

# THE LEWISVILLE NEWS

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## Gorena wants to reform appraisal system

**Michelle Draper**

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"I'm not a one issue guy," declared John Gorena as he discussed his candidacy for Lewisville City Council. "I agree with a lot of what the council does, but on some of the issues, we disagree, and to me, they are the most important issues," he said. Gorena filed last month as a candidate in a special election to fill the City Council Place 4 spot, as current Place 4 Councilman Dean Ueckert has announced his candidacy for mayor.

Identifying himself as a Christian and an American of Hispanic descent, the business owner said he is a family man "just trying to do right." Gorena, who owns JMG Enterprises, moved to Lewisville in 1985 and said he loves his city, but there are some things that need to change. "Lewisville is our little piece of America that we are responsible for," said Gorena, who is the Denton County Republican Party Precinct Chair 318. Gorena said he has been regularly attending Lewisville City Council meetings since April of 2007 and also attends the council workshops.

Several issues seemed to beckon Gorena to run for the Lewisville City Council, and one of them is the issue of illegal aliens working in Lewisville. "It's the Americans who hire them who draw them here, and those that hire them are cheating the system," Gorena said. He said he believes we can't allow illegal aliens to be only a federal issue, but the law needs to be applied equally and on a local level. "If we make it harder to hire illegal aliens, they will leave," he said. "The decisions the council makes influence the demographics of our city."

Another issue of concern high on Gorena's list is abatements. He said he believes abatements have been given too freely to businesses coming to Lewisville. "I do believe they have a purpose, but it shouldn't be doled out like it has been. I call it bribe money," he stated. Gorena said he thinks abatements are justified to bring a business to town that is going to bring the money back to Lewisville, but that too many abatements have been given too freely in the past. Property values in Lewisville are another priority for Gorena, as he said he believes many properties are over-appraised. "The current city council brags about low property taxes in Lewisville, and we do have low property tax rates," he said. "However, properties are highly over-appraised." Gorena said he objects because citizens who receive high valuations on their property either have to just accept it or go through a time consuming process to fight it. "Why should people be forced to go through this hassle every year?" he asked. The former firefighter is calling for a fair system of appraising properties. "We are not going to have liberty and justice for all unless we treat everybody respectfully and fairly," he added.

Gorena has been married for 27 years to his wife Maria and they have a 26 year old son and a 23 year old daughter. He is a member of the Garden Ridge Church of Christ and the Lewisville Citizens Police Academy. Gorena is on the board of Citizens for Immigration Reform, a member of the Lewisville Chamber of Commerce, and through the years, he has been a Boy Scout leader and a volunteer fireman. "I'm a decent person," Gorena said. "A lot of people are like me. They gripe that things are going in the wrong direction. I'm not asking anyone to do anything that I'm not willing to do." The filing deadline for this special election passed Tuesday, and Gorena's opponents as of this writing are Margie Rochelle and TJ Gilmore.



John Gorena

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