Thank You to Those Who Serve

As April is National Volunteer Month, I would like to thank all the volunteers, individuals, and civic organizations that continue to give back to OUR community in so many ways. Over the past few years, Money Magazine ranked Rowlett in its Top 25 Best Places to Live, Movoto designated Rowlett the #1 Small City in America To Move To, and Rowlett is consistently listed among the 50 Safest Cities in Texas. These accolades are a testament to our amazing sense of community, which is not created by having sewer access or running water (although I certainly don’t want to be without either!). A community is created by its PEOPLE. One of the greatest assets Rowlett has is the sheer volume of citizens that volunteer to help their City, giving back more than 22,500 hours of their time every year! It never ceases to amaze me, the number of people who love this community and show it through their volunteerism daily. Please see the next pages for a few shining examples of those we are so blessed to have serving our City, recognized this month at the Boards, Commissions and Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

There are many opportunities to become involved with YOUR community in a way that is meaningful to YOU. Whether that’s volunteering at the Library or Animal Shelter, participating on a board or commission of interest to you, or serving our community as part of the Rowlett Citizens Corps Council, VIPS, Keep Rowlett Beautiful, Friends of Rowlett Animals, Friends of the Rowlett Library, Rotary or Lions Club teams…the list goes on and on. I am absolutely in awe of, and so very grateful to, those who continue to selflessly give of their time to serve OUR Rowlett.

We all have the opportunity to make Rowlett the community we want it to be, and together we will continue to do just that!

Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian
In Fiscal Year 2018...
22,978 volunteer hours were donated
$573,280 taxpayer dollars saved
11.1 Full Time Employee equivalents!

Visit Rowlett.com/Volunteer to for more information about the
City of Rowlett Volunteer Program and to enroll today!

Since 2005, Rowlett Mayors have had the honor of recognizing a Rowlett resident with the highest volunteer award. This service award is named after one of Rowlett’s most civically engaged citizens, Richard Huff. When determining the right person to receive the prestigious Richard Huff Service Award, it took me about two seconds of consideration, as he is so deserving. The only reason he has not won this award prior to now is that he was responsible for naming the recipient for so many years.

Todd Gottel began his service on the Rowlett City Council in 2007 and served as Mayor of Rowlett from 2011 to 2017. I began working closely with Todd in 2013 when I was elected to City Council. I personally have enjoyed and benefited greatly working side by side with Todd - he has been an incredible mentor and friend to so many.

Over the years, I have seen Todd manage difficult situations ethically and responsibly - always keeping the interests of citizens and staff foremost in his actions. That is how Todd works. He meets challenges head on and makes good and sound decisions for the benefit of the citizens and not for personal gain.

Many of our residents knew Todd as Batmayor – someone to help them in their time of need. We often joked that Todd used Facebook like a work order system. And he did. When I first observed Todd doing this, I thought he was crazy. But it really opened up communication and trust throughout the community. One of Todd’s often used statements was “I just want the people to know the whole truth and then they can decide for themselves”.

Todd is very good at connecting personally with those around him. He was very effective with local, state and national leaders, ensuring the best interests of Rowlett were considered. And Todd connected personally with so many individual residents of Rowlett. I saw him use his personal money to assist a resident with a faulty air conditioner in the heat of the summer and mobilize a group of citizen volunteers to rebuild a roof for a needy resident after convincing Home Depot to donate the supplies.

Some major events that Todd navigated the City through include:
• a change in leadership with our City Manager;
• deep budget and service cuts during the Great Recession of 2008 (which continues to impact our city today due to deferred maintenance);
• the creation of a vision that transformed us from a bedroom community to an active thriving community, capitalizing on the actions of our previous civic leaders who brought us DART and PGBT;
• the development and adoption of our Comprehensive Plan, Realize Rowlett 2020;
• the purchase and sale of former Elgin B Robertson Park and ongoing development of Bayside, and unprecedented growth in the city including $1 billion of development currently in process or approved for development in the foreseeable future.

And I cannot talk about Todd without discussing the December 2015 EF4 tornado. Todd did not work at his job for almost three months after the tornado hit our community. He did not bat an eye with this decision, he considered devoting 100% of his time to Rowlett as his obligation and his honor. He was the face of the City and he was in the trenches with our citizens. We heard from countless officials and disaster volunteers throughout the state that routinely deal with disasters, and every one of them were amazed at how our community responded to this massive event in our lives. We pulled together as a community after that tragic event and Todd led us by example.

Thank you for your service, sir. You have been a true representative of the people, and an honorable leader for our City.
The **Volunteer of the Year Award** recognizes outstanding individual contributions to the City of Rowlett and its programs, services, and events.

Glenn is a true asset to his community and the Rowlett Police Department. He has been a member of the Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) since August, 2013 and is currently the VIPS Assistant Patrol Supervisor. He is also a VIPS Training Officer and is a constant source of information and good will. In 2018, he volunteered over 488 hours assisting with Police fleet and vehicle maintenance, along with many other behind-the-scenes duties.

Glenn is also an active member and volunteer in his neighborhood Crime Watch group in the Peninsula subdivision. He attends Crossroads Church, enjoys ice hockey and is a devoted Texas Rangers fan. He has three adult children and two fur babies, whom he often takes to Whataburger for french fries.

Glenn is loyal, dedicated and positive; he never expects recognition or requires affirmation. The Rowlett Police Department is proud to have him on their team!

The **Platinum Volunteer of the Year** is awarded to one who made a significant contribution by way of their volunteerism.

Trung is a “character” with a big, loving heart who is always willing to help no matter the situation. He not only comes to volunteer with an infectious smile and positive attitude, but also has a magnetic personality and connects with people young and old while sharing his passion for playing Pickleball. Every week for the past two years, Trung has provided tips on form and technique to avid new and veteran players alike, teaching skills and drills, and even showing off his own impressive skills every now and then.

Trung’s skill-set extends well beyond teaching and coaching others! Some of his favorite hobbies outside of playing Pickleball include dove hunting, building, re-stringing tennis racquets, and even repairing broken kites. He loves to “tinker” with everything, earning the nickname ‘Mr. Fixit’! But most of all, this husband of 35 years, enjoys cooking right beside his bride. If he isn’t in the kitchen with her, he is probably smoking a tasty brisket!

Trung makes a real difference in the life of our community. His generosity and genuine devotion to helping others get better in the sport of Pickleball makes him an outstanding volunteer...and a rare find!

The **Diamond Volunteer of the Year Award** recognizes the citizen with the greatest number of hours. This is the second year in a row for Margaret to win this award, she volunteered just under 1,500 hours in Fiscal Year 2018!

Margaret is described as “not only assisting with tasks, but investing in friendships as well!” A long-time VIPS member, her work behind the scenes may not always be at the forefront of the program but she has a tremendous impact on the areas in which she contributes, demonstrating absolute commitment and dedication in her work. Her assistance includes service to many areas of the Police Department including Community Services and Police Records. She stepped up to offer assistance in what for many cities can be considered a full time job and has been essential in providing support by scanning and archiving police reports dating back as far as 1995.

Margaret retired from McDermott Research Center as a Lab Chemist, has two children and four grandkids. She loves to read and is a member of the First Edition Book Club. She also enjoys tap dancing and does Tai-Chi! Margaret is a CERT team member and is a graduate of the Rowlett City Academy, the Citizens Police Academy and Citizens Fire Academy.

Although the work Margaret performs is invaluable, her positive attitude and friendliness may just be of equal value, it is contagious to those who have the benefit of working alongside her. Her coworkers in Police Records expressed that “She is a positive figure head and an all-around perfect volunteer!”
Take an Active Role in Your Community
Volunteer for a City Board or Commission!

Visit Rowlett.com/Serve for more information or to apply.

Animal Shelter Advisory Board
Reviews various shelter policies and procedures and assists in planning the special events pertaining to the Animal Shelter. It also provides input and recommendations for drafting and modifying Animal Control Ordinances, presented to the City Council for possible enactment.

Arts & Humanities Commission
Encourages the development of, appreciation for and participation in the arts and humanities in the City of Rowlett. There are also several special annual projects conducted by the commission, including the Rowlett Sings Contest, Photography Contest, Regional Writing Contest, the Young Artist Exhibit, and Cultural Arts Grants.

Board of Adjustment
Hears requests for variances and special exceptions to the City’s Zoning Ordinance. While no experience is required, individuals with a background in Planning, Engineering, Real-Estate, Architecture, Construction etc. may find this board particularly interesting.

Community Investment Advisory Board
Provides recommendations to City Council on capital project priorities and project selection, as well as guiding values for planning of capital projects. Also provides recommendations to City Council on the setting of projects slated for upcoming bond elections and represents the City at public meetings and public outreach campaigns on the subject of capital projects.

Diversity and Inclusion Commission
Provides creative ideas and feedback from the community on how to proactively engage all of the diverse groups in Rowlett, as well as serve as a sounding board for proposed public policy.

Economic Development Advisory Board
Promotes economic development within the community through the coordinated actions of the City and the Rowlett Chamber of Commerce.

Golf Advisory Board
Presents recommendations to the City Council regarding operations and maintenance of Waterview Golf Course. Each board member is given one free golf pass per month to aid in forming those recommendations.

Library Advisory Board
Act as liaisons to library staff, advising on items of community interests and concerns. Board members also visit area libraries and meet with their boards, promote the library and its services within the community, and provide legislative advocacy on library issues.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Reviews, discusses and votes to present recommendations before City Council for all Parks and Recreation matters.

Planning and Zoning Commission
Duties and responsibilities include processing and initiating zoning cases at the request of property owners or at the request or approval of the City Council; and hearing, recommending and/or determining any matter relating to planning or subdivision control as may be specified by the subdivision ordinance or other applicable law. While no experience is required, individuals with a background in Planning, Engineering, Real-Estate, Architecture, etc. may find this board particularly interesting.

Senior Advisory Board
Review, discuss and present items/recommendations to the City Council on all aspects of senior citizen-living in Rowlett. The Board plays an integral part in helping with senior programming and routinely communicating the conditions and needs of seniors within the community.

Youth Advisory Council
Provides observations and makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the needs and wants of Rowlett’s youth. Teen participants are educated in their local government process and serve as messengers for the City of Rowlett and assist City Council in outreach to Rowlett’s young residents. Members also assist the City by volunteering for City events.

I can tell you from firsthand experience, the best way to affect change in YOUR community is by serving it. Are you looking for ways to give back to the community through participating in your local government? I hope you will consider volunteering a few hours each month to serve on a board or commission.
**CIVIC GROUPS**

The City of Rowlett is known for its community support from many non-profit and civic organizations that contribute untold hours to ensure the safety, beauty and well being of our community.

**Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

During a natural or man-made disaster (such as Rowlett’s 2015 EF4 tornado), CERT teams assist Public Safety (Police and Fire) in doing damage assessment, accounting for residents and securing quick, accessible routes into neighborhoods. CERT teams also help search for missing persons, and assist with evacuations, traffic control, courtesy patrols and City events. Members are trained in the CERT program, which includes Disaster Medical Operations, Light Search and Rescue, and Fire Suppression following FEMA guidelines.

Over the past year, members have contributed 5,222 hours of their time. Visit www.RowlettCERT.com or email CERT@rowlettcitizencorps.org for information.

**Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)**

ARES consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes. These communications can be for a wide range of activities: Emergency/Supplemental Communications – Provide communications during radio problems occurring within the Emergency Services trunking system. SKYWARN – Storm spotting and being an integral factor in the Outdoor Warning Siren system activation. Logistical Communications – Parade set-up and control, Fire Watch and security during events where fireworks are present.

Visit www.rowlettcitizencorps.org or email info@rowlettares.com.

**Keep Rowlett Beautiful (KRB)**

KRB cultivates community pride through volunteerism and education focused on creating a healthy, beautiful and sustainable environment. Volunteering with KRB is fun and easy! There are many special events throughout the year, opportunities for skilled professionals, Board positions, logistics... volunteers are ALWAYS needed and welcome. Here are just a few of the many ways you can get involved: Host your own Neighborhood Cleanup, Adopt-A-Road in your area, sponsor a Program or Event, help at the KRB office, join a KRB Committee. KRB volunteered 8,780 hours last year! For more information, visit www.keeprowlettbeautiful.org or call 972-463-3929.

**Friends of Rowlett Animals (FRAS)**

FRAS is a support group of volunteers for the Rowlett Animal Shelter whose mission is to promote the welfare and reverence of companion animals within the community through: working with the Rowlett Animal Shelter, sponsoring adoption fees during local adoption events, raising funds for the Shelter’s medical and surgical supplies that exceed budgetary limits and by raising funds for various other Shelter needs. FRAS also works within the community promoting awareness and importance of spay/neuter programs; promoting the importance of vaccinations and City registration; finding loving companion animals through Shelter Adoptions; sponsoring activities for pets and their owners; and supplying each City fire truck with sets of pet oxygen masks. FRAS conducts four adoption events per year, a couple of fundraising events per year, and volunteering when time is available at the shelter is encouraged. Due to their diligence in working with area rescue groups and Shelter staff, our shelter is able to maintain an unheard of 98-99% live release rate - the national average for a shelter is about 30%! Visit www.friendsofrowlettanimals.com or email info@friendsofrowlettanimals.com.

**Friends of the Rowlett Library**

Founded in 1950, the Friends are a member-supported, nonprofit organization comprised of community advocates and partners who support quality library service through fundraising and other promotional efforts. Their annual donations support cultural and literary enrichment activities, including the Library’s Summer Reading Program. Recognizing that libraries are essential elements of a growing, educated, and forward-reaching community, the Friends strive to support a state-of-the-art library where citizens can satisfy their literary needs, whether it be for school research or a place to sit with a good book on a rainy day. For more information contact Kathy Freiheit at kfreiheit@rowlett.com or call 972-412-6160.

**Senior Citizens of Rowlett (SCOR)**

SCOR is a service oriented nonprofit organization that was formed to help serve and educate all Rowlett senior citizens. To be a member of SCOR you must be 62 years of age, but volunteers of all ages are welcomed with open arms! For more information contact Jeff Sheldon at resqv7ke@verizon.net.

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Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in Democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community in which you want to live.