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972.230.9600

# City Lights DeSoto, Texas



*A publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department*

## Council Corner - A Message from Jerry Edgin, Councilmember Place Seven



Our City Manager, Jim Baugh, retired in April after nearly 40 years of public service, the last 14 years spent in DeSoto. Anyone who has lived in DeSoto for the last fifteen years will tell you that our city looks cleaner, city facilities are newer and better-maintained, and our streets continue to improve. Major thoroughfares have all been updated along with every park in DeSoto and our city enjoys a reputation for being a great place to live, work and play. Ask anyone in the know and they will tell you that City Manager, Jim Baugh has been the driving force behind all this progress. His vision, experience and

dedication to planning are evident in every project he undertakes.

Under Jim's direction a five-year Capital Improvement Program was established in 1998 and with the support of four mayors and several city councils over the years, two major bond programs were approved by voters allowing for major capital improvements all over the city.

Over the last 14 years, every park in DeSoto has been reconstructed or improved. During Jim's tenure, the city's oldest park, Zeiger Park, was reconstructed to house an adult softball complex, walking track and playground. Grimes Park boasts state-of-the-art complexes for youth baseball and soccer and has the first covered track built expressly for BMX racing in the nation. He directed the purchase of 107 acres on Uhl Road that houses the only park built for youth football in this area. Moseley pool was also transformed from the basic municipal pool to a mini-water park. Most areas of the city have neighborhood parks with new covered playgrounds and some even have covered picnic pavilions.

The Capital Improvement Program also provided for street improvements. In anticipation of the widening of I-35 through DeSoto, Jim and his Development Services staff focused on improving our north/south thoroughfare widening Polk Street in sections from Centre Park to Pleasant Run, Pleasant Run to Belt Line and finally Belt Line to Parkerville.

DeSoto participated with Dallas County to improve Cockrell Hill Road from Wintergreen to Belt Line and work will begin soon on the second phase from Belt Line to Parkerville. Parkerville Road was also improved from I-35 to Polk. All these projects included median landscaping, irrigation and new lighting with our signature brown light poles.

City facilities have also been improved or replaced. We have a new, state of the art police building and jail, our crumbling Service Center was replaced in 2002, Central Fire Station was refurbished in 2005 and City Hall, the Civic Center and Library have all been upgraded with new carpet, wall coverings and furnishings.

Jim was also instrumental in setting the wheels in motion to develop a plan to revitalize Hampton Road with the result being the new mixed use development at Town Center. Mixed use zoning is now in place for the Hampton Road corridor and is intended to continue the redevelopment south to Belt Line.

Under Jim's leadership, we have strong public safety departments. Our police department is CALEA accredited and our fire department is also working toward accreditation. DeSoto Fire Rescue operates a fire training academy and trains fire fighters and paramedics who work all over North Texas.

Jim is an excellent fiscal manager and has delivered a balanced budget every year while providing a high level of service to the community. One way this has been accomplished is through partnerships with the other Best Southwest cities such as the Tri-City Animal Shelter, Regional Jail, combined special events and the Southwest Regional Communications Center. He also instituted programs to replace outdated vehicles, computers and furniture along with ongoing maintenance of city facilities.

I think we would all agree that Jim's influence can be seen all over DeSoto but perhaps his most important accomplishment has been his efforts to build a strong, involved and engaged community. Jim encouraged local neighborhood and homeowners associations to organize and get involved by dedicating a staff member to support them, supported the development of a Civic Academy, encouraged community special events, and spearheaded the effort to organize the DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Program. In 2006 the National Civic League recognized these efforts at community building by bestowing the coveted All-America City Award on DeSoto. To be eligible for this award, communities must demonstrate innovation, inclusiveness, civic engagement, and cross sector collaboration by describing successful efforts to address pressing local challenges.

Jim's most lasting legacy will be his leadership at City of DeSoto. When Jim arrived in 1997 he set about forming his management team and creating a culture of empowerment and stellar customer service. He encouraged his team to read the first of many management books, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" which became the baseline for years of management and leadership training. He has taken his team from "Good to Great" and instilled in them values and a corporate culture that will live on after he is gone.

To honor that legacy, the City Council voted in May, 2010 to name our city hall facility the Jim Baugh

Government Center upon his retirement from government service. Jim Baugh exemplifies those individuals who live by teaching others to reach for their full potential. For Jim, leadership is a way of living. It is about building an organization committed to service, quality, excellence and personal growth. Jim Baugh's style of leadership, founded on selfless contribution to City staff, management, citizens and the community, merits the honor of this naming. Jim, you've left a lasting mark on our community and your presence will be greatly missed, your legacy will live on and your work will be continued. Till we meet again, God's speed and happy trails.

**Jerry Edgin, Councilmember Place Seven**



## SWRCC Improves 9-1-1 Response Capabilities with Smart911

Southwest Regional Communications Center (SWRCC), the 911 call center for DeSoto, Cedar Hill and Duncanville and Rave Mobile Safety, a leading provider of software safety solutions, recently announced the purchase of Smart911. Smart911 allows citizens to enter information online that they want to have delivered automatically to the 9-1-1 operator in the event they call 9-1-1. The additional data provided is far more extensive than what is typically available to 9-1-1 telecommunicators and helps to improve incident outcomes.



"Smart911 strengthens and expands our current 911 service by providing us with critical information about callers, while enhancing our ability to locate and communicate with them. This will help us provide more information to 9-1-1 call takers, as well as first responders, before they arrive on the scene," said SWRCC Managing Director Dona Fernandes. "From knowing why a victim is unable to speak, to providing EMS with information about medical conditions, to even having a photo of a lost child available immediately, the information provided by Smart911 will help us better serve our citizens and can help save lives."

Smart911 provides citizens with the ability to enter information that they want to make available to 9-1-1 call takers through a secure web site at [www.Smart911.com](http://www.Smart911.com). Information can include children's photos, medical conditions, home addresses of mobile phone callers, disabilities or other rescue-related information. Smart911 then delivers this information automatically with any 9-1-1 call to the call taker's work station at participating Public Service Answering Points (PSAPs). The service, which is free to citizens, enhances response and supports improved incident outcomes, by providing responders with critical additional information. It also supports citizen demand for the ability to easily provide and manage special needs data.

"We strongly encourage those who live, work and visit DeSoto, Cedar Hill and Duncanville to register for this free service," Ms. Fernandes added. "The information provided remains completely confidential and is only available to emergency responders in the event they call 9-1-1. The information provided can help save lives."

### About Southwest Regional Communications Center (SWRCC)

SWRCC is the Public Safety Answering Point for all 9-1-1 emergency and non-emergency calls within the cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, and Duncanville. The center dispatches for six agencies, handling over 300,000 calls for service each year. All SWRCC dispatchers are certified as Emergency Medical Dispatchers. SWRCC serves a population of approximately 150,000 and a service delivery area of 68 square miles. Communications Center personnel are committed to excellence in the delivery of those services while treating people with dignity and respect.



Use of the Smart911 will significantly improve service and response time. Another way to improve response is to have your residential or commercial alarm monitoring system monitored by SWRCC. For a small one-time fee your system can be reprogrammed to be answered directly by SWRCC. By doing this, you remove one timely step in response by traditional monitoring services who take the call and then must place a call to SWRCC to request dispatch of emergency services. SWRCC offers alarm monitoring for a traditional phone for a monthly fee of \$25. They also offer cellular backup to your traditional system in case your land line is cut or out of service for \$30 per month and a fully cellular system for \$35. This service is offered on a month to month basis and can be canceled at any time.

If you'd like more information about having your alarm system monitored by SWRCC, please call 972.230.5248 or log on to [www.swrcc.net/alarm](http://www.swrcc.net/alarm).

## CITY CAENDAR

### May

- 2 Early voting for School Board Elections begins in Library
- 2 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - City Hall - 6:30 p.m.
- 3 City Council Meeting - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 5 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - City Hall - 6:30 p.m.
- 5 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - Library Conference Room - 7 p.m.
- 9 DeSoto Arts Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 6 p.m.
- 9 Deadline to register for DeSoto Dining & Dialogue 972.230.9648
- 10 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 12 Joint Council/DEDC Mtg. - City Hall - 6 p.m.
- 14 Household Hazardous Waste Disposal event - voucher required
- 14 School Board Trustees Election Day
- 17 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 19 Music In The Park - Don Diego - Outdoor Amphitheater - 6:30p.m.
- 21 DeSoto Dining & Dialogue Dinner Event - call 972.230.9648
- 23 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - noon
- 24 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 26 Adopt-a-Street Banquet - DeSoto Civic Ctr. - 7 p.m. F
- 27 *Woman From The Town* - opens at DeSoto Corner Theatre
- 30 Memorial Day Holiday - City offices and facilities closed
- 31 Special Council Mtg. - transportation study - City Hall 6 p.m.8.

### June

- 3 DAC Salsa Showcase & Class - Civic Ctr. 7 p.m.
- 4 Creekfest - DeSoto Town Ctr. Amphitheater - 3 to 10 p.m.
- 4 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - City Hall - 6:30 p.m.
- 7 City Council Meeting - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 9 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - City Hall - 6:30 p.m.
- 9 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - Library Conf. Room - 7 p.m.
- 13 DeSoto Arts Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 6 p.m.
- 14 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 15-18 2011 Texas Police Games
- 18 BSW Juneteeth Celebration - Cedar Hill - 5 p.m.
- 21 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 27 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - noon
- 28 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 p.m.

### DeSoto Police to Host Texas Police Games - June 15th through 19th

On June 15th, thousands of federal, state and local sworn peace officers will descend on DeSoto to compete in the 2011 Texas Police Games. Officers of all ages will compete in team events such as, softball, basketball, soccer, paintball, volleyball and flag football and many will compete individually in cycling, 5Ks, power lifting, bass fishing, golf, rifle and pistol competitions, billiards and much more. All of these competitions will take place in and around DeSoto. The public is invited to come out and view these events.

DeSoto will "roll out the red carpet" for our visitors with a closed social event on Thursday, June 16th at the DeSoto Civic Center from 6 to 8 p.m. followed by a free concert at DeSoto Corner Theatre featuring Jeff Aycock and saxophone music that moves your soul. The public is also invited to Jeff Aycock's free concert.

The highlight of the games will take place on Friday, June 17th at 6 p.m. when the medal round of the flag football competition will take place at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington. DeSoto Police are working hard to make this event a huge success and can use the support of our community. If you'd like more information on how you can be involved, please call Officer Cindy Mendez at 466.658.3055.

## DeSoto Police & Clergy Coalition (DPAC) Marks First Year of Operation

What is the role of the police in our community? To fight crime! What about those crimes that are family violence? They occur inside our homes among family members; husband vs. wife, child vs. parent, etc. And fights among our children? The police cannot prevent these crimes. They are called to restore order and enforce the law once the crime has been committed.

In 2009, there were 84 aggravated assaults in De Soto. 61% of these crimes were the result of family violence. A police force can only be effective if they are working together with the community. A coalition has been formed between the DeSoto police and the ministers who live in DeSoto or serve citizens in our community. DeSoto Police and Clergy, DPAC, was formed to help our community address the root cause of family violence rather than just the symptoms.

“This coalition is not a new idea, it has been implemented in other cities and communities across the United States,” according to DeSoto Mayor Pro Tem, Denise Valentine. “I learned about the program by attending a workshop in Fort Worth given by leaders of the organization called Uniting Clergy and Police,” said Valentine.

Rev. Oscar Epps, pastor of DeSoto’s Community Missionary Baptist Church and DeSoto Police Chief Mike Brodnax subsequently met with the Fort Worth coalition and created the DeSoto alliance customizing it to match the needs of our community. The ministers attend formal training similar to the curriculum for Citizen Police Academy. The training sessions ensure that the ministers understand the policies and procedures of the police department. Ministers also share information about the ministries available through their own churches. Some have programs in place to provide counseling for family violence and alcohol and drug rehabilitation. They also have special outreach ministries for our youth. The sessions are an opportunity to exchange information and forge a solid working relationship.

Through this coalition with the police department, ministers from various faith groups are volunteering to be “on call” when a family member, victim or perpetrator, requests ministerial counseling. DeSoto Police and Clergy (DPAC) can be called in to provide ministerial counseling for family violence situations, car accidents, or disruptive behavior among our adolescents. You will also see them at athletic events and other public gatherings.

The DPAC program marked its first full year of operation in April. They look forward to growing the program by increasing the number of ministers involved and invite any ministers in the DeSoto area to join them at the DeSoto Police Department on the third Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. For more information about the DPAC program please call the DeSoto Police Department at 469.658.3000.



DeSoto Police & Clergy (DPAC) coalition celebrates their first full year of operation.

## Graffiti - Now You See It...Now You Don't

Beginning in early 2009 the Citizens on Patrol, a small citizen volunteer organization established within the DeSoto Police Department, took on the role of removing unsightly “graffiti” that was detracting from our city. These volunteers, armed with a city supplied trailer; equipped with special chemicals, equipment and tools, took on the task of removing graffiti that plagued homes, businesses, fences, walls, sidewalks, and public/city facilities. They have completed specialized training on high pressure water systems, hazardous (but environmentally friendly) chemicals, Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE), and safe traffic management procedures which allow them to actually remove the graffiti instead of just covering it.

If you see graffiti anywhere within our City, please contact Lt. Brian Windham with the DeSoto Police, at 469.658.3012 who will alert the “GRAFFITI TEAM”. Graffiti Team Chief, John Gault, will contact the property owner and/or caller, assess the project, and determine the best course of action to get it removed. Since the Graffiti Team was established, they’ve cleaned/removed over 125 locations of unsightly graffiti around DeSoto. The graffiti removal service provided by the Citizens on Patrol Graffiti Team is free to all home and business owners in DeSoto...remember; let’s all work together to Keep DeSoto Beautiful!!

Here is an example of the service provided by the Graffiti Team:



AART presents: **Woman From the Town** by Samm Art-Williams  
 May 27 through June 12, 2011 [www.aareptheater.com](http://www.aareptheater.com)  
 Ticket prices - \$15 for matinees \$20 for evening performances  
 Tickets on sale at City of DeSoto Administration Office Weekdays 8 am to 5 pm. For more info call 972.572.0998.

## A Message from Code Enforcement - Posting Signs in the Public Right-of-way is Prohibited by City Ordinance

It is illegal to erect or affix a sign in the public right-of-way (the area from the curb to the sidewalk,) in the median (the area in the middle of the street) on trees, public fences, buildings or utility/ telephone poles. A permit is required to erect a sign on private property. This permit may be obtained by calling the Code Enforcement office at 469.658.3075.



creating a premiere multicultural experience for residents & visitors through music that engages, captivates & embraces the diversity of DeSoto.

**Welcome Tarron Richardson, Ph.D., DeSoto's New City Manager**

Tarron Richardson, Ph.D. will assume the reigns as City Manager of DeSoto on May 1st. He has served in the capacity of Assistant City Manager since June of 2009 and has managed the day-to-day operations of the City for more than a year. Dr. Richardson, a doctoral graduate of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University, began his career with the City of Richmond (VA) as Project Manager for Council Relations for the City Manager and later assumed the position of Assistant to the Chief Administrative Officer for Legislation and Deputy Director of Public Utilities. He also served as Assistant City Manager and Acting City Manager for the City of Coatesville (PA).

"The City Council is fortunate to have an Assistant City Manager of the caliber and strength of Tarron. Their choice to have him lead DeSoto into the future is one that will be of great benefit to DeSoto. I congratulate both Tarron for his accomplishments and the Mayor and Council for their wise selection," stated City Manager, Jim Baugh who retired from the position on April 29th.

Mayor Sherman remarked that Dr. Richardson will be managing a workforce of more than 300 of the most energetic and customer focused employees in the nation. The Mayor noted that the Council's selection process was direct, thoroughly thought through and simple. "We have had the opportunity to work with Tarron, and he has earned the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the Council," Sherman commented, simply put, "He is the right choice at the right time and is well regarded and respected by the employees."

A welcome reception will be held for Dr. Richardson on Thursday, May 19th in the DeSoto Civic Center from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. The community is invited to take this opportunity to meet Dr. Richardson and to stay and enjoy the first concert in our free Music In The Park concert series featuring Soul Cake and Don Diego in the outdoor amphitheater at DeSoto Town Center following the reception.

MAY 19, 2011 >> 6:30-10:00P DeSoto Amphitheater



Soul Cake @ 6:30



Don Diego @ 8:00

CREEKFEST - JUNE 4TH >> 3-9P DeSoto Amphitheater

Creekefest is a city festival celebrating summer in DeSoto with food, fun and family entertainment.



5 SECOND RULE eclectic >>4:00



JOE KING country >>6:45P



Havana NRG cuban/salsa >>7:45

SONS OF GOD: 5:30 LIL CANE: 5:00

DESOTO/LANCASTER COMBINED JULY 4<sup>th</sup> FIREWORKS

July 4th - DeSoto's Meadowcreek Park, 1400 Uhl Rd.  
GATES OPEN AT 6P | FIREWORKS AT 9:30 P  
CORIAN & CREW @ 7:30P

For more info, visit:  
[WWW.CI.DESOTO.TX.US](http://WWW.CI.DESOTO.TX.US)

**Salsa Dance Showcase & Lesson**

June 3rd 7p.m.  
DeSoto Civic Ctr.  
\$25 /couple

Learn Salsa basics from the best and enjoy a evening of food, drinks and great Latin flair. For tickets, call the DeSoto Arts Commission at 972.230.9648



Saturday, June 18th 5 to 10 pm  
Valley Ridge Park Amphitheater  
2850 Park Ridge Dr.— Cedar Hill  
**See Freddie Jones & 80's Funk Band - MIDNIGHT STAR**  
Enjoy food, family fun, children's activities, health screenings & more - admission is free

Sponsored by the Cities of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville and Lancaster and Chevrolet, Cadillac, Metro PCS, and Time Warner Cable