

LAKESIDE NEWS

2024 Fourth Quarter



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PICTURE CREDIT: KRISTIN MILTON

A LETTER FROM YOUR MAYOR

Dear Fellow Citizens,

Summer has officially ended, or so the calendar tells us, and fall is here! Our Council and town staff have spent a productive summer preparing for the upcoming budget year, which began on October 1.

Over the past dozen years, property values in Hickory Creek have risen, and we have seen continued increases this year. Denton County Appraisal District's certified property total for this year is \$1.777 billion, an increase over last year's total of \$1.056 billion. Last year, the property tax rate for Hickory Creek was 0.236686 per \$100 of value. For 2024, our Council once again lowered our tax rate to 0.223060 per \$100, adopting the "No-New-Revenue Tax Rate," meaning the town will raise approximately the same amount of revenue as in the prior year (except for new properties added to the tax roll). New properties which were added to the tax roll in 2024 provide an additional \$133,492 in property tax. I am pleased to announce that we have presented a balanced budget for 2024—2025.

A contract has been approved for the replacement of Harbor Lane, South Hook Street, and Garth Lane. All three streets, which serve as main feeder streets to neighborhoods, will be reconstructed with concrete and will include sidewalks. Construction will begin in December on the Hook/Garth section, with work on Harbor Lane slated to start in spring 2025. These road projects are part of the Denton County Transportation Road Improvement Program Bond (TRIP-22). Denton County will contribute \$5,838,632 to the project, with the Town of Hickory Creek providing \$1,100,000, bringing the total project cost to \$6,938,632. Concrete streets have greater longevity compared to asphalt, which will result in long-term savings. The town will also save on routine maintenance, as concrete does not require professional sealcoating to prevent cracks and fading every five-plus years. We are grateful for our partnership with Denton County!

A contract has also been awarded for the Sidewalk Phase 4 project. Work started in October and will extend sidewalks throughout various parts of the Town. The project includes concrete road repairs and enhance ADA compliance in several neighborhoods.

For the fourth year in a row, our citizens participated in the "Red, White & Blue Freedom Walk" across the Lewisville Lake Bridge, in memory of first responders and all who perished on 9/11. Special thanks to all our citizens who participated, along with the following: Mayors and Councilmembers from Denton, Hickory Creek, Lake Dallas, Shady Shores, Corinth, Highland Village & Lewisville; County Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell; Police & Fire Departments from Lake Cities, Hickory Creek, Lake Dallas, Denton, Lewisville, and Highland Village. Numerous local groups, including Scouts and the Lake Cities Run Walk Group, proudly carried American flags as they gathered at the center of the I-35 Pedestrian Bridge, where Denton County Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell led a heartfelt prayer for our nation.

And finally....I'm excited to officially welcome Chick-fil-A to Hickory Creek! Please join me in welcoming owner-operator Brad Slate and his team as they invite you to visit their beautiful new restaurant. The location offers ample parking, indoor and patio seating, and a convenient two-lane drive-thru. Don't forget to download the Chick-fil-A app on your mobile device to explore all the latest features!



I look forward to all we will accomplish in the coming year. Thank you for the privilege of serving as your mayor!

Lynn Clark

On October 1, 2024 Republic Services annual increase went into effect per the Town's contract with them. New rates are as followed:

Monthly Residential Rates:

Trash & Recycling:	\$19.53
Senior Discounted Rate (65+)	\$13.67
Additional Trash Cart:	\$9.12
Additional Recycle Cart:	\$6.48

Additional Contract Benefits:

Bulk trash pickup (up to 1 cubic yard) weekly
 Landfill drop-off (up to 3 cubic yards) monthly
 Hazardous waste pick-up
 (e-mail: hickorycreekhhw@republicservices.com)
 25% off residential roll-off haul rates
 Senior discount age 65+



Other waste disposal options provided at Town Hall

Household battery disposal bin
 E-Cig drop-off bin
 Medicine Return Collection Unit
 Flag recycle program

FAQs: Regarding PID (Public Improvement Districts)



Which subdivisions does this apply to?

- Steeplechase North, Steeplechase South, and Alcove at Hickory Creek

Why are Public Improvement Districts created?

- Public Improvement Districts are created to fund public improvements in a subdivision such as roads, curbs, sidewalks, utilities, landscaping, etc.

Where can I obtain my balance and other information in regards to my PID?

- By visiting P3Works website (<https://www.p3-works.com/individual-property-search>)

How do I pay off my PID?

- By obtaining a prepayment amount from P3Works and submitting the payoff amount along with the payoff letter to Hickory Creek Town Hall

For further information regarding your PID please reach out to P3Works.

HICKORY CREEK STEPS UP FOR SPAN

BY DIANE CIARLONI

Concern for the welfare of its citizens is constantly at the heart of Hickory Creek and the elected officials who guide the town on a day-to-day basis. That same concern is what drives the town in its support and financial backing for organizations such as Span.

Founded in 1974, Span is a private, non-profit offering a number of personally sustaining services for veterans, older citizens, and individuals with disabilities in Denton County. The mission for the organization is to enable people to live as fully and as independently as possible by providing nutrition, transportation, and social services. The vision is to eradicate senior hunger and to eliminate gaps in transportation in Denton County with compassion, optimism, unity, respect, safety, and excellence. At the forefront of all those considerations is making certain it's all offered and provided with an overriding sense of dignity.

Those values and objectives put Span on the same page as Hickory Creek and its leadership, which is why the town was more than willing to step forward with \$20,000 in funding this year, in addition to its already-budgeted amount.

Fiscal responsibility is something Hickory Creek's leaders take very seriously, since making decisions with and for other peoples' money is a critical aspect of all governments, regardless of their size.

Span has expanded over the years since 1974, increasing its budgetary needs in direct response to the broadening of its services. It operates under contract with client cities, including Hickory Creek, The Colony, Coppell, Corinth, Double Oak, Flower Mound, Lake Dallas, Little Elm, and Shady Shores.

Meals on Wheels is a fundamental component of the program that provides hot, nutritious meals for homebound seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. The meals are free of charge for those 60 and older. The recipients are the same people who are most likely to suffer silently from loneliness, depression, and isolation. They are also the ones Span reaches out to first, connecting them to other parts of society while keeping their stomachs full.

There are also congregant meals at numerous senior centers across Denton County. These are excellent since they provide not only nutritious food, but the opportunity to socialize and make friends. Call 940.382.2224 for a list of locations.

For many people, pets are their primary source of love and comfort. Many also fill the role of service animals, especially for veterans, performing physical and emotional tasks their humans are no longer able to do on their own. When Span discovered many of their Meals on Wheels clients were sharing their food with their beloved dogs and cats, they added the Senior Paws program.

Through Senior Paws, dog/cat food is provided (at no cost) to home-delivered meal clients who have pets. There are times when the organization may be able to include supplies such as cat litter, bowls, or treats. Deliveries are on the third Saturday morning of every month.

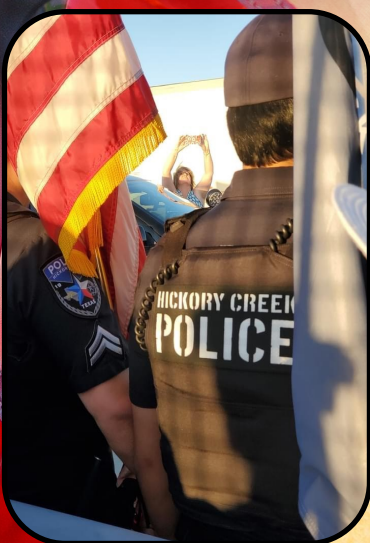
Span operates a fleet of 30 vehicles to fill transportation needs for non-emergency medical trips (doctor appointments, etc.), shopping, recreation, business, education, employment, senior centers, and DFW Veterans Clinics. Annually, Span provides 50,000 trips for approximately 1,000 unduplicated clients. To find out more about Span's transportation services, check www.span-transit.org.

Denton County currently has more than 1 million residents and is still growing at the rate of **90 people per day!** Citizens continue to age and that will not stop. For the first time in 50 years, Span has a waitlist for meals due to rising food costs, ever-growing population, and an increased need for local funding. In the last year alone, 150,000 meals were served, including more than 100 pets. These were the needs of the 7th largest county in the state of Texas. Volunteers and drivers made deliveries and hospital pick-ups to Aubrey, Carrollton, Denton, Flower Mound, Frisco, Lewisville, Little Elm, Pilot Point, Roanoke, The Colony, and more.

One day, some of us reading this may be calling the phone number for Span. The needs will not reverse or shrink, and Hickory Creek will continue to step up when needed.



9/11 Red, White and Blue Freedom Walk





9th Annual See You at the Station

A Touch of Italy

Roma Ristorante Italiano

By Diane Ciarloni

Roma, at 6060 N. Stemmons Fwy, is one of Hickory Creek's newest dining jewels. The comprehensive menu, with its long list of choices, sounds and tastes as if it came straight from the sun-kissed hills of Naples but.....it didn't.

Herolind Shala (Lind), co-owner and manager, landed in the United States five years ago from the small country of Kosovo and its multi-layered mix of cultures, religions, and ethnicities. One of the high-profile layers of the mix is Albanian, which includes Lind.

The country is too complex to offer a full analysis of its varied ingredients so, for now, let's just note that Italy has been one of its long-time supporters. That explains at least part of the connection between the two, along with the affinity for the tastes of Italy.

"My parents were already here," Lind said, "along with several cousins. I had three businesses in Kosovo. One was an Italian restaurant, so I already had the experience." Lind came to the U.S. with the intention of opening another restaurant, and to Texas because it most reminds him of his home country. Also, he has cousins who already blazed an Italian eatery trail in both Texas and Oklahoma.

"I spent eight days in New York when I first arrived," he recalled. "Those eight days were more than enough to tell me New York was not where I wanted to be. Texas and closer to my family was my decision.

"Here, in Texas and especially in Hickory Creek, it's very much like Kosovo," he said. "It has open views and the people are friendly. Hickory Creek is like being in the country, but I still have everything I need within five miles. Many of my customers thank me for opening the restaurant and that makes me happy. Now, many of my Flower Mound people want to know why I don't open a location there. Maybe I will but, first, I must be sure this one is established.

"My cousins are responsible for ten Italian restaurants over here, seven in Texas and three in Oklahoma. I personally prefer Texas."

Restaurants are one of the toughest businesses to tackle. Constant, on-site attention is demanded on a 24/7 schedule. There is no slacking and basically no time off is permitted.

"I have been here every day since December 20 of last year," Lind said. "Monday is the only day we're closed for service but, even then, I'm usually here checking things. There is so much I must keep my eyes on.

"I want to know where my customers come from. I want to know how many are repeat and, if someone has a problem while here, I'm the one who needs to take care of it.

“I keep my eyes on the plates as they’re returned to the kitchen. Is there food left on them or are they clean? How many to-go boxes are we using? That tells me the diner enjoyed the food and didn’t want to leave it behind, but he was too full to finish it at the table.”

Lind was only 11 years old when his father began pushing him into the business world in Kosovo. He wanted him to learn independence and the meaning of hard work. It was his wish that his son become familiar with the flush of pride that comes from the successful results of concentrated, personal effort. He taught well and his son learned well.

In the beginning, Lind’s cousins and friends advised him strongly to wait before opening his own restaurant. Learn the language first, they said. Work a few years for someone else who is already established, they urged. Don’t rush, they said more than once. Lind had no desire to take any of those advisements under consideration. Why wait?

All ingredients are fresh at Roma’s, and your order isn’t made until your smiling, fresh-faced, well-trained, and welcoming waitress writes it on her pad and turns it in to one of three chefs (actually four, counting Lind).

It may take a while to make your menu selection, unless you’ve already visited several times and decided on your favorites. Otherwise, there are multiple entries of pasta variations, chicken, seafood, and pizza. But don’t worry. No one is in a rush. Just know in advance that whatever you choose will be an adventure.

Social media places Roma’s at a 4.7 out of five but head out to 6060 N. Stemmons Freeway and taste for yourself what Roma’s offers.



**Pictured: Harolind Shala (Lind)
Co-Owner and Manager**





HICKORY CREEK ANIMAL SHELTER CREW

BY DIANE CIARLONI

Under the leadership of long-time employee Jeffrey McSpedden, Hickory Creek’s animal shelter crew would be a source of pride for any city or town, regardless of location or size. Two years ago, Hickory Creek entered a partnership to shoulder the animal responsibilities for Corinth and Shady Shores. Activities increased significantly, keeping our two Animal Control Officers Erica Martinez and Robert Paterson busy.

One of the most sought-after goals of any shelter is to become designated as a no-kill facility. This means animals are not euthanized unless they have behavioral problems that rule out the possibility of rehabilitation or they’re afflicted with an incurable illness. It also means more than 90- percent of the animals housed in the shelter, whether they’re strays or owner surrenders or rescues, make it out alive.

HC is considered a small shelter. There’s not a lot of publicity and, as a result, our animals have a tendency to go slightly below the radar. That also makes adoptions a bit harder. Our focus is to always do the best we can for the animals who come through our doors.

Martinez brings some new dimensions to the HC shelter. One of Martinez’s focus areas is establishing a strong social media presence for the HC animals. One of her look-forward-to projects is to resurrect the old-style “glamour shot” profiles for the animals. She considers it a positive element whenever the dogs and cats can be presented as beautiful individuals with distinct personalities. There are things we can do to make our animals more adoptable. For starters we can strengthening our social media presence and ask people to share the things we post.

The shelter utilizes creative ways such as music and lavender to care for dogs who remain in the shelter for extended periods of time to stave off negative kennel effects.

Robert Paterson, the second member of the team, joined approximately one year ago to be a voice for the animals. Paterson spent four years with the HC Public Works department, but decided to switch gears to accept the animal control officer position. “I’ve always loved animals and the thought of being able to help with their welfare was appealing to me.”

Please feel free to visit the shelter during business hours, meet the animals, watch the kittens play, throw a ball for the dogs, or adopt your next furever family member.

Address:

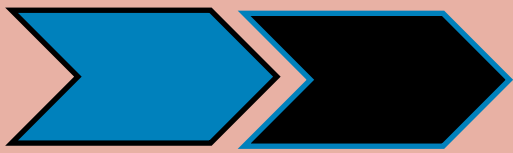
970 Main Street
Hickory Creek, TX 75065

Phone:

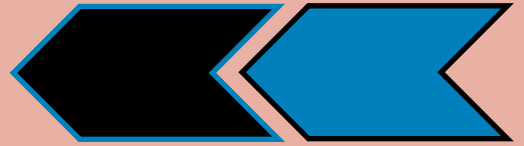
940-465-7444

Website:

www.hickorycreek-tx.gov/animal



**ANNUAL TREE
LIGHTING**



JOIN US FOR

Our Annual

Tree Lighting

Event

**Hickory Creek Town Hall
Friday, December 6th
6:00 - 8:00 PM**

The poster features a festive design with a blue background decorated with white snowflakes and various Christmas ornaments (gold, silver, blue, red). On the left is a cartoon Santa Claus in a red suit and hat. On the right is a cartoon snowman wearing a red and white striped hat and scarf. The text is centered on a white background, with 'Our Annual' in a bold blue font and 'Tree Lighting Event' in a red cursive font. The event details are at the bottom in a black sans-serif font.

**HICKORY CREEK
TOWN HALL**

1075 Ronald Reagan
Avenue

940-497-2528

Monday - Thursday

7:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Friday

7 AM - 11 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

Economic Development Corporation—Third Thursday

Town Council—Fourth Monday

ALL MEETINGS BEGIN AT 6 PM



UPCOMING TOWN CLOSURES

November 11

Veterans Day

November 28 & 29

Thanksgiving Holiday

December 24 & 25

Christmas Holiday