

August, 2009



www.ci.desoto.tx.us
972.230.9600

City Lights DeSoto, Texas

A publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department



A Message from Carl Williams, City Council Place 7



In the recent past, there has been a lot of publicity regarding Homeowner Associations in Texas and across the nation. Most, if not all, of the publicity has been negative, and true; but not in DeSoto. The "Homeowner Associations" in DeSoto play a major role in the beauty and quality of life in our city and were recognized nationally as part of the All America City Award DeSoto received in 2006.

Before I go further, I need to point out that there are two types of "Homeowner Associations". One is the **mandatory** type and the other is the **voluntary** type. It is the mandatory type that you hear the horror stories about. These are incorporated by the developer prior to the initial sale of homes, and the Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions are recorded when the property is subdivided. Buyers sign documents stating their agreement to the Covenants and Restrictions at closing when the home is purchased. If and when they sell the home, they cease to be a member of the association and the new owner becomes a member. All members must pay assessments and abide by the restrictions of the association. Each homeowner in a mandatory association typically pays assessments/dues that are used to cover the expenses of the association. Some examples are landscaping for the common areas, maintenance and upkeep of community amenities, insurance for commonly-owned structures and areas, mailing costs for newsletters and other correspondence, and any other items spelled out in the governing documents or agreed to by the members.

The other is the **voluntary** type and is sometimes called a "Neighborhood Association" rather than a "Homeowner Association" to distinguish it from the mandatory type of Homeowner Association mentioned above. Neighborhood Association membership is voluntary or informal. Neighborhood Associations members only participate if willing and pay dues if they choose to be a part of the organization. These dues can cover such expenses as maintenance of entryways, newsletters and governing documents but every household is not mandated to participate.

DeSoto has both mandatory and voluntary associations. There are 57 operating associations in the City of DeSoto, almost

evenly divided between both. In direct partnership with the city, these associations have consistently developed and supported projects that create and maintain the attractiveness and values of the homes in their respective communities. In today's housing market in DeSoto, I believe it's incumbent on all of us to get involved in keeping DeSoto the beautiful city it has become and reducing the erosion in home values. In the 24 years that I have lived in DeSoto, there has not been an adverse property action by a mandatory Homeowner Association.

Most of us live in an area of the DeSoto Community that has an active association be it mandatory or voluntary. If your community has a mandatory association, then you answered the "Join or Not to Join" question when you purchased your home. All of you are paying annual assessments of varying amounts so "Join In" and actively participate in the planning and implementation of the projects that support your investment. If your community has a voluntary association and you are not a member, then the answer to the question, "Join or Not to Join" is **JOIN NOW!** A voluntary association does not have the power or authority to take an adverse action against your home. The dues structure is typically decided by majority vote of the membership so you can participate directly in determining the cost of membership. Your city wants you, needs you to **JOIN**.

To find out if there is an active association in the area where you reside; call the **CITY of DESOTO at 972.230.9600 and ask for Tracie Hlavinka**. She can provide you with the information you will need to get involved.

Carl Williams.
City Council, Place 7

Sign up to follow the City of DeSoto on : 
Just log on to <http://twitter.com/desototx> .
Twitter is a free service that allows us to send you quick updates on things of interest that affect you as a citizen of DeSoto. We hope you'll join us!!



The DeSoto Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association is taking an active role in graffiti abatement in DeSoto. These volunteers, with the help of the DeSoto Police, are trained to quickly remove graffiti at no cost to the property owner. Pictured above, John Gault, president of the DeSoto Citizens Police Academy Alumni Assoc. removes graffiti on a local business. Please call 469.658.3000 to report graffiti in your area.

City Applies for Stimulus Funds

The City of DeSoto has submitted an application to the Energy Department to receive \$187,000 in federal stimulus funds which will be used to install solar panels on the roof of the city facilities at Town Center. With the installation of these solar panels, the city hopes to generate about 30kW or 20% of the electricity needed to power City Hall, the Recreation Center, Civic Center, Corner Theatre and Library.

A feasibility study is currently underway to determine whether the solar panels would actually produce the desired savings in electric costs and what type of system and location would best benefit our situation. Once the results of the study are received, city officials will make a decision to move forward on the project.



The Cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto and Duncanville are pleased to announce the grand opening of the Tri-City Animal Shelter. The new \$2.5 million facility is operated jointly by all three cities. The public is invited to tour the new facility located at 1150 E. Pleasant Run Road between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturday, August 15, 2009.

CITY CALENDAR

August

- 1 FY2010 City Council Budget Workshop - 9 a.m. City Hall
- 3 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 4 City Council Meeting - cancelled to observe National Night Out
- 6 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 6 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 11 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 18 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 24 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 25 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 29 Auditions for DeSoto Star Search call 972 230-9648 for info
- 29 Briarwood Kids Fishing Day - Briarwood Park - 9 a.m.

September

- 1 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 4 Sister Cantaloupe Variety Show - Corner Theatre - 7:30 p.m.
- 7 Labor Day Holiday - City offices & facilities closed
- 8 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall 7 p.m.
- 12 DeSoto Star Search - Corner Theatre - 7 p.m.
- 14 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 15 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 18 Jazz Concert featuring Tom Braxton - Corner Theatre - 8 p.m.
- 22 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. City Hall
- 26 DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner Event - call 972.230.9648 to attend
- 28 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall



Come out to the fishin' hole at Briarwood Park for the city's annual Kid's Fishin' Day on Saturday, August 29, 2009 from 9 a.m. to noon. Briarwood Park and Pond, located at 1625 W. Belt Line Road, will be generously stocked to increase the kid's odds of a memorable fishing experience. Kids under 14 are welcome and

must be accompanied by an adult. You can bring your own fishing gear. No fishing license is required. **If you don't have your own equipment, there will be a limited amount of fishing rods, bait and tackle available.** Volunteers will be on hand to assist you and your child in catching the fish. Registration is \$5 per child. Prizes will be awarded by age category for the largest fish caught. Applications will be available at the City of DeSoto, Parks & Leisure Services Department beginning August 17th or on-line at www.ci.desoto.tx.us. You can also register at the event. For more information, call 972. 230.9651.

Got Talent??? Come Out and Audition for DeSoto Star Search!!

Got Talent? Do you, sing, dance, or tell jokes? Do you have a hidden talent you are ready to share with the world?

If so, come out and audition for the 7th Annual DeSoto Star Search Competition. DeSoto Star Search is a "just for fun" talent show



sponsored each year by the DeSoto Arts Commission. This year's show is scheduled for Saturday, September 12th at 7:30 p.m. in the Corner Theatre at DeSoto Town Center.

In order to be a part of the show, you must audition. The DeSoto Arts Commission is holding open auditions on Saturday, August 29th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. We are seeking singers, dancers, musicians and other talented performers aged 8 to 108 for the competition. First, second and third place winners will be chosen in the following age groups; kids aged 8-11, tweens aged 12-14, teens aged 15-18, adults and seniors over 55.

20 acts will be chosen from all who audition to perform at the DeSoto Star Search Show on September 12th. First place winners in each age category will receive \$100 and the chance to perform at city events throughout the year. A \$5 audition fee per act will be charged to those who audition with the proceeds to be used as prize money for the winners.

Auditions are open to groups as well as individuals, however, an appointment is required. Each contestant will have five minutes to impress the judges with their talent. To reserve an audition time or for more information on DeSoto's 7th Annual Star Search, please call Kathy Jones at 972.230.9648.

What Do You Think?

Our community, along with the rest of the country, is facing some big challenges. Let's come together to share thoughts and opinions. We owe it to ourselves...

For more than five years, DeSoto Dining and Dialogue has brought together people from various backgrounds to discuss making DeSoto a more vibrant place for all. By connecting neighbors, the program seeks to build relationships among people from different backgrounds with the ultimate goal of sharing experiences and building a strong community, regardless of color, culture or class.

The next DeSoto Dining and Dialogue dinner event is scheduled for Saturday, September 26, 2009. It's easy to register, just go to the website at desotodininganddialogue.org and fill out the guest registration form before September 8, 2009 or call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648. Once registered, you will be assigned to a dinner table and you'll receive an invitation in the mail to the dinner during the week of September 14th. Once registered, all you have to do is agree to attend the dinner and engage in the discussion.

DeSoto Dining and Dialogue is a volunteer-run organization that provides individuals of all ages, including high school students, who live or work in DeSoto, the opportunity to get to know one another at dinner events with 8 to 10 participants. These dinners are held twice a year in private homes, churches or restaurants all over town on the same night. The discussion is lead 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 open their homes and host, at their own expense, a dinner for a diverse group of citizens. 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 which means that we need committed citizens like you, to participate in the program as guests.

Join us in building a strong community by registering to attend the dinner on September 26th. For more information on the DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Program, please call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648.



Have You Registered For Code Red?

The City of DeSoto uses the Code Red Emergency Notification System which allows us to telephone all or targeted areas of the city in case of an emergency situation that requires immediate action such as drinking water contamination, a missing child, flood, street closure, chemical spill or gas leak.

For this program to be successful, we must have accurate contact information for each household and business. Please go to the city's website at www.ci.desoto.tx.us/codered click on the CodeRed icon and enter your name, address and up to two emergency phone numbers. When the Code Red Emergency Notification System is activated, the number 866.419.5000 will show up on your caller ID. It's a good idea to enter this number in your phone book and designate it as Emergency Communications so that you can identify it as a Code Red emergency notification call when received.

This system will only be used for emergency purposes. All your information will remain completely private and will only be used to notify you of critical situations.





Opens for business August 15, 2009
in the foyer of the
DeSoto Public Library
Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily
Menu Includes:

99¢ drip coffee, teas, sodas, juice drinks,
blended drinks, homemade soups, Panini
and deli sandwiches, stuffed pretzels and
breakfast burritos.



and the DeSoto Arts Commission Present:

Poetry, Music, Mime & More
Friday, September 4th 7pm
DeSoto Corner Theatre

211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. in Town Center

Sister Cantaloupe, Trina Jeffrie, invites you to
start your Labor Day Weekend at DeSoto Corner
Theatre for another of her great Showcase of
Stars Variety Shows. Tickets are \$ 10, call
972 230-9648 for info.



Sister Cantaloupe

Prudence The Iets, a
poet and spoken word
artist will perform.



Buckey



Rhonda Jones, of My Life Is Ministry and
Ministry Is Mime will perform.

AFRICAN AMERICAN
REPERTORY THEATER
PRESENTS

Winner of the
N.Y. Drama
Critics Award
for Best Play

Sponsored by:
City of DeSoto

**seven
guitars**
by AUGUST WILSON

Directed by
William (Bill) Earl Ray

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

DeSOTO CORNER THEATER
211 E. Pleasant Run
DeSoto, TX 75115

Show Dates & Times:
Fri. & Sat. Nights @ 7:30pm \$20
Sat. & Sun. Matinee @ 2:30pm \$15
Preview Performance on
Thurs., August 6 @ 7:30pm \$10

The DeSoto Arts Commission Presents:

Tom Braxton - In Concert

Friday, September 18th 8 p.m.

DeSoto Corner Theatre - Tickets \$10

Saxophonist Tom Braxton is a
versatile instrumentalist, a
charismatic performer, and a gifted
composer whose distinct, melodic
sound thrills audiences of all ages
and leaves them wanting more.



For tickets call, 972.230.9648

Save The Date

*Friends of Tri-City Animal Shelter Gala
Celebrating the Grand Opening of the New Shelter*

Date: September 13, 2009
Time: 2:00 - 6:00 PM
Place: Enchanted Memories
Duncanville, TX
Phone: 972-291-1198

Cedar Hill • Duncanville • DeSoto