Volume 8, Issue 5

September/October 2011

COLLIN COUNTY

Collin County Connection

"YOUR SOURCE FOR EMPLOYEE INFORMATION"

Back in business

Customers in the District Clerk's Civil Section conduct a little business, after a quick move into the new courthouse expansion. There's still work to be done but the Law Library, DA and Clerks didn't close a day during the move to their new digs.

Clerk's online brand registration makes an innovative mark in Texas

For the first time in Texas history, livestock owners and agents are able to register or renew their livestock marks, brands and tattoos using a new online application and -- for now -- only in Collin County.

Texas is the only state to allow this kind of registration at the county level, and requires all brands to be renewed every 10 years. The expiration date for all marks and brands in Texas was Aug. 31, 2011, regardless of when it was last registered. Collin County currently has approximately 350 different marks, brands and tattoos registered locally.

The old process was time consuming and labor intensive, and involved the owner and Clerk searching the brand book to ensure a brand was not already registered to another owner. This process included having the livestock owner drawing his or her brand in two different places in the brand book, once on a two-part registration card and again on the application.

The brand book had to be taken apart so the clerk could type an index of the brand in one part of the book and type the livestock owner's information next to the brand which was drawn by the owner in both places. Did we mention the brand book weighs about 12-15 pounds? This is the same process that has been in use since the 1860's. The only change that has taken place was the use of a typewriter instead of handwriting the information in the book.

Once the process was completed, the brand book was put back together and passed on to the next clerk waiting to assist another customer. The information entered on the two part card was sent to the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) by mail.

The entire process took approximately 40 minutes to register one mark, brand or tattoo. Some of the owners have multiple marks and brands, so with 350 to register or renew, there was a very high need to find a more efficient process.

In order to make the upcoming registration and renewal procedures more effi-

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cient, Stacey contacted the TSCRA to ask their opinion on automating the application. They not only approved of the idea, but were also excited about taking the plan statewide.

Working with our Information Technology department, Stacey's staff was able to publish the county's brand book online in June, a first for any county in Texas, in the first step to automate the entire registration-renewal process.

Special thanks, by the way, go out to **Larry CERNOSEK** and **Mike MALAK** who worked directly with Office Coordinator **Tonya KELLOGG** to design, create and implement this innovative program.

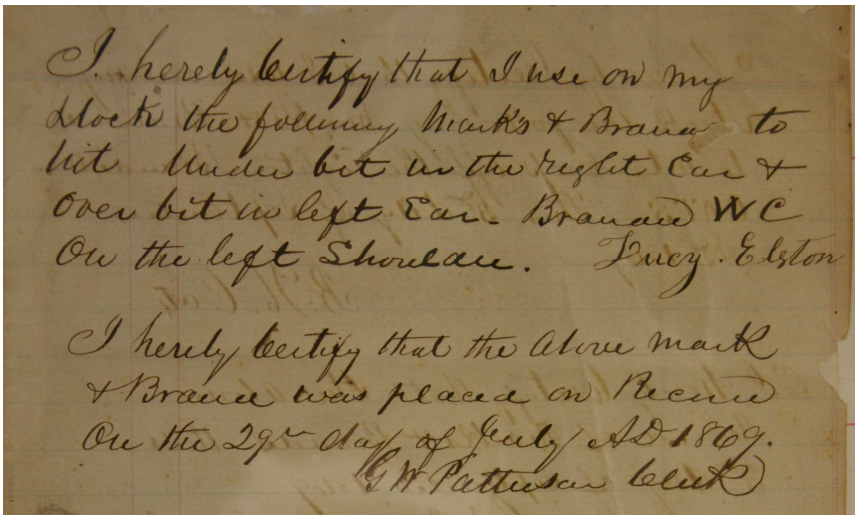
The application can now be completed online from the comfort of the owner's own home or they can visit the County Clerk's McKinney office where the clerks can assist them if needed.

When renewing a registration, if payment is made with a credit or debit card, they don't even have to come into the office. Once the transaction is completed, they are emailed their brand certification. That 40-minute process now takes about five minutes.

By utilizing current technology, and in-house resources, the County Clerk has developed a program that not only delivers innovation, it also embraces a "going green" ideology by reducing paperwork, ink and other consumables at no cost to Collin County's taxpayers.

A little more history

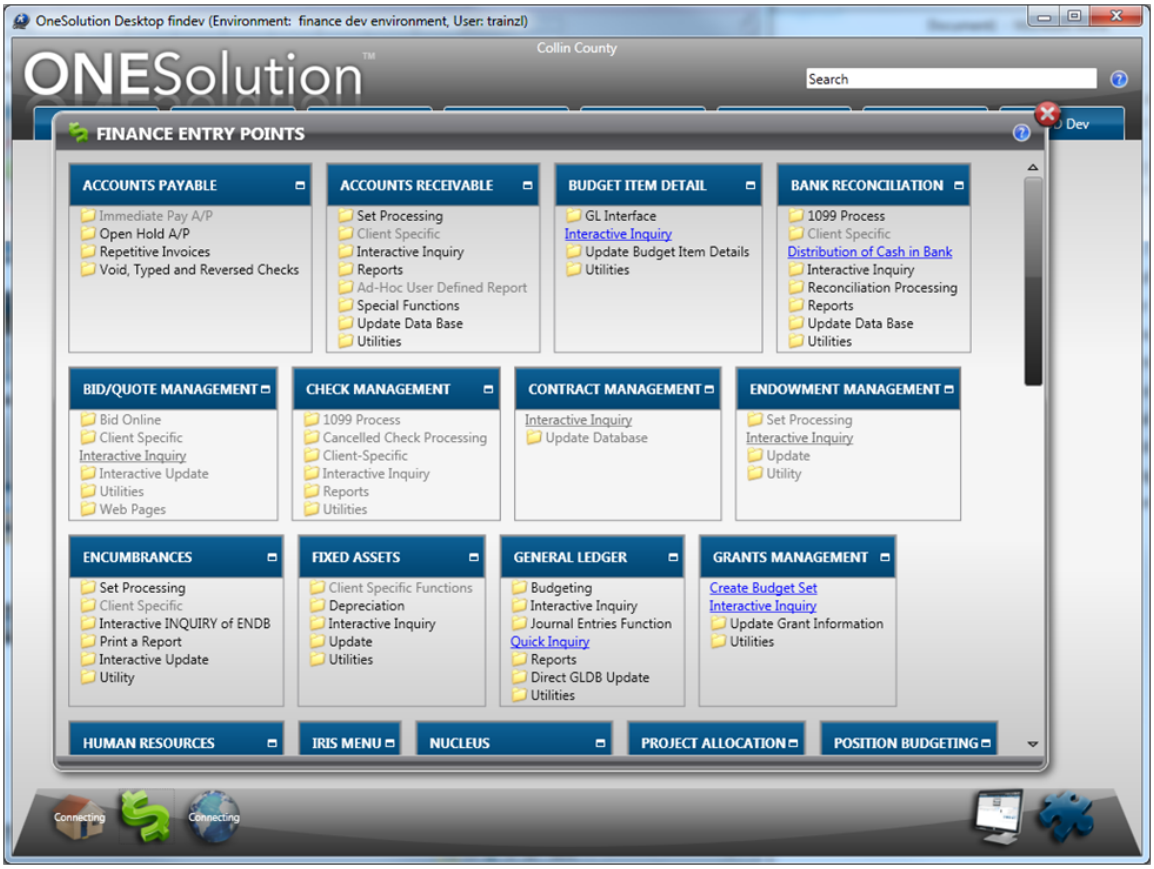
Plano attorney **David B. McCALL** was the first of **Stacey KEMP's** customers to register a brand online. Right, the old brand ledger from the 19th century. Below, an 1869 registration hand-written into a ledger. For more on branding, check out **Page 7**. We've got a challenge for you.



I. herely Certify that I use on my Stock the following Marks & Brand to wit Under bit in the right Ear & Over bit in left Ear. Brand WC On the left Shoulder. Lucy. Elston

I hereby Certify that the Above mark & Brand was placed on Record On the 29th day of July AD 1869. G.W. Pattison Clerk

Upgrade brings a different look to *ONESolution*



In the last edition of the Collin County Connection, the Information Technology department announced the start of the *SunGard ONESolution* project and showcased a bit of the look and feel of the new application.

In keeping with the fast pace of change common in the technology world today, the look and feel of the application has taken on yet another look after the successful completion of an upgrade to the latest version of the software. The mid-implementation upgrade was completed in August and continues to bring additional features to the county.

Among some of the enhanced functions are new security features which will help to ensure the safety of our financial records, updates to the conversion programs used to load selected HTE data to the new system and a new "point and click" menu to access common financial transactions (refer to the screen shot above).

These screens will be tailored to each employee based upon their role based security settings. August also saw the start of interface development by the vendor team as they work to bring together existing systems and automate data feeds to the financial application. In the coming months we will begin to test the flow of data from systems such as Odyssey into the new financial system.

— Greg ELLIOTT

Volunteers help train dozens of new 'attorneys'

In mid-August, Collin County Teen Court held its annual attorney training in the Commissioner's Court, with Judge **John PAYTON,** and local attorneys **Sheryl ADAMS** and **Michael PEREZ** volunteering to come and train a group of about 30 area teens.

These teens have been jurors for teen court at least twice and needed to attend attorney training in order to become Teen Court Attorneys, who take on the role of defense or prosecution before a volunteer judge in trying young offenders sent to the program. The judge is usually a volunteer attorney.

Our teen volunteers come from Plano, Lucas, Prosper, Frisco, Celina, McKinney and other surrounding cities.

She's a GEM now

Monica LOVE (right, center) received a Going-the-Extra-Mile (GEM) award from Collin County Fire Marshal **Michael SMITH** (left) and Dept. of Homeland Security Director **Kelley STONE** (right) in early August. In her 21- plus years with Collin County, this was the first time she has been recognized for her hard work. Her attitude and ability to adapt to change exceeds the definition for a GEM recipient. The Fire Marshal said he enjoyed Monica's surprise from the award and "catching her in a moment where she either didn't know what to say or couldn't say anything."

20 years

Tom WYLIE (left) received his 20-Year Service Pin in mid-September. Tom started his career with Collin County at the Sheriff's Office working in the jail. He has been with the Constable Pct. 3 office for over 10 years.

10 Years' service

Chad HUMPHREY received his 10-year service pin from Judge **Lance BAXTER** of County court at Law No. 3 on Sept. 16.

5 years' Service

Carmelita GOMEZ (right) recently received her five year pin from Precinct 1 Justice of the Peace **Paul RALEEH**. Carmel went to school in Princeton where she still lives with her two teen-aged boys and father. Carmel's smile can be seen at the court's front counter where the business of filing cases or paying tickets takes place. She also manages the Court's eviction docket. Judge Raleeh says Carmel is a great asset to his court and praised her work.

County Clerk's School supplies

The County Clerk's office staff raised $436 and collected a whole passel of school supplies for the approaching school year late this summer. The supplies were divided up and donated to Harper Elementary in Princeton, and Phyllis Ne-Smith Elementary in Community. Additionally, their bean jar at County Court at Law held 3,617 beans, for those guessing for a donation, and **Olivia YBARBO**, a County Court at Law Clerk, was the winner with the *closes*t guess. In the jar at the County Clerk's main office, there were 3,603 beans in which one of their local customers came to the closest guess. The clerk's staff wants to thank everyone who participated.

More than 50 years of Service to county

Five Auditor's Office employees celebrated 10 years of service in September, marking a half-century of service to the county in the last few months; from left: **Lisa NUNLEY**, **Randall RICE**, **Linda RIGGS**, County Auditor **Jeff MAY** (who joined the quintet for moral support), **Janet MAUNEY** and **Robert ARRUEJO**. Congratulations, folks.

Dive Team completes certification process

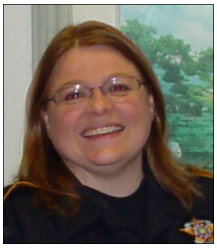
Members of the Collin County Sheriff's Office Dive Team recently completed the "Emergency Response Diving International" course and received their certification.

ERDI is the public safety diving agency responsible for the training of police, fire and other public safety organizations in search and rescue techniques. Receiving this certification is a major accomplishment and exemplifies the level of professionalism of the Dive Team.

Congratulations to Dive Team members Lt. **Scotty MORRISON**, Sgt. **Kyle NEVIL**, Deputy **Edward KENNEDY**, Deputy **Neil TOYE**, Deputy **Jason EVANS**, and Deputy **Bruce FERGUSON**. Pictured above is the SO's latest acquisition, a 19-foot Red Fin Enforcer watercraft acquired from Texas Parks & Wildlife. The CCSO has trained 18 Deputies as Marine Safety Enforcement Officers in partnership with Texas Parks & Wildlife and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve public safety on Lake Lavon.

Swearing In ...

Sheriff **Terry BOX** swore in Transfer Deputy **Rodney TACKETT** and Detention Sgt. **Melissa POLLARD** during a ceremony in his office.



20 Years' Service

Congratulations to Detention Officer **Kathy WILSON** (above, left) and Food Service Tech **Johnna WERNER** who were recently honored with a 20-Year Anniversary Reception in Staff Dining.

20 & 30 Years' Service

Congratulations to Lt. **Mark SANDERSON** (above, right) and Deputy **Mike WHITE** (above, left) who recently received a joint Anniversary Reception in their honor on Sept. 1. Lt. Sanderson celebrated 20 years of service; Deputy White celebrated 30 years of service. Sheriff Box thanked them for their loyal and dedicated service.

Promotion

Congratulations to Deputy **Kane KENNEDY** (right) who was promoted to Sergeant of Field Operations.

We're callin' you out on *callin' a brand*, podnahs

Since **Stacey KEMP's** folks now have all their brands online, we thought it might be interesting to test your knowledge of "callin' a brand." For greenhorns, reading a brand can be tricky, but there are a few guidelines that can help make the hieroglyphics of branding easier to read.

For starters, brands are composed of capital letters of the alphabet, numerals, pictures, and characters such as a slash **/**, circle **O**, half-circle , cross **+**, _bar, etc., with many twists and turns. There are a few generally accepted rules for reading brands:

Read from the left to the right as **ML** (M L).
Read from the top to the bottom as (bar m).
When the brand is enclosed, it is read from the outside to the inside as (circle S).

Still, not all cattle folk agree on every brand calling method, but here are some other standards:

If a letter or symbol is made backwards from its normal position, it's read as a "reverse F" or whatever other letter it might be.
A letter partially over on its face or back is said to be "tumbling."
If a letter lies horizontally on its face or back, it is called "lazy."
An upside down, backwards letter is sometimes called "crazy."

Letters with a curving flare at the top and rounded angles are called "running."
Adding a dash to the left and one to the right at the top, you have a "flying" letter.
Add legs and it becomes a "walking" letter.
Letters or symbols formed together are called "connected," except when one is below the other, then the lower symbol is said to be "swinging."
Triangles were frequently used in late 19th-century brands, and an open triangle was a "rafter."

Letters can be used singly, joined, or in combinations. They can be upright, XIT ; lying down or "lazy," (lazy S); connected (V B connected) or combined, (V B combined); reversed, (reverse B); or hanging (V hanging S).

Figures or numbers are used in the same way as the letters.
Picture brands are usually used alone, for example (ladder) or (rising sun).

Also, a few other symbols added to letters are commonly used:

Think you're ready to "call" a brand?

Here's a list of Collin County livestock brands registered here in the latter half of the 19th century. We'll start out easy, and work our way up to the harder ones. We'll publish answers In the next *Connection*. By the way, every brand here was registered in Collin County at one time.

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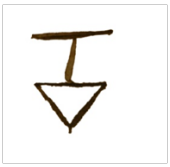
9. 
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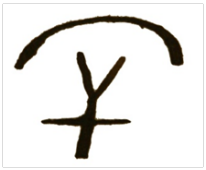
11. 
12.
13.
14.

Announcements/Classified

Believe in dreams, they do come true. Ours came dressed in blue. **Raylan Lee STARNES** was born Tuesday, July 12, 2011 at 6 p.m., in Allen. He weighed 8 pounds, 15 ounces and was 19 inches long. Proud parents are **Rowdy and Adri STARNES** (Collin County Court at Law).

SERVICES

SKATING RINK: Rock-N-Rollers, Collin County's Premier Roller Skating Rink. Birthday parties, church events, school outings. 972-736-3003, 110 Caldwell St., Princeton.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JLG Photography: We specialize in on-site photography of babies, high school seniors, family portraits, campaign photos and more! We also offer graphic design of cards, postcards and announcements. Contact Jessica Griffith at 903-520-1856 or through www.jlgphotographyonline.com. You can also check out our most recent work on Facebook!

WEIGHT LOSS: Lose Weight, melt inches and get healthier: Join the Body By Vi 90-Day Challenge. Can you commit for 90 days to the *Visalus Sciences* challenge and change your life? Visit ronaldjames.myvi.net, ronaldjames.bodybyvi.com, or call 507-726-3700 for more information. Contact Ron at 214-733-2575, or email ron602010@live.com.

WANTED: Running and non-running lawn mowers. Call 214-726-5780.

FOR SALE

TRUCK: 1995 Chevy ½-ton long wheel base truck. 350 motor with 221,000 miles, 4l60e transmission that was dealer installed about 2 years ago. Frame is bent and would fix with a good frame machine. The transmission cost the previous owner over $2000 when it was replaced. $2000 OBO call Steve 972-741-0168.

FURNITURE: TV entertainment center/armoire and 32" TV; two pieces (top and bottom); overall dimensions 77" wide x 74" tall, with 36" wide x 31" tall TV opening, $350. Baby Dresser, $100.

FURNITURE: Table with (4) chairs, $225; large (3) pillow sofa for $100; 51-inch rear projection Hitachi for $200 or best offer. If you don't buy it here, it will go in the garage sale in a couple of weeks. Call/Text for more information: (903) 436-2928.

THE COLLIN COUNTY *CONNECTION* is published six times a year for county employees by the Public Information Office, with a lot of technical assistance from the good people in Information Technology's GIS Department.

Please submit your articles, anniversaries, announcements, classified ads, good deeds and atta–boys (and girls) in plain text email to: publicrelations@collincountytx.gov.

The deadline to submit material for the November-December edition is Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2011.