



House District 1 - Bowie, Franklin, Lamar & Red River counties
District & Capitol Interim Report
November 2015

Election results. Texas voters went to the polls earlier this month to vote on seven proposed amendments to the state's 139-year old constitution that was originally adopted in 1876. Since then, Texas voters have voted on 670 proposed amendments while adopting 491 amendments and defeating 179 propositions. All seven propositions were approved by large margins across the state and in HD 1. Here is a link to information on the state's constitution: http://www.tlc.state.tx.us/const_amends.htm ; and election results: <https://enrpages.sos.state.tx.us/>. While reviewing election results, it is interesting to compare total population of the four counties in HD 1 with their number of registered voters to actual voter turnout; see below:

| | Population | Registered Voters (% of total population) | Election Day Turnout (% of total population) | Election Day Turnout (% of registered voters) |
|------------------|-------------------|--|---|--|
| <i>Bowie</i> | 93,148 | 56,135 (60%) | 5,683 (6.1%) | 5,683 (10.12%) |
| <i>Franklin</i> | 10,868 | 6,491 (59.7%) | 789 (7.2%) | 789 (12.15%) |
| <i>Lamar</i> | 50,482 | 29,390 (58.2%) | 3,478 (6.8%) | 3,478 (11.8%) |
| <i>Red River</i> | 13,013 | 7,909 (60.7%) | 934 (7.1%) | 934 (11.8%) |
| <i>Statewide</i> | 26,900,000 | 13,988,920 (52%) | 1,555,412 (5.7%) | 1,555,412 (11.11%) |

House District 1 has a higher percentage of registered voters than the state, but the percentage of HD 1 voters who turned out for the November general election is similar to the statewide percentage of registered voters who voted. Voter turnout in Texas is among the lowest in the country. Here are some links to news reports from the 2014 mid-term elections about the low voter turnout in Texas: <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/historical/70-92.shtml>; http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/12/opinion/the-worst-voter-turnout-in-72-years.html?_r=0 ; http://www.expressnews.com/news/news_columnists/elaine_ayala/article/Texas-should-learn-from-states-that-led-in-voter-5897157.php.

Help for veterans. With Veterans' Day earlier this month, it is appropriate to announce that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has recently entered into a partnership agreement with Walgreens to improve veterans' access to preventative healthcare services. VA patients with a VA identification card and flu voucher form can receive no-cost flu shots at their local Walgreens, saving a trip to the VA. To access the necessary form, log on to http://www.ehealth.va.gov/campaign/rccp/2015_VA_RCCP_W_Flu_RegForm_100815.pdf.

Walgreens will electronically update the VA patient's clinical record. **Please note:** this is *not* a Tricare Benefit, and family members are not eligible. For questions or more information about the program, call (866) 964-1812 or go to <http://www.ehealth.va.gov/Immunization.asp>.



Katie Williams, Rivercrest High School, & Rep. VanDeaver

Christmas ornament design winner. Katie Williams's design for a Christmas decoration reflecting the uniqueness of House District 1 was selected by a panel chosen by Rep. VanDeaver to review all 45 of the designs submitted. Ms. Williams is a student at Rivercrest High School. Rep. VanDeaver expressed appreciation for all the teachers and students who participated in this year's contest to design a unique ornament that will hang on the 20-foot Christmas tree in the House Chamber. He also thanked the panel of reviewers who chose the winning design. VanDeaver said "I am so impressed with the artistic abilities of our area's students who took the time to create a unique Christmas ornament to display at the Texas Capitol this holiday season." According to Williams: "The ornament has four different illustrations, one for each county in House District 1. The Eiffel Tower for Lamar County; The Gateway to Texas for Red River County; The Don Meredith Museum for Franklin County; and, Red River Army Depot for Bowie County."

Around HD 1. This month I have enjoyed meeting with many people and speaking to various groups including the Paris Rotary Club; Paris Kiwanis Club; Red River County retired teachers; Town Hall meeting with students at Paris Junior College; and, spoke to classes at Malta ISD. I have enjoyed each of these events and learned so much about the lives and challenges facing residents of HD 1.

News from Austin. Safety first! The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding Texans to remain vigilant with respect to potential crime and terrorist activity in their communities, and to report suspicious behaviors to the department's iWATCH website at www.iwatchtx.org. The iWATCH program was created as a partnership between communities and law enforcement, and utilizes citizen-sourced tips related to criminal activity. DPS urges residents who see something unusual to simply speak up. Preparations for terrorist attacks may often be seen, but rarely reported. When in doubt, report the suspicious activity through iWATCH. For more information on the iWATCH program or to submit a report, visit www.iwatchtx.org. To make an anonymous report, individuals can contact DPS at 1-866-786-5972. (iWATCH is **not** designed to report emergencies. If a situation requires an emergency response, call 911.)



Rep. VanDeaver speaking to the Paris Rotary Club.

Interim charges. The House Speaker recently issued interim charges for House Committees to study and make recommendations for the 85th Legislature that convenes in January 2017. Committees will study a variety of issues including one I submitted relating to funding for community and junior colleges. Here is a link to all of the charges: <http://www.house.state.tx.us/media/pdf/interim-charges-84th.pdf>.

Texas Park & Wildlife Department. Texas hunters can assist the statewide chronic wasting disease (CWD) monitoring effort this fall by voluntarily taking their harvested deer (or the head of the harvested deer) within 24 hours to a location where Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wildlife biologists will collect tissue samples for testing. A list of collection sites and times is available online at www.tpwd.texas.gov/cwd. In addition to those established collection locations, biologists will also be conducting localized sampling at various sites throughout the season to meet sampling objectives. For more information about localized CWD sampling efforts, please contact your local wildlife biologist (http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/technical_guidance/biologists/).



Happy Thanksgiving! I want to wish each of you a blessed and Happy Thanksgiving. Please keep our families, region, state and country in your thoughts and prayers. And, I thank each of you for letting me serve you as your state representative. Please feel free to contact either the District office (903-628-0361) or Capitol office (512-463-0692) if there is anything you think we can do to help you.

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