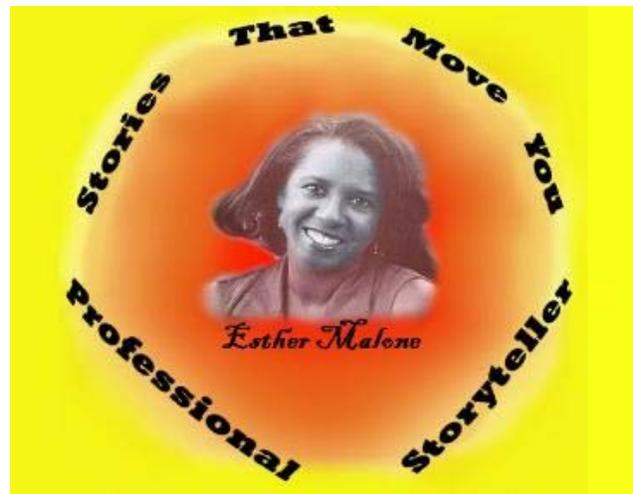


DeSoto News Flash

Week of February 18th
through the 22nd, 2008

Celebrate Black History Month at the DeSoto Public Library

The DeSoto Public Library invites families to experience "Voices: A Black History Celebration" with Master Storyteller Esther Malone on Thursday, February 21 at 6:45 pm in the Library Assembly Hall. Ms. Malone tells stories that move you... body and soul. "Voices..." begins with an invitation to contemplate our own family experiences. You are then invited to "hear the voices of those who have come and gone before us. Feel the heartbeat of the Underground Railroad. Break bread together by sharing stories and making personal connections."



Imagine a symphony with no instruments, a book with no words, & a people with no history! That's hard to imagine. Just as a symphony needs instruments, & a book needs words, people need to know history, all history! In her telling of African American history, Ms. Malone encourages audiences to celebrate the human drive we all possess to simply "Be," and invites each participant to share history through the art of the telling of stories.

The DeSoto Library is located at 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, in the DeSoto Town Center. Because of construction at Town Center, please park in the lot on the east side of Town Center. Come in through the Recreation and Civic Centers to reach the Library Assembly Hall. For more information, please call 972.230.9656, visit the library page on the city website, www.ci.desoto.tx.us, or come by the library.

Renovations are Complete At DeSoto's Central Fire Station

In 2003, voters approved a bond election which funded much needed renovations to DeSoto's Central Fire Station on Wintergreen Road. This is the city's oldest fire station constructed in 1980 and it has just received a \$1,140,000 facelift. Private shower and sleeping facilities were added to facilitate male and female personnel working side by side in addition to other upgrades.



Instead of a ribbon cutting, DeSoto's first fire chief, Murrell Porter with help from Mayor Bobby Waddle and other city officials held a "hose uncoupling" to rededicate the newly renovated facility. Pictured from left is City Manager Jim Baugh, Councilmember Denise Valentine, Fire Chief Fred Hart, former Fire Chief Murrell Porter, Mayor Bobby Waddle and Assistant Fire Chief, Jerry Smith.

The Utility Payment Box and U.S. Mailbox Have Been Moved Due to Construction



If you like to drop your City of DeSoto Utility payment in the drop box which has always been in the parking lot at Town Center, you can still do that. The utility payment box and the U.S. Mailbox have been moved from their location facing Pleasant Run Road to the east side of City Hall in the new round-about.

The Next Session of the DeSoto Civic Academy Begins March 20th

The DeSoto Civic Academy is looking for participants. This program is designed to give citizens a behind-the-scenes look at the City of DeSoto. There are 11 weekly sessions each hosted by a different city department or group. Each class is designed to allow participants to experience hands-on how our city operates.

The first session is a Hollywood-style Opening Night hosted by the staff of the City Manager's office who serve a sumptuous dinner prepared by Debby Baugh, the City Manager's wife. They introduce participants to their "cast of characters" (the staff in Administration) and their duties. Next, the class goes behind-the-scenes at the Police Department to tour the facilities including the jail. They operate a radar gun, and walk through shoot/don't shoot scenarios. Development Services hosts the class at the Service Center and shows them the equipment used by our Street Department. The class even gets the opportunity to drive the street sweeper and other equipment. There's a tour of the city's Pump Station and class members see what it takes to make it possible for us to have water every time we turn on a faucet. DeSoto Fire Rescue hosts the class at Central Fire Station and serves some of their famous Fire House Burgers as they discuss all aspects of fire protection and emergency medical services.



Staff from Information Technology, the Library, and Community Relations take class members on a scavenger hunt using the City's website. Human Resources, Planning & Zoning and Building Inspections also make presentations.

The Finance Department guides the class through the world of municipal accounting and budgeting by giving class members a fictional amount of money to run their



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Civic Academy (cont. from page 2)

imaginary city. The DeSoto Economic Development Corporation discusses how they attract commercial development to our city and Parks & Leisure Services discusses the city's beautification program and the wide spectrum of recreation opportunities available to DeSoto residents. The class also goes behind the scenes at Southwest Regional Communications, the 911 emergency dispatch center for DeSoto, Duncanville and Cedar Hill. Participants see dispatchers work a 911 call from start to finish. They can also get extra credit for taking "ride-alongs" with both our Police and Fire Departments.

At the final class, the City Secretary's office casts class members in the roll of Mayor, City Councilmembers, City Staff and citizens and walks them through a "mock" city council meeting. The meeting is accurately scripted to the smallest detail, however, the subject matter is so ludicrous that your sides will ache from laughter.

The next Civic Academy will begin March 20, 2008 and meets every Thursday for eleven weeks. There is no charge for participation and dinner is served at each session. If you would like to be a part of the next class, please call Tracie Hlavinka at 972 230-9689 to request an application or for more information.

