



Purchasing Quarterly

Summer 2008, Volume 8, Issue 3 A Publication of the Travis County Purchasing Office, Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., Purchasing Agent

Know your Purchasing Office

By Jerome T. Guerrero

Lee Perry



“My full name is Joe Lee Perry but I go by ”Lee.” So starts my interview with Lee Perry, a Purchasing Agent Assistant for Construction in the Purchasing Office.

Sports plays a vital part of Lee’s outlook on life. His oldest son Hayden was eight years old in 2000 when he wanted to play in the Pop Warner football league. However, he exceeded the size limit and did not fit into the matrix of age and weight. Lee looked around and found that there was not a league without age and weight limits, so he started one.

Starting with 40 kids, the league grew to over 200 kids who wanted to play football. Lee facilitated the recruitment and fund-raising by opening the league to kids who either did not fit the size matrix or who could not afford to play.

Lee names the high schools from Round Rock to Hays County that have kids who played in the league he founded. “A lot of the kids I coached are starters for their respective schools.” Afterwards, he used the skills he learned over his career to recruit people and solicit grants to fund and start a Pop Warner league in Northern Hays County.

The youngest of five children, Lee was active in most sports from age six. “I’ve played football, baseball, wrestling and lacrosse.” Born in Dallas, Texas and raised in Austin, he graduated from the San Marcos

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Purchasing Office Wins its 4th Consecutive Procurement Award

The Travis County Purchasing Office, lead by Purchasing Agent Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., has earned the 13th Annual Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award for 2008. Furthermore, the Purchasing Office has received the award for four consecutive years and is one of only eight counties in the state to receive the national award. Also, Travis County is listed among the top ten percent of all governmental agencies in the nation for total points achieved.

The Achievement of Excellence in Procurement award is designed to recognize organizational excellence in procurement. The award is achieved by those organizations that demonstrate excellence in procurement by obtaining a high score on a rating of standardized criteria. The program is designed to measure innovation,



professionalism, e-procurement, productivity, and leadership attributes of the procurement function. The Achievement of Excellence in Procurement is sponsored by the National Purchasing Institute (NPI), the California Association of Public Purchasing Officers (CAPPO), Florida Association of Public Purchasing Officers (FAPPO), the Institute of Supply Management (ISM), the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO), the National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP), and the Texas Public Purchasing Association (TxPPA).

Congratulations to Ms. Grimes and the entire Purchasing Office staff on their accomplishment for the fourth consecutive year. The office will continue the work to serve the Travis County taxpayer and you!



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Travis County

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Purchasing Agent

Commissioners Court

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Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis

Pct. 2 Commissioner Sarah Eckhardt

Pct. 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty

Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gómez

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Presiding Chair

261st District Ct. Judge Lora Livingston

250th District Ct. Judge John K. Deitz

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Purchasing Quarterly

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R.A.V.E. - Recognize A VALUE-able Employee

Donna Stirman

By Jerome T. Guerrero

"I feel like I've been raised by Travis County," shares Donna Stirman, Senior Risk/Safety Specialist. Donna has been a dedicated and hard working employee since 1982.

The daughter of an Air Force Officer, she was born in Louisiana but raised in Texas. She graduated from William B. Travis High School and after a brief time in Phoenix, Arizona, she started working for Travis County in the Sheriff's Office (TCSO). She began by typing the Offense Reports. "Back in the day," she starts, "reports were transcribed onto three part forms, using carbon paper in between. When we weren't typing reports, we did warrant checks when the deputy sheriffs called in on a traffic stop." Later, she moved to the Sheriff's Office Personnel where she spent almost 10 years.

In 1995, she transferred to the Human Resources Risk Management Office. Travis County is a self-insured entity and she is the "insurance company for the county." She is an adjustor and handles claims for county vehicles, property and general liability.

Donna is also very active with the TCSO Brown Santa Program. Started over 25 years ago to assist needy families outside the City of Austin, the program has helped many families have a better holiday season.

When the County began the Wellness Program, the committee had an idea to create a 5K event to motivate employees to get moving. The 5K Committee was formed and contacted the Austin Runners Club (ARC) for help with the organization and logistics of a 5K run. They chose the TCSO Brown Santa Program as the beneficiary of the proceeds. The Brown Santa 5K and KidsK is now going into its 5th year. The event had 269 participants and raised \$6,416 last year to benefit Brown Santa. "The 5K and their sponsors have been a big help, increasing the money raised to help Travis County families."

When Donna is not busy with her work at the County and Brown Santa, she is driving her two sons, 12-year-old William and 7-year-old Matthew, to soccer, baseball and bible classes. She and her husband, Tracy, like to spend quiet times at their



country home away from the busy life of central Travis County.

About 18 months ago, she joined the RunTex University. She started walking and progressed to jogging. Donna has kept up her exercise regime by participating in 5K and 10K runs and is currently training for the AT&T Half Marathon. She was motivated by the desire to take "better care of myself."

Donna is one of those individuals that puts others ahead of herself especially with caring for her aging father. Donna is someone we all are glad to know. ✕

5th Annual
BROWN SANTA
5K & KIDS K
Sunday, Dec. 7, 2008
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

A chip-timed foot race/fun walk
and Wellness Fair at the
Travis CountyExpo Center

<http://www.brownsanta.org>

For additional information, contact
brownsanta5K@co.travis.tx.us



Purchasing Code of Ethics Guide

Part 3 - True Stories

The purpose of highlighting ethics is to remind all of us as public employees that we have a responsibility to manage and conduct ourselves in the highest realm of moral standards. One of the lowest points of anyone's public career could be having your name published in the local newspaper or mentioned on the television news.

A former Cameron County Auditor, Mark Yates was cleared of charges stemming from awarding an insurance contract without approval from the Cameron County Commissioners Court. He voluntarily entered a pre-trial diversion program, a supervision program offered to first-time offenders who have not been charged with violent crimes and have no criminal records.

Although the charges were dropped, Yates could be re-indicted on them if he violates the orders of his pre-trial diversion.

Isauro Trevino, the former City Manager of Mission, Texas, was sentenced in February, 2008, for accepting or paying bribes in exchange for favorable treatment in the awarding of city contracts. In May, 2008, U.S. District Judge

Randy Crane sentenced Mr. Trevino to 48 months in federal prison, without parole and fined him \$50,000. Judge Crane found



that Trevino was part of a "systematic and pervasive pattern of corruption" that resulted "in a loss of trust and public confidence in government." Judge Crane further found that Trevino has received more than \$90,000 in documented bribes. Trevino received free stucco at his Mission home during the fall of 2002 from a private contractor. Many of the projects awarded were split into phases to evade the public notice and City Council-approval requirements for projects in excess of \$25,000. Federal prosecutors said Trevino created fake bids to control who would be awarded a contract.

These public officials violated not only state and federal laws but the public's trust of fair competition and ethical behavior. The guidelines are meant to keep the procurement process fair and equitable for vendors and taxpayers. ✕

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Military Academy. After graduating from the academy, he spent four years in the Army then returned to Texas.

He worked in contract administration for the State of Texas. There he learned the purchasing side of contract administration. He joined Travis County in 2005. One of his main duties is administering construction projects for

roads, bridges and parks. Lee is very active with his two other children, son, Griffen, 8 and daughter, Peyton, 3. His wife, Aimee operates a certified home day care. After hours, they enjoy racing all terrain vehicles (ATVs) and camping. From organization to funding raising, Lee considers himself a facilitator first. "I like to bring people together to get the job done." ✕

Economic Opportunity Forums

10/17/08 - Austin

"Partners for a Better Texas"

Address: Brown-Healy Building Public Hearing Rooms 1110, 1120, and 1130

Time: 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Information: HHS HUB Vendor Fair Hosted By: Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of Aging and Disability Services, The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, The Department of State Health Services and the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Contact: Hope Degollado, 438-6529 /

hope.degollado@dads.state.tx.us or Sherice Williams-Patty,

424-6903 / sherice.williams-patty@hpsc.state.tx.us

12/10/08 - Bexar County & City of San Antonio

"8th Annual Small, Minority, Women and Veteran Business Owners Conference"

Address: Freeman Coliseum 3201 E. Houston St., San Antonio, Texas

Information: Registration at 7:00 AM; Conference starts 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM; Register online: www.bexar.org/smwbe; call 210-207-3900 for more information or e-mail:

rvatson@bexar.org or grace.luna@sanantoniogov for more information

Subcontracting Opportunities

By Jerome T. Guerrero

As a small minority or woman-owned business that has gone through the process of being Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) certified and would like to do business with a number of government agencies, what can you do to increase your opportunity to secure some of the funds Travis County or other government spends?

Often, many businesses do not know what 2nd tier or subcontracting opportunities exist. Potential subcontractors are encouraged to attend pre-bid or pre-proposal conferences to meet with potential prime bid-



ders, buyers and project managers for the specific bid. The pre-bid conference is a powerful way to introduce your company to potential contacts. Visit the county website at <http://www.co.travis.tx.us/purchasing> to view the latest bid opportunities. Look for relevant bid opportunities and do your research before you attend.

The HUB Team helps by creating HUB Specialized Listings by commodity codes. If your commodity code is not listed, contact the office at 854-9700 to request a listing specific to your industry. ✕

Use Life-Cycle Costing to Rake in Best Value

By Jason Walker, Governmental Support Consultant for Peoria, Ill.-based Caterpillar Inc.
Contact him at Walker_Jason_C@cat.com

Whether it was a coffee table, a gas grill or a garden rake, I never paid much notice to the thought process involved in purchasing some of the more common items found around the house. Looking back, though, I have to ask myself how I justified spending twice as much for one rake as I would for another rake. Was it because I believed that the fiberglass handle wouldn't break as easily as the wooden one? Was it because I concluded that the cast-iron head probably would last longer than the alternative? Or was it simply the fact that I liked the little rubber cover that came with the more expensive option?

As consumers, all of us have had to make similar decisions – whether we're conscious of our thought processes or not. Maybe you've had to decide between buying a piece of furniture made of solid oak or one made with plywood and veneer. Or maybe you've had to decide between gas versus charcoal when buying that patio grill. Regardless of the item being purchased, there are specific costs associated with each of these decisions that inevitably will affect the overall ownership cost of that particular item.

Purchasing is a lot more complicated in the public sector, where procurement professionals face the daunting task of meeting the complex needs of their constituents with limited resources. Because of these budget constraints, purchases often are dictated by lowest price. However, past lessons learned have taught us that purchasing the lowest-priced product or service often does not reflect the best value.

Overcoming the low-price method of purchasing can be very difficult when an agency is facing a multitude of budgetary pressures. It's very easy to look short-term when the well is almost dry. Unfortunately, history often shows us that the well never really fills up and that better procurement practices need to be considered.

All agencies should consider incorporating life-cycle costing methodology into their procurement process. This method of purchasing takes into consideration everything associated with the cost of owner-

ship of a particular item.

In my current position as a governmental support consultant for a heavy equipment manufacturer, my responsibilities include gathering competitive owning and operating costs for heavy equipment. I've learned that whether you're purchasing a garden rake or bulldozer, the ultimate goal is the same: getting the most out of each dollar spent. Obviously there is a lot more to consider when buying a bulldozer. Still, if you let that basic principle guide your buying decisions, you'll find that in most cases, initial price is not the best gauge when determining the best value.

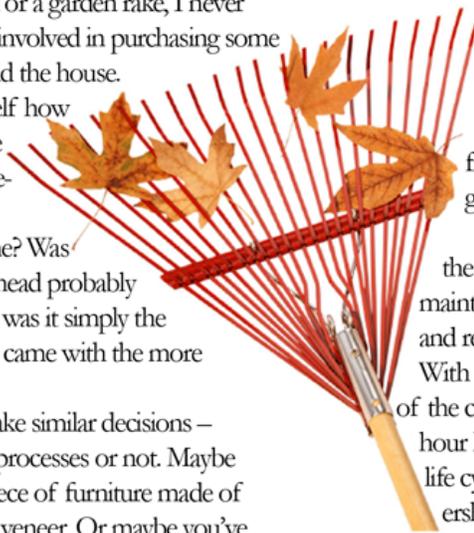
The factors that I consider when trying to establish the life-cycle cost for heavy equipment are scheduled maintenance costs, expected repair costs, fuel consumption and residual values. Take fuel consumption as an example. With the price of 1 gallon of gas exceeding \$4 in some parts of the country, choosing a machine that consumes 1 gallon per hour less than another machine over a five-year, 5,000-hour life cycle would equate to a \$20,000 cost savings in the ownership of the particular piece of equipment. If the initial purchase price for the more fuel-efficient machine were \$5,000 higher than the less efficient one, the agency would realize a savings of \$15,000 over the established useful life of that machine.

Imagine now that you incorporated into your calculations the scheduled maintenance costs, repair costs and the residual value of the machine over the same time period. Maybe you take it a step further and include productivity, operator efficiency, serviceability, dealer capability and even fleet standardization into the equation. Finally, imagine applying these criteria across your entire fleet. Before you know it, the well doesn't seem so dry.

Among the benefits of life-cycle costing, it promotes vendor accountability; provides your agency with higher-quality products; and enables you to budget with a much higher level of certainty. The bottom line is that you attain peace of mind knowing that you've spent your agency's money wisely and have made the best choice at the lowest total cost.

Just in case you were wondering, the rake still works great! ✕

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RFPDepot is Now BidSync

On September 15, 2008, RFP Depot changed its name to **BidSync**. Users of the **BidSync** system will notice a redesigned, easier to use Web site, but do not have to change anything about

how they use the system. User names and passwords are the same and all agency documents are on the new site. The company has the same ownership and management. Everyone will continue to receive the same excellent service to which they have become accustomed. If any user has questions or needs assistance with the name change, please call **BidSync** at 800-990-9339.

Special Information

 *Purchasing Quarterly*

Packaging: There Has To Be a Better Way!

By Charles Williams

The majority of packaging used today is made of Styrofoam, such as peanuts, flat or shaped sheets. Styrofoam also makes up many of our fast food product containers, from hamburger trays to cups. Are you aware that Americans use enough Styrofoam cups every year to circle the earth 436 times? Scary!! We should be using washable glasses but that is not the theme of this article. However, it does parallel our packaging solution and that is to substitute Styrofoam for something that is earth friendly.

Styrofoam is actually polystyrene foam. The material is made from benzene (a known carcinogen), converted to styrene and then injected with gases to make it a foam product. Polystyrene foam is completely non-biodegradable; it just won't go away. Your grandchildren's grandchildren will be finding cups and packaging we leave behind for them. It is also believed the gases used are CFCs which eat ozone molecules, depleting the Earth's vital ozone layer. Polystyrene foam is also deadly to marine life. It floats on the ocean's surface, breaks up into pellets resembling food and is consumed. When sea turtles eat Styrofoam, its buoyancy keeps them from diving. It clogs their system and they starve to death.

The next time you get a box in the mail, inventory the packaging. If the packaging is a Styrofoam product, do what Travis County does. Send a letter to the shipper, politely telling them your concern and ask that they use packaging material that is more environmentally friendly. Ask that consideration be given to recycled boxes, water-soluble peanuts, and other products that replace Styrofoam and bubble wrap which is harmful to the environment. There are paper products on the market that do the job of bubble wrap or Styrofoam, and are recyclable. Old newspaper wadded up or

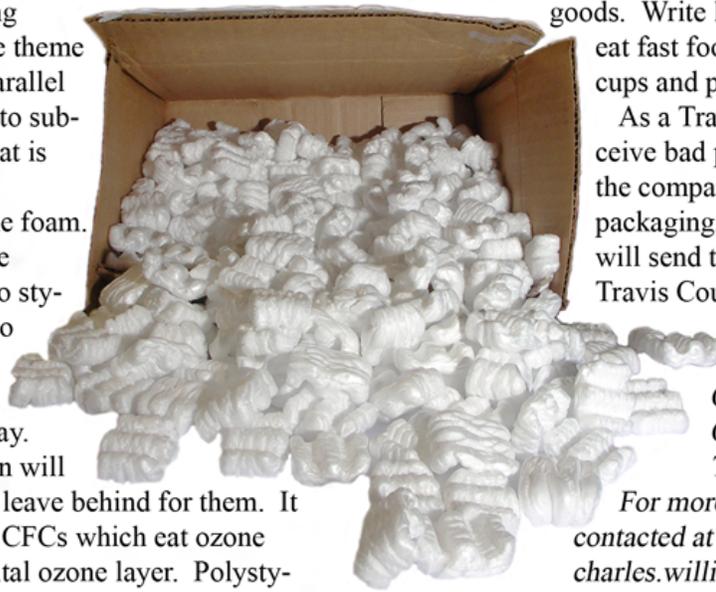
pressed around the item also works great. Believe me, as a consumer you carry a big stick and companies listen to you. The demand of the consumer is the most powerful tool you have.

What else can you do? Use substitutes for Styrofoam. Avoid form packaging in egg cartons, and disposable picnic goods. Write letters to manufacturers. If you eat fast food at restaurants, ask for paper cups and plates.

As a Travis County employee, if you receive bad packaging, send the address of the company, along with a piece of the packaging, to me, Charles Williams and I will send the vendor a letter from the Travis County Environmental Office and Purchasing Office.

Charles Williams is the Conservation Coordinator TNR - Environmental Quality

For more information, he can be contacted at (512) 854-4496 or charles.williams@co.travis.tx.us



Faith

When all about you is falling down,
And your world spins round and round
There is no sense to your doings, Where all things fall into ruin

It is a time when hope fades fast,
A ray of light a thing of the past
The urge to surrender overcomes all,
As you prepare for the last fall

But in all our fates a thread is loose, That won't allow us a sad excuse
For we can win all no matter the weight,
If we only hold on to our inward faith

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