



Judge Bob Perkins was born in Laredo, Texas and was raised in Mirando City, Sinton, Carrizo Springs, and Eagle Pass, Texas. He learned Spanish before English and was the first bilingual, bicultural judge elected in Travis County. He graduated high school in Eagle Pass and really considers it to be his home town since he spent more time there than any other when he was growing up. In 1966 he came to the University of Texas (one month after the Whitman rampage from the Tower). He got his Bachelor of Arts degree in Government in 1970 and graduated from U.T. Law School and became a lawyer in 1973. He was elected Justice of the Peace of Precinct 4 in Travis County in 1974, then was appointed and elected Judge of County Court at Law No. 2 in 1980. He became a District Judge of the 331<sup>st</sup> District Court of Travis County, where he served from 1982 to the end of 2010. He was last opposed in local races in 1980. He has heard many high profile cases and was elected by his colleagues as the first Presiding Criminal Judge of Travis County. As such, he presided over the 13 criminal courts of the county. While serving as a JP Judge Perkins reformed writs and petition forms to use plain English to make legal proceedings more understandable to the public. Judge Perkins was the first District Judge in Travis County to require that the DA consult with victims before making plea bargain offers. The legislature did not require this until years later.

His 36 years as an elected judge place him second only to Judge Mace B. Thurman Jr. who served as a judge from 1941 to 1990. Judge Perkins has helped pass legislation in the field of criminal justice, has spoken at many venues on varied legal topics, and has authored an outline used by lawyers concerning Texas criminal jury charges.

His parents, Bill and Carol Perkins were both educators and large influences in his life. Because his father was an American History teacher, he grew up with history books all around him, resulting in his fascination with history, government, and politics. He ran as a Democrat for the Court of Criminal Appeals (a statewide office) in 1996 and won the Democratic nomination but suffered his only election loss in November of that year when Republicans won every office in Texas. He has been an active member of the Mexican American Democrats and Tejano Democrats since 1977.

His mother, Carol Perkins, was raised in Mexico so Bob learned Spanish from her. His mother's work in bilingual education has been recognized nationwide for her contributions to that field. She wrote many songs used to teach English and Spanish and was one of the main contributors to Carrascolendas –the bilingual educational show on KLRU. Bob's love of singing both in English and Spanish comes from his mother.

In 2011, after he retired, he began to work on something that had always bothered him and that was the misspelling and mispronunciation of the name of the great Tejano patriot—Jose Antonio Menchaca. He had first encountered this problem when he was dating his first wife, Yolanda Velasquez, a native Austinite born and raised on the East Side. Bob spent many weeks researching the history of Menchaca and the springs named after him as well as the town. He distributed petitions, spoke to many community groups, reached out to Menchaca's descendants, created a 501 c 3 organization to raise the funds to pay for the street name change, and drafted the historical text used by City Councilman Pio Renteria in filing the petition with the city to correct the spelling. The Council heard the petition on October 4, 2018 and voted 8 to 1 to correct the spelling. A group of people from the town of Manchaca (sic) filed an injunction in the District courts of Travis County to hold off the name change but that injunction was overruled in September, 2019, and on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019, the new, correct signs were put up. It took the judge 9 years to get it done but at last it was done.

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