



Commissioner Grady Prestage's
PRECINCT 2 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

January 2016



**January Is National
Mentoring Month!**

**Meet Missouri City's
New City Manager**



January 2016 marked the 15th annual National Mentoring Month (NMM), a campaign designed to expand quality mentoring opportunities and connect more of our community's young people with caring adults. NMM is led by Mentor: The National Mentoring Partnership and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, with support from the Highland Street Foundation. Each year since its inception, NMM has embraced consistent support of the U.S. President and members of Congress. Additional prominent person's who've participated in the campaign include: Maya Angelou, former President Bill Clinton, Clint Eastwood, Senator John McCain, Quincy Jones, General Colin L. Powell, Cal Ripken, Jr., Bill Russell and Usher.

Mentoring has been linked to improved social, academic and economic outlooks for young people, which aids in strengthening our community. In a recent national report called '*The Mentoring Effect*', young people who were at-risk for not completing high school but had a mentor were fifty-five percent more likely to be enrolled in college than those who did not have a mentor. The study also concluded that they were also 81% more likely to participate regularly in sports or extracurricular activities and 78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities.



After a lengthy eight-month national recruitment process coordinated by Strategic Government Resources, the Missouri City Council unanimously appointed veteran public administrator Anthony Snipes as the city's new City Manager. Mr. Snipes has over 20 years of experience managing municipal projects nationwide; finding success in strategic initiatives involving budgeting and performance management, public/private partnership and organizational development.

Prior to landing the role in Missouri City, Snipes worked as a Fund Development and Government Relations consultant in Austin, where he was also an Assistant City Manager. As Assistant City Manager in Austin, his primary areas of oversight included the Austin Convention Center, Fleet Services, Building Services, Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs, Management Services, Communications and Technology Management, Human Resources, and Labor Relations.

Mr. Snipes earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Sociology from Mercer University and a master's degree in Public Administration from Florida State University. Along with becoming the first African-American to serve in the post, he also becomes only the seventh chief administrative officer to serve Missouri City in the past 40 years. He will oversee 338 employees and a combined annual budget of more than \$105 million. Mr. Snipes officially started his new role on Dec. 1 and is in the process of relocating his wife and two children to Missouri City. He is succeeding former City Manager Edward Broussard who went on to accept an identical position in Tyler, Texas.

What is Texas Affordable Housing?

The Housing Tax Credit program, administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), strives to help Texans attain an improved quality of life through the development of better communities. The tax credit program is meant to boost the state's supply of quality, affordable housing. Having access to affordable housing can help reduce the use



To learn more about the role mentoring plays in our community and find volunteer opportunities please visit:
nationalmentoringmonth.org

Texas Open Carry Law Now in Effect!



As of January 1, 2016, licensed Texans are free to walk the streets, or travel the state, openly wearing their handguns in plain view in a shoulder or belt holster. This is the first time in more than a century it will be legal to do so. House Bill 910 authorizes individuals to openly carry a handgun in the same places that allow the licensed carrying of a concealed handgun with some exceptions. Citizens are first required to obtain a License to Carry or already have a valid concealed handgun license. Unconcealed or Open-Carry handguns, whether loaded or unloaded, must be carried in a belt or shoulder holster. If you already have a valid CHL, no additional fees or training is required to be permitted to open-carry, although additional training will be added to the curriculum for new applicants. Handgun Licenses will no longer be 'CHL's but LTC's for License to Carry. The eligibility requirements for licenses to carry have not changed.

substandard housing in Texas communities, and provide a stable housing base from which working families can improve their quality of life.



The target audience for tax credit properties are working individuals and families, people on fixed incomes, and other people you may encounter on a daily basis. They include citizens working in retail, daycares, restaurants, schools, hospitals and various government jobs. They often don't generate enough income to buy a single-family home, but the tax credit program makes decent, safe housing within their reach. According to a TDHCA survey of housing tax credit developments, most families who live in tax credit developments come from the community where the property is located. More than 80% of the residents surveyed were either from the same zip code, one zip code away or within the metro area of the development.



Tax credit developments are often referred to as "public housing", because they are government-owned developments, but because tax credits are a federal resource used to attract private capital to develop affordable housing. Tax credit developments are privately owned, managed and maintained.

They must be able to meet their operating expenses through traditional means like rent collections and extra sales, such as laundry and vending. How well they attract qualified, paying renters is central to their ability to operate successfully, just like a conventional property. For more information about TDHCA housing tax credit program developments, public forums, board meetings, trainings or other events, please visit: <http://www.tsah.org>



While open carry is now legal, there are still places where firearms are generally prohibited. Polling places, correctional facilities, established places of worship and certain businesses with alcohol permits or licenses all prohibit firearms. While it is still currently prohibited, beginning August 1, 2016, concealed handguns will be allowed at certain locations, and at certain colleges and universities. Another change is in the posted signage required by business owners who wish to prevent people from carrying guns into their establishments. Previously business owners were only required to post one sign preventing concealed handguns from entering their business, now they must post two. Texas Penal Code section 30.07, which prevents open carry, and section 30.06 which prevent concealed carry, must be posted at any entrance to the building and list in contrasting colors in English and Spanish.

Normally, the police need reasonable suspicion to temporarily detain and question someone, and check their identification. However with open carry, police will be authorized to stop and check an individual's license to carry (LTC) without cause. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.opencarrytexas.org/faq.html>

***Do You Have A Story?
We'd Like to Hear from
You!***

Community Spotlight



Mrs. Evelyn Barnett is a resident of Fort Bend County and has lived in the Briargate Community for 42 years where she is a member of Abiding Faith Baptist Church. Mrs. Barnett is a graduate of Texas Southern University where she received a Bachelor of



Science Degree. After moving into the neighborhood August of 1973, she immediately joined the Briargate Garden Club and the Civic Association where she held seats as the Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. In March of 1974 she served as an Election Clerk with Mr. Robert Smith, the first Election Judge in the Briargate/Chasewood subdivision. In 1978 Mrs. Barnett ran for Precinct Chairman and has maintained her seat 37 years. She also attended her first "State Convention" that same year in what was formerly known as the Sam Houston Coliseum.

Mrs. Barnett worked professionally for Continental Air where she retired in 2001 after 25 years of service. In addition, she has worked with numerous organizations throughout the county such as the Boy Scouts, the NAACP (Silver Lifetime Member), Fort Bend Coalition Black Democrats (Secretary), and The Briargate Community Improvement Association Inc. (HOA Secretary). She was selected and served for six months as a member of the Fort Bend Grand Jury, and was the first Court Clerk for the Precinct 2/Place 2 Justice of the Peace.

Mrs. Barnett has worked with Fort Bend County Elector Democratic office holders and many City of Houston elected officials, including former Mayor Kathy Whitmire, former State Senator and Congressman Craig Washington and newly elected Mayor Sylvester Turner.



This is your space! We want to hear from you, so send us your news. We may even publish your article in a future newsletter (although we reserve the right to edit for length and content). Try to keep your submissions to 150-200 words.

Submit articles to:

commpct2@fortbendcountytexas.gov

Write away!

Additional organization and affiliations include: The Fort Bend Super Neighborhood Council – 41, Fort Bend Houston Bridging the Community Divide Leaders, Advisory Committee for the Countywide Polling Place Fort Bend, and the A. Phillip Randolph Institute.

Evelyn Barnett has been a tremendous asset to the community and to Fort Bend County. She has worked tirelessly to promote the growth of her community as well as to uplift those around her. Precinct 2 Commissioner Grady Prestage and staff salute Mrs. Barnett for her dedication to her community and county and thank her for her time and continued service.

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