

January, 2010



www.ci.desoto.tx.us
972.230.9600

City Lights DeSoto, Texas

A publication of the City of DeSoto's Community Relations Department



Council Corner, A Message from Sandy Respass, City Council, Place 5



Public transportation was a big part of my daily life growing up in East Tennessee in the 1950s. We had light rail (the electric trolley) and we had the city bus system. In those days only the most affluent families owned more than one car, so most of us used the city bus system for transportation to work, to school, to shop, and to carry out daily activities that required local travel.

By the time I graduated from high school, the community had prospered. We had acquired more cars and moved in large numbers to the suburbs leaving both the city and the public transportation system behind. The trolley system had vanished, and bus system, struggling for economic survival, served only the disadvantaged inner city. Public transportation ceased to be a significant factor in our daily lives. And this same transition was taking place in most cities across the nation including DeSoto.

By the early 1980s, DeSoto had moved from a rural farming to a suburban bedroom community. DeSoto citizens were urban and affluent; their daily commute into Dallas by car was short, fast, and cheap. Access to public transportation was seen as neither necessary nor desirable. So in 1982 when Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) invited the suburban cities to participate in their system, DeSoto's city leaders declined. One requirement for DART participation was a commitment of 1¢ of the city's 2¢ sales tax base to support DART. City leaders at the time believed that there were far better uses for this money.

Today the 1980s are well behind us. We have grown from a population of 15,000 in 1980 to 50,000. Our surrounding suburban cities, Dallas, and the Metroplex itself have grown likewise to the point that transportation is now a major Metroplex issue and a concern for DeSoto citizens. The cost of expanding and maintaining the Metroplex roadway system to accommodate population and traffic growth is approaching the limits of our willingness and ability to pay. Individual commute time and vehicle operating costs are diminishing our quality of life and adding to our financial stress. The lack of public transportation options for those who have no other good transportation choices is becoming a matter of increasing concern particularly with our senior citizens and the

disabled. The time is right for us to again consider the need for public transportation in DeSoto.

Your City Council recognized public transportation was becoming a serious concern for DeSoto citizens and, as a result, placed two transportation related items in the 2010 Work Plan:

- Initiate a series of community discussions on the topic of public transportation for DeSoto, including a strategy to interface with DART and transportation for senior citizens and those with disabilities.
- Develop a multi-year plan to implement a community vision for a public transportation from information taken from the public input process.

We intend to begin the public discussion process by posing three basic questions:

1. Do you believe there is a need for some type of public transportation in DeSoto?
2. If there is a need for public transportation, what form should it take?
3. Would you be willing to pay for public transportation in increased property taxes?

The Council urges all of you to participate in this discussion through blogging on our City website (www.ci.desoto.tx.us), by attending a Town Hall Meeting on the topic, Saturday, January 30th, 9:00 a.m., at City Hall, by participating in the next DeSoto Dining and Dialogue event on Saturday, February 27th, 6:30 p.m. (go to www.desotodininganddialogue.org for more information and guest registration), or by contacting your Council representative directly.

As a community we face issues directly and work together to find solutions. This approach won DeSoto All-America City recognition in 2006 and is the approach we follow today. Your input is vital to arriving at the best possible solution to the public transportation issue for all of DeSoto.

**Sandy Respass,
City Council, Place 5**



DeSoto's Parks & Leisure Services Staff recently implemented a new Ambassador's Program of supervised activities for kids aged 10 to 18 at the Recreation Center during the Thanksgiving holiday school break. Pictured above are kids on a climbing wall, one of the supervised activities offered. The Ambassador's Program recruits citizen volunteers to assist the Recreation staff in monitoring the facility, leading recreation activities such as this one, and mentoring youth. This program is available during the midwinter and spring break school holidays. If you'd like more information on volunteering with this program, please call Keshia Randle at 972.230.9649

Why is the Hydrant in my Neighborhood Gushing Water?

Flushing the water system on a routine basis removes sediment from lines and keeps the entire water distribution system refreshed. Although it may appear to waste water, "flushing" the hydrants is part of a routine maintenance program necessary to maintain the integrity of the water system and to continue to deliver the highest quality water possible to our customers. The process can take from 20 minutes to more than eight hours to complete.

This flushing process may cause a temporary discoloration of the water for homes in the immediate vicinity. This discoloration consists primarily of harmless silt and precipitates and does not affect the safety of the water. If you experience discoloration in your water after crews have been flushing in your neighborhood, clear the pipes in your own home by running all water faucets for a minute or two.

If you have questions about your water service, please call the Utility Billing Department at 972.230.9600.


CITY CALENDAR

January


- 4 Arts Commission Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City hall
- 4 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 5 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 7 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 7 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 12 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall 7 p.m.
- 15 MLK Display in City Hall Lobby
- 18 MLK Holiday - City Offices and Facilities closed
- 19 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 25 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 26 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. City Hall
- 30 Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Mass Transit - 9 a.m. - City Hall

February

- 1 Arts Commission Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 1 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - PALS Conference Room
- 2 City Council Meeting - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 4 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 4 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 5 *Having Our Say* - opens in the Corner Theatre 972.572.0998
- 6 Daddy Daughter Valentine Dance - Civic Center 6 to 9 p.m.
- 9 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 16 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 20 Black History Month Program - City Hall
- 22 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 23 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 27 DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner Event - call 972.230.9648 for info.



Parkerville Road Widening



Pleasant Run Rd @ Westmoreland Intersection Improvement

CITIZEN INPUT

FY 2010–2011


MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 6, 2010 9 a.m.

TOWN HALL MEETING

City Hall Council Chambers
Town Center
211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

"5-Year Capital Improvement Plan"



SOURCING FOR EXCELLENCE

All the projects included in the FY-2003 Bond Referendum are now complete and its time to begin planning for the future. To begin the process, the city will be mailing out postcards similar to the one pictured above in early February. When you receive the postage paid card, please take a few moments to fill it out and drop it back in the mail to the City of DeSoto.

Are Your House Numbers Clearly Displayed?

If you knew that the Publisher's Clearing House Prize Patrol was set to come to your house to deliver a million dollar check, you would have a neon sign out front pointing to your house so there would not be any chance of missing the address.

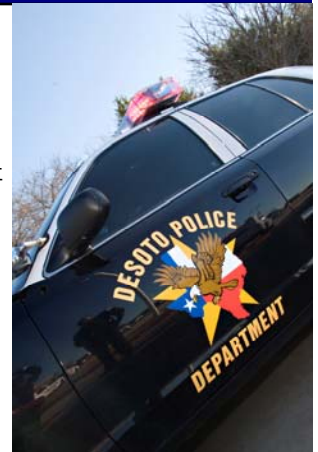
But what if right now, at this very moment, you had an emergency in your home, could city emergency vehicles find your address quickly and easily? What if someone was trying to break into your home or was already inside coming toward you? Could police easily read your house numbers on the front of your home or from the alley? What if you smelled smoke or needed an ambulance? What if a pipe burst, flooding your home? Would we be able to find you?

These are some of the critical situations that affect you personally. Time is of the essence and a quick and ordered response could mean your safety. DeSoto, like many other cities, has an ordinance that requires residents to have their house numbers displayed prominently on the front and rear of their residence, but we want more. We want you to follow this rule because you understand that it may mean the difference in city services arriving to help you

when you need it most.

The City of DeSoto would like to ask you to check your house numbers to make sure that they are easy to see. They should be displayed on the front of the residence under the eave. It's an added bonus to have them printed on your front curb; however, parked cars can block them from view. It is just as important to have your house numbers on the rear of your residence above your garage door.

Clearly displaying your house numbers under the eave in both the front and rear of your residence will prevent you from receiving a citation but, more importantly; helps first responders find you in an emergency. If you have any questions regarding house numbering, please call the Code Enforcement office at 469.658.3075.



DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Will Discuss Mass Transit at Dinner Event on February 27th



For the last six years, DeSoto Dining and Dialogue has brought together people of various ages and backgrounds to discuss making DeSoto a more vibrant place for all. By connecting neighbors, the program seeks to build relationships among people from different backgrounds with the ultimate goal of sharing experiences and building a strong community; regardless of color, culture or class. The next DeSoto

Dining and Dialogue dinner event is scheduled for Saturday, February 27, 2010.

The purpose of DeSoto Dining and Dialogue (DDD) is to bring together a group of strangers who all have something in common. They all live or work in DeSoto and care about their community. DDD is a volunteer-run organization that provides individuals of all ages (including high school students) the opportunity to get to know one another at dinner events with 8 to 10 participants. These dinners are held three times a year in private homes, churches or restaurants all over town on the same night. The discussion is lead by a trained facilitator who guides participants through questions designed to elicit thoughts and opinions on issues facing our community.

DeSoto Dining and Dialogue also offers a great opportunity for neighbors to discuss issues that will shape their future. That is why the DDD program is partnering with the City of DeSoto to discuss the topic of public transportation. There will be a couple of questions on this topic included in the discussion at the February 27th dinner. The discussion on transportation will be carefully documented and included with the public input gathered on the subject for use by the city council as they develop a plan for mass transportation in DeSoto. DDD invites you to join in the process.

DeSoto Dining and Dialogue is primarily successful because families are willing to open their homes and host, at their own expense, a

dinner for a diverse group of citizens. Facilitators and other volunteers willingly give of their time and expertise because they believe in the program. DDD will personally recognize the following hosts and facilitators at the DeSoto City Council Meeting on January 19, 2010, who made the program possible in 2009:

Hosts: Debby & Jim Baugh, Cammy & Alan Jackson, Drs. Janice Pettis & Jesse Ingram, Hazel & Richard North, Paula & Maj. Gen. Hugh Robinson and Rena' Thomas & the Concerned DeSoto Citizens.

Facilitators: Chuck Burch, Jerrilyn Breedlove, Richard Tuck, David Scott, Marvin Gooch, Sheila Webb, Maj. Gen. Hugh Robinson, Judson Meshack, Dorothy Pierce, Reginald Jones, Lynn Kornegay and Billie Clayton Porter.

Without the generous support of these and other volunteer hosts and facilitators, DeSoto Dining and Dialogue could not continue. However, there is one more vital piece that is needed to keep the program strong. DeSoto Dining and Dialogue needs continuing community participation which means that we need committed citizens like you to participate in the program as guests. There's no cost to be a guest and all you have to do is agree to attend the dinner and engage in the discussion.

To be a guest, please register by logging onto the DDD website at desotodininganddialogue.org. Just fill out the guest registration form before February 12, 2010 or call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648 to register by phone. Once registered, you will be assigned to a dinner table and you'll receive an invitation in the mail to the dinner during the week of February 15th.

Join us in building a strong community by registering to attend the dinner on February 27th. If you can't make this dinner, there are also dinners held in May and September. For more information on the DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Program, please call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648.

Daddy & Daughter Valentine Dance

*Saturday, February 6th
6 to 9 p.m.*

DeSoto Civic Center



Parks & Leisure Services invites all young ladies to get dressed up, bring your dad or favorite guy, and dance the night away at the 16th Annual Daddy & Daughter Valentine Dance. For an added touch of elegance everyone walks "the Red Carpet" just like the stars at the Oscars. The Red Carpet event and pictures begin at 6 p.m. followed by the dance from 7 to 9 p.m. Dads, make plans now for a special evening with your "Little Princess". Tickets are \$30 per couple and \$15 for each additional child. The ticket price includes a photo and refreshments. Space is limited. All tickets are sold in advance at the DeSoto Recreation Center beginning January 18, 2010. No tickets will be sold at the door. For more information on the Daddy & Daughter Valentine Dance, please contact Parks & Leisure Services at 972.230.9651.

AFRICAN AMERICAN
REPERTORY THEATER
PRESENTS

Having Our Say The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years
Adapted by Emily Mann

starring IRMA P. HALL

Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray

Show Dates & Times:
February 5 - 28, 2010
Friday & Saturday Nights @ 7:30pm \$25
Saturday & Sunday Matinee @ 2:30pm \$20
Preview Performance on February 4 @ 7:30pm \$12

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

THE CORNER THEATRE
CITY OF DESOTO, TEXAS
211 E. Pleasant Run
DeSoto, TX 75115

Sponsored by:
CITY OF DESOTO BOARD FOR EXCELLENCE
Classical 101 WDR 101.1 FM



In honor of the memory and contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the special events staff invites you to view a pictorial exhibit on display in the lobby of DeSoto City Hall from January 15th through February 1st.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26 and WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14
FREE Resume workshop with Barbara Safani

Barbara Safani, with tutor.com is hosting two FREE webinars that will be broadcast in the DeSoto Public Library Assembly Hall on Tuesday, January 26, 2010 from 3 to 4 p.m. and Wednesday, April 14, 2010 from 5 to 6 p.m. Safani, resume expert and author of *Happy About My Resume: 50 Tips for Building a Better Document to Secure a Brighter Future*, will present this informative webinar to assist job-seekers in DeSoto. This presentation will cover resume-writing for the following audiences:

- People making a career transition
- Stay-at-home parents who are re-entering the workforce
- College students who are job searching
- People looking for work in skilled trades and services

Ms. Safani, owner of Career Solvers, will teach attendees how to write an effective resume that gets attention and interviews. The Resume Workshop will cover:

- Writing a powerful profile and skills summary that shows how valuable your experience is to hiring managers.
- Transforming a list of job tasks into powerful success stories.
- Leveraging education and internships to prove you have "the right stuff" to do the job.
- Using resume design templates to help you stand out from the crowd.

If you would like to attend one of these free webinars, please call the DeSoto Public Library at 972.230.9661 to register or for more information.

Sign up now for Youth Soccer
Boys and girls aged 4 to 19 are encouraged to go to the DeSoto Recreation Center and register now for spring play. U5-6, \$60, U9 and above \$65. \$10 non-resident fee. For more information go to www.desotosoccertx.com or call 972.217.0533.



Now is the time to register for spring youth baseball.
For spring registration information, please visit the DeSoto Youth Baseball Organization website at www.desotobaseball.org, call 972.228.2255 or email info.desotobaseball@gmail.com.