

DeSoto City Lights

A Publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department

DeSoto Parks & Recreation Department Receives National Accreditation

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recently announced that the DeSoto Parks & Recreation Department has received accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). With the announcement, DeSoto Parks & Recreation joins an elite group of 155 park and recreation agencies across the nation who have achieved accreditation.

“This national accreditation of our Parks & Recreation Department is another major milestone for our City,” said DeSoto Mayor Curtistene McCowan. “The honor of being ranked among the “best of the best” is a testament to the outstanding leadership, dedication and hard work of our administration, staff and community partners” said Mayor McCowan. “Special commendations go to Renee Johnson and her team for establishing and maintaining a standard of excellence for programs and services that meet the needs of our diverse community.”

National accreditation through CAPRA signifies that the Department employs national best practices in all facets of the organization. It is an extensive, multi-year process which includes the completion of an application and detailed self-assessment report as well as a site assessment conducted by the agency and the Commission. Accreditation requires agencies to respond to 151 standards representing elements of effective and efficient park and recreation operations.

“The DeSoto Parks & Recreation Team is committed to providing a premier park system by implementing the best management practices and establishing an elite agency to serve our citizens,” said M. Renee Johnson, Director, DeSoto Parks & Recreation Department. “Our citizens deserve the pursuit of excellence.”

The DeSoto Police Department has been accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) since 1993 and recently underwent a re-accreditation. With the announcement of the Parks & Recreation Department accreditation, DeSoto is now one of only three local government agencies in the North Texas area to have two accredited departments.



There were big smiles all around as DeSoto learned that they were approved for the CAPRA accreditation. Pictured here from left, DeSoto Senior Center Manager Nathan Busby; Recreation Specialist Roderick Turner; Recreation/Civic Center Supervisor Kevin Moore; Managing Director M. Renee Johnson; Mayor Curtistene McCowan; CAPRA Visitation Committee Chair Gregory Mack; and Parks Operations Coordinator Danny Johnson.

City Calendar

October

3 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. 6 pm
3 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
4 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
4 Texas Night Out - Town Center 7 pm
6 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
6 Friends of the Library Mtg. - 6 pm
6 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
6 Historical Foundation Mtg. 6 pm
11 Planning & Zoning Mtg.- canceled
18 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
20 #LetsTalkDeSoto - Manderley - 6:30 pm
25 Planning & Zoning Mtg. City Hall 7 pm
30 Kneel Together - Amphitheater 4 pm

November

1 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm
3 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
3 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
3 Historical Foundation Mtg. - 6 pm
7 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
7 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. 6pm
8 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm
12 Vet Fest - Civic Center - 9am to 2pm
15 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
24 Thanksgiving Holiday - City Hall closed
25 Thanksgiving Holiday - City Hall closed
28 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am
29 Planning & Zoning Mtg. City Hall - 7 pm



"A Beary Special Celebration" is the theme for the DeSoto 2016 Hometown Holiday Parade scheduled for Saturday, December 3rd at 5 pm.

Now is the time to reach out to your church, scout troop, community group, HOA, business, or other organization to see if they would like to participate. Help us kick off the Holiday Season in DeSoto by going to www.desototexas.gov and downloading an application for this year's parade. Act now, early bird registration ends November 11, 2016. For more information, please call Special Events Coordinator, Sade McCallan at 972.230.9652 or send an email to smccallan@desototexas.gov.

DeSoto's Historic Nance Farm Is Featured On The History Channel's Lone Star Restorations

Historic Nance Farm has received some national notoriety, having been recently showcased on episode #1 of Lone Star Restorations, which first aired on the History Channel on October 3, 2016. Brent Hull, of Hull Historical, has been involved in the long-term restoration of Nance Farm for several years, doing repair and rehabilitation projects on the property as funding permits. Lone Star Restorations, a new series on the History Channel, taped excerpts of the rehabilitation project for the milking barn. It is believed to be the oldest structure on the 160+ year old property.

"Brent is a genius in the restoration realm and is a wealth of information as we seek to uncover the true history of Nance Farm," said Lora Stallings, DeSoto Assistant City Manager and staff liaison for the DeSoto, Texas Historical Foundation. "Every time he opens a wall or repairs a floor, there is a new paragraph to an old story."



"Mr. Hull allowed our Nance Farm to be one of the focus properties showcased on the History Channel series, and we are very blessed to have this avenue to tell the world about DeSoto's historic landmark," said Stallings.

Once the restoration is complete, the Nance Farm house will be used as a museum to display DeSoto memorabilia and Civil Rights Movement educational exhibits. The DeSoto, Texas Historical Foundation is requesting donations or loans of historic artifacts that will be displayed in the house. To make a donation or loan an artifact to the museum, please email your contact information to NanceFarmDonations@desototexas.gov and a Historical Foundation Board Member will respond.

Lone Star Renovations is available for viewing On Demand through your cable provider or by downloading it at <https://www.historyvault.com>.

**Holiday Week
Trash Pick-up
Schedule**

"No pickup on the holiday..."

**After the holiday, your trash
will be picked up one day later
than your usual day**

There will be no trash pick-up on Thanksgiving Day. As the graphic here suggests, regular Thursday trash will be picked-up on Friday and regular Friday collection will take place on Saturday. The normal schedule resumes on Monday, November 28th.

Calling All Veterans - Join Us for Vet Fest on November 12th at the DeSoto Civic Center from 9 am to 2 pm

For the last four years, the City of DeSoto has hosted an event to honor the contributions and sacrifice of our military veterans and their families on the Saturday closest to Veterans Day. This year, on Saturday November 12, 2016 from 9 am to 2 pm, we will again recognize our veterans with an event called Vet Fest. The event, which includes a special appreciation ceremony at 10 am featuring comments by Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (if her schedule permits), will take place in the Blue Bonnet Rooms at DeSoto Civic Center.

Our keynote speaker is Brigadier General (ret.) Remo Butler. BG Butler will recount his nearly 30 year military career that began with his initial tour of duty with 2/17th Field Artillery, Camp Pelham, South Korea. After completing the Special Forces Qualification Course in 1977, he was assigned as a detachment commander in Company C, and Company A, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Panama. In 1980, he attended the Infantry Officer Advanced course and later commanded Company C, Infantry Training Group, Fort Benning, Georgia.

After completing the Armed Forces Staff College he was assigned in 1988 to Special Operations Command South, Panama, as Director J3 and as a special operations plans officer. He was also a participant in OPERATION JUST CAUSE. He

returned to Fort Bragg to command 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from January 1993-1995. After the War College he was assigned as Chief, Special Operations Coordination Element, XVIII Airborne Corps. BG (ret) Butler commanded the 1st Special Warfare Training

Group (Airborne), United States Army Special Warfare Center and School, from 1997 through 1999. He was reassigned as the Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina from 1999 to 2000. He served as the Commanding General, Special Operations Command South in Puerto Rico from June 2000 to July 2003. His last Military assignment from July 2003 to July 2004 was as Chief of Staff for the United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base Tampa Florida.

Following the appreciation ceremony, representatives from the Dallas VA Medical Center will be providing blood pressure checks and flu shots for veterans along with representatives offering the following:

- VBA Representative
- Benefits Area Representative
- Mental Health Representative
- Appointment Scheduling Rep.
- Vocational Rehab
- Satellite Location/Services
- Veterans Texas Commission & Veterans Entrepreneur Program



- Texas Land Board Assoc.
- Texas Employment Commission & more

We will also have giveaways and free entertainment provided by Forte until 2 pm. For more information, please call Kathy Jones at 972.230.9648.

Brighter Tomorrows Provides Safe Restart

Domestic violence and sexual assault tear away the foundation of safety and wellbeing for its victims. Brighter Tomorrows provides the resources needed for healing.

“The physical effects of domestic violence and sexual assault are compounded by the loss of life’s basics, such as a safe home and financial resources,” said CEO Diana Franzetti. “In addition to providing immediate safe shelter for victims, we have counseling and transitional housing programs, as well as help with permanent safe housing, legal aid, child care, clothing, enrolling children in school, obtaining school supplies, job readiness, budgeting and life skills.” The hotline phone number is 972.262.8383.

Brighter Tomorrows operates thrift stores in DeSoto and Grand Prairie to raise operating money and to provide free household goods and other necessities for clients. The thrift store in DeSoto also provides electricity bill-payment assistance for TXU Energy customers who live in DeSoto, Lancaster, Glenn Heights or Duncanville.

“Through its bill-payment assistance program, TXU Energy gives us the flexibility we need to help its customers keep their lights on and use the money they have for other needs,” Franzetti said. “We appreciate TXU Energy and our other partners who support our mission.”

The Brighter Tomorrows Thrift Store in DeSoto is at 230 E. Beltline Road. It is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. It accepts donations of gently used clothing and working household appliances, and furniture that is not broken, stained or torn.

New Sewer Rates Become Effective October 1st

In order to cover the increased cost of wastewater treatment services from the Trinity River Authority, maintain current service levels and continue capital improvement activities for the water/wastewaters system, the City of DeSoto is implementing the following rate changes for FY 2017:

	FY2016	FY2017	
Water Base Rate	\$8.50	\$8.50	No Change
Water Volume Rate	\$3.10	\$3.10	No Change
Sewer Base Rate	\$8.71	\$9.32	7.0%
Sewer Volume Rate	\$8.65	\$9.26	7.0%

Customers will see the new sewer base rate and volume rate reflected in their December utility bills. If you have any questions regarding your water or wastewater service, please call 972.230.9627.

How Do DeSoto's Water and Sewer Rates Compare to Other Cities in the DFW Area?

The average consumption for City of DeSoto residential utility customers is 7,500 gallons of water and 4,000 gallons of sewer per month. Therefore, based on the new rates, the average charge for water and sewer will be \$58.01, not including garbage, drainage or recycling costs. As you can see from the chart below, this is well below the State average of \$76.90 and well below the average of most cities in the DFW area. While DeSoto's average bill may be slightly higher than those of cities like Irving, Grapevine, Coppell, Dallas, Grand Prairie and Fort Worth, it is important to understand that those cities have much larger populations over which to spread the costs associated with providing water and sewer service.

