



ROCKWALL CITY NOTES

A Monthly City Publication

March 2021

City Council Names Mary Smith as Interim City Manager

The Rockwall City Council has named long-time Assistant City Manager Mary Smith as the interim City Manager. The move came on the heels of the retirement of former City Manager Rick Crowley. Mary Smith has served successfully in the dual role of Assistant City Manager and Director of the Finance Department since 2012.



Ms. Smith, a CPA, came to Rockwall as the Finance Director in 1998 and has overseen a lot of growth and change in more than 20 years here. She came to Texas a year before from her home state of Indiana, working for a brief time for the town of Balch Springs before taking the position in Rockwall. "We've made great strides over the years, working with City leaders to keep the tax rate low and help keep business vibrant in our community," Smith said. "Our goal is to focus on our customers, the residents, and their needs. We do our best to help people and businesses become successful."

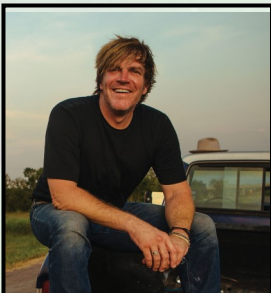
Several City Council seats are up for reelection this year, and the Council has chosen to have Ms. Smith serve as interim City Manager until June, when the new Council is in place. "Mary was a clear choice, in our eyes, for this role," said Rockwall Mayor Jim Pruitt. "She has so much knowledge and experience of the inner workings of the City, and her transition to the City Manager role will be a natural one." I've watched Rockwall change quite a bit over the years—one of my first events was the ribbon cutting of Ralph Hall Parkway," Smith said. "It's been fun seeing the transformation from small town to a regional destination city. I've enjoyed the last 22 years here, and am looking forward to serving in this new capacity."

Founder's Day Festival Acts Announced!

After a two year hiatus, the Founder's Day Festival is back in Rockwall! Last year's event had to be cancelled because of COVID-19, as it was scheduled to take place right when everything was shutting down. Concertgoers this year are in for a treat. The Rockwall Parks and Recreation Department has announced their opening and headlining acts for this year's highly anticipated event.

Singer / songwriter Wade Bowen will take the Southwest Kia of Rockwall main stage on Saturday, May 15 in Harry Myers Park. The native Texan has been a consistent favorite in the Texas Country genre for more than 20 years.

Opening for Wade Bowen is Woodlands, Texas native Jack Ingram. Look for all the details of this free, all-day family event coming soon at playrockwall.com.



Concert by the Lake Series Set to Return

Residents will be happy to know that the Concert by the Lake Series begins on Thursday, May 13, 7:30-9 pm. The annual tradition has lively crowds dancing and singing along with the performers. Music lovers can enjoy the events at The Harbor every Thursday evening from May-July. For a complete list of the summer lineup, you can visit playrockwall.com.

Also look for the San Jacinto Plaza Music Series to begin in May in Historic Downtown Rockwall.



Out and About in Rockwall



SNAP Prom Success

Prom season kicked off in a big way in Rockwall. The Rockwall Parks and Recreation Department hosted an event for residents of all abilities—to shine on the dance floor.

The fourth annual Special Needs and Adaptive Programming (or SNAP) Prom was a huge success. The event has grown over the past few years and is lots of fun for everyone.



Fields of Excellence

The City of Rockwall Parks & Recreation Department has been awarded the Pioneer Athletics Fields of Excellence Award for the 4th straight year! Under the leadership of Parks & Recreation Director Travis Sales and his team, the Parks Department has mastered the turf grass maintenance program at Leon Tuttle Athletic Complex. This honor is bestowed on only a handful of cities throughout the state. For more information about Rockwall's ballfields, please visit playrockwall.com.



Theater in Our Schools Month

To draw attention to the importance of the arts in education, the Rockwall City Council presented a proclamation naming March as *Theater in Our Schools Month*. According to studies by The College Board, "students who took four years of arts classes in high school, scored an average of 92 points higher on their SATs than students who took only one-half year or less." The State Thespian Officer Board advocates for theater education in the State of Texas to help increase awareness and boost academic achievement. Pictured here is Kaylen Pruitt, honors 8th grader and longtime drama student.

Love Your Landscape—Weathering the Winter Storms

The recent winter storms have wreaked havoc and left a lasting effect in so many ways. Our landscapes are no exception. Here are a few tips to help nurture life back into your plant life:

- **Grass:** Grass had snow cover before the extreme temperatures arrived which may have provided some protection, but some grass loss is probable
- **Trees:** Possible cracking and sloughing bark from extreme temperatures
- **Flowering trees and shrubs:** There may be fewer or no flowers due to bud damage
- **Shrubs:** Various species may show blackened leaves which is a result of extreme temperatures and could mean possible death of the plant
- **Evergreen groundcovers:** There will be sporadic dead leaves and needles throughout, but give the plant time—it may recover
- **Irrigation:** A visual inspection of the entire system is recommended due to probable freeze damage
- **Plants most susceptible for long-term impacts and probable loss:** Wax leaf Ligustrum, palm, succulent, plumeria, boxwood, oleander, Indian hawthorn, St. Augustine grass
- **Plant salt damage:** If you used salt or rock salt to melt snow, it could've potentially burned foliage on plants

