

March/April, 2009



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City Lights DeSoto, Texas

A publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department



Council Corner, A Message From Mayor Pro Tem, Carl Sherman



Change is coming!

We are experiencing tremendous change; the citizens of DeSoto have challenged our old way of thinking to shift to a new paradigm of bold change from the bottom up.

The heart of the city of DeSoto has been transformed by the recent addition of 136 distinctive, upscale, urban-style

apartment homes in the new mixed-use development at Town Center. This development also includes over 36,000 square feet of retail and grade A office space at the corner of Hampton and Pleasant Run Road. Built on a previous parking lot site primarily for city government use that held no economic value for the city, this corner lot now represents a more than \$28 million dollar project. It also represents years of working with DeSoto residents, business owners and developers to bring to reality a vision to transform our 60 year old city. I believe that this open dialogue between city officials and residents is the main reason this new development has experienced great interest from new citizens moving into DeSoto. The Trammel Crow High Street Residential unit has already reported over that 25% of the residential units were leased prior to the official grand opening in early March.

Apart from being visually striking and creating a sustainable community where people live, work and play, this new development houses the first parking garage in the Best Southwest. Thereby creating an environment of efficiency in space utilization for our city of 21 square miles which has limited growth and development opportunities in retail zoned space. I believe that this new development of retail, office and residential mixed-use will establish a new blueprint for future development along the Hampton Road corridor.

Imagine a new birth as we celebrate our 60th year as an incorporated city in the Best Southwest region. DeSoto began as a bedroom community with elite aspirations of

being a place to live and raise a family, a place to come and get away from the hustle and bustle of Big D. It was the vision of our city fathers to be the ultimate exclusive family community.

That was then...now as we embrace change we are embarking on a threshold of being transformed from an exclusive town to an inclusive city in a bold way. We are now well on our way to reinventing ourselves as a robust, vibrant and sustainable city in the Best Southwest. I firmly believe that this new uptown-style development will not only serve as a catalyst for a surge in capital investments in DeSoto, but also for similar developments in our area. It is my belief and hope that we are evolving into a modern uptown suburban and sustainable community with the achievement of this landmark development.

That said, while we have celebrated our 60th birthday, we are in no way stuck in our old ways. DeSoto is a city of transformation! We invite you to come see how your city has changed. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce will host a Taste of Jazz on June 27th and 28th which will celebrate what I like to refer as the beginning of our new down town district.

Truly yours,

**Carl Sherman
Mayor Pro-Tem**



Views of the new Town Center Development from the swimming pool in Residential Building 3 to the courtyard in front of City Hall.



Earth Month Newsletter - DeSoto Is Going Green

For more than 10 years, the City of DeSoto has hosted Annual Clean-Up each spring. If you look around, you'll notice that DeSoto is cleaner and virtually litter-free thanks to the efforts of hundreds of Adopt-A-Street volunteers and our city funded litter crew. As a result, the city is focusing our clean-up efforts this year on green initiatives and proclaiming April, Earth Month in DeSoto.

President Obama has encouraged us to get involved in green initiatives. As you look through this newsletter, you'll see that we have organized several activities that are planned to help DeSoto GO GREEN. Keep up the good work, DeSoto!!

Tracie Hlavnika,
Community Initiatives Manager

Electronics Recycling

Old TV's and electronics can be placed out for pick-up with your regular trash service. However, when Duncan Disposal collects them, they go to our landfill and are not recycled. Tossing hundreds of computers, TVs and cell phones into landfills poses serious health and environmental risks. Today, most electronic components can be reused, recycled and diverted from the waste stream. The City of DeSoto, in conjunction with Waste Management Recycle America is doing our part to keep electronics out of our landfill by offering recycling of electronic equipment during Earth Month.

On Saturday, April 25th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., bring your unwanted electronic items to the DeSoto Service Center located at 809 W. Spinner Road for recycling.

Here's the list of acceptable items:

	Recycling Fee
Computers - CPUs	-0-
Monitors/TVs	\$10
Computer Peripherals	\$3
Printers	\$3
Fax Machines	\$3
Keyboards	\$3
Photocopiers	\$3
VCRs	\$3
Stereos	\$3
Consumer Electronics	\$3
Home & Office Phones	-0-
Cell Phones	-0-

Unacceptable Items

- Microwaves
- Dehumidifiers
- Smoke Alarms/Detectors
- Large Appliances- Refrigerators, etc.
- Non Decontaminated Medical Equipment
- Thermometers
- Batteries

CITY CALENDAR

March

- 2 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 3 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 Reception for DeSoto's 60th Anniversary of Incorporation - City Hall 6 p.m.
- 5 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 5 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 10 Arts Commission Mtg.—6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 12 Board & Commission Banquet - 6:30 pm - Civic Center
- 16-20 Spring Break Camp - Recreation Center - 972.230.9655
- 17 City Council Meeting - cancelled
- 20 "A Raisin In The Sun" opens in the Corner Theatre
- 23 Parkland Hospital Health Expo - Civic Center - 3 to 7 p.m.
- 24 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. City Hall
- 26 King Tut Presentation by Library - Civic Center 7 p.m.
- 27-28 Best Southwest Bookfest - Lancaster Library
- 30 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall

April

- 2 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 2 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 4 Concerned DeSoto Citizens Candidate Forum - City Hall 9 a.m. - noon
- 4 Youth Sports Assoc.- Park Clean-up Day
- 6 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 7 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 11 Easter Egg Hunt - Civic Center Courtyard - noon
- 11 Earth Month Celebration at DeSoto Public Library
- 14 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 15-19 AVTT Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall Exhibit - Grimes Park
- 16 Adopt-A-Street Banquet - Roberts Park - 6:30 p.m.
- 20 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 21 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 25 E-Recycling & Shredding Event - DeSoto Serv. Center, 800 Spinner - 9-1pm
- 25 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event - voucher required, call 972.230.9600 to request a voucher beginning April 10th.
- 28 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall

Earth Month Activities at the DeSoto Public Library

The DeSoto Public Library Teen Advisory Board is planning a fun and educational event intended to get kids involved in the Green Movement in DeSoto. On Saturday, April 11th, bring your kids to the library between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to hear a special storytime dedicated to recycling followed by a craft using recycled materials. The Teen Advisory Board will also teach kids to do their part by challenging them to commit to turn the lights off when they leave a room or turn the water off while brushing their teeth. For more information on Earth Day at the DeSoto Public Library, please call 972.230.9663.

Avoid Identity Theft by Shredding Your Personal Documents

Identity theft is a serious problem in today's society. One way to protect yourself is to make sure that identity thieves aren't gaining access to your personal information through junk mail or other documents you have placed in the trash. The best way to assure this doesn't happen is to shred your junk mail and other personal documents before discarding.

If you don't have access to a paper shredder, bring the things you wish to shred to the DeSoto Service Center located at 809 W. Spinner Road on Saturday, April 25, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. There will be a mobile document shredding unit on-site to shred your personal household documents at no cost. (Commercial documents will not be accepted.)

Please place all your documents in boxes. Do not bring them loose in bags as documents must be stacked to go into the shredder. You can watch your documents being shredded. There is no limit to the amount of household material you may bring for shredding. However, if you bring a large amount and choose to view them being shredded, you will be asked to step out of line and wait in order to get as many people through the line as possible. If you have any questions regarding household document shredding, please call the City of DeSoto Action Center at 972.230.9600.



Do You Need A Helping Hand? Great Days of Service Can Help!

"Great Days of Service", a cooperative effort between the City of DeSoto, area churches and community volunteers, is looking for homes in DeSoto that need painting and/or repairs. These homes must be owner occupied and the homeowner should be elderly, disabled or financially challenged. The work will be done the week of June 24-27 but applications for service must be received by May 1, 2009. If you know of someone who can benefit from this program, please contact Traci Hlavinka with the City of DeSoto, 972.230.9689. She can provide an application for service.



Code Enforcement Encourages You to be Their Eyes & Ears

DeSoto's Code Enforcement Department has offered a program for several years called Eyes & Ears which enlists the help of homeowner's or neighborhood association members by asking them to report code violations such as high grass or junk cars in their neighborhood. That program has been expanded to allow HOA members an even greater opportunity to make a difference in their neighborhoods. In addition to reporting high grass, the Eyes & Ears Program was expanded to empower registered homeowner's associations to mow high grass and weeds at vacant homes in their neighborhoods.

As we move into spring, neighborhoods may start to experience problems with high weeds at vacant homes. The Expanded Eyes & Ears program allows HOAs or neighborhood associations to be proactive in resolving the problem by following these procedures:



- When a high grass complaint at a vacant house is reported, a Code Enforcement Officer verifies that a violation exists and confirms with the city's water department that the property is vacant.
- A high grass sign is placed in the yard of the vacant property and digital photos are taken of the property for documentation purposes including the date and time of the photo.
- The property owner is notified and has seven days to move the property.
- On the eighth day, the Code Enforcement Officer will re-inspect the property and if it has not been mowed, the neighborhood's homeowner's association is notified and members of the HOA can mow the property.

Before this program was instituted, mowing contractors were hired to mow the vacant property extending the time before the property was mowed. Now, HOA or neighborhood association members can mow the property as soon as they are notified by Code Enforcement giving them some control over the appearance of their neighborhood. This gets the mowing done more quickly in most cases. Property owners are billed for the mowing and the HOA or neighborhood association is paid \$50 for each yard mowed under this program.

In order to participate in the Eyes & Ears Program, the HOA or neighborhood association must be registered with the City of DeSoto's Community Initiatives Manager. For more information or to participate in this program, please call Tracie Hlavinka at 972.230.9689.

CoverThe UninsuredWeek 2009

MARCH 22-28

LET'S GET AMERICA COVERED

Parkland Health & Hospital System and the City of DeSoto are teaming up to raise awareness and provide services at the Cover the Uninsured Health Expo on March 23, 2009.

This Health Expo targets low-to moderate income families: adults, children, and seniors living in the Southern Sector of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex area. During the Expo, Parkland staff will provide cholesterol, glucose, vision, prostate and blood pressure screenings at no cost. Kids can receive no-cost immunizations/vaccines. There will also be information and education on smoking cessation, cancer, trauma, injury prevention, parenting, nutrition, physical activity, stroke, healthy living, diabetes, healthy relationships, resources for seniors and seizure/epilepsy resources. The Expo will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2009 at the DeSoto Civic Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd, DeSoto, TX 75115.

Parkland will also be registering women for no-cost during the Health Expo on March 23rd. Parkland's mobile mammogram unit will be on-site at the DeSoto Civic Center from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Friday, March 27, 2009 to provide these mammograms. To qualify, you must be over 35 years of age, have no current breast issues, live in Dallas County, and be uninsured. For more information, please call 214.266.1120.

If you are interested in making Parkland your medical home, financial counselors will be available to assist you. To see if you are eligible for Parkland's financial assistance program, you will need to bring the following information with you to the Health Expo on March 23rd:

- A photo ID such as your driver's license, your Texas Department of Public Safety ID card or your student or employee picture ID.
- Proof of residency in Dallas County, such as your lease agreement, current utility bills or your monthly Medicaid form.
- Two check stubs or proof of unemployment.
- How Many People Are In Your Family - For each family member, bring birth certificates, guardianship papers or bring your last year's income tax return.

For more info call Parkland's Customer Service Hotline at 214.590.4900.



Bring Your Kids to the Annual Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 11, 2009 at noon DeSoto Civic Center

Join the Easter Bunny and the Parks & Leisure Services Staff for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Kids will be separated into two groups, aged 3 and under and 4 to 7. Free admission, bring your Easter basket. For more info call, 972.230.9650.

CDC To Host Candidate Forum

On Saturday, April 4, 2009 at 9 a.m., Concerned DeSoto Citizens will host a Candidate Forum in the City Council Chambers at DeSoto City Hall. The public is invited to attend this forum to meet the candidates who are running for open places on the DeSoto City Council and DeSoto Independent School District Board of Trustees. The forum will also be broadcast live on the city's government access cable channel 16 for Time Warner subscribers.

AFRICAN AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER
Presents
A RAISIN IN THE SUN
by LORRAINE HANSBERRY
Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray

DeSoto CORNER THEATRE
211 E. Pleasant Run
DeSoto, TX 75115

Starring
Irma P. Hall
as Lena Younger

Show Dates & Times:
March 20 - April 12, 2009
Fridays & Saturdays @ 8pm **\$20**
Saturdays & Sundays @ 3pm **\$15**

To Purchase Tickets:
Box Office - 972.572.0998
Web - www.aareptheater.com

Sponsored by:

380 feet long | 58,253 names | 5 days
to remember...

American Veterans TRAVELING TRIBUTE

80% Replica of Vietnam Memorial Wall
On Display at Grimes Park, 500 E. Centre Park Blvd. DeSoto
April 16-19th Free to the Public - Open 24 Hrs. per Day
For more information call 972.230.9648