



JUDGE SALINAS LAUNCHES BLOG

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What goes into the making of decisions that affect hundreds of thousands of people? What are government officials doing when they aren't in the office? What goes on behind-the-scenes?

The answers to these questions can now be found online at www.judgejd.com, a Web log, or "blog" launched by Judge Salinas.

The first informational post to www.judgejd.com went up on Aug. 2. Judge Salinas explained why has introduced this Web site:

After watching the presidential debates recently broadcasted on [CNN](http://www.cnn.com) and [YouTube.com](http://www.youtube.com), it reminded me of how locally we need to catch up with advancements in communication technology. There are vehicles of communication out there we have not taken advantage of, and, for that reason, we— meaning myself, my staff and all whoever chooses to participate — have decided to introduce this blog. The idea has been in the works for awhile, and I'm glad we've finally been able to make it a reality. The purpose behind this site is so that your government can receive input directly from you.

Since his first post, Judge Salinas, with the help of his staff, has posted stories, press releases, speeches, article excerpts, photos and even videos about events and issues affecting Hidalgo County. The site has already achieved more than 900 hits, most of them after it was recently linked to the Hidalgo County Web site (www.co.hidalgo.tx.us). People have also posted comments and questions about such topics as personal hardships and drainage.

"I'm amazed at the response so far. It's been very positive, but at the same time, not a lot of people know about this blog yet, and I want to the word to get out," Judge Salinas said. "I want to hear

peoples' ideas and their concerns. I may not be able to respond to every single person out there, but any vehicle for better communication is a step in the right direction.”

Judge Salinas asks that people use the blog responsibly. He does not want it to become a political pulpit, but rather a forum for exchanging ideas and allowing people more access to their government. Media should not use the blog to post interview questions either.

“I do feel like I am putting myself out on a limb,” Judge Salinas said. “Blogs have been around now for the better part of this decade but you don’t see too many elected officials with one. I’m going to take a chance on this, and we’ll see what happens.”

Please visit www.judgejd.com.

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