

Third Quarter 2023

LAKESIDE NEWS

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PHOTO CREDIT: KEVIN RUSSBACH

LOCATION: POINT VISTA PARK

A LETTER FROM YOUR MAYOR



Fellow citizens,

Our Council has had a busy spring, and we're already gearing up for our 2023-2024 budget year. Summer always ends up being a busy time as we begin to plan for our next fiscal year. As always, we want to use your tax dollars wisely and as efficiently as possible.

This Spring, many of our citizens have provided input for our new Comprehensive Plan through the Vision Committee, Focus Groups, and Community Workshops. We expect to have the plan completed and adopted in late September or early October. Thanks to all who have dedicated their time to help provide focus for the next 30 years!

In April, we held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of the Sycamore Bend Road Project. This project accomplishes several things: a wider road that provides better access to Sycamore Bend Park, especially for boat trailers; an improved road for the Lake Dallas ISD Agricultural Barn; the addition of sidewalks to reach the park; a separate turn lane for our Eagles Arie neighborhood; and we were able to provide additional fire hydrants to the area near the park. All of these are vital safety improvements for our citizens. Again, I want to thank our Denton County Commissioner, Bobbie J. Mitchell, Judge Andy Eads, and all the other Commissioners for providing almost \$3 million of funding for this project.

At our May Council meeting, we honored our 2022 Hickory Creek Business of the Year (Angelina's Don Louis' Mexican Restaurant), Citizen of the Year (Freddy Calvert), 2023 Scholars of the Year (Hannah Knop & Victoria Valderrey), Female Athlete of the Year (Camryn Richardson) and Male Athlete of the Year (Christian Willis). In May, The Lake Cities Chamber of Commerce also honored Hickory Creek Police Officer Krystal Dawson as First Responder of the Month. In June, our Police Chief Carey Dunn, along with Corinth, Lake Dallas, and Lake Cities Fire Chiefs were all selected as First Responders of the Month by the Chamber. Congratulations to each for these well-deserved honors!

Also in May, Councilmembers Randy Gibbons, Chris Gordon and Ian Theodore were sworn in for new two-year terms. These councilmembers, along with Councilmembers Richard Dupree and Mayor Pro-Tem Paul Kenney, are dedicated public servants, and it's my privilege to serve the Town of Hickory Creek alongside them. We also have outstanding staff members that serve each of us, and I can't thank them enough for their dedication and commitment to our town.

Several construction projects have kicked off around town:

- Lakesound Community (on the land between The Olana & Swisher Road)
- Alpha & Omega Equipment Sales & Rental (I-35 Service Road at Hickory Creek Road)
- The Learning Experience Academy of Early Education (behind Angelina's)
- The Olana Design Village (northeast corner of The Olana property)

In June, the Council and staff held a Workshop regarding the preliminary 2023-2024 Budget detailing Council priorities, operations, potential projects, and strategic planning.

In December 2023, The Town of Hickory Creek will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of our incorporation! We stand on the shoulders of all who came before us, who through hard work and perseverance built the wonderful town we all call home.

I hope you and your family have a wonderful summer. I look forward to seeing you around town!

Best regards,
Lynn Clark



Sycamore Bend Road

The Town of Hickory Creek and Denton County Commissioners Court celebrated the completion of Sycamore Bend Road with a ribbon cutting Wednesday, April 26, Construction on the \$3.4 million project began April 2022 and was completed in May 2023. The road was widened and reconstructed from Turbeville Road to the entrance of Sycamore Bend Park. Sidewalks were added along the corridor for safety and beautification. An estimated \$2.5 million of the project cost was funded by the County's TRIP '08 bond funds.



Mayor Lynn Clark



**Denton County Commissioner
Bobbie J. Mitchell**



Halff Engineering Lee Williams



**US Army Corps of Engineers
Chandler Sanford**



**Denton County Judge
Andy Eads**



**Councilmember Gordon, Mayor Lynn Clark,
and Councilmember Dupree**



**Lake Cities Chamber of Commerce Members, Hickory Creek
Town Council Members, Hickory Creek Town Staff
and Police Department**



**County Commissioners Kevin W. Falconer, County
Commissioner Bobbie J. Mitchell, Mayor Lynn Clark,
County Commissioner Dianne Edmondson, Denton
County Judge Andy Eads**

COUNCIL RECOGNITIONS

During the May 15, 2023, Town Council Meeting, council members presented the Town of Hickory Creek's **2023 Scholars of the Year**, Victoria Valderrey and Hannah Knop, **2023 Female Athlete of the Year**, Camryn Richardson, and **Male Athlete of the Year**, Christian Willis, **2022 Citizen of the Year**, Freddy Calvert, and **2022 Business of the Year**, Angelina's Don Louis' Mexican Restaurant. Congratulations to all recipients.



Also during the May Town Council meeting, councilmembers Randy Gibbons, Chris Gordon, and Ian Theodore took their Oaths of Office for their new two-year terms.



Councilmember Randy Gibbons & Mayor Lynn Clark



Councilmember Chris Gordon



Councilmember Ian Theodore



Councilmembers Gibbons, DuPree, Gordon, Mayor Clark, Councilmembers Kenney, Theodore

HICKORY CREEK PARKING REGULATIONS



Just a reminder of some of the parking rules:

- Motorized vehicles may not be parked on the street in the same spot over 48 hours.
- Non-motorized vehicles, boats, trailers, etc., may not be stored on the street.
- Any vehicle that cannot physically or legally operate on a public street may not be parked or stored in the street. This includes cars without current registration stickers or plates, wrecked or dismantled vehicles and those with flat tires, etc.
- Do not park within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, 20 feet of an intersection, 30 feet of a stop sign or any other traffic sign or signal, and 50 feet of a railway crossing arm.
- No vehicle of any kind may park on the sidewalk.
- Sporting equipment (basketball goals, ramps, etc.), containers, or any other property may not be put in or next to the street, sidewalk, or any other public right of way.
- Vehicles being advertised for sale may not be stored in the street.
- Vehicles may not be used as signs. This does not include regularly used work vehicles displaying company information.
- Large commercial vehicles may not be parked or stored on any street unless they are actively unloading and not blocking traffic.
- With a few zoning exceptions, vehicles may not park on dirt or grass, on a vacant lot or drive across a curb.
- Golf carts must follow the same operation and parking rules as other vehicles. For more information on golf carts, see Article 12.06 in the Code of Ordinances.

Parking regulations may be found in the Code of Ordinances, Article 12.05. Violations may be reported by contacting Code Enforcement at 940-497-2528 or at www.hickorycreek-tx.gov/code-compliance.

REPUBLIC SERVICES SENIOR DISCOUNT

Hickory Creek provides a 30% senior discount on trash and recycling services for our residents over 65. To receive the discount, bring your trash bill and driver's license to Town Hall and let us know you're eligible for the discount. The Town will contact Republic Services for your discount on future bills. Once your information has been submitted, there is no need to reapply each year.



CHIEF CAREY DUNN

Carey Dunn, Hickory Creek's Chief of Police, spent the first three years of his law enforcement career working as a jailer in the Denton County Sheriff's Department. What he really wanted, however, was to be a patrol officer.

"I know it sounds like a cliché," Dunn said, "but I always felt cut out to help people, to uplift them. I know I'm naturally inclined to be strong-willed and most of my friends shared their problems with me, especially when we were younger. Being a patrol officer would let me be outside to engage with people, which would make my efforts feel more tangible."

A couple friends told Dunn about an opening at Hickory Creek. He wasn't very familiar with the town, its residents, or how the police force operated but he decided it was worth his time to investigate.

"I got the job," he said, "and I've never looked back.

"Originally, I thought it would be an excellent jumping off spot for my next step – whatever that was – but it didn't take long to know this is where I want to be. I honestly fell in love with the town, with the residents, and with the way the city officials cooperated with us and allowed us to work. I felt like I was here to stay."

That was 20-years ago so he has, indeed, stayed.

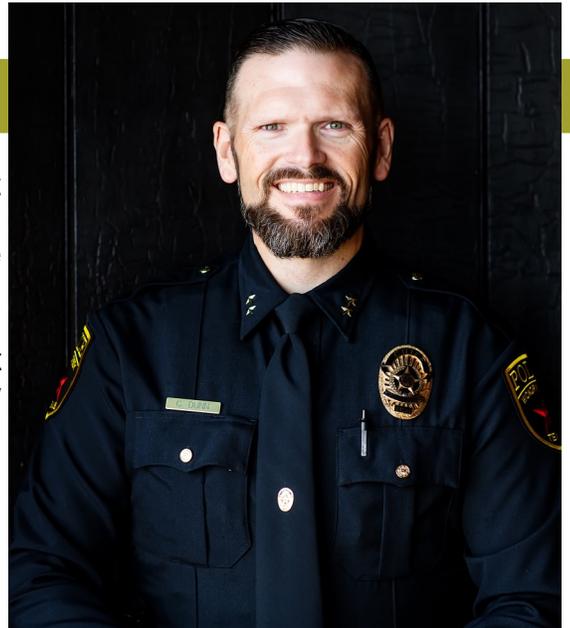
Hickory Creek is one of the few – maybe the ONLY – towns whose Chief of Police is also a third generation cattle rancher. Dunn may have been the first in his family to enter law enforcement, but that certainly wasn't the case with ranching. His grandfather bought 400-acres of land in Aubrey more than 70-years ago. The real estate has remained in the family going on four decades, and provides home-turf grazing for 80 to 100 head of cattle.

"I grew up around ranching," Dunn said, "and I love it. It's all part of my enjoying the outdoors and working with a purpose. Sure, I'm aware of the commercial value of 400-acres of land, especially in a growing and developing area, but I don't want to even think about selling it."

Dunn did his job well in Hickory Creek from the very beginning. With his undergraduate and Master's degrees in criminology and criminal justice, combined with his hands-on experience and community involvement, he was the prime candidate when the position of Chief of Police needed filling a few years later. He enjoys his well-earned promotion but doesn't hesitate to admit there are times when he misses the frequent, face-to-face interaction he had with residents as a patrol officer.

"My goal for myself, and for our officers, is to be as involved as possible with the community, its people, and its events. I don't want kids to be afraid or nervous if they see a uniform walking down the halls. I participate in the Chamber of Commerce, and I'm always looking for new avenues of outreach. To me, those are all ways for us to serve."

Is there a way to prove Dunn practices what he preaches?



The answer is yes, which is especially important since it comes at a time when police forces across the nation are battered by harsh criticism.

Dunn does everything he can to make sure that unfortunate door never opens in Hickory Creek.

“Law enforcement always had a tendency to gauge new recruits based on skills assessment,” he said. “I don’t agree with that approach. From my perspective, I can teach almost anyone how to do a job. I can demonstrate technical aspects, and how and when to use them. But I *can’t* teach someone how to be a basically good person, how to be compassionate, how to be committed and dedicated to the community he or she serves. Those qualities must already be there.”

Dunn is also a solid believer in allowing his officers to engage in what they enjoy the most. That way, they become great at their job rather than merely good. The officers themselves bear the best testimonies of this when they make comments such as, “Chief knows I like working with kids, so he put me on the ‘X’ patrol.”

For Dunn, that’s simple mentorship and he considers it a fundamental part of his job. “I’m responsible for a lot of internal management,” he said. “We can also call it mentorship. It’s up to me to help develop career paths so we can all be the best we can be. That’s how we serve at the highest level. Some officers are especially interested in drugs or alcohol or even domestic violence. Frequently, these special interests develop because of personal experiences with family or friends in those areas. I want to do whatever I can to open the necessary doors for them to pursue their passions.

“It’s also part of my job to keep up with the available technology. I don’t ever want to be guilty of failing the community because I wasn’t aware of technology that could have solved a problem and/or protected us better.”

One other interesting element about Dunn. We all know about kids, especially sons, following in their father’s footsteps. Well, in this case, the father followed the son.



“Dad was a partner in a custom cabinetry shop,” Dunn explained. “After he retired, he asked me if I thought he could do what I did for three years at the Sheriff’s office. I said ‘Sure, you can,’ and he did!”

Chief Dunn doesn’t waste time these days sending out resumes or checking with law enforcement friends about job openings. He’s already found his home. Now, he considers it part of his job to make his officers feel the same. So far, from what we can tell, he’s succeeding on all counts.

Make an effort to meet him. It’s guaranteed to make you feel extra warm and safe if you have a personal acquaintance with your town’s police chief.

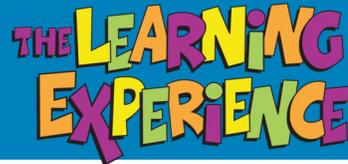
COMING SOON!

In early April, the Town of Hickory Creek celebrated the groundbreaking for Alpha & Omega located at 8560 S. Stemmons Freeway! We are excited to welcome this new business to Hickory Creek!



Hickory Creek is pleased to announce the groundbreaking of The Learning Experience Daycare!

This is one of many new businesses coming to Hickory Creek. The daycare will be located at 120 Baize Blvd and Turbeville Road (near Angelina's). Construction is expected to be complete in six months.



SHOW FEATURES

15th ANNUAL Faith Presbyterian Hospice Event

CAR CLASSES

JUDGE BY PARTICIPANTS:
 Pre-50's, 50's, 60's, 70's
 80 & 90's, 2000's, 2010 & Newer

Mopar
 Muscle Car
 Imports
 Camaro 92 & Older
 Camaro 93 & Newer
 T-Bucket / Roadster / Street Rod
 Corvettes 82 & Older
 Corvettes 84 & Newer
 Convertibles
 Original
 Custom
 Mustang's 79 and older
 Mustang's 80 and Newer
 Under Construction (must be driven)
 Jeep / 4x4

TRUCK CLASSES

JUDGE BY PARTICIPANTS:
 Pre-60's, 60's, 70's
 80 & 90's, 2000's, 2010 & Newer

BEST OF SHOW

Engine, Paint & Interior
 Cars (79 and Older)
 Trucks (79 and Older)
 Cars (80 and Newer)
 Trucks (80 and Newer)

SPECIAL AWARDS

Peoples Choice
 Manager Pick
 Hospice Pick

2023

CAR SHOW

SEPTMBER 16th

6940 S. I-35E (Exit 460)
in Corinth

Events Schedule
 9:00 am - 1:30 pm

Registration
 8:00 - 10:30 am
 \$20 entry fee

KIA | SUBARU



HICKORY CREEK'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

Hickory Creek needed an established county before it could be properly planted. That happened April 11, 1846, when the outline of Denton County was stepped off. It was named after John B. Denton, who was a unique combination of lawyer/preacher, killed in an Indian fight in 1841. Pinckneyville was selected as the county seat.

The Pinckneyville site was replaced two years later in 1848. New roots were put down near Hickory Creek, at a location named Alton (the same Alton as the "old Alton Bridge"). This was Denton County's seat for the next 10 years.

Alton took hold quickly and thrived. By 1856, it claimed several private residences, three stores, a blacksmith shop, a saloon, a hotel and bar, two doctors, several lawyers, a cemetery, and the newly created Denton County Land District.

The movement of settlers to the area picked up in 1841, aided by a complicated system of grants. The grants allocated land to selected colonists who, in turn, began bringing new settlers into the area.

While the state's political paths developed, Denton County again decided to move its county seat. On January 10, 1857, it relocated for the third time to the town of Denton, making it more central to expanding settlements in Pilot Point and Lewisville.

Ranching and farming were the primary occupational pursuits, with cattle and horses roaming freely across the prairies before the advent of barbed wire. Personalities such as John B. Chisum were spawned, the most famous cattleman in the West. The cattle looked like jerky on the hoof, long and stringy. The cowboys were tough and the horses they rode were even tougher, most of them needing to be re-broke almost every morning. There wasn't much about everyday life that was easy, but the people kept coming – just like they do today.

Wranglers pushed millions of cattle and shaggy mustangs along hard-packed trails to places like Kansas City. Texas acquired a special veneer that drew people from across the country – just like it does today. A mystique developed, some of it based on facts and a whole bunch of it sprouting from fiction and myth. Whichever, people believed the things they wanted to believe – just like they do today.

Time passed. Texas shed buckets of blood to break free of Mexico. Governments grew. Towns were born, named, and populated, and churches and cemeteries proliferated. Time marched forward, unfurling a blanket called PROGRESS as it conquered each new horizon.

The devastation of the Civil War came and went, followed by the equally painful devastation of Reconstruction. It was in the dust of these two history-changing events that settlers began pouring into the Denton County area.

Trails became roads. Railroads were laid. Stagecoach routes established. Cotton gins. Steam boats plied the waters of the area's numerous rivers.

The area along the extensive shoreline of Lewisville Lake was occupied as far back as 1852, originally called French Settlement. It was rich in water, timber, and farmland. The name was changed to Garza in 1881.

HICKORY CREEK'S 60TH BIRTHDAY CONTINUED

Finding the true explanation for the name Garza remains a mystery. One theory says Garza was the chief of a crew responsible for laying track for the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railway in 1881. Another theory says Garza operated a camp for crews of rail cutters. The crews moved on, but Garza stayed and built his home. Residents agreed to change the name of the community to Lake Dallas sometime between 1926 and 1929.

A red brick schoolhouse, called The Alamo, opened its doors in Lake Dallas in 1929 and stood until 1986. According to early settler Mildred Gumm Kirby, the town also had one café, two grocery stores, two service stations, a telephone office, and three churches "That," she said, "was our town."

"A medicine man came through once a year, selling medicine. Everyone dressed in their best and went, sat on the ground, and watched. "No one had much money to spend. The best part was going to Hickory Creek to swim and hang out over the water on grapevines."

The need for food and water increased in direct proportion to the population growth. Food was handled, since farming and meat production were a way of life. Water, however, was a bit more complicated. There was too little because the underground water tables were depleted, as well as too much during the rainy season.

The "too much" factor, which flooded out towns and farmlands, was resolved through the construction of dams, while the "too little" element brought about the construction of reservoirs.

The original lake came about in the 1920s for water storage/supply. It was named Lake Dallas. The Garza Dam came in 1927 and actual water storage began in 1928.

It wasn't enough. More water was needed, so the building of Lewisville Dam began in 1948. Completed in 1955, it was named Garza-Little Elm Dam. Later, the name was changed to Lewisville Lake.

Remember the movie *Field of Dreams*? Kevin Costner was told "they would come" if he built a ballfield. Well, "they" came to the shores of Lewisville Lake. They came from Dallas and Fort Worth. They built cabins and one-room houses for weekend fishing and boating. The setting was nothing less than perfect. The lake. An extensive shoreline. Acres of dense woods shielding an intriguing variety of wildlife. People came and they fell in love. Soon, they wanted to stay full time.

According to records put together in 1986 by The Lake Cities Legacy as a contribution to the state's Sesquicentennial celebration, the real evolution of Hickory Creek began in 1961 when a group of people living along the banks of Hickory Creek decided they wanted to become a town. The group circulated a petition, which was signed by approximately 18 families and individuals. They indicated in the petition they wanted the town to be called Hickory Creek.



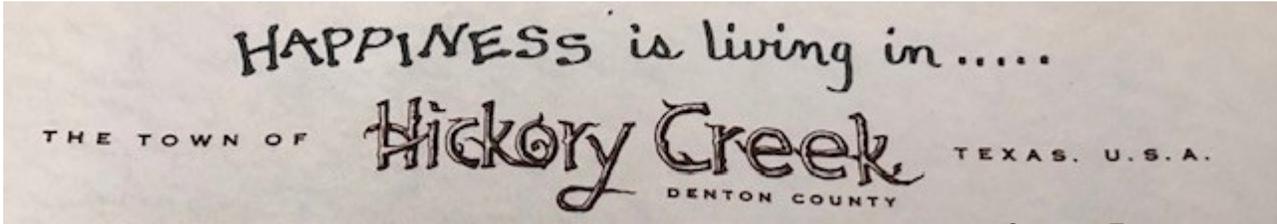
All necessary paperwork was processed on April 29, 1963. Nineteen people then voted in an official election. It was unanimously decided the Town of Hickory Creek should be incorporated under the Commission Form of government.

The Commission Form, also known as the Galveston Plan, came about as a direct result of the Galveston hurricane of 1900. More than 6,000 people lost their lives and nearly every structure was swept into the Gulf. The Deep Water Committee, a group of wealthy businessmen, petitioned the governor of the state to appoint a commission to govern the city during the restoration. Two of the five commissioners were decided through popular election. Each individual commissioner was put in charge of a specific aspect – public works, finance, public safety.

Hickory Creek was incorporated officially in 1963, with a population of 219. The east side of I-35 was annexed August 10, 1964. It was time to begin shaping and molding this new community in Denton County.

It's safe to say that the handful of people along the shores of Lewisville Lake had no idea their tiny, tree-filled town would, 60 years later, be home to over 5,500 residents, still surrounded by the dense trees, wildlife, and shoreline but with quick access to big city amenities. And they certainly had no idea that the once slow-to-settle Denton County would, in 2023, be scrambling to find homes for the 86 new people *per day* moving in, requiring only 13 years (from 2010 to 2023) to surpass the 1-million mark.

The first group to fill the positions of Hickory Creek's Commission Form of government were Duvall Williams as Mayor, Perry Harvell as Commissioner, and Edmond Bright as Secretary. The three met at Duvall's home February 24, 1964, and passed a resolution calling for a town election on April 17. The resolution was adopted, with the qualifying addition that two judges and two clerks be selected to assist in the proceedings.



ORIGINAL TOWN LOGO

Election results were announced April 29. Williams remained seated as Mayor, Harold Hunsaker and Albert Schneider were named Commissioners, and Edmond Bright continued as Town Secretary. Williams also presented an invoice for \$15, to reimburse him for the cost of two prints of Hickory Creek maps.

A letterhead design for the town was presented and approved at the June meeting. Step by step, the town was developing its personal brand and identity. The following month, arrangements were made for mowing and maintaining Turbeville to the entrance of Harbor Grove. Once again, there was financial business conducted when Secretary Bright presented an invoice for \$7.25 to cover a portable file cabinet and a rubber stamp.

In August, Hickory Creek passed its first property annexation. More annexations continued for the town over the next several years. The Mayor and Commissioners agreed at the October meeting to make a \$25 donation to the Lake Dallas Volunteer Fire Department. Goodness, how things have changed!

Hickory Creek was defining itself. An ordinance was passed declaring all property within town limits must be kept clean; "all filth, trash and rubbish" removed. Groundwork was being laid for code enforcement. Next on the list was the requirement for building permits. Sixty years later, we still post those permits in plain view.

In January, 1965, Lake Dallas informed Hickory Creek's Mayor and Commissioners that it, too, wished to incorporate. There was, however, a cause for concern since some of the land Lake Dallas proposed to include in the incorporation was positioned in Hickory Creek's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Would Hickory Creek surrender that portion of the real estate? Hickory Creek said, yes, and Lake Dallas could move forward.

In 1986, an interview was conducted by Letitia deBurgos for the earlier mentioned Lake Cities Legacy contribution to the state's Sesquicentennial. In the interview, Ellis Varge Bunch and Margaret Siebert Bunch shared memories of the area from approximately 1950.

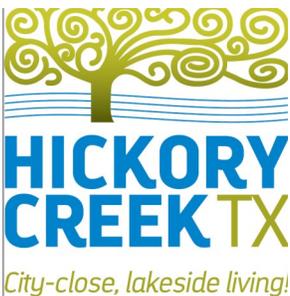
"If you wanted a telephone from the Lake Dallas Telephone Co., you had to pay for stringing the wire. There were no poles. The wire was strung across trees, the top of barbed wire fences, and sometimes on the ground. If it went out, you had to find the break yourself. Sometimes it was caused by the cattle." Wall-mounted crank phones that rang the operator were used until the early 1950s.

There was also the beloved "Fishing Lady," Maude Bradshaw. She was an elderly widow, living in a little redwood cottage near the west end of Hickory Creek, with her devoted coonhound, Rosita. Maude was barely five feet tall, thin as a piece of string meat, and tough as old boot leather. She wore a gingham apron, with a pistol tucked into the pocket. She also toted a rusted rifle that was like a third eye for her to zero in on dozens of snakes every year.

Maude had a boat but preferred a cane pole for fishing. And, always, Rosita was with her. Belle Cox and her son Ron, two more early residents, were like family to Maude. Belle moved into Maude's cottage after the older lady suffered a stroke. Maude couldn't return to her house on the creek, but it brought her some peace to know Belle was caring for Rosita. She died at 88 and the last thing she said to Belle was, "Take care of my little Rosita."

That's the way Hickory Creek used to be and, funny thing, that's the way it still is. We all take care of one another's "little Rositas," even though the original population of 219 is over 5,500. There are more Rositas in our community but, also, more people to share in their care.

Current Hickory Creek residents are grateful for those early town planners who laid the foundation for what we have today. And they are appreciative of the unpaid efforts of the Mayors and Councilmen and women who walked the more recent Hickory Creek trails. Those are the people who held together the outline carved to hold a unique town that reflects the best of two worlds – the tranquility and peace of family, friends, and neighbors combined with the close-by adventures of big cities.



CURRENT TOWN LOGO

It was the residents, and not some distant public relations company, who created the Hickory Creek brand. It's their thoughts reflected in the town's description, which reads:

City-close, lakeside living!

Hickory Creek is one of the most unique communities in the state of Texas. Truth be known, most of its residents are protective of the little town they consider as their personal retreat.

Hickory Creek is a designated Texas Tree City, with magnificent stands of huge trees spreading their canopies and forming major thoroughfares for a vast array of squirrels and an ever-changing variety of birds, thanks to its proximity to a migratory pathway. Its primary anchor is historic Lewisville Lake, with many of the original bungalows built more than 60-years ago for weekend fishing still rooted to its shores.

Seemingly endless acres of dense forest, all part of the U.S. Corps of Engineers' property, provide beautiful parks for camping, hiking, fishing, swimming, and family outings. And, even though Hickory Creek literally straddles the constant noise and activity of I-35E, none of that intrudes on the atmosphere dominated by family, friends, and neighbors who are all critical parts of a deep community support system.

Despite enjoying all the yesterday charms, no one in Hickory Creek is isolated. Commuter train access is five minutes away. Work, shop, or dine in Dallas in 25-minutes or less. Need groceries? Five minutes across the Interstate or just down the road. Dozens of small businesses offer almost all of the services and products needed for everyday living.

Hickory Creek has grown and changed over the years, but the growth has been carefully managed and monitored. There are certain aspects the residents and city leaders consider as off-limits: the natural beauty cradling the town; the forests still providing a home for foxes, coyotes, bobcats and deer; the relaxed and friendly lifestyle where the cops wave at citizens and the mayor always has a hug ready; and the beautiful parks popping up along the gentle contours of the lake.

Hickory Creek's leaders are the ones responsible for maintaining the unique relationships that make the town what it is today. They weigh and measure constantly the qualities of uniqueness against the 21st century conveniences desired (and needed) by the residents and businesses – such as the newly installed broadband internet services.

Thanks to the unswerving guidance and attention to detail provided by the town's leaders, Hickory Creek will continue as a wonderful place to live and a very, very hard place to leave.

That's us! That's our town!

Happy 60th Birthday!



TREE CITY USA®
An Arbor Day Foundation Program



KRYSTLE DAWSON

LAKE CITIES CHAMBER'S FIRST RESPONDER OF THE MONTH

Krystle Dawson, a nearly four-year member of the Hickory Creek Police Department, shows up for every shift with a positive attitude, a dedicated willingness to do whatever needs to be done, and a physical body supported by her focused attention to health and wellness.

"I was in Dispatch five years before deciding to go to the Academy," Dawson said. "My mom was scared for my safety when I first told her, but she worked through it. We have no other law enforcement people in our immediate family, so this was something new. I had a college degree in sports management, which is obviously very different from what I eventually chose to do.

"I enjoyed my time in Dispatch, but I wanted to do more. One of my priorities is to do my part within the community – to help make a positive difference. I have a 10-year-old son, Jayden, so I have a very personal investment in keeping 'the bad guys' off the streets.

"It's also very important to me that I continue to learn. I can honestly say I learn something new every day. It might come from Chief (Carey Dunn), from my fellow officers, or from the people at RaceTrac or WalMart. I'm convinced the only way a cop can perform a really good job is through establishing trust and communication with the people we serve."

Dawson never seeks attention simply for her personal gratification, but for her, some of that attention is unavoidable. First, she's the only female on the force in a seriously male-dominated environment.

Second, she's a black female. Third, she's tall, slim, and overall fit-looking. That characteristic is no doubt the result of her attention to health and wellness and her accompanying desire to maintain her ability to chase those bad guys on foot, if needed. And fourth, she's undeniably beautiful.

Dawson laughed.

"People approached me about modeling but, somehow, I didn't see it as making a difference in a community." Maybe not, but the clothes would have been prettier! But, as she pointed out, she wouldn't have worn them with as much pride as her uniform.

Dawson was among the oldest students in her class at the Academy.

"Most were just out of college," she explained. "I thought about it a long time before deciding. I felt it was one of the most important choices I'd ever make. Then, after deciding to move forward, I had an accident and tore my meniscus cartilage. That was another two-year delay."

Dawson has lost family members to DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) incidents, which gives her time on the highway special meaning.

"I always try to keep my head on straight," she said. "In most incidents, being combative does not make things better. I think, as a female, I'm better able to de-escalate certain circumstances that could otherwise become much worse very quickly. One of the things I try to get across to people is the process of making good choices. Every day is an opportunity to make better choices than the day before.

Dawson is apparently making a lot of good choices, so many that she was named "First Responder of the Month" by the Lake Cities Chamber in June. *That's* the kind of attention she likes.

"It was an honor and a total shock," she said.

Dawson has no regrets about becoming a cop. It was the right choice on the day she made it, and it's still the right choice nearly four years later. And the advice she would give to anyone else facing their own choice?

Answer: "*Don't let anyone tell you what you **can** or **can't** do.*"



Every day is an opportunity to make better choices than the day before.

HICKORY CREEK, 40 YEARS AGO

BY DIANE CIARLONI

I relocated to Texas in 1983 for work-related reasons. It's difficult to believe that was 40 years ago, when Hickory Creek was only 20 years old.

I came from (you guessed it!) the Los Angeles metroplex, where my office sat on Sunset Boulevard with a clear view of the iconic Hollywood sign. My building's owners paid taxes to two cities, since we straddled the line between Beverly Hills and West Hollywood.

Walking the pavement along the Sunset Strip to my office offered a flavor-filled buffet of sights and sounds. Remember the old TV show *77 Sunset Strip*? The opening scene of each episode was filmed in front of Dino's Lodge, an actual restaurant owned by Dean Martin. Edd "Kookie" Byrnes was in the opening footage, combing his wavy, product-laden hair.

And remember Jack Webb, otherwise known as Sergeant Joe Friday on *Dragnet*? Five days every week I walked in front of his favorite pub, *The Cock 'n Bull*. I went in now and then and ordered a non-alcoholic Shirley Temple – just to see if he was there. He almost always was.

Telly Savalas, otherwise known in TV Land as *Kojak*, preferred the chili at Barney's Beanery. He and I unloaded the film in our cameras at the same processing lab. This was, after all, before the digital age. The difference between us, according to the lab owner, was I paid my bills and Telly didn't!

There are more blocks in my memory sidewalk, before my immigration to Texas, but fast-forward to February 1983. I'm sitting in the front seat of a Realtor's Lincoln. Back then, a lot of real estate agents drove those impressive touring car-types with comfortable, spacious seating for clients.

We spent most of the day looking at homes, but nothing really clicked. Then she turned the wheel and guided us across some bumpy railroad tracks. She told me we were in Hickory Creek. There was a dense line of trees along the tracks; so thick that it was impossible to know there was an actual community hidden

behind all the foliage. I didn't even know there was a lake. And I didn't know those trees shielded the residents from both noise and prying eyes.

The Realtor stopped the car to allow a family of deer to cross the road. Was I in some magical kingdom?

There was no commercial development on the west side of I-35. Nothing. Nada. Not even a service station. And, really, there was very little on the east side. Chick's was here for a fast-food treat. Tim's Produce was a delight. And, of course, there was Neal's Italian Restaurant on the lake. Technically, all three were in Lake Dallas.

A run-down, white, framed house served as Town Hall. Next to it was a tiny, dark death trap that passed as an animal shelter.

There was a small, bedraggled Food Fair on Main Street, and some of you may remember Slick's on Shady Shores. Going to a fully-fledged "real" grocery store, however, meant a trip to Denton. It also meant no ice cream in the summer because it melted before making it to my freezer. And I learned the hard way that those big chocolate Easter bunnies couldn't survive the mileage without spreading into a chocolate puddle. In many ways, living in 20-year-old Hickory Creek resembled the set of *Little House on the Prairie*.

I rented a house on Robin's Nest in Lakewood Gardens. Rented because I forgot to mention my work contract was for only 90 days. The project ended on a successful note, but instead of packing my bags and gathering my dogs, I called the Realtor who found my Hickory Creek rental. I told her I was ready to buy a house in this tiny town that had quickly become home.



Some of the old buildings are still here but with different names. Most of them are in Lake Dallas. The now 60-year-old Hickory Creek is, for the most part, shiny and new. An imposing town hall with all the digital amenities. The spectacular wedding venue, The Olana. A Walmart Super Center. Restaurants and pizza parlors. Boutiques and banks. Gas stations with expansive convenience stores. Doctors, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors. A beautiful low-kill animal shelter. But....

The thick woods are still here, and the branches of spreading oaks shade the houses. My west-facing front yard baked in unrelenting sun 40 years ago. Today, it's shade dappled with sunspots. Foxes, bobcats, coyotes, squirrels, possum, skunks, and raccoons still find pathways from the lake, through the woods, and into my backyard. The deer come quietly out of the trees to gobble trailing potato vines planted by people who never realized the big-eyed beauties consider the leafy greens a top-tier delicacy. Birds, butterflies, hawks, and eagles still ride the air currents, and wild turkeys gobble their way across lawns.

Hickory Creek, after 60 years, learned how to balance the best of the old with the shine of the new. We still know, and help, our neighbors. We are family and friends and cordial cops, sharing and loving and giving. We're blessed with small town traditions and the easily accessible riches of big cities. We are privileged to open and to close each day in the embrace of God's lavish gifts of lakes and forests. We know gratitude and we say thank you for what we have.

We are, in two words, Hickory Creek.

GINGER WHALEY REMEMBERS HICKORY CREEK, 60 YEARS AGO

Ginger Whaley was born in Dallas, lived in Garland, but was anchored by deep roots to Hickory Creek.

"My grandparents had a farm in Hickory Creek, and we moved in with them in 1962 while our house was being built. It was finished in 1963, the same year Hickory

Creek became a town." (This farm eventually became the residential neighborhood we know as Hickory Creek Crossing, with 92 homes and a neighborhood park. Streets are named for Ginger's family members).



"I don't think it's even possible to list all the changes between then and now. I mean, when you stop and think about it, there wasn't even a Food Fair here! There were certainly no stoplights and no commuter trains. And I can't tell you how many times I've almost sailed through the new stop sign at Carlisle, next to Silva's café. I'm one of those people who's good at 'going with the flow' but there have been a lot of things that were difficult to get used to.

"Diane, you and I were here during the time of the fierce competition between the East and West sides of the town. Everyone on the West accused the town government of showing favoritism to the East but the simple truth was the East side had more people. Today, the newer people have no idea what we're talking about if we bring that up.

"I worked for the school for more than 30 years, and I watched a lot of people come and go. We only had 200 people in the entire system back then.

"My dad was the Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department in the late 1960s, and John Farmer was our one police officer. I remember Duvall Williams, the first mayor, quite well.

"Changes? They've been huge, but what else would you expect after 60 years. We're still Hickory Creek."

Indeed.

**HICKORY CREEK
TOWN HALL**

1075 Ronald Reagan
Avenue
940-497-2528
Monday - Thursday
7:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday
7:00 AM - 11:00 AM

POLICE DEPARTMENT

1075 Ronald Reagan
Avenue
940-497-3520

Police/Fire Emergency 911

Non Emergency
940-349-1600

**HICKORY CREEK
ANIMAL SHELTER**

970 Main Street
940-349-1600
Monday - Friday
7 AM - 6 PM
Friday
Saturday - Sunday
7 AM - 11 AM

VISIT YOUR TOWN HALL

Parks & Recreation Board—Third Monday
Planning & Zoning Commission—Third Tuesday
Town Council—Fourth Monday
Economic Development Corporation—Third Thursday

ALL MEETINGS BEGIN AT 6 PM



UPCOMING TOWN CLOSURES

Monday, September 4

Labor Day

Monday, October 9

Columbus Day

City-close, lakeside living!