



JEFFERSON COUNTY LINE

WINTER EDITION 2014



Important Numbers to Remember . . .

Employee Assistance Program
1-800-324-4327

Deferred Compensation
1-877-677-3678

CIGNA
1-800-244-6224

Compass Professional Health Services
1-800-513-1667

Risk Management
409-835-8672

Employee Health
409-784-5881

co.jefferson.tx.us

Annual Lighting of the Tree

On **December 1, 2014** the employees of Jefferson County gathered together to see the lighting of the Christmas tree in the Atrium of the Courthouse. Those in attendance were entertained by Memorial High School Choir, and greeted by Santa Claus and his helper.



The tree was lit by **Talia Riana Johnson (age 5)**, daughter of Dorothy B. Joubert and Travis R. Johnson, and grand daughter of Bernadette Antwine from the Tax Office.

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Sub Courthouse Annual Lighting of the Tree

On **December 12, 2014** the employees of Jefferson County gathered together to see the lighting of the Christmas tree in the Foyer of the Sub Courthouse in Port Arthur. Those in attendance were entertained by students from DeQueen Elementary and Wheatley Elementary.

The Tree was lit by **Jordan Lowe (age 2)**, grandson of Major Bradford Lowe from the Sheriff's Office.



Jefferson County Welcomes Newly Elected Officials



ALLISON GETZ, TAX ASSESSOR/COLLECTOR



Jefferson County Employee Health Clinic

Protect Yourself from the Bad Ol' Bug---Get the Flu Vaccine!

The CDC recommends everyone over the age of 6 months get a flu vaccine every year. Once vaccinated, the body needs two weeks to produce enough antibodies for protection against the flu. The vaccine does not protect against non-flu viruses that can cause colds and other respiratory symptoms that are similar to the flu.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu>



There are a number of things we can do to protect ourselves in addition to getting vaccinated. Washing our hands frequently throughout the day with soap and water is the #1 best way to prevent illness. If water is not available, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Sneezing and coughing into a tissue helps to block the spread of germ droplets from your mouth or nose. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth throughout the day. Germs spread this way too. Avoid close contact with people who are coughing or state that they aren't feeling well. If you or a fellow employee begins to run fever, call your supervisor and let them know right away. Do not report for work until you are free of fever for 24 hours. Routinely clean frequently touched objects and surfaces, including door knobs, keyboards, and phones to remove germs. Make sure others are trained to do your job temporarily in case you or a family member gets sick and must stay home. Everyday preventive actions can help slow the spread of germs that cause many different illnesses and offer some protection against the flu. Our employee health clinic has a limited number of flu shots still available to you, your spouse and dependents over age 18. If you are a retired county employee, we also encourage you to visit your local pharmacy to get your shot.

Have a Healthy and Happy Holiday Season!

Leslie Little, APRN, MSN, FNP-C Employee Health Provider





StepUp & ScaleDown

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Watching the Waistline When Eating Out

Americans love to eat out. In fact, a large part of every food dollar is spent on food prepared by someone else. Unfortunately, eating out is a habit that may come at a cost to our nutritional health. While it may be easier to drive to the window of a fast food restaurant or have pizza delivered to our door, eating foods prepared away from home tend to be higher in calories and fat compared to what you could prepare in your own kitchen. This creates a challenge for people who are watching their weight. The following tips can help avoid waistline expansion when dining out.

Plan before you go. If you are watching your weight or trying to eat fewer calories, think about what you will eat before you enter the restaurant. Many restaurants post the nutrient analysis of their menu items on the internet and smart phone apps make the information available at the touch of a screen.

At the restaurant: Restaurants are also beginning to place calorie information next to menu items. This can help you order a meal that won't break your calorie budget.

Other ways to watch your calories when eating out

1. Free foods offered at restaurants are not really "free." A basket of bread sticks or fried corn chips can cost up to 1,000 calories. **The solution?** Ask for plain corn tortillas instead of fried chips or request that bread be served without added butter. Better yet, decline the "free" food altogether.



2. A baked potato is usually better than one that is fried unless butter, sour cream, bacon, and cheese are added. You may get a little more flavor with these toppings but with that comes extra fat and calories. **The solution?** If you must

top your potato with a little extra "something," get the toppings on the side and use them sparingly.

3. Bigger portions may be cheap but what value are you really getting? A small order of French fries has about 220 calories and 9 grams of fat. Upgrading to a larger size for a few cents can add as much as 170 additional calories and 6 extra grams of fat. Is that really a value? **The solution?** If you eat at a fast food restaurant, just say "NO" to value-sized portions. If restaurant portions are too large for your needs, ask for a child-sized portion or ask for another plate and split the entree with a friend.



4. Restaurants that advertise "all you can eat" may be easy on the wallet but not on the waistline. **The solution?** If you have a tendency to overeat when eating out, stay away from buffets and places that offer unlimited quantities of food.

5. Eating out with others may encourage some people to eat more even when they are not very hungry. **The solution?** Order an appetizer as your main course. With bread and side salad, that may be all you need to take away the hunger pains.



Risk Management Reminders Winter 2014

Do you have any money left in your Health Care Flexible Spending Account?

If you are enrolled in the **FSA Health Care Account**, you have a *spend down period* through March 15, 2015 to incur expenses. You have until March 31, 2015 to submit claims for reimbursement. If you are enrolled in the **Dependent Care Account**, any money left in your account at the end of the plan year will be forfeited.

Benefit changes made during Annual Enrollment will take effect on January 1, 2015. Your 1st pay stub in January will reflect any changes in your deductions.

Cigna approved over-the-counter drugs for \$2.00 - Prilosec 20 mg, Prevacid 24 hr, Zegerid, Nexium 20 mg, Zyrtec, Claritin, Allegra, and Nasacort are covered by the Plan for a \$2 co-pay for a 28-30 day supply with a written prescription from your doctor indicating OTC on the prescription. You must present the OTC prescription to the pharmacist for filling through the Cigna System. Generic statins for high cholesterol and generic oral anti-diabetic medications have a \$0 copay.

Injured on the job? County Policy states that you must notify Risk Management within 24 hours of any on the job injury or illness by completing an On the Job/Injury Illness form located on the Risk Management page of the Jefferson County website.

Happy Holidays

from your Risk Management staff:

Kim, Verona, and Cathryn



Please join us in welcoming our newest employees of Jefferson County:

317th District Court—Rod Paasch; **Adult Probation**—Dana Dover; **Constable Pct. 1**—James Locke; **District Attorney**—Leticia Gonzalez; **Employee Health**—Sophia Leblanc; **Juvenile Probation**—Christal Channell, Edward Johnson, Stephen Mayfield; **Maintenance**—Beverly Dittrich; **Sheriff**—Danny Moore, Phillip Swan, Jordan Macha, Nathan Staggs, Reginald Boykin, Kenneth Breakfield, Misty Garrison, Evyn Lacy, Vladimir Quirante, Blake Rice, Harry Wiltz; **Tax Office**—Donna Shelton

REMINDERS FOR RETIREMENT

- Contact Verenice Rosales in Human Resources, to schedule your appointment to retire, (409) 839-2395.
- Bring your driver’s license to your appointment.
- Bring your beneficiary’s driver’s license along with his/her social security number.
- Bring a voided check for direct deposit purposes.
- Employees may bring their beneficiary at the time of their appointment.

We wish all of the retirees continued happiness and success in their future endeavors. Congratulations!

September

*Starla Ware
Dorothy Dean*

October

Sandra Landry

November

*Elizabeth Clayton
Lige Darrell Clayton
Joan Lemoine
Kathy Kellas
Shelia Briggs
Vera Ozen*

December

*Susan Jane Birge
Creig Miller
Belinda Thompson
Kenneth Seholm*

WINTER WORD SEARCH



Created by
Don Lindhorst
Grand Forks Herald
2010

W	E	A	T	H	E	R	W	G	S	F	P	S	F	M
O	H	J	V	O	L	J	O	N	J	V	H	N	J	J
K	F	R	A	C	S	M	E	O	K	O	L	O	M	G
D	R	H	B	P	T	T	O	P	V	B	P	W	W	N
I	E	L	J	Q	T	O	I	E	L	J	Q	F	W	I
W	E	P	N	Q	I	W	K	L	I	P	N	S	L	K
S	Z	Q	M	W	Q	D	S	D	Q	M	F	A	D	A
N	I	A	K	S	B	I	U	W	A	K	F	K	I	K
A	N	S	L	I	D	E	I	S	S	L	U	E	W	S
M	G	W	J	C	D	L	L	A	W	J	M	D	S	W
W	W	X	J	D	S	N	O	P	X	I	R	B	S	X
O	C	C	U	F	D	D	P	C	C	U	A	D	D	C
N	V	D	O	M	G	G	N	I	D	D	E	L	S	D
S	B	E	P	I	C	C	R	E	T	N	I	W	C	E
F	S	L	I	P	P	E	R	Y	R	T	A	H	H	R

See how many of these words you can find in the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Snow | 5. Shovel | 9. Slippery | 13. Scarf |
| 2. Snowman | 6. Cold | 10. Slide | 14. Hat |
| 3. Winter | 7. Freezing | 11. Sledding | 15. Earmuffs |
| 4. Weather | 8. Snowflake | 12. Skating | 16. Mittens |

The Wellness News

November 2014

This Month: Getting Healthy for the Holidays

Let us help!

The holidays are fast approaching, and you'll need to be at your best to enjoy all the fun of the season. This month, we'll provide tips to help you prepare for the holidays by starting healthy habits. In this issue, you will learn about reasons you should quit tobacco, how to reduce your stress through exercise, and managing cravings for sweets.

Quitting Tobacco

What's in it for you?

November is the American Cancer Society's month to bring awareness to the benefits of quitting tobacco. Here are some reasons why you should quit:

- It improves your health! After a year of staying off tobacco products, your heart disease risk lowers by 50%. After ten years, your risk for developing cancer equates to that of a life-long non-smoker.
- You'll save money – cigarettes aren't cheap.
- There are social benefits – public places are increasingly becoming tobacco free. Why should you have to leave the party to go smoke outside in the cold?

Quitting can be challenging, but the rewards more than compensate for the effort.



Want to Reduce your Stress?

Sweat it out!

Exercise is a great way to reduce your stress and improve your overall well-being. It can alleviate stress, loosen tight muscles, and it can be a lot of fun. Here are some easy ways to incorporate more physical activity into your life. Take a quick walk on your work breaks. Even as little as five minutes can be helpful. When you come home from work, grab your workout clothes and choose a physical activity you enjoy. Try a high-intensity workout and work up a sweat, or do some gentle yoga. Studies show that both are proven to reduce stress and improve mood. Get active outside. Being outdoors helps you enjoy the fresh air. Think outside the box and opt for a different kind of outdoor physical activity. You could use this as an opportunity to do some fall chores. Try gardening, mowing the lawn, raking the leaves, or any other activity that you might enjoy! It doesn't matter what you choose—any activity that gets you moving can be beneficial to your health!

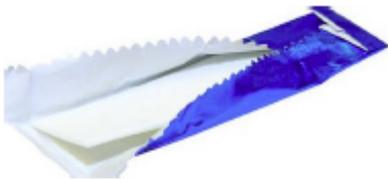
The Wellness News

November 2014

What's the Best Way to Handle a Sugar Craving?

If you have a sweet tooth, you aren't alone. Fortunately, there are ways to help reduce those cravings. By nourishing your body with nutritious foods, you will want that sweet treat less. Try these tips:

- **First, grab a bottle of water.** The water can help fill you up and give your hands something to hold onto. For added flavor, add a slice of your favorite fruit.
- **For cold days** when chilled water won't suffice, have a warm drink instead. For a flavorful beverage, steep herbal tea.
- **Eat a healthy snack.** Combine a healthy protein (nuts, nut butter, seeds, meat, dairy, or beans) with a nutritious carbohydrate (fruit, vegetable, whole grain, or a starch). Balancing your snacks can provide more energy and alleviate your cravings for the sweet stuff.
- **Chewing gum** can go a long way when your sweet tooth hits. It's full of refreshing flavor and keeps your mouth busy. Try sugar-free gum to make your dentist happy.
- **Eat nature's candy.** If you really need a sweet treat, eat a piece of fruit—it contains vitamins and fiber. Consider keeping a bowl of fresh apples, bananas, and oranges at home and work.



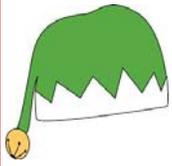
Log Your Food

Track what you eat

Whether you want to lose a few pounds or just want to eat better, tracking what you eat can help. Logging your food intake can help you be more mindful of what you consume and allow you to see areas for improvement. We make it easy to track your food—you can log it right on your wellness website! Your Wellness website features a variety of easy-to-use health trackers to help you stay on top of your wellness goals. In addition to tracking your food, you can also track your exercise, water intake, weight, sleep, and more.



For more Health & Wellness information visit: www.4eap.com



HATS OFF TO YOU!



The Jefferson County Tax Office would like to commend **Terry Wuenschel** for a job well done serving as the interim Tax Assessor/Collector this past year. She took on the added responsibility along with her other duties which include being an integral part of all accounting activities within the office including calculation of the effective tax rate. The county is fortunate to have such a dedicated public servant and we are fortunate to have her as Financial Director of Operations for this office



Jefferson County Holidays 2015

January 19 (Monday)
Martin Luther King, Jr., Day

September 7 (Monday)
Labor Day

February 16 (Monday)
President's Day

November 11 (Wednesday)
Veteran's Day

April 3 (Friday)
Good Friday

November 26 & 27 (Thursday & Friday)
Thanksgiving

May 25 (Monday)
Memorial Day

December 24 & 25 (Thursday & Friday)
Christmas

July 3 (Friday)
Independence Day

January 1, 2016 (Friday)
New Year's Day



"There is no greater joy nor greater reward than to make a fundamental difference in someone's life."

—Sister Mary Rose McGeady
Children's advocate

The Jefferson County Line is published quarterly by the Human Resources Department. News Editor: Cary Erickson. Publisher, Verence Rosales. If you have an article that you would like to include in the next newsletter, please send it to the HR Department.

INSERT

**2014 JEFFERSON COUNTY
EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARD NOMINATION FORM**

Name of Nominee: _____

Position Title: _____

Division/Department: _____

Number of years employed with Jefferson County: _____

Briefly outline nominee's current job responsibilities: _____

All items below must be completed. Attach additional pages if necessary.

Describe at least three qualities and/or characteristics which reflect the nominee's professionalism and dedication to excellence in his/her work:

Cite specific example(s) of the nominee's actions or attitudes which underscore his/her dedication to the job and public service and which show that he/she is committed to the highest standards of moral, ethical and professional excellence:

Cite example(s) of nominee's interaction with co-workers/citizens that show self-confidence, courtesy and respect for others:

Submitted by:

Department: _____

Date: _____

**Return completed form to the
Human Resources Department no later than
January 30, 2015.**

INSERT

GUIDELINES FOR THE JEFFERSON COUNTY AWARD FOR EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

I. What are the criteria?

- Personifies at all times the highest ideals of personal integrity, professionalism and excellence.
- Sets personal and work standards which are outstanding and continually strives for excellence and perfection.
- Consistently performs tasks, interacts with others, and presents him/herself in such a manner as to be a credit to his/her department and Jefferson County
- Is self-motivated and self-directed with a thorough knowledge of his/her job and demonstrates the ability to initiate creative, goal oriented projects and carry them through to successful completion.
- Shows pride in his/her work and dedication to duty; consistently does nothing less than the best possible job in every detail.
- Treats coworkers and the public with respect and courtesy.

II. Who is eligible?

All full-time regular county employees (other than elected officials) who have been employed for at least one year are eligible to be nominated for this award. **Please submit the name of one employee per nomination form.**

III. How will the recipient be selected?

Nominations for the recipient can come from any County employee. All nominations must be received in the Human Resource Department by a specified date. A panel made up of five elected officials and/or county employees (selected by Commissioners' Court) will be responsible for selecting the finalists and the ultimate recipient. This panel will review all nominations and select three finalists. These finalists shall be rank-ordered for purposes of selecting the award winner.

IV. How will the recipient be recognized?

A cash award of \$700.00 will be presented to the award winner during Commissioners' Court. The award winner will also receive a resolution from the court and have his/her name displayed on a plaque in the courthouse lobby. The first finalist will receive a cash award of \$350.00 and the second finalist will receive a cash award of \$300.00. Both the winner and the finalists will also receive a certificate of merit stating they were a finalist for the award.

Application Deadline is Friday, January 30, 2015.

OVER

Interlink

**November
2014**

A monthly newsletter published by Interface EAP

Getting Ready for the Winter Illness Season

In much of the Northern Hemisphere, this is prime time for colds, influenza (flu), and other respiratory illnesses. In the US, flu season typically runs from November through March. Illness like colds, influenza, and other types of flu are caused by a virus. Regardless of the virus, there are many things you can do to help limit your exposure and/or improve your treatment.

Colds and flu spread primarily by the mucus of someone already ill. When an ill person coughs, sneezes, and/or touches a surface, they may leave cold or flu virus behind. To help minimize exposure, follow these prevention tips:

Cough & sneeze into your elbow, not your hand!

Instead of covering your cough with your hand, turn your head and cough into your elbow, which will sequester a virus just as well. Your elbow, however, is far less likely than your hands to come in contact with people or surfaces, and so you will be less likely to spread illness to others.

Wash up often!

The more frequently you wash your hands, the lower your risk of becoming sick. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends washing your hands with warm, soapy water for about 15 seconds. Especially wash hands before eating and after using the restroom. Turn off the water and open doors while holding a paper towel to avoid touching those surfaces.

Keep your hands off your face!

A study in 2008 from the University of California, Berkeley, found that the typical person touches their

face about 16 times per hour! If you refrain from touching your eyes, nose, and lips, you drastically reduce the likelihood of a virus entering your body.

Use hand sanitizer in public areas.

Not everyone will cough or sneeze in their elbow, and not everyone washes their hands. When touching surfaces that many others have touched, hand sanitizer can substitute for hand washing in a pinch (though soap and water are still preferred).

Get the flu vaccine!

The flu vaccine remains the best way to prevent and control influenza. The best time to get the vaccine is from October to November, but December and even January are not too late! According to the CDC, more than 200,000 people in the United States are hospitalized from flu-related complications each year, including 20,000 children younger than age 5. Flu-associated deaths number in the thousands each year. Between 1976 and 2006, the estimated number of flu-related deaths every year ranged from about 3,000 to about 49,000.



Usually, colds and flu simply have to run their course. If you are already sick, see your doctor, especially if you have a cough that wakes you from sleeping, a fever that won't go down, or if your symptoms worsen. Try not to make other people sick by limiting your exposure to others, stay hydrated, and keep rested.

Interface EAP

Total Life Assistance™



Treating ADD/ADHD—Behavioral Therapy & Medications



ADHD, or attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, is a behavioral condition that makes focusing on everyday requests and routines challenging. People with ADHD typically have trouble getting organized, staying focused, making realistic plans and thinking before acting. They may be fidgety, noisy and unable to adapt to changing situations. Children with ADHD can be defiant, socially inept or aggressive. Families considering treatment options should consult a qualified mental health professional for a complete review of their child's behavioral issues and a treatment plan. And, according to the American Psychological Association, treatment plans should include talk therapy.

Patricia Quinn, MD, co-authored When Moms and Kids have ADD. According to Dr. Quinn, “A pill decreases common ADHD *symptoms* like impulsivity and distractibility, but it doesn’t change *behavior*. A child on medication might be disinclined to punch someone, because he’s less impulsive, but he doesn’t know what to do instead. Behavior therapy fills in the blanks, by giving a child positive alternative behaviors to use.”

Quinn is not alone in prescribing behavior therapy for patients. According to the American Psychological Association, behavior therapy should be the first line of treatment for children with ADHD who are under five years of age. Though William Pelham, PhD, director of the Center for Children and Families at the State University of New York goes further, suggesting that children of any age try behavioral therapy before medication. “There’s clear evidence that a behavioral approach will work for the majority of children with ADHD,” says Pelham. “The benefit of using behavior therapy first is that, if a child also needs medication, he can often get by with a smaller dose.”

One must also consider the effects of using stimulant medication long-term. “Particularly in the case of stimulant medications, which are the most common treatment for ADHD, we don’t know an awful lot about the long-term side effects,” says Nancy Neef PhD, a professor of special education at The Ohio State University. And medication doesn’t address problems related to children’s academic performance and relationships with family members, peers and others. “Even though medication can be effective and very helpful, it’s not a panacea,” Neef says.

That vast majority of studies indicate that medication treatment for mental health issues is far more effective when combined with talk therapy. In some cases, cognitive behavioral therapy alone can be as effective as medications, or even more effective. Regardless, medications do treat symptoms, and are often the first line of treatment used for ADD/ADHD patients. But treating a symptom is only part of the process – behaviors must change, and patients must learn to adapt. Thankfully, behavior therapy is documented to help in these areas.

For more information on therapeutic options for ADD/ADHD, and other mental health conditions, contact your free and confidential EAP!



Source: www.apa.org

Holiday Party Planning in the Diverse Workplace



Holiday party planning can get complicated when companies add diversity to their merrymaking mix. How do you appeal to all without leaving someone out in the cold? "Put the emphasis on celebrating," advises Sondra Thiederman, PhD, author of *Making Diversity Work*. The key: "Focus more on what we share and less on where we differ."

Thiederman says trying to plan a holiday party that recognizes every culture and religion is just inviting failure. "The more you try to please members of every single group, the greater danger you are of deeply offending someone left out," she says. "Go for neutrality, not specificity."

Holiday Party Planning Tips:

- ◆ **Include a Welcome Statement.** Encourage the CEO, president or regional manager -- whoever's hosting the bash -- to recognize the company's diversity from the microphone. "Say, 'Look at the diversity in this room. Not only are we celebrating the holiday season and the end of the year and a job well done, but the fact that we're all together in this room,'" Thiederman suggests.
- ◆ **Keep Décor Nonspecific.** Sorry, Santa -- it's a "holiday party" now. But that doesn't mean it has to be somber. Deck the halls with neutral symbols such as flowers, balloons, candles and snowflakes. Don't try to do the symbols from every culture.
- ◆ **Accommodate Diverse Palates.** Be respectful of dietary diversity and offer both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food choices.
- ◆ **Try Golden Oldies for Musical Mass Appeal.** Music can be tough, as individuals within families (let alone companies and cultures) can have vastly different tastes. Anything too genre- or culture-specific may strike a sour note. To make everyone happy, Thiederman suggests going back in time. "Try historical music, the big bands and sounds of the '40s. It's less of a hot button than if you play modern popular music or holiday carols.
- ◆ **Invite the Family.** "One mistake companies make is inviting people for evening celebrations and not including the entire family," says Thiederman. "Everybody has family in common." Daytime and weekend events like picnics may have the widest appeal. Remember that in some cultures, the concept of family may include not just spouses and kids but the extended family, too. Consider how child care and transportation issues may affect whether employees attend.
- ◆ **Make it voluntary.** Allow employees to opt out of company holiday events without penalty or negative connotation.

Source: *monster.com*

Stress

For free and confidential assistance, call your
Employee Assistance Program and speak with a Care Coordinator:

Marital Problems

Financial

(713) 781-3364

Se Habla Español

Family Problems

Legal

(800) 324-4327

(800) 324-2490

Alcohol/Drug Problems

Depression

www.4eap.com

Other Referrals

Your employer has contracted with Interface EAP to provide you an Employee Assistance Program.

