to add punch to the landscape. I’m out often at dusk in the cooler weather watering and fending off the mosquitos. We were dining al fresco one evening before the heat dome, and I noticed something strange as I sat facing some of the pots. I told my husband, whose back was to the pots not to get up but slowly turn around and look. Lo and be-

hold, we had company – albeit, dead company, but who knew?

What looked like to be a very long snake was going down into my recirculating water feature. I called my nextdoor neighbor, Wayne – no relation to my Wayne and asked him over – he’ll put his hand on anything. Sure enough, he grabbed that snake and dropped it down on the patio declaring that I had a dead snake. There’s a story here. Maybe 3 weeks prior, Wayne’s wife had run over the tail of a snake with their pickup in her driveway, and the snake disappeared but left a lot of body fluids behind. I did consider the likelihood of it running into one of our garages, but soon forgot about it. Indeed, this snake’s tail was crushed and lack of fluids probably sent it to the water feature. I’m seeking a little more sunlight in watering now and I declare this to be a rat snake – one of the good guys!!



Update on Hairy Man Road

While it seems like light-years ago, the trees along Hairy Man have thrived and the filtered, dapple shade is back on that wonderful, tiny-bit of country driving near to home for many of us - and I will add, better than ever. A little bit of shoulder, much better drainage, and absence of trees tempted by gravity to drop. Here's an album from a drive:



Brushy Creek Bridge Ribbon Cutting

June 27, 2023

At Last – almost there. This picture is a “nearly-done” shot from a drone.

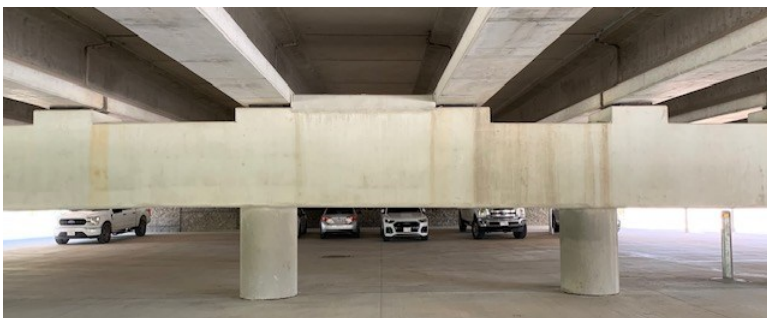
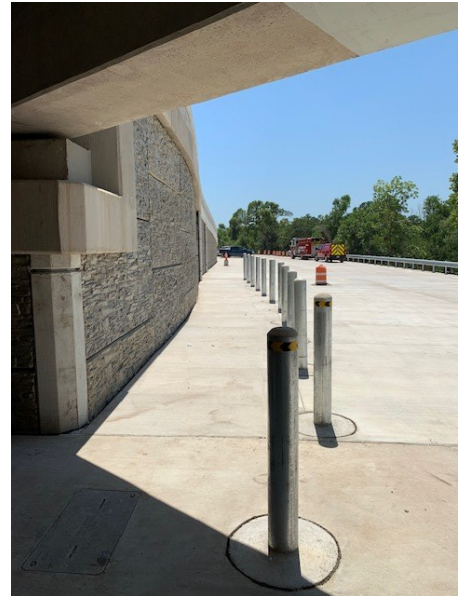


Lanes and lights fully functional now. Parking under the bridge for vehicles is not yet striped so it's not open. We held the ribbon cutting celebration UNDER the bridge in the parking lot – 20 degrees cooler in that shade at 3PM on June 27.



Valerie Covey, Commissioner for Pct 3, officiated as it's now in her district. DiNucci Constructors are the construction contractors. There's a lot of water lines (Round Rock, Brushy Creek MUD and Fern Bluff MUD) & communication lines running under this bridge structure. If walking the Brushy Creek Trail coming from Round Rock, you walk right thru the parking lot instead of thru traffic! We stepped out into the heat and light for the actual ribbon cutting. Joining us were members from DiNucci, HNTB staff, members of the Brushy Creek MUD Board: Michael Tucker, Kim Filiatrault and Ken Reifschlager as well as Shean Dalton, the MUD's general manager. We all dashed into shade as soon as that ribbon was severed for ice cream! This was done with 2013 Road Bond money.





GEORGETOWN VFW
4TH OF JULY
CELEBRATION & VENDOR MARKET

Indoor Vendor Market Noon-7pm
Fireworks 9:30pm

Free Burgers & Hotdogs, Live Music, and FIREWORKS

VFW Post 8587, 1000 N College St. Georgetown, TX 78626

Texasshoppersmarket.com/georgetown4thofjuly



MICAH MARCOS



STEPH CASH BAND

4th^{of} July celebration

FREE ENTRY TUESDAY, 4TH OF JULY 5 TO 9:30 PM

LIVE MUSIC, KIDS' ACTIVITIES, FOOD TRUCKS + FIREWORKS
BROUSHY CREEK AMPHITHEATER, HUTTO

PRESENTED BY **HETTO** HuttoTix.com/events



EL TULE



JACKIE VENSON

4th of July in Taylor

9 AM 4TH OF JULY PARADE
7TH & DAVIS TO MURPHY PARK
VIEW ROUTE AT FACEBOOK.COM/GRAHAMDLUHN
10 AM ICE CREAM SOCIAL
AMERICAN LEGION HALL

6:30 PM RECOGNITION CEREMONY
MURPHY PARK PAVILION

7 PM LIVE MUSIC:
THE DERAILERS
MURPHY PARK PAVILION



SUNSET FIREWORKS
MURPHY PARK DUCK POND

ALL DAY AT MURPHY PARK
FOOD COURT, COLD DRINKS
TENNIS COURTS & AQUATIC CENTER OPEN UNTIL DUSK
Graham D. Luhn, Post 39
Taylor, TX 76574 - Facebook.com/GrahamDLuhn

Sponsored by:



JULY 3

**6-10PM
LH | TX**

INDEPENDENCE DAY SPECIAL

Main St (Loop 32)

P \$20

NOBLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

RAND STAGE

WATER REFILL STATION

MEDICAL

RESTROOMS

FOOD TRUCKS

CONTEST TEXTS

SNOWBALL FIGHT

No Cooles or Alcohol Allowed at Festival

LIBERTY HILL TEXAS

NO PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ACROSS SH-29

SH-29

P \$20

LI LITTLE ROCK MIDDLE SCHOOL

PS \$20

FIREWORKS SHOOT ZONE NO ENTRY

5pm Parking Lots Open

6:45pm Festival Gates Open

6-7pm Elite Townley

7:05pm Ms. Liberty Pageant

7:15pm Hot Dog Eating Contest

7:30pm Contest Award Presentation

7:45pm Snowball Fight

8-9:45pm Shinyties

9:45pm Fireworks

PARKING

- Liberty Hill MS - Grass | 101 SH SH-29 S (cash only) | General Parking
- Liberty Hill MS - Paved | 1022E SH-29 S (cash only) | General Parking
- Noble ES | 101 SH SH-32 Loop S (cash only) | General Parking
- SH-29 | Field Access From 29 S (cash only) | Premium Parking

FOOD VENDORS

- Country Creamery
- Coopers Maine Lobster
- Dominici's
- Elliott's Egg Rolls
- Fried Green Beans
- Hill Country Cheese Pops
- Hill Country Chicken Korma
- Kelly's Kitchen
- Louisiana Fried Chicken
- Monte's Shawarma
- K.O. Barbecue
- Marché Marché Waffles & More
- Poppin Around Texas
- Rickie's R's Concessions
- Shilo's Big Momz
- Texas Bayou Bites
- Texas Two Kitchens
- Tussock Country Farm
- Tropical Island
- Wagyu on Wheels
- Watson Cook Company
- Wild West Friends

KID ZONE

- Snowball Fight
- Bugout Traps
- Pirate Ship
- Rock Wall
- Swing Hole
- 9 ft Obstacle
- 7 ft Obstacle
- Twister
- Trampoline
- Glow Obby Bounce House
- Big Kahuna Slide

CONTESTS

- Hot Dog Eating
- Homesmade Apple Pie
- Ms. Liberty Pageant
- Watermelon Seed Spitting

EXPERIENCE.LH.TX.COM

July 4th

Celebration



CEDR PARK
50
PARKS & RECREATION

7.4.2023

Tuesday, 5-11:30 p.m.

cedarparktexas.gov/july4

Milburn Park

1901 Sun Chase Blvd.

- ★ Live music - SUEDE
- ★ Carnival rides (FREE)
- ★ Inflatables (FREE)
- ★ Food trucks
- ★ Fireworks begin at 9:30 p.m.
- ★ Movie in the Park

The Incredibles to play after fireworks show.



THANK YOU 2023 SPONSORS!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR TITLE SPONSOR:



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Ascension



W-E-B



MAVERICK



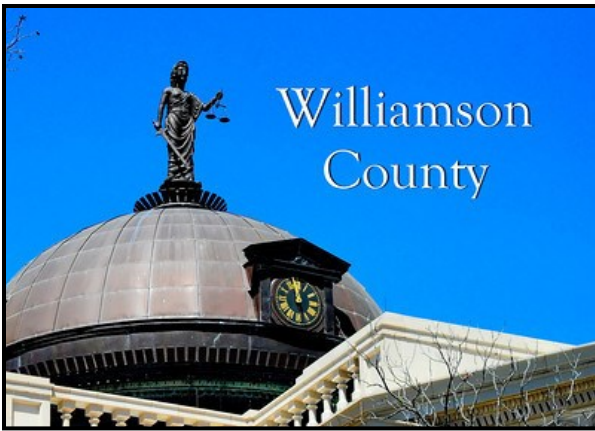
MUTTS



LeafFilter
Water Management



CHIROPRACTIC



In Commissioners Court

Celebrating 25 years at the Helm as County Clerk

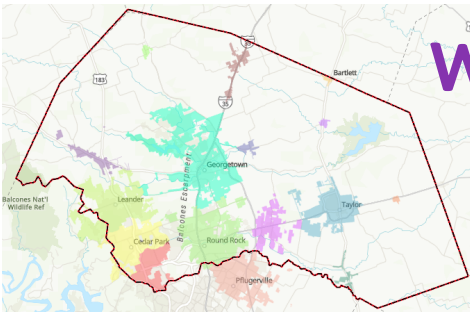
Nancy Rister

Staff and cohorts in the Justice Center attempted to plan a clandestine celebration of Nancy's 25 years as Williamson County's County Clerk – but nothing gets by Nancy. But she willingly showed up beaming her smile. Flanked on both sides by Deputy County Clerks Cynthia Zuck on the left and Marlen Rosetti on right.



Great turnout and delicious cakes!! My attempt to avoid sugar dissolved to temptation, and I don't regret it.

25 years, think of the changes which have occurred in this office: paper to imaging and in-person service to online distributions (although in-person requests still occur). This is the office that is responsible for preserving real estate plats and transactions, birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, doing-business-as registrations, and annual finance reports for all elected officials and MORE. Her office operations are on two floors of the justice center and she needs more space. Each year she contracts for archival preservation work for these documents paid for by a small fee we all pay to register our necessary documents with her. You'd better believe she keeps a eye on the legislature for impacts on her operations. In addition, she is a member of the 5-member Elections Committee. Thank you, Nancy, for all you do.



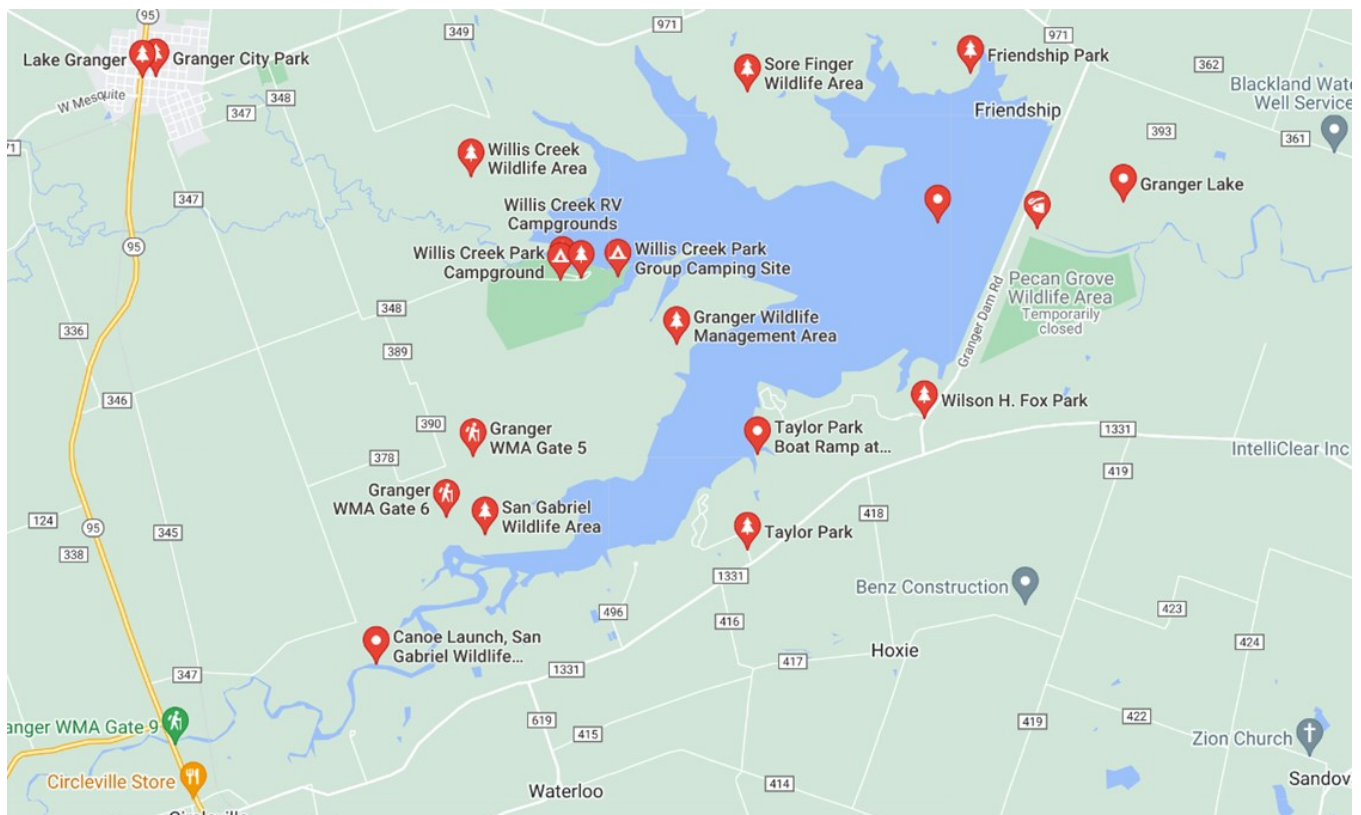
Where is Commissioner Cook?

Granger Lake

I was invited to come out to Granger Lake and visit with the Williamson County Amateur Radio Club as they participated in the national field day – always the last weekend of June. I believe it was 2018 when I went to Leander to see what goes on during a National Field Day the first time. I'd never been to Granger Lake, however, have wanted to – what a great excuse – even though it was over 100 degrees.

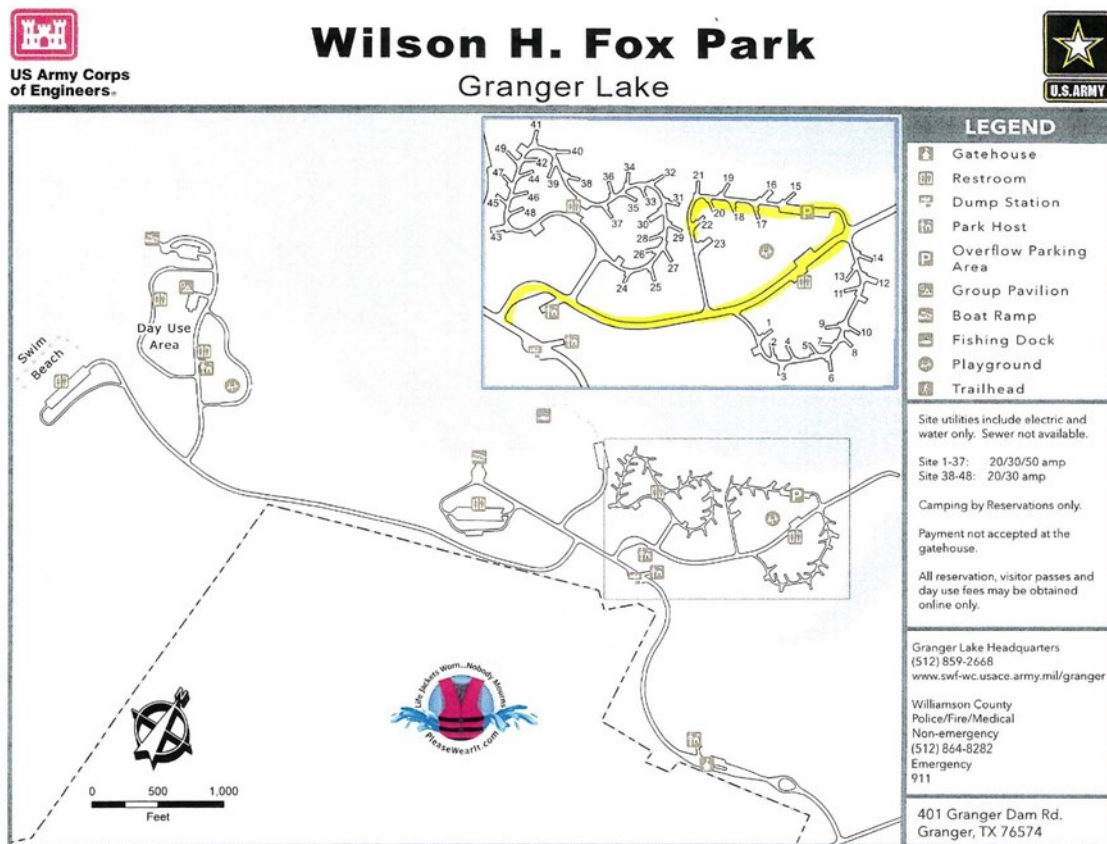
First let's look at the recreation areas of Granger Lake – operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. What in the world are they doing operating a park at a lake, you might ask. This is the group who handled creating Granger Lake by building the dam on the San Gabriel River back in 1972 to February of 1980. It's an earthfill dam about 115 feet above streambed and 555 feet above mean sea level. The resulting lake is not very deep – we're in flat country here – but was probably created to better control flooding of the farmland and the resultant soil erosion like what was done in putting the series of dams in our Water Improvement Districts (started out as one). There are campgrounds with electricity, boating ramps and at least one swim area and bathhouse.

Our parks director, Russell Fishbeck, has been in some talks with the Corps about leasing or purchasing some of the park areas around the lake as the Corps is not spending much on maintenance and we have no county parks out east. You'll see that money is proposed for this endeavor in our 2023 Park bond package should we (the court) decide to go forward with a bond election. Here's a look at the overall layout of the area:



Coming up from Taylor area on SH 95, just hang a right onto SH 1331. I will tell you the signage about the Granger Lake area is not abundant nor easily seen if you're driving. I needed to get to the Wilson H Fox Park. I didn't not see a sign for it but did see a sign with an arrow for Granger Dam Road and off I went.

Stopped at the Ranger entry station and got a more detailed map of the immediate area:



Here are pics from the Wilson Fox Park area:



This particular boat owner chose to selfishly leave his truck in place at the boat ramp and go boating with music blasting in a quiet, bucolic setting (where are the rangers when you need them?)



Not exactly tree country – bring your own shade, a la the sea shore.



National Field Day for Amateur Radio Operators



Williamson County has a very active amateur radio club. It is no longer a need to know morse code to get an amateur license – there are many levels at which you can pass a test and become licensed – and spend your money on equipment. Each year on the last weekend of June, there is an Amateur Radio Operator Field Day – for a full 24-hours as each operator competes to make contact with others across the nation at their licensed level. You can just imagine how congested the air-waves are at the different bands; you trying to get thru with 100 other operators at the same time.

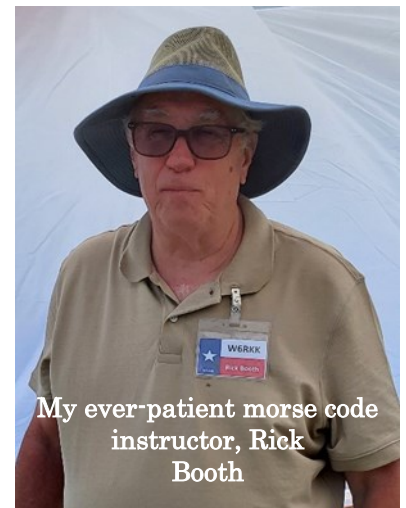
Well, that Saturday was hot, Hot, HOT. The operators had reserved campsites near each other and erected necessary antennae. A tent was even air conditioned. One operator had an RV that had solar panels, battery packs and a composting toilet – these guys are serious. I first spent time with the lone morse code operator and he taught me some letters and especially about the rhythm of the dots and dashes where experienced operators know the words without parsing each letter. You're training you ears in this arena. I even got some of the rhythms going. Having to learn Morse code in the past has been a barrier for many wanting to be an amateur radio operator – now there's levels of digital means to become licensed.



I then moved

on to the one air-conditioned tent – wow, spent some time there. Solar panels supplied power for the equipment. Coolers and large containers of water were in abundance. There was some shade at the campsites and a breeze to ward off mosquitos.

Morse
Code
Setup





Round Rock Pride Fest and the Austin Babbist Women

Pre-114 degree days, but in plenty of heat, Round Rock celebrated in acceptance, love and laughter as we were entertained with a side-busting program by the Austin Babbist (sp) Women – first time I’d seen them. What a hoot! First formed in 1986, this group of men have entertained Central Texas and others as a comedy troupe and “singing” force. They raise money for HIV/

AIDs, breast cancer research and more. This is a show of force for which you had better gone to the restroom ahead of their production as the laughter and delight doesn’t stop. I found myself worrying about women of a certain age doing all this “singing” and dancing in the heat as they were so convincing in dress and actions and I will add, *GREAT HAIR*. Fortunately for us in the large crowd, the city had erected a big canopy for us to be under as we watched the action on the stage.



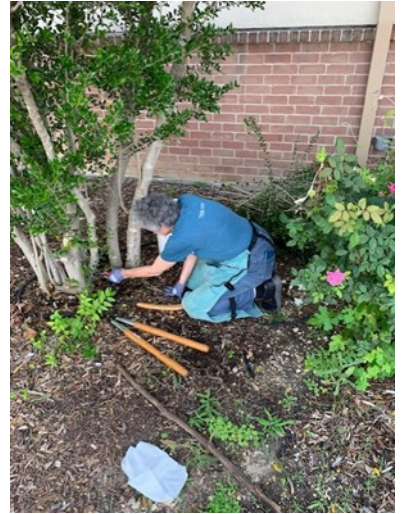
WSB Opens in Round Rock

Over 25 years ago, 3 engineers, probably over some form of brew, decided to join forces to create an innovative engineering firm. Brett Weiss, Pete Willenbring, and Ron Bray named the new company WSB (no idea where the “S” is derived). This firm specializes in engineering, community planning, environmental, and construction services. With 16 offices and over 700 team members, we’re happy for them to open their newest office in Round Rock, near the corner of La Frontera Boulevard and W. Louis Henna Boulevard. Steve Lindsey and I had the honor of cutting the ribbon.

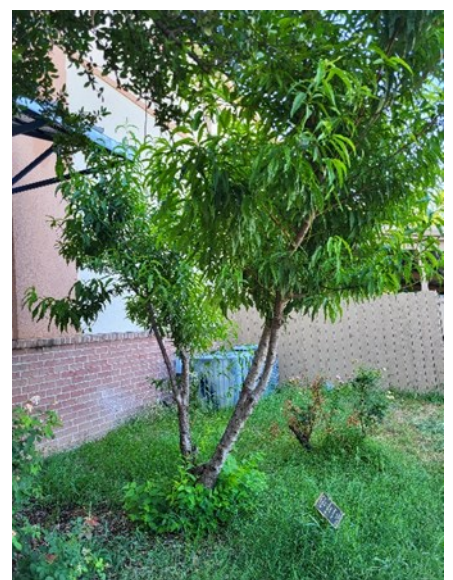
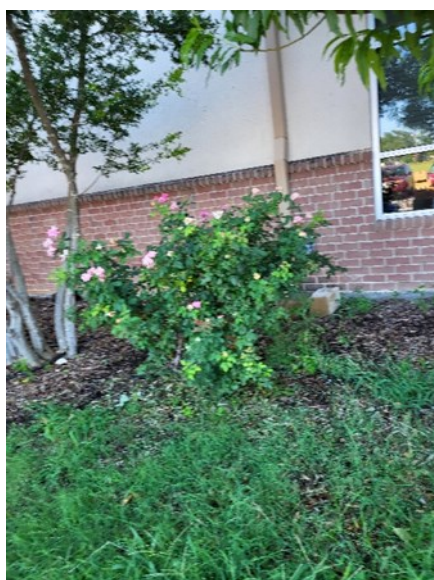
United Way's Day of Sharing

Each year, our office joins in with many companies to do good somewhere in the county. On June 2, Garry and I joined in with others to work on landscaping and the community garden at the Round Rock Area Sharing Center. I, with my sharpened and oiled felco pruners, saw and loppers headed straight to the westside trees and roses; Garry joined the team working in the community garden. From 10 to 12:30, we worked mightily to clean up these areas – I in the shade of the trees (good choice), Garry in full sun in the garden (but with a hat). I tried a hat but hats and trees don't work well together.

I took the woody plants from this state:



To become this, taken on June 28 – suckers so want to be seen:





In The News

Feeding growth – one expensive omnivore

[Williamson Commissioner Cook: Feeding growth – one expensive omnivore \(statesman.com\)](http://statesman.com)

The march towards a population topping 1 million by 2040 continues for Williamson County. Companies and ventures desirous of a presence in our county are numerous, and the draw for families to live here and commute to local jobs remains strong.

There are now over 74,000 single-family homes outside of municipalities. This means they do not have city services and protections, such as abundant law enforcement, noise and nuisance abatement ordinances, libraries, local ballfields, access to water and wastewater treatment facilities (unless contracted through a local municipality) and bulk trash pickup days.

Many of those county neighborhoods do not feel nor look rural, and homes are purchased without realizing that the mailing address may not be an indicator of whether that neighborhood is within the boundaries of a city. We now have more residents in the county than in our largest city, Round Rock. The residents in our unincorporated areas request city services; after all, they pay taxes, but those services do not exist for them. Those who live in a city pay both county and city taxes. For that, they get both worlds.

Growth also leads to packed roads. Our 2023 Williamson County Citizens Bond Committee selected by the Commissioners Court to discuss future needs for county roads and parks, just completed its tour through the precincts. They conducted public meetings and voted on proposed projects they analyzed as the most needed improvements and additions. They will be bringing proposed road projects cresting \$1 billion in costs to the Commissioners Court for adoption, modification or rejection. Most of the projects have city/town shared costs.

As for parks, the Bond Committee will be recommending almost \$80 million in improvements and expansions, many of which are also in cities, and in one case the YMCA, as it operates our Twin Lakes Park, bringing money to the table.

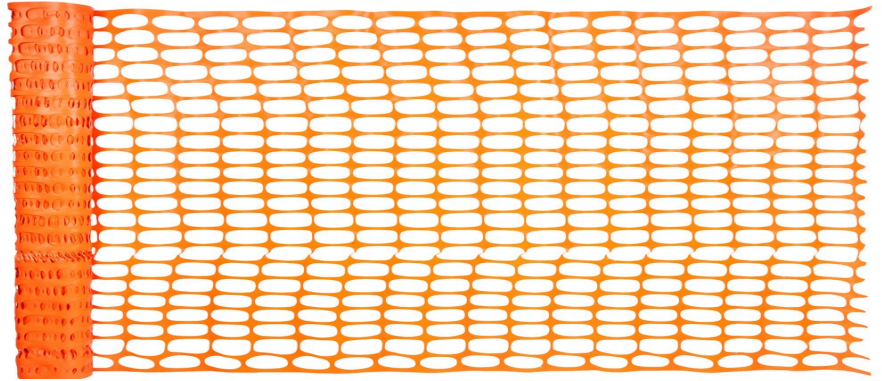
Why do we need these roads and park funds? The number of vehicles registered in Williamson County has increased 41.3% over the past 12 years to around 530,000 this year. In addition, we have those coming into the county to work (in excess of those leaving the county to work) and those passing through. Populations are exploding in several of the cities, with Hutto leading the pack with a projected change of 32.89% just since 2020. While the Georgetown population has increased the most in Wilco in the past two years, it is in second place in the county for percentage of growth at 29.09%.

Our parks and trails are loved to death. A great deal of proposed additions is for the completion of more shared-use paths connecting trails to trails, cities to parks and parks to trails. A most interesting proposal is to negotiate with the Army Corps of Engineers to assume responsibility for the parks (some or all) around Granger Lake. They are suffering from neglect and could open additional camping and water sports capacity for residents.

Growth requires increased capacity for water and wastewater treatment plants. We do not have a river with sizeable flow to help disperse effluent from wastewater treatment plants but rely on our small creeks such as Brushy Creek and the San Gabriel, so there are major challenges for wastewater plants in times of low rainfall. Every community with water and wastewater plants is under pressure to expand. Most communities are searching for additional fresh water sources, as is much of Texas.

Population growth puts pressure on our criminal justice system: space, employees, judges, courtrooms, staff, prosecutors and lawyers in general. Wilco sees continued pressure for medical services and hospital space. Have you tried to get an appointment with a specialist in the past six months? It also leads to increased numbers of those unhoused from evictions, loss of employment, and inability to afford the increasing rents or home prices.

Government entities are challenged to meet the increasing needs and challenges of this swelling number of residents and can't rely on past experience. We're facing a brand new, hot, dry future. We sure need more ability to manage what we have at the local level, not less, as the Legislature continues its assault on our abilities to govern.



Great Oaks Bridge at Brushy Creek Rd.– The new bridge is complete!!! Ribbon cutting has already taken place. Some clean up work around the edges of the intersection still being done, but the bridge and the approaches to it are ready for you to travel across!

Pond Springs Road Area Drainage Improvements– Comments on the 90% design package have been sent to Austin Water for their review. A meeting in July is being planned to discuss any lingering issues after the review. The cost of the project is now at \$2.65M from a high of \$3.2M. Construction start looks like Spring 2024 and last about 90 days... depending upon weather delays, of course.

I-35 at US 79- There are weekly updates from TxDOT that you can sign up for [HERE](#).

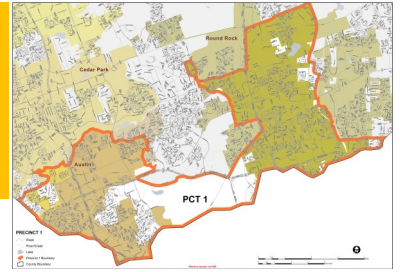
620 at Railroad/Chisholm Trail (TxDOT with primary contractor Bridges and Roads LLC)– *Lots of switched traffic around this project, so please be aware of the surroundings.* The west bridge abutment and retaining wall for the Chisholm Trail Overpass has been completed. Work continues on the center median, east of Deep Wood Dr., as does the retaining walls on the east and west sides of the Lake Creek Drive Overpass. Go [HERE](#) to learn more. This is a \$27.5M TxDOT project and according to them, substantial completion is Fall 2023. I really hope that road construction crews are being safe in this heat.

183 North Project (a CTRMA project) - The 183 North Mobility Project will include the construction of two express lanes in each direction and the addition of a general-purpose lane where needed to bring the number of non-tolled lanes to four in each direction along a 9-mile stretch of US 183 between SH 45 North and MoPac. Driveway reconstruction along US 183 between SH 45 North and MoPac is continuing to make progress. You may notice that business driveway entrances along the frontage roads on US 183 northbound, southbound, and MoPac southbound are being reconstructed to rehabilitate existing sidewalks and accommodate the new sidewalks that are included in the 183 North Mobility Project. When the project is complete sidewalks will be ADA-compliant and continuous along the 183 North corridor and will be widened to up to 5-feet-wide. Anticipated completion is sometime during 2026.

Learn more: [183 North Mobility Project](#) Sign up for updates [HERE](#).

To view previous meeting minutes and presentations for the proposed Road Bond projects and some park projects, go [HERE](#) for more information.

The Mission, Vision, and Value Statements of the Williamson County Commissioner Precinct 1 Office



MISSION

Providing strong, thoughtful, and collaborative leadership on the Williamson County Commissioners Court through a time of great change and growth in our county

VISION

Upholding a local governmental entity that is centered around best-practices throughout the organization and focused on timely and respectful responses to our citizenry

VALUES

The guiding principles of the Williamson County Commissioner Precinct 1 Office continue to be respect, reliability, and dedication to Precinct 1 constituents, while being open to ideas for positioning Williamson County for the future

CONTACT US!

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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT: Garry Brown
512-244-8615, garry.brown@wilco.org

SEE US ONLINE!!!

Williamson County's Website! - www.wilco.org

Our office's web site— Terry Cook, Commissioner Pct 1

Non-Emergency Phone Numbers

Austin Fire Department
512-974-0130

County Judge
512-943-1550

Cedar Park Fire Department (ESD 11)
512-401-5220

Jollyville Fire Department (ESD 1)
512-258-1038

Round Rock Fire Department (ESD 9)
512-218-5590

Williamson Central Appraisal District
512-930-3787

Williamson County Landfill
512-759-8881

Williamson County Regional Animal Shelter
512-943-3322

Williamson County Sheriff's Office
512-864-8282

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about what's happening
in Williamson County?

Sign up for the WIL-
CO County Line E-
newsletter! Click [here](#) to
sign up!

Commissioner Cook
keeps meeting with many
MUD Boards and HOAs.
To invite her to your meet-
ing, contact Doris at doris.sanchez@wilco.org or
512-244-8610