



Thank you to all employees who have worked at the Theatre at Grand Prairie vaccine site!

April 2021

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A Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Thirteen months ago, the spread of COVID-19 shaped our world in a way we could never imagine. The City of Grand Prairie has persevered through a year of the pandemic with grace. The Environmental Services Department helped everyone in the city adjust with creative solutions for safety. Cindy Mendez and Werner Rodriguez worked tirelessly to ensure the City of Grand Prairie employees and residents were educated and prepared to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Mendez has reflected on the year of COVID-19 and how it has shaped our world:

Q. How have safety measures evolved since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic?



Cindy Mendez and Werner Rodriguez

A. The city closely followed the CDC and local health recommendations throughout the pandemic as new research and medical information became available. Initially, masking was not recommended so masks could be conserved for medical staff as they were in short supply. Eventually, masking was recommended and even required. Once more was

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The Big Event is Back!



The 2021 Big Event in Grand Prairie will be April 24, 2021. The Big Event is a one-day, citywide volunteerism day in which volunteers are matched with qualifying service projects at homes of people who need help, celebrating unity in the community.

The Job Request portal closed March 31, but the Volunteer Portal will remain open into early April as we push to recruit enough volunteers for all jobs.

For more information and to register, visit gptx.org/bigevent



Healthy Living for the Whole Family

The WOW Committee is dedicating the month of April to Family Wellness! Family plays an important role in our lives. Whether family is near, far, in the form of humans or our loving pets, we need them to survive! As we continue to navigate the meaning of family during the pandemic, you may be looking for ways to improve family care habits, eating right or checking on loved ones. Here are some lifestyle tips to help refresh your wellbeing:

- Refresh everyone's wellness routine with good sleep, regular exercise and mindfulness
- Help your kids get the nutrition they need
- Set time aside for personal care

Here are some resources that may be helpful:

- [Healthy Weight, Nutrition and Physical Activity](#)
- [Caregiver Online Support Group](#)
- [Healthy Pet](#)

Wellness Webinar - Caregiver Excellence

This stress management and relationship management skills presentation is designed to enhance the personal wellness and professional effectiveness of caregivers. The presentation discusses several proven stress management strategies, tips for communicating more effectively with those we are caring for, and how to deal with compassion fatigue.

April 13, 2021

Time: 11 a.m.

Registration:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2197140205962791952>

Five participants who attend the webinar will be selected to receive a \$25 Amazon Gift Card!

Light It Up Blue - Autism Awareness

Join the WOW Committee and encourage your fellow colleagues for a stroll around EPIC Central on April 22, 2021 between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. During this come-and-go event, we will use our steps to celebrate our loved ones and friends who have been identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by wearing blue.

Here are a couple of Autism Facts to know:

- About 1 in 54 (or 1.85%) of chil-

dren have been identified with ASD

- ASD occurs amount all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups
- Boys are more than 4 times likely to be identified with ASD than girls
- Almost half of children identified with ADS have average or above average intellectual ability

*CDC Autism Spectrum Disorder
Can't join us for a brisk walk? Here

are some other ways you can get involved by donating, volunteering, or seeking support:

- [National Autism Association of North Texas](#)
- [Autism Treatment Center of Texas - Dallas](#)
- [Autism Treatment Center of Texas - Ft. Worth](#)



Mayor Ron Jensen



Chase Wheeler



Andrew Fortune



Cindy Mendez



Chief Daniel Scesney

Chamber of Commerce Awards City Staff

The Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce held their 2020 Community Award show on Thursday, March 25 and some of our own city staff was recognized:

- **Chamber Superman of the Year:** Mayor Ron Jensen
- **Public Service Award:** Chase Wheeler, Andrew Fortune and Cindy Mendez (COVID Response)
- **Man of the Year:** Chief Daniel Scesney

Congratulations to all! Well deserved recognition and an example of the great level of service that we all provide, as a team, to our community!

District 2 Special Election Results

Councilman Swafford passed away while in office from COVID-19 on Dec. 1, 2020. A special election to fill the seat was conducted on Feb. 27, 2021, with a run-off election on March 27, 2021. Dennis King won the seat with 292 votes (52%) to Frank Gonzalez's 269 (48%). Pending provisional vote tallies, Mr. King will be sworn in on April 6, 2021. The newly elected official will complete the current term, which expires in May 2022.

A Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic Cont.

understood about the virus, social distancing and lockdown measures became more prominent. The urgency of the quarantine was to give our medical facilities time to get ready for the onset of patients by having enough ventilators, medical supplies, healthcare workers, and beds available.

The city implemented CDC recommendations quickly and took additional measures like creating a childcare center at the EPIC to keep our first responders on the job.

Q. What do you hope changes as a result of COVID-19?

A. Well, I hope everyone will wash their hands more, touch their face less, and get their vaccines.

Q. What helped the most in avoiding disruption during the pandemic?

A. The creativity of staff from all departments really assisted in finding innovative approaches to reducing disruptions.

Q. Has there been a decline in the number of COVID-19 infections

that have affected city employees?

A. Yes, our number of infections were higher over the holidays, but we made it to the vaccine phase and many of our employees have now been vaccinated. Our numbers are currently low and I hope we can maintain it by maintaining practices we know work—masking, social distancing and not attending large gatherings.

Final thoughts:

Be part of the herd. Protect those who cannot be vaccinated.

Message from the Manager

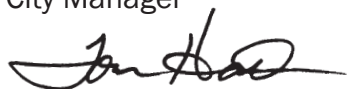
Thank you to everyone who was able to attend the World Class Service class last week. The presentation will be posted online soon for those who could not attend. It is so important for each of you to know that you make Grand Prairie a world class city by providing excellent customer service. Our goal is to deliver such outstanding service that the customer raves about the experience they have here. While that is not always possible, I hope that everyone strives for that each day at work.

On another note, if you live in Grand Prairie, we have a bond election in May asking voters whether or not they approve of the issuance of \$75 million general obligation bonds for promoting economic development within the city. The proposition supports economic development and revitalization of commercial, retail, residential, mixed-use development and neighborhoods throughout the city, such as corridor and façade improvements, land acquisition and other development and redevelopment investments in targeted areas within the community. You are encouraged to express your position on this matter through your vote. To read more about it, visit gptx.org/bondelection.

As I have said before, every vote counts. I like to tell the example of Bedford, Texas. In 2005, Bedford held an election asking voters whether or not to roll back the local property tax rate, which would drop the rate 40 cents per \$100 valuation. The rollback passed by a mere 10 votes. After the election, city officials determined that there were more than 10 city employees who were residents of the city that did not vote. Had they voted, they might have affected the outcome of the election. The message is that your vote in a local election counts. If you live in Grand Prairie, please take the time to vote and encourage eligible family members to do the same. Early voting begins April 19 and election day is May 1.

Thank you all for continuing to create Raving Fans. Stay healthy, wear masks and socially distance.

Tom Hart
City Manager



Grand Prairie
**Farmers
Market**
Opening

Saturday, April 10
8 a.m.-1 p.m.
120 W. Main St.



Toastmasters



Join the Toastmasters on Wednesdays at 12:05 p.m. via Zoom to develop your skills as a communicator and leader! Have fun while learning the Pathways Program that can help you find new ways to become everything you want to be in life.

Anyone can join in the Toastmasters meetings here:

<https://gptx.zoom.us/j/778600369>
Phone: 346-248-7799
Meeting ID: 778-600-369

****All meetings are waiting room enabled, please stand by on the day of the meeting to be let in****

Website:
<https://grandorators.toastmastersclubs.org>

Facebook:
Grand Orators Toastmasters Club

Contact:
President Michael D. Levy at
toastmasters@michaeldlevy.com

Need a COVID-19 Vaccine?

The new Texas Department of State Health Services website allows all people ages 16 and older to register for the COVID-19 vaccine:

GetTheVaccine.dshs.texas.gov

Registrants will be notified by email or text when and where to get the vaccine. **The vaccine is free.**

A phone line for registration is also open every day 7 a.m.-7 p.m.:
1-833-832-7067