

December, 2008



www.ci.desoto.tx.us
972 230-9600

City Lights DeSoto, Texas



A publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department

Council Corner, A Message From Deshaundra Lockhart, City Council - Place 4



The Holiday Season is associated with family, gratitude and making plans for the New Year. We have much to give thanks for as DeSoto citizens this season. Specifically, thanks for life, community, family and those who give for the good of others. Our All-America city has been blessed with such people who love family, community and helping others.

DeSoto provides such a great opportunity for people to be valued. You, fellow citizen, are our greatest

asset. You are priceless as there is no amount of money to replace you, your gifts or talents. The intangible things of life are often overlooked. I ask you this season, to reflect on the good things of life and the adversities you have overcome this year. One thing is for sure, it was a person, used by God, to assist you.

It has been said, people are God's extended hand. In that respect, there are many unsung heroes in our city; men and women who seek no fame for their good deeds. They want to overcome evil with good and shed light in their community. They act without the law forcing them. They pick up trash blown in the neighbor's yard, talk to each other, and watch out for each another. Folk being nice just to be nice is a rarity in society. However, in DeSoto, we know it as a way of life. We have neighbors who help each other out in difficult times. They call/visit one another without being intrusive.

We, DeSoto citizens, unselfishly give of our time, talents and resources for the continued betterment of our city. Examples are donating to the DeSoto Food Pantry, participating in a neighborhood association, being a Big Brother/Sister, volunteering for community events and tutoring school students. There are many givers in our community and but there is always room for more people to share time and talent with fellow DeSoto citizens. Will you be one?

The rewards for doing something in our community are so much more than expected. I experienced it. A little more than ten years ago, I moved to DeSoto looking for a nice, clean and quiet area to retreat after working all day. As a new resident wanting to know how to receive city services, I inquired. The city staff provided a wealth of information. Some suggestions for getting involved included, attending the Civic Academy, joining the neighborhood association or applying for a board or commission. Eventually, I did all of their suggestions. The benefits were an extended family, meeting people with mutual community interest and increased community pride. The benefits far outweigh the minutes of time.

Actively participating in community has become a way of life for many residents of DeSoto.

I am thankful to live in a city where citizens get to know each other, build relationships and collectively help each other. I am thankful to live in a city, where residents vote for change and are involved in improving their own city.

We can be thankful for leadership. With the progressively dynamic leadership of City Manager Baugh and Council, our city enjoys a lower tax rate this year, a town center constructed, improvements to our Corner Theatre, more teen advisory boards and additions to our industrial park. There are great plans for DeSoto citizens.

As we face uncertain economic times and embrace political change, let us remember to be thankful for what we already have. Let's appreciate our great city, become involved and share our God given talents with our fellow citizens. DeSoto is as good as its people and thankfully, that is exponentially positive. A wise proverb states, "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success." Fellow citizens of DeSoto, I am thankful for our current and future successes.

Deshaundra Lockhart City Council - Place 4

DeSoto Firefighters Are Collecting Toys for Needy Kids

The DeSoto Firefighter's Association wants to let children and families who are having a tough time know that someone really cares this Holiday Season. They are sponsoring a Holiday Toy Drive by collecting new, unwrapped toys for boys and girls aged six through eleven years of age. Collections boxes are in place at all three fire stations as well as City Hall. Toys can be dropped off until Monday, December 15, 2008.

For information on the DeSoto Firefighters Association Holiday Toy Drive, please call DeSoto Fire Administration at 972.230.9680.



A Few Simple Tips on Personal and Home Safety During the Holidays

The Holidays are just around the corner and the DeSoto Police Department would like to remind you that con artists may take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays by making appeals for nonexistent charities. Always ask for identification from solicitors.

Shoppers rushed and distracted during the holidays must try to stay alert to their immediate surroundings. Use the following tips when doing your shopping this year:

- Do not approach areas where there are people loitering in garages, parking lots, and outside of stores.
- Shop before dark if possible or coordinate shopping trips with a friend.
- Never park in an unlighted lot, no matter how convenient it is.
- Lock your car and close the windows, even if you only plan to be gone a few minutes.
- Store packages in the trunk so they are out of view and do not prove a temptation to a thief.
- Have your keys in hand when you return to your vehicle.
- Avoid having to set your packages down when getting into your car.
- To discourage purse snatchers. don't overburden yourself with packages. Carry only what you comfortably can to the car.
- Take only those credit cards for the stores where you intend to shop. Record the numbers of all of your credit cards and keep this information in a safe place at home.

Movies like "Home Alone" may make burglars look dumb, but the fact is that homes full of gifts are attractive targets for smart thieves. The holiday season's increase in travel, shopping, and the hauling home of hundreds of dollars in electronic equipment and other gifts brings an increased risk of robbery and burglary. To reduce the risk of loss during the holidays, the DeSoto Police Department suggests that you don't display presents where they can be seen from a window or doorway, and store gifts away before leaving the house or taking a trip. Moreover, closing drapes or blinds even during short visits away from home is a good habit.

According to a Gallup poll, 22,000,000 people will go away during the holidays. That's a lot of unattended homes. It is important to trick burglars into believing someone is home. Having lights on timers, and stopping mail and newspaper deliveries are important security measures. Always arm your intrusion alarm when away from home.

If you have an alarm monitoring system in your home, consider having it monitored by the City of DeSoto's 911 Call Center. 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.

CITY CALENDAR

November

- 3 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 4 Election Day - Vote at Precincts
- 4 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 6 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 6 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 6 "Neat" opens in the Corner Theatre
- 17 Arts Commission Meeting - 6:30 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
- 27 Thanksgiving Day - City offices and facilities closed
- 28 City Offices closed for Thanksgiving holiday

December

- 1 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 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
- 4 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 6 HomeTown Holiday Parade of Lights - 6 p.m. - North on Hampton Road
- 9 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 16 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 17 CDC Kwanzaa Celebration - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 22 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 23 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 24 City Offices closed for Christmas Eve Holiday
- 25 City Offices & Facilities closed for Christmas Holiday



CDC invites you to attend the **2008 Kwanzaa Fest Celebration** on Friday, December 19, 2008 from 7 to 9 p.m. at DeSoto City Hall, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road. Kwanzaa is a celebration honoring our unity, self-determination, responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. This special event will present the symbols, customs, special foods and tradition of Kwanzaa to our community. Admission is free, but reservations are required for the feast. For more info, call 972.274.9795.

Code Enforcement Steps Up Enforcement Measures On Inoperable Vehicles

City Ordinance requires that you maintain your property free of any junk motor vehicles. A junk motor vehicle is any vehicle that is inoperative and remains inoperative for more than 45 days or is inoperative and does not have a current registration sticker or inspection sticker. A junk motor vehicle is also any vehicle which is wrecked, dismantled, partially dismantled or discarded. These vehicles may not be visible anywhere in the public view, public right-of-way, street or on any other private property.

DeSoto Code Enforcement is stepping up enforcement on inoperable vehicles around the city. In the past, a door hanger was left on the residence where the vehicle was parked asking that it be moved. Now a certified letter and a first class mail

letter will be sent to the resident stating that if the vehicle is not moved in 10 days, Code Enforcement will pursue securing a court order to have the vehicle towed. If you have any questions about junk vehicles or would like to report one in your neighborhood, please call the Code Enforcement office at 469.658.3076.



Answers To Your Questions Regarding How Your Sewer Charges Are Calculated

How are winter sewer averages calculated for residential customers?

Each year, residential customers have their monthly water consumption during the winter months averaged to establish a maximum sewer charge. We take the water consumption shown on your December, January, February and March billings, discard the two highest months and average the remaining two months to establish the maximum sewer charge that will be used from April of that year through the following March. For example: if your water usage is 10,000 gallons in December, 15,000 gallons in January, 8,000 gallons in February and 6,000 gallons in March, the new average is 7,000 gallons. The December and January bills would be discarded because they are the two highest of the four months and the remaining February and March billings would be averaged.

Why do you average only two of the four winter months?

Lawn sprinkling, entertaining guests during the holidays, filling a swimming pool or having a toilet leak, for example, can all increase a monthly bill. Being able to discard the two largest of these water bills prior to averaging the two remaining months gives a more accurate measure of water going into the sewer system.

Once I have my average, does this mean I will be charged this

same amount every month?

This is a maximum charge. You will not be charged more, but you could be charged less. If your average water usage is 8,000 gallons and you only use 5,000 gallons of water one month, you will be billed for 5,000 gallons of sewer.

Why do you use the winter months for averaging?

Normally residential customers are not watering their lawns during this time period and all of the water usage is inside the house. Generally this is the time of the year that the majority of the water is going down the sewer system. If you operate your irrigation system year round, it would be advisable to have a separate meter for watering your lawn so that the water used on your lawn would not calculate into the winter average.

What is my average if I am a new customer and do not have a winter months' history?

All new residential customers receive a 7,000 gallons average until they have established their history during the winter months. Remember that is the maximum and the charge is less if your water consumption is less.

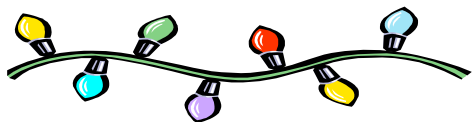
If you have questions regarding the charges on your utility bill, please call 972.230.9627.

DeSoto Public Library Offers Program For Homeschoolers

Homeschoolers, bring your students to the DeSoto Public Library on Fridays. The DeSoto Public Library has just introduced a program to support local homeschool families. Every Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., a volunteer educational team has been assembled to offer a cooperative learning environment for students aged six to ten (1st through 4th grades). Lessons will include environmental studies, spelling bees, research how-to's, library scavenger hunts, math games from around the world, group activity centers, community volunteer projects, business studies (including "library real estate"), guest speakers, a science fair, art show and holiday celebrations.

"It is our intention to provide an opportunity for children from various backgrounds of similar ages to join in a creative, diverse, and social environment," said Lucile Dade, Managing Director of Library Services. "We welcome parents to contribute your time, talent, and ideas by volunteering to help with the program," said Dade.

A parent or guardian must be present in the library while the child is participating in the program. For more information, or to register your child, please call Kim Boyd, Children's Librarian at 972.230.9666 or e-mail her at kboyd@ci.desoto.tx.us.



DeSoto's HomeTown Holiday & Parade of Lights

Breakfast With Santa

Saturday, Dec. 6th

DeSoto Civic Center

8am - 11am

sponsored by the DHS Eaglettes -

Breakfast - \$5

Santa Pictures -\$5

**Holiday Shopping in
The Princess Galleria**

DeSoto Civic Center

9am - 4pm

Holiday Parade of Lights

Theme: Candy Land

6:00pm Hampton Road

Parade Lines Up at DISD Admin. Bld. 200 E. Belt Line,
Parade travels west on Belt Line turning north on
Hampton ending at Winn Dixie

Miss Texas 2008 Grand Marshal



Tree Lighting

Thursday, Dec. 4th 6:30pm

DeSoto Town Center

For more info call 972 230-9651

Holiday Trash Schedule

Duncan Disposal, the city's solid waste contractor, will observe the Thanksgiving Holiday on Thursday, November 27th and no trash will be collected that day. The normal schedule will shift by one day for the remainder of that week and regular Thursday customers will have their trash collected on Friday the 28th. Regular Thursday customers will have their trash collected on Friday the 28th. Regular Friday customers will have their trash collected on Saturday, the 29th and the normal schedule will resume on Monday, December 1st.

The same schedule will be followed for the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays. No trash will be collected on Thursday, December 25th Christmas Day. Regular Thursday collection will move to Friday the 26th and regular Friday collection will move to Saturday the 27th. The regular schedule will resume on Monday the 29th. On Thursday, January 1st there will be no trash collected due to the New Year's Day holiday. Regular Thursday trash will be collected on Friday, the 2nd and regular Friday trash will be collected on Saturday the 3rd. The normal schedule will resume on Monday, January 5, 2009.

If you have questions regarding your trash service, please call the Action Center at 972.230.9600.

Holiday Schedule for the Library

Thanksgiving Hours:

Wed., Nov. 26th - close at 6 p.m.

Thurs., Nov. 27th - closed

Fri., Nov. 28th - closed

Sat., Nov. 29th - open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Christmas Holiday Hours:

Wed. Dec. 24th - closed

Thurs. Dec. 25th - closed

New Year's Holiday Hours:

Wed., Dec. 31st - close at 6 p.m.

Thurs., Jan. 1st - closed

For more information, please call the Library at 972.230.9656.

Holiday Schedule for the Recreation & Fitness Centers

Thanksgiving Hours:

Thurs., Nov. 27th - closed

Christmas Holiday Hours:

Wed., Dec. 24th - 5 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 25th - closed

New Year's Holiday Hours:

Wed. Dec. 31st - 5 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Thurs., Jan. 1st - closed

For more information, please call Parks & Leisure Services at 972.230.9651.

LIGHT UP DESOTO AWARDS

DeSoto City Councilmembers will be riding neighborhood streets in their districts looking for the best holiday lighting displays during the week of December 8th through the 14th for the Council's Choice Light Up DeSoto Awards. The Mayor will judge all commercial properties in the city. Winners will have a sign placed in their yard and will be announced at the DeSoto City Council meeting on December 16th.

AFRICAN AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER PRESENTS NEAT featuring REGINA WASHINGTON

November 6-23, 2008

@ Corner Theatre
211 East Pleasant Run
DeSoto, TX 75115
972.572.0998
aareptheater.com



This one-woman play is the wonderful story of a young woman coming of age who realizes how her most difficult times in life turn out to also be the most fulfilling

NEAT written by Charlayne Woodard is described as "Powerful, heartbreaking, and beautiful." by The New York Times

This story is compelling and captivating — don't miss it!

Ticket Prices: \$15 (3 pm) \$20 (8 pm)

special discount for students and seniors

Purchase tickets 3 ways:

1. Online @ aareptheater.com
2. Call box office 972.572.0998
3. At the door 1 hour before show time