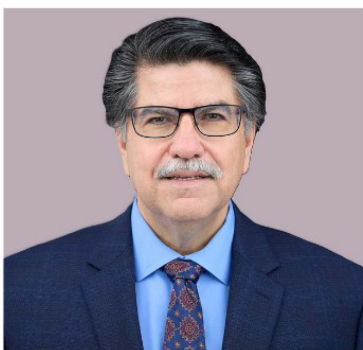


# THE DALLAS COUNTY CHRONICLE

## New Commissioner, Alex Martinez

Alex Martinez, P.E. was born and raised in Laredo, Texas and has resided in the Dallas area since 1984. He is a Texas A&M University graduate and holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He is a Licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Texas and Vice President at STV Inc. He is a lifetime member and President of the Hispanic Organization for Genealogy and Research (HOGAR de Dallas), lifetime member of Dallas Mexican American Historical League (DMAHL), Founding Board Member and Treasurer for The Mexican American Museum of Texas (TMAMT), serves on the Preservation Dallas Board of Trustees and is affiliated with the Greater Dallas Planning Council (GDPC), American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Texas Society of Professional Engineers (TSPE), American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), and Regional Hispanic Contractors Association (RHCA).

Alex identifies as Mexican American, tracing his roots to early Spanish settlers in the 16th century of present-day Mexico as well as 17th century Spanish explorers of what later became Texas. His ancestors were among the founding settlers of Nuevo Santander (later south Texas) on both side of the Rio Grande in the 18th century, making him a Tejano. Some of his ancestors did not cross the border; the border crossed them. Genetically, he is Mestizo, he carries Native American genes as well. His genealogical and family history research has instilled in him a passion and appreciation for the historical aspect of his surroundings.



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### DALLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

- Yasir Arafat, Dist. 4
- Maiya Bangurah, Dist. 3
- Deah Berry Mitchell, Dist. 1
- Anthony A. Cornell, Sr. Dist. 2
- Christopher Cornell, Vice Chair-  
Dist. 2
- Priscilla Escobedo, Dist. 4
- Patricia Hicks, Dist. 1
- Alejandro "Alex" Martinez, Dist. 2
- Jearlene Miller, Chair- Dist. 4
- Coy Poitier, County Judge
- John Roppolo, County Judge
- Vacant, Dist. 3
- Vacant, Dist. 1
- Vacant, County Judge

# Ebby Halliday

For some, Ebby Halliday is the name of a renowned real estate company, easily recognizable with its bold red and white signs. For others, Ebby Halliday is the name of their children's elementary school, or a reminder of The Ebby House at Juliette Fowler Communities, which supports young women as they enter adulthood. All of these institutions are the namesake of one of Dallas' most influential businesswomen: Ebby Halliday.

Born in Leslie, Arkansas, on March 9, 1911, she was named Vera Lucille Koch by her parents Charles Lewis Koch and Lucile Mabrey. By 1920 the family, now consisting of Vera, her mother, two siblings, and a stepfather, had moved to Kansas. When she was 8 years old she worked selling Cloverine salve to local farms, riding her pony from property to property. Vera graduated from high school in Abilene, Kansas, and started working as a saleswoman in a department store in Kansas City. Her sales of hats were so impressive that she was offered a position as hat department manager at the W.A. Green store in Dallas in 1938. Her work was so impressive that it caught the eye of Clint Murchison, Sr., who commissioned her to sell his newly constructed concrete houses in North Dallas. She did so, and in 1945 she founded Ebby Halliday Realtors. She married Maurice Acers, attorney and former FBI agent, on April 18, 1965.

Ebby Halliday grew her business into what is now one of the nation's largest residential brokerage companies. The First Lady of Real Estate, as she was called, used her work to donate to charitable causes, which included the establishment of The Ebby House, volunteering on various community and charity boards, privately donating to scholarship programs, and embodying her personal mantra of "do something for someone every day". In 2005 she was awarded the Horatio Alger Award by the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans for her charitable work. Ebby Halliday Elementary School was named after her, and for her 101st birthday she visited the school. Ebby died on September 8, 2015, at the age of 104, and she left a profound impact on Dallas.

This photograph comes from UTA Special Collections' Squire Haskins Photography Collection. Titled "Ebby Halliday, prominent Dallas, Texas realtor", this photograph exemplifies Ebby's confidence, strength, and glamor.

<https://library.uta.edu/digitalgallery/img/20022454>

<https://library.uta.edu/digitalgallery/img/20022452>

Creator: Squire Haskins Photography, Inc. (Photographer)



## DCHC- African American Solders WWI

Before the outbreak of World War I, there were 4 Black regiments in the United States military: the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry divisions. By the end of the war, African Americans would serve in nearly every branch of the military, from Stevedore Regiments to Medical Corps, on the homefront and abroad. Additionally, the War Department (which was split up and dismantled in 1947) provided funding and training in military science and tactics for around 20,000 students, given at various HBCUs and integrated colleges and universities around the country.

Increasing the number of African Americans in the military during WWI was an incredibly complex task: racism and racial violence were endemic even within training camps, and significant efforts from Black organizations and leaders and the American military led to changes that would protect soldiers. Despite these efforts, events like the Houston riot of 1917 exemplified the growing tensions between those who were prepared to serve their country and those who saw Black servicemen as threats to contemporary racial hierarchies.

This photograph comes from the National Archives and depicts Black recruits at a dinner on June 11, 1918, at an unknown location in Dallas, Texas. Dallas Morning News articles reported that Black recruits would be sent to Camp Travis, which by the summer of 1918 served as an induction and replacement center.

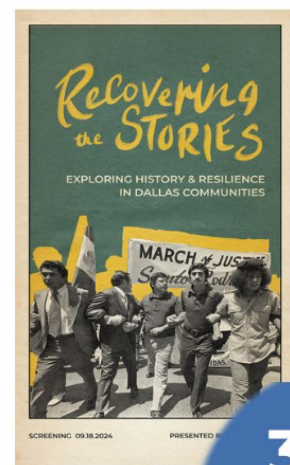
For more information on the history and experiences of Black soldiers during WWI, you can read [Scott's official history of the American Negro in the World War](#) on the Library of Congress website, where it has been fully digitized. The author, Emmett Jay Scott (1873 – 1957), was a Houston native and studied at Wiley College. He worked as a journalist and editor for the Houston Post and Texas Freeman before working for various colleges, universities, and the U.S. government. During WWI he was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson as Special Assistant for Negro Affairs to the Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, making Scott the highest-ranking African American in the Wilson administration.

If you recognize someone in this picture or have an idea about where it may have been taken, contact the Dallas County Historical Commission!

## DCHC- Recovering the Stories

Want to learn more about local Dallas history from those who live and work in the city? KERA and PBS, in collaboration with Dallas TRHT, have been releasing short films on different aspects of Dallas history under the series *Recovering the Stories: Exploring the History & Resilience in Dallas Communities*. These videos include archival footage and photographs of historical events and people in Dallas, along with interviews with local historians, community advocates, and Dallasites who live and work in the city. Current episodes feature Dallas' Little Mexico, Little Asia, Fair Park, Freedman's Town, South Dallas, and West Dallas' Indigenous community. These mini documentaries offer insight into Dallas' deep and complex history from those who know and love it best.

Viewers can watch episodes online the [PBS website](#), or on [YouTube](#).



Junius Street, Victor Street, North and South Carroll Avenue, Victor Street, Flora Street – what do these and other Dallas streets have in common? They are named after members of the Harwood and Peak families of Dallas, whose members often became economic, civic, and cultural leaders of early Dallas. A recent archival collection at the University of Texas at Arlington has compelling correspondence, photographs, and papers relating to these families. The Harwood – Peak Family Papers were donated by a descendant of these families and is open to the public for research.

The first archival item featured in the DCHC newsletter is a letter from George Victor Peak (1852 – 1931) to his sister Juliette Abbey Fowler (1837 – 1889). Juliette's name is familiar to Dallasites since Juliette Fowler Street is her namesake, as is Juliette Fowler Communities, which was founded by her sister Sarah Peak Harwood in 1892 in memory of her sister, Juliette. Written in Lexington, Kentucky, on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1873, the letter reads:

Mrs. J. A. Fowler

My dear Sister, I again seat myself to write to you after a silence of some weeks. I received your very good letter some days since, and I assure you that I read it with much pleasure – I will endeavor to take the good advice which you gave me in your letter, and am always ready to receive such as it was.

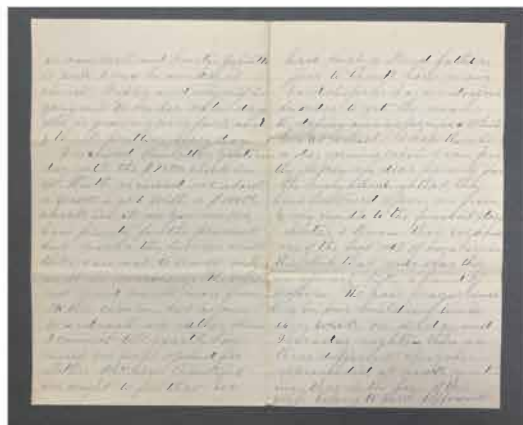
We are all well and doing well at present – Worth, Matt and Mack have had bad colds for some weeks, but are about over it now – Worth was pretty sich for a while with his, but is now well and hearty. Juliette is well I saw he[r] sunday at church, Ripley and myself is going out to see her saturday – she is growing every day.

I received Pa's letter yesterday with the \$75.00 check in it. Worth received one about a week ago with a \$100.00 check in it so you see we have plenty for the present, but never the less we will take care not to use it only as it is necessary. We will not need much more from Pa this cession, but as our wardroabs are rather slim I cannot tell exactly how much we will spend for cloths. Oh! How thankful we ought to feel that we have such a kind father; just tp think how many hardships he has undergone in order to get the means to defray our expenses while here at school. I hope there is a day coming when I can partly repay my dear parents for the many blessings that they have bestowed upon me from my cradle to the present day.

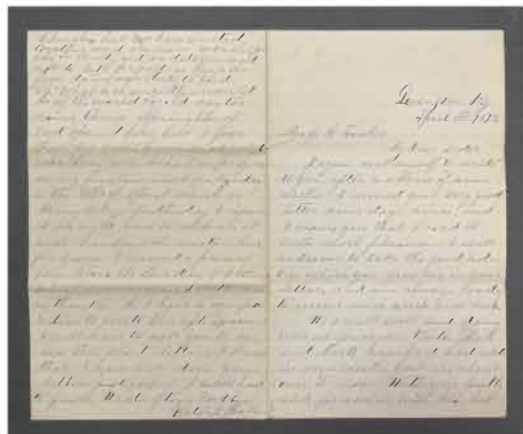
Sister I know that we have one of the best set of boys here in this club than ever was they are almost like a family of brothers. We have prayer meeting in our building twice every week, on sunday. And Thursday nights – there are three different churches represented at each meeting – That is the boys of this club belong to three different Churches, but we have invited together and are not worshipping in unity, and are determined not to let prejudice keep us from doing our duty to good.

Oh! What change there would be if the world could say the same thing. Spring has at last opened here, but I fear that we will have more cold weather. Our school is progressing finely – next Saturday is the 12<sup>th</sup> of April which is Henry Clay's birth day. I expect we will have to celebrate it as it has been the custom here for years. I received a present from Flora the other day of \$5.00 which was received with many thanks. As I have a composition to write this afternoon I will have to ask you to excuse this short letter, I know that I have not done your letter justice but I will have to quit. Write often, Good bye.

Victor S. Peak



**At the time of this letter, Victor Peak (he went by his middle name) was studying in a military academy in Kentucky. His generous parents were none other than Jefferson Peak, Sr., and Martha Malvina Reser. The Peaks had come from Kentucky, where Jefferson Peak, Sr., had worked as a merchant and state legislator, settling in what is now East Dallas. Keep an eye on our future newsletters to learn more about this illustrious family!**



On March 5, 2025, the Bataan Center of West Dallas was placed under the control of the Josephine Torres Cultural & Community Center, marking a new era for the center that had been at the center of debates and legal battles over the last decade. But why has the Bataan Center garnered so much passion from West Dallas' community?

Per Dallas Central Appraisal District records, the Bataan Center on 3201 Herbert Street (also recorded as 3232 Bataan Street) was constructed in 1935. The building served as a community center, hosting programs and events for West Dallas, and local non-profits would use the space to connect with the community. In 1964, SMU students travelled to the center by the busload to tutor local students. In the 1970s, Los Barrios Unidos held meetings and forums to advocate for the Mexican American community in West Dallas. Medical and dental services were also offered at the center for those who lacked access to such services. And throughout the decades, the Bataan Center held classes, put on cultural celebrations, and served as the heart of West Dallas. But the passing of time and the ongoing encroachment of gentrification threatened this stalwart center, and for over a decade purchases and legal battles exemplified the conflict between the community that has called West Dallas home and encroaching development. This conflict seems settled now that the Bataan Center has been granted to the Josephine Torres Cultural & Community Center.

The Center is named after Josephine Torres, who served as director of the Bataan Center. Under her leadership the Bataan center hosted actor James Edward Olmos, who spoke to youths about the importance of education. The promotion of education was a priority for the Bataan Center, and events like kindergarten graduations helped support students throughout their school years. This picture of Trini Garza handing a certificate to a young graduate exemplifies how prominent community leaders helped the Bataan Center's mission. From youth hangouts to La Bajada Neighborhood Association meetings, as pictured in 2011 with Felix Lozada and Eva Alvarado, the Bataan Center was the heart of West Dallas and the barrios of La Bajada and Los Altos, and our hope is that the center will continue to be the heart of these vibrant communities.

The following photos are from the Dallas Mexican American Historical League Collection at the Dallas Public Library, and can be found online at <https://dallaslibrary.recollectcms.com/>



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Please examine the attached file of supporting documents.

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