

ATASCOSA COUNTY JUDGES REPORT

I will continue from my last column to talk about the growth from the census in the NW quadrant of our county. It is no longer the little county of the 90s (nineties). Precinct 2 has shrunk in geographic terms by over 25% of its physical size.

One of the outcomes of the redistricting is that the Precinct Yard outside of Poteet is now in Precinct 3, and Precinct 2 is going to have to move. But to where?

Commissioner Knowlton has been working on this for several months. We all suspected before the census numbers were in that he would lose his Yard and the numbers confirmed. Commissioner Knowlton has taken a strong leadership role in planning for this. There is a piece of property adjacent to the JP2 office that would allow him to tie his location to that building and be more centrally located for the Precinct's new boundaries.

Commissioner Knowlton has been following that property, and when it came up for a tax sale, he sought pre-approval by Commissioner's Court to buy it, did successfully bid on it, and buy it at auction. We do have money budgeted for his new Yard. However, his foresight allowed the county to buy it for a good price. He also has found and purchased an excellent metal (used) building to put on the property. He has purchased that building and will be getting bids to erect it and build it out inside. Much of the building will be shop if I understand his plans correctly, but to save money, he will be building out a portion of it for a Precinct 2 office for himself. The Commissioner also has a fine idea to build out a portion for a Precinct Voting Station for that area. JP2 courtroom is where we have been holding "countywide" election early voting (one station for the area and the other is in Lytle). This is a great idea because early voting can restrict holding court during early voting (election day is, of course, one day – but early voting can run 2 weeks or more). My hat is off to Commissioner Knowlton for planning, follow-through, and watching the county purse-strings.

Finally, on a separate note, there is a push in many areas of the country and Texas to practice "Sober January." I think it is a great idea for many folks to prove to themselves that they can go 30 days without alcohol. It is worth considering, I think.

Thank you for listening.