

October/November, 2007



City Lights DeSoto, Texas

A publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department



Council Corner - A Message from Thelma Clardy



It seems like just yesterday but I know it was almost a year ago, that I was writing about getting

ready for the upcoming holidays. It doesn't seem possible, but the end of 2007 is just around the corner. Before you know it, we'll be talking about shopping for gifts, decorating, and making holiday travel plans.

My thoughts are increasingly turning to the holiday season and my family's plans for same. The holiday season is a special time of year, and that is especially true in our All-America

City. Those families who are new to DeSoto are certainly in for a treat.

I particularly look forward, along with my fellow City Councilmembers, to hosting the annual holiday luncheon for City employees. It is indeed an honor to greet the employees as they pass through the serving line to receive a meal prepared and served by the Mayor and Council. I mean it when I say that we have one of the best groups of city employees in our region. They show it daily by often going above and beyond the call of duty. This was evidenced at a recent council meeting where we had the pleasure of recognizing more than 90 city employees for their outstanding customer service to citizens and internal customers in 2007.

We traditionally kick off the holiday season on the first Saturday in December. One of our most popular annual holiday activities is the Holiday Parade of Lights. It seems to get bigger and better every year. This year is sure to be no different as we celebrate with the theme, *Christmas in Toyland*. It's not too early to start thinking about having an entry in the parade. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce is already passing out applications. And don't forget about all the activities that come along with the parade including the annual Breakfast with Santa sponsored by the DHS Eaglette Boosters, the Holiday Craft and Gift Bazaar and the Tree Lighting. I also encourage you to get involved in these activities. Carolyn Campbell, the City's special event coordinator, is

looking for individuals or organizations who would like to participate. Community organizations and faith-based institutions will sponsor activities as well.

It is my desire and hope that, as we enter the last months of 2007, each of you take time out from your busy schedule to share this special time with family and friends. With a twinge of sadness, I recognize this will be my last holiday as a councilmember, as my term will end next May. However, I am so grateful for the experience of having served you, and I look forward to serving in other ways in the years to come.

Thelma Clardy
Mayor Pro Tem
Place Four

Enforcement of New Animal Ordinance Begins October 1st

The DeSoto City Council approved changes to the City's Animal Ordinance at their regular meeting on July 17, 2007 that are intended to require citizens to take responsibility for their animals. Specifically, the changes:

- Amend the Animal Ordinance to include a definition for "Dangerous Dog" which is defined by the Texas Health & Safety Code 822.041(2); or (2) as any dog that makes an unprovoked attack on a domestic animal or person causing serious bodily injury or death and occurring in a place other than an enclosure in which the dog was being kept and that was reasonably certain to prevent the dog from leaving the enclosure on its own or "running at large". By including the definition of
- "Dangerous Dog" in our Animal Ordinance, we will require that any dog found to be "running at large" who seriously injures another person or domesticated animal will be immediately removed from the City.
- Impose fines for dogs found to be "running at large" as defined above. The first conviction will subject the dog's owner to a \$100 fine, the second conviction will result in a \$200 fine, there will be a \$500 fine for the third conviction and all other subsequent convictions will be subject to up to a \$2,000 fine.
- Require that any dog found by Animal Control or Police to be "running at large" and impounded, will be implanted with a microchip at the

owner's expense. The \$30 micro-chipping fee must be paid before the dog is released to the owner. This will aid Animal Control officers in identifying the dog should it be found "running at large" again in the future.

The City held a public meeting last winter to discuss the issue of dangerous dogs in our neighborhoods. Over 100 people expressed their opinion at the meeting. The majority felt that the only way to address the issue is to require owners to take responsibility. The changes in the Animal Ordinance are intended to make owners responsible for the actions of their pets.

DeSoto Animal Control, Code Enforcement and Police begin enforcing the new ordinance October 1st.

Protecting Yourself from Home Invasion

Because the home is supposed to be a safe place for those who live there, home invasion is frightening and emotionally scarring. Fortunately, there are ways you can protect yourself.

Prevention works best. Harden your home or apartment with strong doors and locks with three-inch screws in the strike plate. Use a wide-angle peephole and instruct everyone in your family not to open the door to strangers.

There are several home protection components available for purchase that are effective at protecting your home. For increased security, use a combination of the following:

- **Motion-sensitive outdoor lighting** - This type of lighting will come on when there is movement around the outside of your home, alerting you to potential prowlers.
- **Cameras** - Whether it is a dummy camera or a real one, the presence of security cameras will cause potential invaders to avoid your home.
- **Alarms** - Alarms come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and price ranges. An inexpensive door-stop alarm sounds when a door is opened, while more sophisticated systems are not only activated by doors and windows, but also can notify the authorities that the alarm has been activated.

If it makes sense to have an alarm system, then it should make sense to have it monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week by your local 911 emergency center. Alarm monitoring is now being offered as a fee based service by the City of DeSoto for \$25 per month. No long-term contract is required.

There is a cost associated with having your monitored system reprogrammed to be monitored by DeSoto's 911 Call Center. As a result, the City will waive the first three months of their monitoring fee to help offset any cost you may incur to have your system reprogrammed.

There is no faster response to your alarm system than the response provided by your City. For more information on the City of DeSoto Alarm Monitoring Program, please contact 972.230.5248.

KDB Board Members pose with new recycling container. Pictured on front row from left, Kellie Larson, Elizabeth Green, Genesis Moore, Linda Zander and Marilyn Hurr, Back row from left Gabrielle Royal, Wayne Valentine and Tem Youngblood.



CITY CALENDAR

October

- 1 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 2 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 4 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 6 Arts Commission Meeting - 10 a.m.—City Hall
- 9 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 14 Toyota US Open Triathlon 6 a.m. to noon
- 16 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 23 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 29 DeSoto Economic Development Corp. Mtg. - noon - City Hall

November

- 6 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall (Election Day)
- 8 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 12 Park Development Corp. Meeting 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 13 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 16 Senior Citizen Community Thanksgiving - 6 p.m. - Senior Activity Ctr.
- 20 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 22 Thanksgiving Day - City offices and facilities closed
- 23 Thanksgiving Holiday - City offices closed
- 26 DeSoto Economic Development Corp. Mtg. - noon - City Hall
- 27 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall

Keep DeSoto Beautiful Encourages the City to Go Green

Initiating, planning and coordinating DeSoto's litter control and recycling programs has long been a mission for the Keep DeSoto Beautiful organization. Now the KDB Board wants to help DeSoto go green. At a recent City Council Meeting, KDB Chair, Linda Zander, rolled out a program intended to raise the awareness of the need to recycle plastic bottles and aluminum cans at all city-sponsored events.

"A big event with lots of food creates a lot of trash and the majority of it is recyclable," said Zander. "KDB is committing to provide special recycling receptacles and supplies

as well as for the environment.

Members of the Green Team organized by KDB provided bottle and can recycling bins at VIVA DeSoto and the Taste & Trade of DeSoto recently. At these events, they realized that there is much to do to educate the public on recycling.

"It was a little frustrating when I had to remove regular trash from our recycling bins," according to Zander. "For future events, we'll use special bins with tops that only allow you to deposit bottles or cans in them and bags that are clear allowing you to see any unwanted trash inside."

City employees are also being encouraged to go green. For some time, efforts have been made at City Hall to recycle the mounds of unwanted paper discarded every day. Now with KDB's help, staff will start recycling bottles and cans as well. Special plastic bottle and aluminum can recycling bins will be available in City Hall.

"This recycling effort at City Hall is only the beginning," she said. "We plan to help our schools, businesses and the community start their own "Go Green" programs," said Zander. For more information on starting a recycling program, please contact Keep DeSoto Beautiful at 972.230.9650.

for all city-sponsored events." Every plastic bottle or can that goes in one of these recycling bins is diverted from our landfill. This is a good choice financially



Economic Development Corner

The DeSoto Economic Development Corporation was proud to be included in the September 14,

2007, Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening celebration at the new Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites at 1310 E. Wintergreen Road. The DEDC was among many who were recognized by Developer Perry Molubhoy and General Manager Lindsay Owens and thanked for their dedicated support to the successful completion and opening of this hotel. The DEDC awarded a \$300,000 cash grant to the Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites at the onset of this project in 2006.

Guests came not only from the immediate DeSoto area, but also from various cities throughout the DFW Metroplex and even from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to enjoy this special occasion and tour the hotel. According to Mr. Molubhoy, the DeSoto facility is now considered the "top of the line" among other Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites.

As the many guests toured this new

upscale facility, it became apparent that no stone was left unturned in making this a first class hotel, as even the smallest details had obviously been given a great deal of attention. The 4-story hotel offers 88 guest rooms and suites, a guest breakfast bar, and a 3,000 sq. ft. meeting room/ballroom, plus numerous high-tech amenities to accommodate both the business and pleasure traveler. An added feature to the property is the charming footbridge which was designed and constructed to provide hotel guests direct access to the Cracker Barrel Restaurant.

The DEDC encourages residents of DeSoto to stop by the new Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites to see for themselves the extraordinary effort that went into making this facility a wonderful asset to the community and one that all citizens can take great pride in.



This is the former K-Mart building, located on Pleasant Run Road at I-35.

The DeSoto Economic Development Corporation exists to plan, promote, finance, and create opportunities for the retention, growth, and attraction of enterprises that enhance the tax base, quality of life, and level of employment for the citizens of DeSoto – WE ARE WORKING FOR YOU! If you have any questions related to economic development in the City of DeSoto, please contact the DEDC at 972-230-9611.

DeSoto's Website Now Offers Interactive Mapping of Neighborhood Crime Statistics

"We get a lot of requests for crime statistics in a particular neighborhood or section of the city," said DeSoto Police Chief, Mike Brodnax. "Now that information is easily accessible to the public on the City's website."

If you've been wondering about crime statistics in your neighborhood, go to the City's website at www.ci.desoto.tx.us. You'll see a link under E-Services for crime mapping which will take you to the City's Interactive Mapping. Once there, you'll have the option to enter your address and view several map layers showing registered homeowner's associations, aerial photos, zoning, city council districts and trash pick-up days.

If you click on the tab marked CRIME, you'll be able to customize your map by the type of crime and enter a date range to see all offenses from a certain time period. Crime statistics on the number of burglaries, thefts, robberies and auto thefts can be requested for a specific address or for a general location such as a homeowner's association. Click on "Query a Crime" (above the map) and then click on a particular icon to find out the exact date and type of offense that occurred. Only 2007 statistics are available.

DeSoto Interactive Map

DESOTO, TEXAS Soaring For Excellence

Click or drag a rectangle on the map to:

- Pan
- Zoom In
- Zoom Out
- Query a Crime

Map Layers: Crime

- 2007
- Homeowners Association
- Police Grids
- Burglary
- Burglary of Motor Vehicle
- Murder
- Theft
- Robbery
- Auto Theft
- All Crimes Listed Above Combined
- Confidential Crime Data

Update Map Clear Map

Zoom to a HOA

Select From the List Below

Zoom to a Police Grid

Select From the List Below

print | email map | map size: [red]



**DeSoto's
HomeTown
Holiday &
Parade of
Lights**

**Saturday, December 1st
DeSoto Civic Center**

Breakfast With Santa

8 a.m. - 11 a.m.
sponsored by the
**DHS Eaglettes
Breakfast - \$5 -
Santa Pictures -\$5**

**Holiday Craft &
Gift Bazaar**

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Choir & Dance performances in

the Corner Theatre

**Holiday Parade
of Lights**

**Theme:
Christmas in Toyland**

6 p.m.

**On North Hampton Road
Beginning at Centre Park Blvd.
& ending at Town Center**

**Tree Lighting 7:45 p.m.
Town Center**

**Prior to the Tree Lighting, Ken VanCura of
Faith Bible Church will conduct a
Community-wide Choir singing your
holiday favorites**

**Call the DeSoto Chamber at 972.
224.3565 for a parade application.
If you would like information on
participating as a vendor, please call
Carolyn Campbell at 972.230.9651.**



The DHS Eaglettes Booster Club & the City of DeSoto
Present



*Denise & Wayne Valentine at last
year's dance.*

**The Second Annual Old
School Holiday Dance**

*Old School age is
Thirty (30) and older*

Friday, November 30th

**DeSoto Civic Center
7 PM until Midnight**

\$20 per person or \$30 per couple

Light Refreshments will be served.

For tickets or more information call Carolyn Campbell at 972.230.9651.

**Senior Center Sponsors Free
Community Thanksgiving Dinner**

The DeSoto Senior Center and Parks and Leisure Services invite local senior citizens to join us for a Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Friday, November 16, 2007 from 6 to 9 p.m. The dinner will take place at the newly remodeled Senior Activity Center located at 204 Lion Street. Seating is limited Please call 972 .230.5825 for a reservation.

**DeSoto Town Center is Now
a Wi-Fi Hotspot**

The City of DeSoto is pleased to announce that Town Center is now equipped with free high-speed wireless Internet connectivity using standard wireless technology. Access extends throughout the building and includes the City Hall Atrium, City Council Chambers, the Corner Theatre, Recreation Center and the Bluebonnet and Pecan Rooms in the Civic Center. The DeSoto Public Library has offered its own free service for some time.

You are invited to use this free service by bringing your own notebook computer, PDA or other 802.11b/g wireless device to Town Center. Please note that as this is a free service, the City cannot guarantee the compatibility of your wireless equipment. Please contact your wireless device or network card vendor if you have problems connecting.

Use of this wireless connection is entirely at the risk of the user and the City disclaims all liability for loss of confidential information or damages resulting from that loss.

The DeSoto Senior Center invites you to attend their monthly
Evening Dance
Featuring Local County & Western Band
Off The Record
Saturday, November 17, 2007
From 7 to 9:30 p.m.
Tickets are \$4 at the door
DeSoto Senior Activity Center
204 Lion Street - 972.230.5825

Take a Seat in.....



Coming Attractions:

NIA Kids Christmas Production December 16th NIA Kids is a non-profit organization that nurtures and encourages the development of the natural gifts, talents and interests of young people through the fine arts and theater. Get in the holiday spirit by attending their Christmas production. For tickets or more information, please call LaTara Thompkins at 972.322.5413. This production is funded in part by the DeSoto Arts Grant Program.

The Real Meaning of Christmas by Chanina Mwikuta presented by Top

Hat Theater December 20th - 23rd Wealthy business owner, Shannon Dyer, seems to have everything going for her. Good looks, her own hotel, a fine home, nice car—the perfect life. However, because of trials and hardships that she has faced in life, she has stopped believing in Christmas. Come see how the people in her life who are important to her, convince her to open her eyes to the real meaning of Christmas. Tickets are \$10. To reserve your tickets or for more information, call 214.809.0169 or 214.306.9697 or e-mail yourtophat@yahoo.com.

The Corner Theatre is located in DeSoto Town Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, DeSoto, TX.