

DeSoto City Lights

A Publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department

Council Corner, A Message from Dick North, City Council - Place Five



Dear Citizens of our All America City of DeSoto,

As we look back at our celebration of Black History Month and honor some of America's most prominent and celebrated Black Americans (i.e. Dr. Martin Luther King and President Barack Obama), let us not forget the dedication and service of many of our local leaders.

There have been ten African Americans elected to serve on the DeSoto City Council since 1995. The first African American elected to the DeSoto City Council was Phil Jones who served from 1995 through 1998, Gilbert Saulter followed him serving from 1998 to 2000. Thelma Clardy, our first African American female City Councilmember and Mayor Pro Tem, served from 2002 to 2007, followed by Carl Williams who served from 2006 to 2009. Carl Sherman was elected to the City Council in 2006 and has served as our first African American Mayor since 2010. Denise Valentine served on the City Council and as Mayor Pro Tem from 2007 to 2013. DeShaundra Lockhart served from 2008 to 2012, followed by Rachel Proctor, our youngest African American Councilmember, elected in 2012. Curtistene McCowan was elected in 2013 and serves as our current Mayor Pro Tem. I was elected in 2013 as well.

In addition, there have been many more elected to the DeSoto Independent School Board of Trustees. Those currently serving are Board President, Warren Seay, Van Strickland, Carl Sherman, Jr., Don Gant and Aubrey Hooper.

These are only a few of the African Americans in our community contributing to the well being of our citizens and our city. All these efforts serve to make our All-America City the diverse and culturally advanced city it is today. ALL our leaders, past and present and YOU, the citizens, are to be applauded for your contributions. "It takes a VILLAGE"!!!

Councilmember Richard (Dick) North



City Calendar

March

1 Concert - Corner Theatre - 3pm
2 Arts Commission Mtg. Civic Ctr. 6 pm
2 Poetry In Progress - Civic Ctr. - 7 pm
2 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
3 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
5 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
5 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
7 HOA Involvement Workshop - 9am
8 Concert - Corner Theatre 3 pm
10 Planning & Zoning Mtg.-City Hall - 7pm
15 Concert - Corner Theatre - 3 pm
20 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
24 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
28 DeSoto Dining & Dialogue Dinner Event
30 DEDC Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am

April

6 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6 pm
6 Poetry In Progress - Civic Ctr. - 7 pm
6 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
7 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
9 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
9 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
9 Friends of the Library Mtg. - 6 pm
10 Holiday - City Offices Closed
12 Concert - Corner Theatre 3pm
14 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
19 Concert - Corner Theatre 3 pm
21 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
27 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am
28 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm

Calling All HOA Members!

Join us for the tenth annual HOA Involvement Workshop on Saturday, March 7, 2015 from 9 to 11:30 am at City Hall. Information is a key element in effective neighborhood involvement and this workshop is designed to provide representatives of DeSoto's neighborhood and homeowners' associations with the information they need to make their neighborhood a better, safer place to live. Members of all registered DeSoto HOA's are encouraged to attend whether your association is new or well-established. To register or for more information, please call Tracie Hlavinka at 972.230.9689 or contact her by email at thlavinka@desototexas.gov.

The City of DeSoto Launches ENGAGE DeSoto Website

The City of DeSoto is pleased to announce the launch of Engage DeSoto, a new community engagement website, developed by MindMixer, where citizens can connect, communicate and collaborate with community decision makers and other residents on the future of our community.

The goal is to get the community involved in the planning process. Along the way, Engage DeSoto will be used as an online tool to generate new ideas and feedback from citizens using this interactive and accessible platform.

Feedback from the website will be used by the City Council and staff as a planning tool on a variety of projects.

"None of us is as smart as all of us," said Mayor Carl Sherman. "We want to know what's important to you so that we can make good decisions for DeSoto's future."

The Engage DeSoto website provides an opportunity to share new ideas, support others' ideas, expand upon existing ideas and give feedback on initiatives, working with community leaders on a variety of

topics. It can be shared online anytime, anywhere on your smartphone, tablet or computer.

The discussion will start with topics like these, and branch off from there based on input:

- Tell us your favorite park in DeSoto and why.
- What improvements would you like to see in our park system?

The site also measures and tracks participation, identifying the most interested citizens and most compelling topics.

"The Engage DeSoto website will make it easy for us to communicate back with citizens, and will deliver measurable results and invaluable insights for the planning process," said Tracie Hlavinka, Assistant City Manager.

Please go to desototexas.gov/engagedesoto and sign up today. You can also follow us at #EngageDeSoto on Facebook and Twitter.

Talk to us.....We're listening.

A Message from Code Enforcement

The fence on your property should be maintained at all times. It is unlawful to allow your fence to lean or to have missing, loose or broken slats or panels. The fence is not allowed to have any symbols, writings or other graffiti except for signs which pertain to the address or occupancy of the property. It is prohibited to have barbed wire, hog wire, or chicken wire or to have an electric fence.

If you have a swimming pool, a fence, structure or gate is required to completely surround the swimming pool

to prevent small children from inadvertently wandering into the pool. This fence, structure or gate shall not be lower than six feet in height, and not have any openings that will allow a four-inch diameter sphere to pass through; and all gates should have a self-closing and self-latching device designed to keep gates closed and locked at all times. A permit is required to build any fence on your property and can be obtained from Building Inspection at City Hall, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. or by calling 972.230.9610.

The Project to Improve Chattey Road is Underway

The City of DeSoto is beginning a project to improve Chattey Road. The existing two-lane asphalt roadway will be improved to a 27 foot, two-lane, undivided concrete roadway with curb and gutter, closed drainage, sidewalks, retaining walls, sewer line crossings, water line replacement, landscaping and lighting.

The project was awarded to the Design Consultant, EJES, Inc. on September 16, 2014 and a project kick-off meeting between City Engineering personnel and EJES was conducted on November 14, 2014. The meeting covered project parameters including design criteria as well as design and construction scheduling.

Survey work is currently underway on the site. Affected property owners are being contacted, accordingly. The work entails establishing existing property boundary lines to determine whether right-of way will be needed, as well as determining

the overall location of the new roadway. Preparations are also being made to conduct the first public meeting for the project in the near future. Actual roadway design work is slated to begin sometime in March of 2015.

The City has launched a special website designed to provide information to residents affected by the construction on Chattey Road. That website is linked to



the desototexas.gov homepage in the News and Events section. If you are a resident in this area or just looking for information on the project's progress, we encourage you to go to the website and register to receive project updates. You can also contact Crystal Owens, City Engineer at 972.230.9672 for information.

You asked. We listened.

Coming Soon – DeSoto Water Utilities new and improved online payment system and customer dashboard. Here's what to expect:

- A simplified, user friendly online payment experience
- The ability to easily create an online bill pay account
- View and pay your bills anytime on any device
- View past bills
- Manage multiple water accounts with a single sign-in
- Set it and forget it! Set-up and manage monthly AutoPay/Schedule AutoPay using eCheck, credit or debit card at no additional charge
- Create a digital wallet
- Set-up paperless billing
- Manage your eBill notifications

Watch the online bill pay page on desototexas.gov for these improvements coming soon.

What's Happening at the DeSoto Public Library

Spring Break, Teen Tech Week Activities At The DeSoto Public Library

"Are You Divergent?" is the question for Teen Tech Week at the DeSoto Public Library! To celebrate the March 20 release of "Insurgent," the new movie based on the second book in bestselling author Veronica Roth's Divergent Trilogy, the library is hosting two weeks of Divergent-related activities and discussions. The fun starts on March 2 with a raffle drawing and ends on March 13 with a book review challenge. Other activities include a scavenger hunt, poetry writing contest, creating a music video and/or movie trailer, and refreshments. All teens ages 13 – 18 are welcome to come...and bring a teenaged friend! Registration is not required.

Clearing Your Criminal Record

One in four Americans has a criminal record which can prevent them from leading normal lives. The past doesn't have to haunt the future. Join us at the DeSoto Public Library on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 from 6 to 7:30 pm for this seminar presented by Dallas Attorney, Ms. Ify Seales. Learn information on the expungement/non-disclosure process, including: eligibility; what records are subject to expungement/non-disclosure; how to file for a petition for expungement/non-disclosure; and what to expect if you represent yourself.

Ms. Seales is a criminal and immigration attorney and has been a Dallas County Assistant District Attorney and a Dallas County Public Defender. Ms. Seales dedicates her spare time helping educate individuals on their legal rights and hosting free legal seminars throughout Dallas/Forth. This program is free and open to the public. No registration is necessary.

The library is located at 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, in the DeSoto Town Center Complex. Free parking is available in the nearby parking garage. For more information, please call the library at 972.230.9661.

CITY OF DESOTO
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

DOG DAYS N DESOTO

May 16, 2015
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Fashion Show
Canine Obstacle Course
Photo Contest
\$5 Dog Registration Fee

Zeiger Park
400 Eagle Drive
For more information please call
972.230.9653. Pre-register at the
recreation center.



DeSoto's Parks & Recreation Department invites you to attend an important Town Hall Meeting on February 21, 2015 at DeSoto City Hall from 10 am to noon. We are inviting you to share your thoughts and ideas for the future of the DeSoto Park System. For more information, please contact us at youthsports@desototexas.gov or 972.230.9653.



Arina McCain, Piano

Icy Renee Simpson, Soprano

Baya Kakouberi, piano

Stockton Helbing, solo/titiated cabaret

Dave Zoller & Daybreak Express



"Connecting Neighbors!"

Do you feel connected to the DeSoto Community?

If you'd like to connect with your neighbors and find out what's going on in the community, please take this as a personal invitation to attend our next free DeSoto Dining and Dialogue dinner event on March 28, 2015. Adults who live or work in DeSoto and care about our community are encouraged to attend. Resident high school students and their parents are also welcome to attend. We offer five hours of Community Service Credit for students who attend because their input is vital to the program. As a guest, all you have to do is attend and join in on the discussion. Repeat guests are also welcome. Please register your attendance at www.desotodd.org.

Dinner Discussion Topic:

What makes a great community?

The DeSoto Dining and Dialogue program was instrumental in DeSoto receiving the All-America City Award in 2006 and it sets DeSoto apart from other cities. We invite you to join with your friends and neighbors and share your thoughts on what makes DeSoto an All-America City, what brought you to DeSoto and what keeps you here. For our next dinner event, we are focusing the discussion on the elements that make DeSoto a great community. One such element is the park system. Members of the DeSoto Park Development Board will be on hand to hear your comments about the future of DeSoto's Parks system. Please follow the link below and register to attend this important event!

Saturday, March 28, 2015

6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

For more information and to register go to: www.desotodd.org

or call Kathy Jones at

972-230-9648

The deadline to register to attend the free dinner event is March 13th!

Join us for an exciting series celebrating DeSoto's diverse taste in music, alternating each week from classical to jazz. There's something for everyone!

DATES

March 1
March 8
March 15
April 12
April 19
May 3
May 10
May 17
May 24

Tatiana Mayfield & Victor Cager
Carelle Flores
Daybreak Express w/ Dave Zoller
Arina McCain (piano)
& Icy Renee Simpson (soprano)
Andrea Dawson
Leana Conquest Trio
Demarre McGill (flute)
& Baya Kakouberi (piano)
Gary Levinson (violin)
& Steven Harlos (piano)
Stockton Helbing Trio



artsdesoto.com

DeSoto Dining and Dialogue is a volunteer-run organization that provides individuals of all ages, who live or work in DeSoto, the opportunity to get to know one another at private dinner events. These dinners are held twice a year in private homes around DeSoto. The discussion is led by a trained facilitator who guides participants through questions designed to elicit thoughts and opinions on issues facing our community. DeSoto Dining and Dialogue is primarily successful because families are willing to host a dinner for a diverse group of citizens in their homes at their own expense. Facilitators and other volunteers willingly give of their time and expertise because they believe in the program. However, we need continuing community participation to keep the program strong. Join us in building a strong community. Please feel free to forward this invitation to anyone who lives and/or works in DeSoto!