

DeSoto City Lights

A Publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department

Council Corner - A Message from James Zander, Councilmember Place Six



In my four years as a board member on the DeSoto Economic Development Corporation, and my two years as a City Councilmember, my focus has been on activities that bring more businesses and jobs to the community as well as reduce the tax burden on our citizens and make DeSoto more attractive to companies and residents alike.

One of the most important issues we are dealing with in DeSoto is the city's high unemployment rate. In 2008, that rate hit 11.2 percent. As a result, I made it my mission to create more jobs for DeSoto citizens. The Council jumpstarted the process by reviewing and modifying the city's zoning ordinance to encourage more light industrial and commercial development.

With those zoning changes in place, we have been working hand in hand with the DeSoto Economic Development Corporation to bring in a number of new companies, such as Marten Transport, and the Kohl's E-commerce Center. These companies have invested \$72 million in our community. Those investments have benefited DeSoto residents by reducing their tax burden and creating over 1,200 new jobs in the past three years. Our unemployment rate is now down to 8.8 percent.

As the Council's liaison to the DeSoto Economic Development Corporation, I have been able to learn about companies which are considering locating or expanding in the city at the earliest stages. That gives me the opportunity to have input into negotiating win-win deals and making recommendations to the Council.

Negotiating solid deals often involves working with entities outside the city. That was the case with the reconstruction of Danieldale Road from Hampton to I-35. McGraw-Hill, one of DeSoto's largest employers, was threatening to leave because of the road's poor condition. In our quest to get the road project job done at the lowest cost to the city, we reached out to partner with Dallas County as well as property owners along Danieldale Road. Those partnerships reduced DeSoto's share of the \$7 million project to \$350,000. Similarly, we are working with Dallas County, Cedar Hill and Duncanville on the widening and realignment of the Wintergreen/Duncanville Road intersection. DeSoto's share of the \$6 million project will only be \$250,000.

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Register Now to Attend the Next DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner Event on May 5th

Do you know your neighbor? 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 accept this as your personal invitation to attend our next free dinner event on May 5, 2012. Everyone who lives or works in DeSoto and cares about our community is encouraged to attend. As a guest, all you have to do is attend and join in on the discussion. Repeat guests are also welcome. Please register your attendance at www.desotodd.org no later than April 23, 2012 or call 972.230.9648 for more information.

City Calendar

April

2 Poetry In Progress - Library - 5:45 pm
2 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
2 Arts Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 6 pm
3 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
5 KDB Mtg. City Hall - 6:30 pm
5 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
5 DESOTO READS! Day
6 City Facilities close for Good Friday
10 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
12 Historical Foundation Mtg. City Hall 6pm
14 City/ISD Candidate Forum - City Hall 10am
17 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
21 E-recycling/Document Shredding Event - Service Ctr. - 9 am
21 & 28 DCPAAA Garage Sale - PD 7am-2 pm
24 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
28 Family Farm Festival @ Nance Farm 10-5p
28 HHW Event - Pump Station - 9 am to noon
28 & 29 Broadway Rhythm - Corner Theatre
30 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - noon

May

1 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
3 National Day of Prayer Serv. City Hall 7am
3 KDB Mtg. City Hall - 6:30 pm
3 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
5 DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner Event
5 Mother/Son Dance—Civic Ctr. - 7 pm
7 Poetry In Progress - Library - 5:45 pm
7 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
7 Arts Commission Mtg. - City Hall - 6 pm
8 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
10 Historical Foundation Mtg. City Hall 6pm
12 City Election Day
15 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
17 Don Diego Concert Amphitheater 6:30pm
21 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - noon
22 Senior Symposium Civic Ctr. - 9 am
22 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
27 Anthony Evans Concert Amphitheater
28 City Facilities closed for Memorial Day

Household Hazardous Waste Event Saturday, April 28th 9 a.m. to noon

If you have household hazardous waste that cannot be discarded along with the regular trash such as paint, oil, fertilizer, acid, gasoline, or pesticides, you can bring it to the City of DeSoto Household Hazardous Waste event with a reservation. Space is limited to the first 125 who register. The event will take place at the DeSoto Pump Station, 620 N. Westmoreland Road on Saturday, April 28th from 9 a.m. to noon. Call the City of DeSoto Action Center at 972.230.9600 for a reservation. Only DeSoto residents will be allowed to participate and you will be asked to show proof of residency at the event.

New Landscaping Along Hampton Road

Have you noticed the new landscaping (pictured at right) that has been installed along Hampton Road between Greenbrook Drive and Shockley Drive? This is a pilot project intended to enhance the look of our city by screening those alleyways that are adjacent to Hampton Road.



Important Information Regarding the City Election on May 12th

The DeSoto City Charter contains a provision requiring that this document be reviewed at least every five (5) years. In compliance with this provision, the DeSoto City Council appointed a 21 member Charter Review Commission in November. This Commission met several times to review the entire Charter and brought forth their recommended revisions to the City Council. Council accepted the commission's recommendations and added an additional measure regarding the elimination of term limits. The City Council has called a special election for May 12, 2012 to consider amendments to the Home Rule Charter for the City of DeSoto. Here are the propositions to be considered by voters:

Proposition 1:

Shall Article II, Section 3; Article III, Sections 1, 3 & 7; Article IV, Section 5; Article VI, Section 4; Article VIII, Sections 1, 2 & 5; Article X, Section 4; and Article XII, Section 1, of the DeSoto City Charter be amended to conform with provisions of state law.

_____ For _____ Against

Proposition 2:

Shall Article II, Sections 2 & 12; Article III, Section 6; and Article IX, Section 1, of the DeSoto City Charter be amended to correct typographical and spelling errors.

_____ For _____ Against

Proposition 3:

Shall Article II, Section 1; Article IV, Section 4; Article VI, Sections 1 & 2; Article VII, Sections 2 & 11; of the DeSoto City Charter be amended to remove obsolete dates and clarify language.

_____ For _____ Against

Proposition 4:

Shall Article II Section 1. Titled "Number, Selection, Term of Office and Compensation" of the DeSoto City Charter be amended to remove the term limits for the Mayor and Councilmembers; the change shall be applied retroactively for the Mayor and Councilmembers currently serving.

_____ For _____ Against

In addition to the Charter Election, voters will be asked to cast ballots for candidates for City Councilmember Places 6 and 7. You can meet the candidates for City Council and the DeSoto ISD Board of Trustees at a Candidate Forum hosted by Concerned DeSoto Citizens on Saturday, April 14, 2012 from 10 a.m. to noon in the City Council Chambers at the Jim Baugh Government Center, located in Town Center. The candidate forum will also be broadcast on Time Warner Government Channel 16. In order to vote in the election, you must be a registered voter in the City of DeSoto. Voter registration applications are available at City Hall and the deadline to submit your completed application to the Dallas County Elections office is April 12, 2012.

Early voting for the May 12th election takes place in the DeSoto Library Assembly Hall from April 30th through May 8th. When you come to vote, please remember to bring your Voter Registration Card or another form of picture identification that indicates your current address. Taking advantage of the early voting option saves time and allows you to avoid the long lines on Election Day. For more information on the City Election, please contact the City Secretary's office at 972-230-9664.

Library Sponsors Teen Empowerment Summit

The DeSoto Public Library and the Library's Teen Spot Advisory Council invite local teens to participate in the 1st Annual City of DeSoto Teen Empowerment Summit at the DeSoto Public Library on Friday, June 8, 2012 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The purpose of the summit is to inspire and empower youth to become their best as contributing members of society by providing them with opportunities to learn and practice leadership, citizenship and life skills.

This year's summit will focus on the development of entrepreneurial and career building skills. One hundred youth participants, ages 13 – 18 will have the opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge through listening to speakers, panel discussions and interactive workshop sessions on:

- resume writing
- online job searching skills
- job applications
- interview skills
- dress for success
- entrepreneurship

- financial literacy
- creative careers
- music video production
- gaming

Through a Teen Talk Forum panel discussion, participants will have the opportunity to discuss current issues facing young people with local city leaders and staff members. This discussion will help youth become engaged and lend a voice in making a difference in their DeSoto community.

A Career Fair will provide participants the opportunity to interview with local DeSoto businesses for potential jobs. Numerous businesses and organizations will be available to discuss their services and resources for youth.

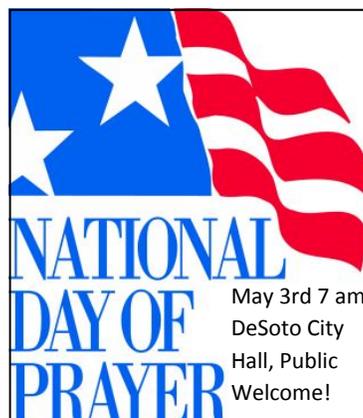
Registration is free for this event and lunch will be provided. Interested youth wishing to participate must register at www.desototeensummit.eventbrite.com or www.desototexas.gov/library starting April 15, 2012. The deadline to register for this event is May 15, 2012.

Council Corner, A Message from James Zander, Councilmember Place Six *(continued from page one)*

I am also pleased to report that the retail beer and wine sales initiative that I spearheaded in 2009 has had a beneficial impact on the city. The initiative has eased the city's financial challenges by adding over a million dollars in new sales tax revenues to the bottom line, with zero increase in the crime rate.

Going forward, my plan is to continue making DeSoto a safe, attractive and desirable community in which to live and work. In order to keep our city clean and inviting, hiring an additional code enforcement officer would enable the department to proactively enforce code violations. We also need to continue support of family-style activities that will draw people to DeSoto, such as the upcoming SolJazz Festival in DeSoto on June 1st through 10th. Most importantly, we need to encourage residents to take advantage of the educational opportunities at local institutions, such as Paul Quinn College, Cedar Valley College and University of North Texas – Dallas, as well as DeSoto's new high school academies, and the drop-out recovery program called WINGS. Promoting a well-educated workforce will ensure that DeSoto citizens will be ready to take on the challenges of the new jobs being created within our community.

James Zander,
City Council Place Six



Document Shredding Event on April 21st 9 am to noon

Bring items you wish to shred to the DeSoto Service Center located at 809 W. Spinner Road on Saturday, April 21, 2012 from 9 a.m. to noon. There will be a mobile document shredding unit on-site to shred your personal household documents at no cost. (Commercial documents will not be accepted.) You must show proof of DeSoto residency with a driver's license or current utility bill. Please place all your documents in boxes. Do not bring them loose in bags as documents must be stacked to go into the shredder. There is a limit of 10 boxes of household material per person for shredding. If you have any questions regarding household document shredding, please call the City of DeSoto Action Center at 972.230.9600.

Free E-Recycling on April 21

On Saturday, April 21st from 9 a.m. to noon, bring your unwanted electronic items (excluding TV's) to the DeSoto Service Center located at 809 W. Spinner Road for recycling. Here's a list of items that will be accepted for recycling free of charge: personal computers, monitors, hard drives, keyboards and mice, printers, toner and ink cartridges, scanners, peripherals and gadgets, cell phones, webcams, servers and racks, power supplies and chargers, cables and wires, networking equipment, servers and racks, gaming equipment, PDAs and other small electronic devices. Help us protect the environment by keeping electronic waste materials out of landfills and putting them back into the manufacturing process to make new products.

Family Farm Festival at Nance Farm - April 28th

The first phase of the restoration of Historic Nance Farm, circa 1847, is now complete and we are ready to show it off to the public. The DeSoto, Texas Historical Foundation invites you to join them for a full day of entertainment with music, a melodrama, poetry and storytellers. You'll also experience living history demonstrations, farm animals and pony rides, a chuck wagon cook-off, tea cakes and prairie food favorites. The kids will have fun playing old-fashioned carnival games and the adults will enjoy horseshoes, checkers, 42, watermelon seed tournaments and much more. Docents in period costumes will provide tours of the home and out buildings.



Because Nance Farm is located at 1325 Greenbrook Drive in the Mantlebrook subdivision, parking is not allowed at the farm. When you come to the festival, park at Town Center and catch the special Nance Farm hay wagon or shuttle buses for the short ride to the farm. Admission is free but you'll want to bring some cash for the games and food. For more information on the Family Farm Festival, contact Marikay Dewberry at 214.532.5902 or dewkraft@swbell.net.

desoto arts commission presents

a musical revue of some of the most powerful & encouraging songs from our generation

Produced and Choreographed by
Michael Sylvester

BROADWAY RHYTHM II

live Loud!
THE CORNER THEATER

Tickets:
\$10 for adults
\$8 students & seniors, group rates available.
Call 972.230.9648 for more information.

April 28th at 7:30 pm and April 29th at 3pm

DE SOTO ARTS COMMISSION

NEED INFO?
kathy.jones@desototexas.gov | 972.230.9648
www.desotoartscommission.com

Join the DeSoto Arts Commission as we revisit some of Broadway's most beloved songs from the past such as America from West Side Story and Hair and salute some of the most popular music of today. With an all-star cast of professional singers, actors and dancers, this show is sure to leave you wanting more!
For tickets go to www.desotoartscommission.com or call 972-230-9648.



The City of DeSoto has a sign ordinance that prohibits the posting of signs in the city right-of-way. This includes garage sale signs like this one at left. When you apply for a permit to hold a garage sale at your home, you will be notified that you can post a sign in your own yard only. You are subject to a fine if you post other signs in the medians or on utility poles. Code enforcement has stepped up enforcement of this ordinance. If you have any questions, please contact the City of DeSoto Code Enforcement office at 469.658.3075.

The City of DeSoto will Host the 3C Series—A Conversation and Chat with our Constable, Roy Williams and Mayor, Carl Sherman on Thursday, April 26, 2012 from 5:30 to 7pm in the City Council Chambers at the Jim Baugh Government Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd. Constable Williams and Mayor Sherman will discuss activities in their office, share their vision for our area and answer your questions. **Public invited.**

DeSoto Police Senior Symposium - May 21, 2012

DeSoto Police Department is committed to working with senior citizens to help enrich their lives by sponsoring a free Safer Seniors Symposium and Health Fair on Tuesday, May 21, 2012 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the DeSoto Civic Center. DeSoto residents, 55 years of age and older, are encouraged to attend this event to receive information about personal safety and home security, health, and information on avoiding scams or fraud targeting the senior population. To attend, please call Officer Cindy Mendez at 469.658.3055 to request an application.

Mother & Son Dance

Saturday May 5, 2012
DeSoto Civic Center
211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.
7 to 9 pm
Tickets \$30 per couple
\$15 each additional son
To purchase tickets, call 972.230.9651 or email cccampbell@desototexas.gov.

Come out to the fishin' hole at Briarwood Park for the city's annual Kid's Fishin' Day on Saturday, April 21, 2012 from 9 a.m. to noon. Briarwood Park and Pond, located at 1625 W. Belt Line Road, will be generously stocked to increase the kid's odds of a memorable fishing experience. Kids under 14 are welcome and must be accompanied by an adult. You can bring your own fishing gear. No fishing license is required. If you don't have your own equipment, there will be a limited amount of fishing rods, bait and tackle available. Volunteers will be on hand to assist you and your child in catching the fish. Registration is \$5 per child. Prizes will be awarded by age category for the largest fish caught. Applications will be available at the City of DeSoto, Parks & Leisure Services Department beginning April 2nd or on-line at www.desototexas.gov. You can also register at the event. For more information, call 972. 230.9651.