

# PEOPLE

Westlake Picayune

## Here comes the firefighting judge

Newest volunteer with the Westlake Fire Department exemplifies diversity of members

Ed Allen  
Editor

Westbank resident Kevin Madison has been a volunteer and professional law enforcement officer, police chief, practicing attorney, municipal court judge and recently was even appointed president of the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center board. But he says nothing he has done can match the satisfying feeling he has experienced since becoming the newest volunteer for the Travis County Emergency Services District No. 9, better known as the Westlake Fire Department.

"It is different from police work in that there is much more teamwork involved," said Madison. "I loved being a police officer. I enjoyed being a reserve officer. In that line of work, you do depend on backup a lot, but for the most part you find yourself acting alone. This was especially true when I was a deputy for the Travis County Sheriff's Department. You often find yourself by yourself in a secluded area of the county.

"Being a firefighter means that you are part of a potentially life-saving unit in which every other member of the team depends on one another to be effective," he continued. "I've always had tremendous respect for firefighters, and I have grown to have a particular appreciation for the Westlake Fire Department since moving here three years ago, so I just decided it was time I do some-

thing to get involved in my community."

Madison, 42, a resident of Camelot subdivision, said he is fast discovering the sense of reward in being one of the 25 volunteers who support a 12-member paid staff for the department.

"It is a great feeling being a part of what I think is one of the best volunteer units in the state. These guys do a great service, whether it is risking their lives going into a burning structure or putting out a car fire," Madison explained. "They are on the scene of accidents in minutes serving many roles, whether that means using the jaws of life to free someone from a vehicle or in the all important role as first responder since most are certified as emergency medical technicians.

"As a police officer, most of the time people aren't that happy to see you because you are stopping them for a violation or making an arrest; however, when the firefighters arrive at a scene of an emergency, usually people are very glad to see them," he added.

Madison seems to have the same attitude about going beyond the call of duty in the role of presiding judge for the Cedar Park Municipal Court. During the past six years in that capacity, Madison has gone all out for that community, as well. He implemented a highly-successful night court, which often has a docket of approximately 100. And, he is in the midst of making a proposal to the Cedar Park City Council

about becoming the pilot project for what he feels is one of the most important programs in the history of warrant collection.

"The way the new program works is that if somebody gets a traffic ticket in Amarillo and decides simply not to pay it since they probably won't be going through that city again,



The Westlake Fire Department's newest member is Kevin Madison, who is shown here in his role as the presiding judge for the Cedar Park Municipal Court.