

THE TEXAS RESOLUTION CONNECTION

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TEXAS RURAL MEDIATION SERVICES™

What can we mediate?

Glad you asked!

The list is endless, but a few types of cases are...

- Agricultural Credit: operating loans, equipment financing, real estate improvements...
- Estate Settlement: probate...
- Health Care: billing disputes, quality of care, and access to care, staff problems...

Be on the lookout for more issues that may be mediated in future newsletters.

THIRD ANNUAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

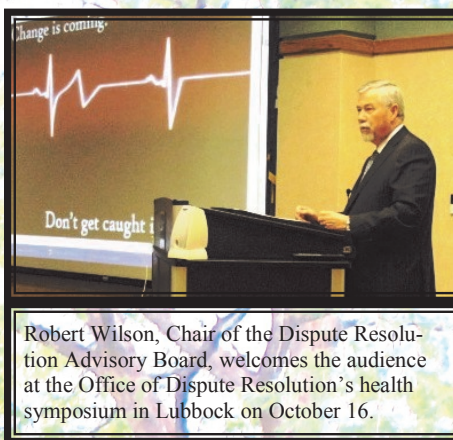
Hospital administrators, nurses, doctors, attorneys, social workers, nursing instructors, students, and others gathered at the Region 17 Education Service Center on October 16 to participate in a one-day seminar. The Office of Dispute Resolution of Lubbock County (ODR) hosted the Third Annual Health Symposium, "Clashing Paradigms: A New America – Health Care Reform and Where We Stand," with a prestigious line-up of speakers from national, state, and local levels.

The goal of the 2009 Health Symposium was to bring information and clarity about health reform to the health and legal communities of West Texas. The ODR focuses on the future through mediations, and because the ODR recognizes that information is vital to understanding the possibilities the future may hold, the Symposium took on an important role.

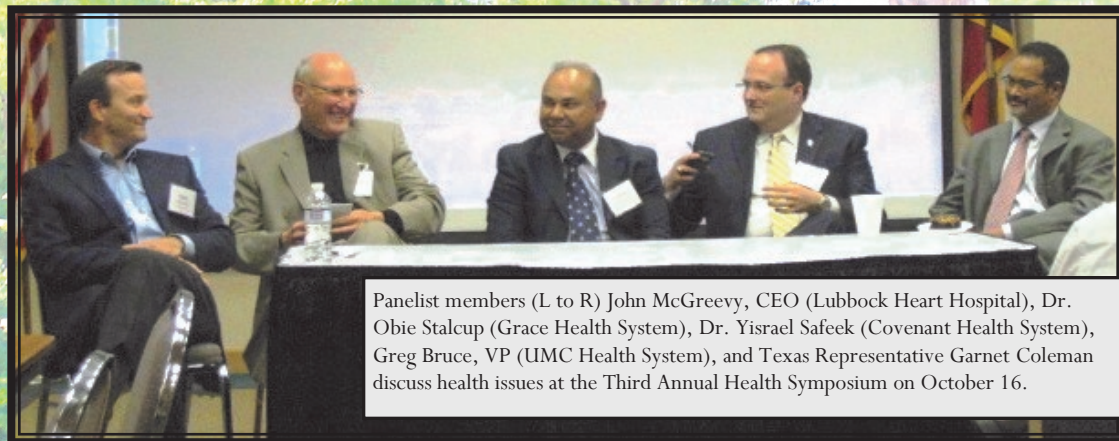
"Where there is change, and where there is misinformation, there are disputes," said the event coordinator, Jessica Kelly. "In order to help resolve the disputes that will inevitably arise, we felt it was necessary to educate our community with the facts," she said. She added that the best way to do this was to bring informed speakers from national, state, and local sectors to shed light and bring clarity about reform.

After a welcome from locals Judge Ruben Reyes, Commissioner Patti Jones, Lubbock County Bar President Carolyn Moore, and Dispute Resolution Advisory Board Chair Robert Wilson, the program, moderated by David O'Dell, MD, JD, MBA, MHSM, began.

Story continues on page 3.



Robert Wilson, Chair of the Dispute Resolution Advisory Board, welcomes the audience at the Office of Dispute Resolution's health symposium in Lubbock on October 16.



Panelist members (L to R) John McGreevy, CEO (Lubbock Heart Hospital), Dr. Obie Stalcup (Grace Health System), Dr. Yisrael Safeek (Covenant Health System), Greg Bruce, VP (UMC Health System), and Texas Representative Garnet Coleman discuss health issues at the Third Annual Health Symposium on October 16.

LUBBOCK COUNTY RECOGNIZED

The Texas Association of Counties Leadership Foundation recognizes efficiency in Local Government through its Best Practice Awards program. The 2009 Best Practice Awards recipients were announced at the Texas Association of Counties Annual Conference in August. A total of twenty projects were recognized in three categories: Superior Innovation, Exceptional Delivery of Service, and Outstanding Achievement. Lubbock County was honored to receive three of these prestigious awards.

For Superior Innovation, Lubbock's CourTools Accountability Program was recognized. CourTools allows the Courts to be accountable to the citizens, increases the efficiency for the Courts, and allows the Courts to measure the success of Court initiatives. Thanks to CourTools, Lubbock County is one of the first Counties in the nation to utilize all ten performance measures recommended by the National Center for State Courts.

Also for Superior Innovation, Lubbock County was recognized for the West Texas Public Defender for Capital Cases. This project allows 67 Counties in West Texas to provide indigent defense services in capital murder cases. These Counties have saved over \$300,000

Story continues on page 4.

COMMISSIONERS' CORNER



Gilbert Flores

Commissioner Gilbert Flores was born and raised in Slaton, TX. "My family was one of the very first settlers of Lubbock county and the first Hispanic family that bought property in Lubbock, back in the 1890s."

Flores was an entrepreneur for many years, but his love for people led him into politics, where he currently serves as Lubbock County Commissioner for Precinct 3 and has been serving for over 12 years, collectively. His connection with rural Texas and his passion for helping others motivates

him to do the work he does.

"My precinct is a rural precinct and my responsibility is to serve those people who have been neglected, and rural areas are neglected."

Commissioner Flores feels that the backbone of America is rural America. Although he believes that the economic crisis has had an impact on Texas' economy, rural areas have helped prevent Texas from facing the same economic challenges affecting other states across the nation.

"The successes of rural Texas reflect on the economies of bigger cities like Lubbock," states Flores. "As long as we have strong rural areas, we'll have strong urban areas."

Flores does admit that rural Texas has faced its own fair share of setbacks not related to the economic crisis.

"Farmers in my precinct are replanting cotton for the third time because of weather-related issues," said Flores with a concerned look on his face. "Mother Nature treats them well sometimes and sometimes she can be their worst enemy."

Over the years the Flores family has seen Lubbock County transform from a rural area into an urban hub. Commissioner Flores is proud to be a rural Texan.

"I'm home grown," said Flores. "I'm very proud of my ancestry here in Lubbock."

MEET THE BOARD



Joe Nagy

Joe Howard Nagy was first appointed to the Dispute Resolution Advisory Board (DRAB) in 2003, and he also served on the Advisory Committee that preceded DRAB.

Joe served as president of the State Bar of Texas from 1987-1988 and on their Board of Directors from 1975-1978.

He has been married to his wife Dorothy Shelton for 58 years. Their daughter Margaret is a professor at Texas Tech, and their son Joe Nagy Jr. is the county attorney for Gaines County.

Joe's hobbies include hunting and spending time with his four grandchildren Matt, Megan, Michael and Jacob.

PARENTING CLASSES

In an attempt to help strengthen the relationship between parents and their children, the ODR's Domestic Relations Office, in conjunction with Lubbock Catholic Family Services (CFS), provided four parenting classes. Classes were held every Thursday afternoon during the month of October. There were a total of 21 attendees for this voluntary five week seminar, which included a bonus session with a local motivational speaker, Keith Graves. The class was offered free of charge.

"The classes gave me the tools to successfully become a better man, parent, and to contribute to my daughter and society," said one attendee. According to another, "All parents should take a parenting class."



Attendees listen to speakers at an October parenting class. Classes were offered by the ODR and Lubbock CFS.

FROM SOUTHWEST FARM PRESS

A recent Southwest Farm Press article addressed new legislative impacts on the farming and ranching community, while highlighting our recent Annual USDA Mediator Training in September where editor, Ron Smith, presented on the impact of the farm bill on producers.

Smith noted in the article that during a question and answer session, panic over Cap and Trade legislation and higher energy costs were not the only fears. Farmers and ranchers were also concerned about a possible mandatory animal identification program and the always present possibility of funding cuts.

With legislation and funding for farming programs consistently changing, disputes are likely to arise, and "mediators may find plenty to do," Smith warns.

"They deal with just about anything you can imagine that could come up in any community, family or workplace, with the added stresses that come from living in rural America. Mediators hope to resolve issues without having them get to court," Smith said in reference to Texas Rural Mediation Services™, established in 2000.

Read more at www.southwestfarmpress.com.

The Office of Dispute Resolution is in the process of sending The Texas Resolution Connection newsletter by email to all our readers. If you would like to receive this publication by email you can submit your contact email address to drc@co.lubbock.tx.us.

HEALTH SYMPOSIUM (CONT)

Corrine Parver, professor and Executive Director for the Health Law and Policy Program on Law and Government at American University Washington College of Law opened with national policy information and current legislative health reform updates.

She was followed by Carla Penny, Chair of the Economic Security Committee of the AARP National Policy Council, who clarified AARP's stance on reform and information about what policies AARP would and would not support.

Texas State Representative Garnet Coleman, upon return from Washington, DC, opened the state section of the program with information about what transpired in the US House and Senate earlier in the week, emphasizing the role that citizens, especially those in rural communities, play in Texas. He was later interviewed by a local TV station regarding recent policy discussions at the White House.

Stan Strickland of Texas Department of Insurance, Ernie Schmid of Texas Hospital Association, Cathy Harris and Patty Freier of Texas Nurses Association, and Cathy Harris of the Texas School Nurse Organization then brought information about each of their state organizations and associations.

After a laughable lunch presentation from comedian Steve "Nice Guy" Mingolla, discussion resumed with a unique panel hosting representatives from four major Lubbock hospitals and Representative Garnet Coleman. The panel included Greg Bruce, Vice President of UMC Health System, Dr. Yisrael Safeek of Covenant Health System, John W. McGreevy, CEO of Lubbock Heart Hospital, and Dr. Obie Stalcup of Grace Health System.

Attendees posed "thought provoking" questions about insurance, patient accountability, and other concerns. The panel, moderated by Dr. David O'Dell, led to an exciting discussion.

Afternoon presenters Archie Alexander, M.D., J.D., LL.M. and Hans Seitz of Press Ganey discussed consumer reports, red flag issues, and the role that Alternative Dispute Resolution plays in representing clients in this new environment.

The event closed with a clarifying view of what the future may hold, presented by moderator O'Dell, who, according to attendees, gave a great wrap-up of the entire program. "The closing session was excellent," said one participant. "I'm glad I was given the opportunity to attend."

Months of planning coupled with esteemed speakers contributed to a successful Third Annual Health Symposium. The seminar brought information and clarity without getting too political, according to participant feedback.

"I was afraid it would get political and was relieved that it didn't," said one attendee. "If all the discussion were only this reasonable!" he said.

Planning is already in motion for next year's Fourth Annual Health Symposium, which will take place in October 2010.

TRAININGS IN 2009

Mediator CE (Lubbock)
December 5

TRAININGS IN 2010

* Dates and locations are tentative and subject to change.

Basic Mediation Training

March 1-5, South Padre
March 22-26, Ruidoso, NM
September 13-17, Nacogdoches
Date TBA, Lubbock

Family Mediation Training

October 18-21, Kerrville

Mediator CE (Lubbock)

February 6, April 17
May 15, August 14
October 2, December 11

Health Continuing Education

May 7, Victoria
Date TBA, Harlingen

4th Annual Health Care Symposium

October (Date TBD), Lubbock

Juvenile Justice Symposium

April 9, Lubbock

Estate and Transition Planning CE

January 14, Lubbock
February 18, Salado
May 27, Nacogdoches
September 30, Wichita Falls
November 18, Alpine

Agricultural Law Course 2010*

May 20-21, Lubbock

To register, please contact drc@co.lubbock.tx.us.

To view updates and other useful information, visit our blog at www.TexasMediationTraining.blogspot.com or website: www.co.lubbock.tx.us/drc/training.htm

*Co-sponsored by the State Bar of Texas

NOTE: Reciprocal Continuing Education Credit available for other professions

HOWARD COUNTY: JUVENILE MEDIATION

School is back in session for children all across Texas. Schools in Howard County started their year off with a new program in place to help reduce truancy, drop-out rates, and juvenile criminal behavior, and to promote higher education.

As of September 1, 2009, Howard County has a Juvenile Mediation Program managed by the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) in Lubbock County. The program will utilize local trained mediators and community resources to help at-risk juveniles. The goal of this program is to uncover and address the underlying causes of juvenile truancy.

"We're excited about Howard County participating," said Gene Valentini, director of the Office of Dispute Resolution. "This program will benefit students, school administrators and courts."

The mediators in Howard County will facilitate cases referred by the Justices of the Peace, Municipal Court and schools, promoting a systematic and collaborative approach to addressing the issues and their causes.

COLLEGIATE OUTREACH EFFORTS

In an effort to reach out to the youth of our state, we have begun speaking to college students across the state involved with agriculture. This is accomplished through our Texas Rural Mediation Services™ (TRMS™), one of the many services provided by the Texas Dispute Resolution System™.

“Speaking to these students allows us to reach the younger population and inform them about the state’s USDA Ag Mediation Program,” stated Lauren Peel, Field Representative.

ODR’s TRMS™ is the USDA Agriculture Mediation Program for the state of Texas. This program provides options such as mediation and conflict resolution to all 254 Texas counties. Because of our focus on rural areas, specifically individuals and organizations that are affected by the USDA, knowledge of TRMS™ can be a value to students as they approach graduation and begin looking for a job.

“Employers within agriculture will find it valuable to their operation that their new hires are educated about the only Agriculture Mediation program in Texas,” said Peel.

We will be continuing our outreach to colleges across the state offering an agriculture curriculum. If you are interested in someone visiting with your students, contact drc@co.lubbock.tx.us.

LUBBOCK COUNTY (CONT)

thanks to the program.

For Exceptional Delivery of Service, Lubbock County received the Best Practice Award for its Vote Centers and High Tech Communication to Voters. The County partnered with local, state, and federal government, business, civic and advocacy groups to develop, implement and refine a voting system that accommodates the needs and expectations of evolving society.

Congratulations to our peers for earning this honor for Lubbock County!

BOARD OF JUDGES

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Honorable Cecil G. Puryear	Honorable Larry B. “Rusty” Ladd
Honorable Jim B. Darnell	Honorable Drue Farmer
Honorable Judy Parker	

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Honorable Stephen Johnson	Honorable Patricia Moseley
Honorable Melissa McNamara	Honorable Kevin Hart

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*“Dispute
Resolution
strives to provide
a competent,
effective
alternative
resource for the
resolution of
disputes.”*

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