

DeSoto City Lights

A Publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department

Council Corner, A Message from Sandy Respass, Councilmember, Place Five



Guess I've gone to the dogs. About a year and a half ago, I came home and found my wife, Becky, sitting on the couch holding a cute little black and tan puppy that she just had to keep. The dog, an adorable female mixed breed Yorkie named LuLu, was something Becky simply could not live without. And best of all the dog was "free", a gift from a friend.

Now adopting this dog did not strike me as a great idea. I allowed that there was no such thing as a "free" dog. They eat (think dog food); they require maintenance (think grooming); they go to the doctor (think vet); and someone has to look after them when the owner is out of town (think kennel); all of which cost money. Further, I told Becky that I would take no responsibility for care of that dog beyond delivering her to the Tri-City Animal Shelter when she was no longer "cute" and caring for her had

become a problem.

Up to this point, I had not given the Tri-City Animal Shelter much thought. From my experience on the City Council, I knew that the shelter is joint venture between the cities of Cedar Hill, Duncanville, and DeSoto run much like a limited partnership with Cedar Hill being the general partner (responsible for shelter ownership and management) and Duncanville and DeSoto being the limited partners. Each of the participating cities pays one third the cost of the shelter operation or about \$155,000 a year. In 2008, Cedar Hill spent \$2.1 million to build a new, larger animal shelter. The new shelter, one of the finest facilities of its kind in the entire Metroplex, opened in 2009.

A few weeks ago, I decided to pay the shelter a visit just to see how it operates. The shelter has a staff of five full time and five part time employees and can house up to 160 animals (104 dogs; 56 cats) at any one time. Approximately 4,800 animals are processed through the shelter each year. Roughly a quarter of these animals are surrendered to the shelter by owners who no longer want or are unable to care for them. The other three quarters are picked up by Animal Control Officers of the participating cities or delivered to the shelter by an occasional Good Samaritan citizen.

All animals picked up and brought to the shelter are held for 72 hours in hopes the owner will contact the shelter or that the owner can be identified and contacted through a collar tag or microchip. Today, many pet owners microchip their pets for identification, and the shelter has all the equipment needed to read the microchips and scan the owner databases. This is a great method of identification so long as the microchip is properly registered with the owner's contact information and that information is kept up to date.

If a pet is not reunited with its owner within the 72 hour holding period, it is moved into the general shelter population for placement. Every effort is made to place all animals left at the shelter in new homes – a process the shelter staff calls live release. Live release can occur through adoption or release to an animal foster home, animal rescue group, or another shelter with a broader based adoption program. About half of the animals taken in by the shelter that are not reclaimed by their owners are live released. The fate of the animals not reclaimed or otherwise live released is dire.

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Check out our website at:
www.desototexas.org

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City Calendar

January

2 Park Board Mtg. - canceled
2 Arts Com. Mtg. - City Hall - 6 pm
3 City Council Mtg. - canceled
5 KDB Mtg. City Hall - 6:30 pm
5 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
10 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
12 Historical Foundation Mtg. City Hall 6pm
17 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm
24 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
26 Historical Foundation Mtg. City Hall 6pm
30 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - noon

February

2 KDB Mtg. City Hall - 6:30 pm
2 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
6 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
6 Arts Com. Mtg. - City Hall - 6 pm
7 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
12 Historical Foundation Mtg. City Hall 6pm
14 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
21 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
23 Historical Foundation Mtg. City Hall 6pm
27 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - noon
28 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm



Even though temperatures have cooled and we have had rain in recent weeks, Texas is still experiencing drought conditions. To avoid implementation of Stage One of our Drought Contingency Plan, DeSoto's Public Water Utility is asking residents to continue to use water wisely. If you water your landscape, please do it during the off-peak hours from 9 pm to 5 am and only when needed. One inch of water every five to seven days is sufficient for most lawns. DeSoto has worked hard to manage our water resources through adequate storage and conservation and with your help, we can avoid implementing mandatory restrictions.

Cockrell Hill Road Will Be Widened From Belt Line Road South to Parkerville Road

The City of DeSoto is fortunate to partner again with Dallas County to improve the southern most section of Cockrell Hill Road. This project is included in Dallas County's Major Capital Improvement Program.

The general scope of this project involves replacement of the water and sanitary sewer lines and the construction of a four lane, concrete, divided roadway with sidewalks, drainage improvements, median lighting and landscaping. When complete, the new roadway will have two twelve-foot wide travel lanes in each direction separated by a fourteen-foot wide median designed to enhance safety by separating opposing traffic lanes. The addition of meandering sidewalks and an attractive landscaping package will make



this section consistent with the recently completed section of Cockrell Hill Road north of Belt Line Road.

Franchise utility companies; Oncor Electric, Atmos Gas, AT&T and Time Warner Cable are currently completing

the process of relocating their lines. The road widening portion of this project is targeted to begin just after the first of the year.

Motorists are reminded that this area is considered

a construction zone, and are encouraged to observe all posted construction signs in order to maintain a safe environment for construction workers and pedestrian traffic. If you have any questions regarding this project, please call Crystal Owens, P.E. City of DeSoto Engineer at 972.230.9672.

City of DeSoto Begins Search for New Chief of Police

DeSoto's Police Chief, Mike Brodnax, has retired after 34 years of service to the community, the last fourteen of which were as chief. Assistant Chief Robert E. Lee has been tapped to serve as Interim Police Chief and a search is underway for a new Chief of Police. In addition to managing the day to day activities of budgeting and staffing all police activities in a department with 71 sworn officers, the chief is responsible for Code Enforcement, Animal Control and a regional jail that serves Cedar Hill and Lancaster in addition to DeSoto.

City officials are looking for input from the community as they begin the search for a new police chief and have posted a blog at blog.desototexas.com to receive comments. The blog will be available through January 20, 2012.

"I hope our residents will take a few minutes to give us their thoughts on qualities they would like to see in a new police chief," said DeSoto City Manager, Tarron Richardson, Ph.D. "We will formulate interview questions based on the information provided through this blog," according to Dr. Richardson.



If you have questions regarding DeSoto's search for a new Chief of Police, please contact the Human Resources Department for the City of DeSoto at 972-230-9601.

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(Continued from page one)

Animals that cannot be live released are ultimately taken to the shelter's euthanasia room where their lives are gently and humanely ended. This unpleasant process would be largely unnecessary if we, as a community, became more responsible pet owners. Specifically, unless you plan to breed your dog or cat, have it neutered or spayed to prevent unwanted puppies and kittens. If you no longer want or cannot care for your pet, first try to place it with a friend or relative that will provide it with a good home. If you must give up your pet and cannot find it a new home, by all means take it to the animal shelter. Never abandon a pet to fend for himself. The shelter will care for the animal and make every effort to place it in a new home.

So what about LuLu? After a year and a half, she has morphed from that cute little black and tan puppy into a solid gray eight and a half pound devil. We (LuLu and I) have been through two obedience classes. She now does exactly what I tell her to do so long as that is exactly what she wants to do. She thinks I do a fair job of obeying her most of the time. As for her one way trip to the animal shelter, if anyone in this family makes that trip it sure won't be her. Most likely it will be me.

If you are thinking about adopting a pet, there are some great dogs and cats looking for caring homes at the Tri-City Animal Shelter, 1150 E. Pleasant Run Road in Cedar Hill. They are open Monday through Friday, 10 am to 6 pm and Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm. You should check them out.

Sandy Respass DeSoto City Council, Place Five



"Connecting Neighbors!"

Do you know your neighbors?

Do you feel connected to the DeSoto Community? Have you ever attended a DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner event? If your answer to any of these questions is no, please take this as personal invitation to attend our next free dinner event on January 28, 2012. Adults who live or work in DeSoto and care about our community are encouraged to attend. High School students and their parents are also welcome to attend. We offer 6 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.

Topic: NO MORE!!

Violence, Drugs, Fighting, Failing

We ARE our brothers' keeper.

Come hear what initiatives DeSoto Police and Clergy have in place to begin to address violence in our community and how you can help.

Join us for dinner and discussion:

**Saturday, January 28, 2012
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**

Deadline to register is Jan. 13th!

City's Employment Functions Are Now Online

The City of DeSoto has just installed a new online recruiting system powered by NeoGov that has automated the job application process. Prospective applicants are encouraged to go to the city's website at

www.desototexas.gov and click on EMPLOYMENT on the left side for information on open positions for which applicants can apply online. Paper applications will no longer be accepted. For more information, call the Human Resources Department at 972.230.9601.

Did You Know...

It is unlawful for any owner, occupant or person in charge of adjacent property to allow the branches of any tree to extend over into a public street or alley at a height less than fourteen and one-half (14 1/2) feet. It is also unlawful to allow the branches of any shrubbery or similar vegetation to extend over into adjacent property or over a sidewalk blocking or hindering pedestrian access. If you have questions regarding this ordinance, please call the Code Enforcement office at 469.658.3000.

Medline Database Classes at the DeSoto Library

The DeSoto Public Library is offering free classes on how to use the Medline medical research database on Wednesday, January 18th from 6 pm to 7:30 pm and Saturday, January 21st from 11 am to 12:30 pm. Classes will be held in the library's Venable Training Room.

Medline is a database of medical information on diseases, treatments, clinical trials, and prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Information included in Medline comes from organizations such as the National Library of Medicine, American Cancer Society, and the American Diabetes Society.

Because space is limited to ten people, registration is required. Please call the library's Information Desk at 972.230.9661 to register for the classes.

Foster Kid's Love of Reading at the DeSoto Library

The DeSoto Public Library will present Pre-school Storytime on Wednesday mornings from 10:30 am to 11:30 am, from January 11 to April 11, in the Children's area. Children ages 3-6 will enjoy storytimes full of themed books, educational sing-alongs, and arts and crafts. No registration is necessary.

The Library's Spring Reading Club, for children ages 5 – 12, will begin on Friday, January 27 and end on Friday, April 6. Enjoy a Spring full of interactive stories and crafts. Prizes will be awarded to children who complete certain levels of reading. Sign up begins Monday, January 23 at the Children's Information Desk.

Baby Storytime, for children ages newborn to 2 years old will be held on Tuesday mornings from 10:30 am to 11:30 am in the Children's Area from January 10 to April 10. Come and enjoy an hour of fun with nursery rhymes, finger plays, songs, and stories. No registration is required.

The DeSoto Public Library is located at 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, in the DeSoto Town Center Complex. Free parking is available in the nearby garage. For more information, please call the Children's Information Desk at 972.230.9666.

ART AFRICAN AMERICAN
REPERTORY THEATER
PRESENTS

FREE MAN of COLOR

by CHARLES SMITH

Following its 2004 Chicago world premiere, *Free Man of Color* won the Jeff Award for Best New Work. A powerful drama, based on the true story of John Newton Templeton, a freed slave and the first Black to attend and graduate from Ohio University in 1828, thirty-five years before the end of slavery. "Bold and striking new work." -Chicago Tribune

February 3-26, 2012
Friday & Saturday Nights @ 7:30pm **\$20**
Saturday & Sunday Matinee @ 2:30pm **\$15**
Preview Performance on
Thursday, February 2 @ 7:30pm **\$10**

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

Sponsored in part by:

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

Saturday, February 4th
7pm - 9pm
DeSoto Civic Center

**Daddy
Daughter
Dance**

Reserved Tickets \$50 per couple
General Admission \$30 per couple
Advance purchase only
Call 972.230.9651 for more info.

Tickets go on sale
January 9th at the
Recreation Center

June 2012
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for complete event information
DESOTOSOLJAZZFEST.COM