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County recognizes years of service

Ellis County officials gathered Friday evening to recognize employees for their years of service to the public.

“I know sometimes it seems like a thankless job,” said County Judge Carol Bush. “But I am here to say you are appreciated.”

Topping the list was Judge Curtis Polk, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 3, who has served for 30 years, beginning as a Sheriff’s Deputy in 1981. Polk was appointed by the Commissioners’ Court to fulfill an unexpired term on the bench of the Justice Court for Precinct 3 in 1994. He was subsequently elected to that bench by the people of the precinct and has served continuously in that capacity since that time.

The Justice Court has jurisdiction over civil, small claims, and eviction suits up to \$10,000 exclusive of interest. Because the Justice Court is not a court of record, any appeal to county court is trial de novo, or a new trial. The Justice of the Peace also serves as magistrate and can issue warrants for arrest as well as search warrants after determining there is enough probable cause to do so. Another important function as magistrate is to review applications for emergency mental commitments and emergency protective orders. In counties that do not have a medical examiner or county coroner, a Justice of the Peace is required to rule on cause and manner of death on unattended deaths and must determine when an autopsy is necessary to find the cause. In this position, the Justice of the Peace works closely with law enforcement personnel who have the investigation authority.

Members of the Commissioners’ Court thanked Polk for his dedication to the people of Ellis County, quipping that he was now the “oldest elected official” in the county.

Eight individuals were recognized for 20 years of service, having achieved that milestone during the 2011 calendar year, including Commissioner Ron Brown, pct. 4; Sonja Butler, Community Supervision and Corrections; Cindy Chapman, Sheriff’s Office; Carla Cobb, County Court at Law #1; Alyssa Kirton, Road and Bridge 3; Marvine Morrow, Community Supervision and Corrections; County Clerk Cindy Polley; and Judge Bill Woody, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1.

Janis Burdett, Juvenile Services; Yvette Gallegos, Community Supervision and Corrections; Ralph “Anthony” Golden, Sheriff’s Office; Carol Haden, Road and Bridge 1; Don Maxfield, District Attorney’s Office; Heidi Smith, Sheriff’s Office; and Clifford Stacks, Sheriff’s Office were all recognized for having served fifteen years with Ellis County.

A total of 35 employees marked their tenth year of service during 2011, including Jeremy Atilano, Sheriff’s Office; Ruben Benavidez, Road and Bridge 2; Dywana Blake, County Clerk’s Office; Sheriff Johnny Brown; Carol Bugg, Juvenile Detention; Nancy Byers, Elections; Roy Callender, Jr., Sheriff’s Office; Ojimer Cannaday, Road and Bridge 2; Gary “Dale” Cheek, Sheriff’s Office; Teral Crawford, Information Technology; Rodney Dickerson, Road and Bridge 2; Amy Ellison, Sheriff’s Office; Kenneth Hatcher, Sheriff’s Office; Amelia “Millie” Hopgood, Maintenance; Casey Johnson, Sheriff’s Office; Captain Charles “Chuck” Laubach, Sheriff’s Office; Ather “Pete” Marion, Road and Bridge 3; Patricia Marshall, County Court at Law #2; Christopher Martinez, Juvenile Detention; Brian Mathiowitz, Road and Bridge 3; Lupe Nieto, Road and Bridge 1; Captain Bruce “Brad” Norman, Sheriff’s Office; Timothy Oldfield, Sheriff’s Office; Thomas Pelzel, Road and Bridge 1; Kenneth Reeves, Sheriff’s Office; Judy Robertson, Human Services; James Saulter, Sheriff’s Office; Phillip Slaughter, Sheriff’s Office; Thomas “Glenn” Smith, Sheriff’s Office; Joshua Tate, Sheriff’s Office; Eula Taylor, Tax Assessor-Collector’s Office; Anthony Welling, Sheriff’s Office; Debbie Werkmeister, office of the Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2; County Engineer Joe White; and George Williams, Sheriff’s Office.

Earning recognition for five years of service were Donald Blanton, Sheriff’s Office; Tina Boykin, Tax Assessor-Collector’s Office; Sylvia Bucio, Community Supervision and Corrections; Kyle Butler, Road and Bridge 4; Teneshia Chatman, Sheriff’s Office; Janice Davis, Tax Assessor-Collector’s Office; David Duke, Road and Bridge 4; Larry Feaster, Road and Bridge 4; Evelyn Flangin, Juvenile Detention; Maria Fowler, Community Supervision and Corrections; James Glasscock, Sheriff’s Office; Margie Goggans, Sheriff’s Office; Glen Johnson, Road and Bridge 3; Jocelyn King, Information Technology; Justin Knapp, Sheriff’s Office; Lawrence Krajca, Road and Bridge 1; Charlie Littleton, Jr., Sheriff’s Office; Jessica Martinez, Juvenile Services; Christopher Morgan, Sheriff’s Office; Gloria Meyers, Sheriff’s Office; Amy Nguyen, District Attorney’s Office; Ryan Payne, Juvenile Services; Jeremy Puckett, Sheriff’s Office; District Clerk Melanie Reed; Billy Rose, Sheriff’s Office; Kathy Roundtree, Sheriff’s Office; Thomas Spaniel, Sheriff’s Office; Marilyn “Kay” Sweet, County Clerk’s Office; Jeffrey Thompson, Juvenile Services; Shane Thompson, Sheriff’s Office; and Amber Wilmot, District Attorney’s Office.

“I think this is an impressive list of employees who have dedicated a significant block of time to their work at Ellis County,” said County Judge Carol Bush. “I know I speak for the Commissioners, and with their permission, when I say thank you to each of the departments for the work you do.”