

# DeSoto City Lights

*A Publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department*

## Council Corner - A Message from Curtistene McCowan, Councilmember Place Six



My Fellow Citizens of DeSoto,

I would be remiss if I did not use this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to you for allowing me to serve on the City Council. Since my election in May of 2012, I have had the honor and pleasure of working with one of the most visionary, dedicated and hard working teams I know. This team consists of our Mayor, fellow Councilmembers, our City Manager, other staff, our Economic Development Corporation and Chamber of Commerce partners in addition to the many volunteers who make it possible to achieve the mission and strategic goals we created, together, for our "All America City."

TEAM – "Together Everyone Achieves More" – is a philosophy I not only embrace, but have been very pleased to see, first hand, put into action in DeSoto. Just in case some of you have not noticed, DeSoto is in a race among cities in the Dallas Metroplex, especially in the Best Southwest area. If DeSoto does not want to get left behind as it relates to strategic and focused economic development, job creation, improving the quality of education for students, arts and entertainment and addressing overall quality of life issues, it is incumbent upon all of us to recommit ourselves to working together to ensure that we are positioned to win.

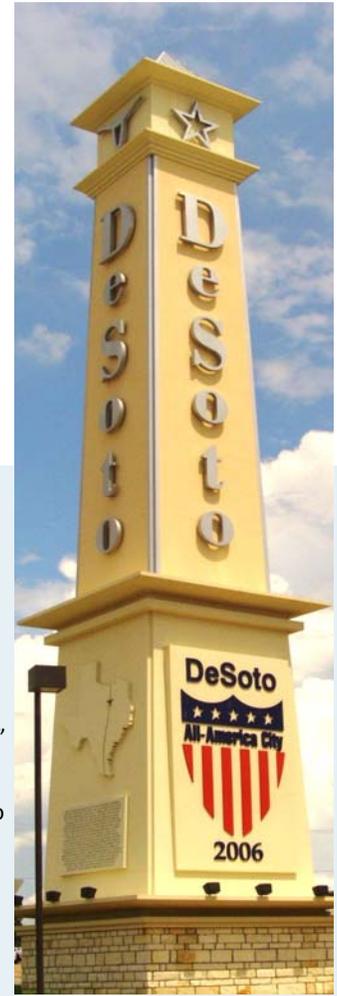
Here are some key accomplishments over the last 10 Months:

- The City Council and the DeSoto Economic Development Corporation Board worked together to bring the one-million square foot Kohl's E-Distribution Center to DeSoto. The City also hosted a series of job fairs at Town Center for Kohl's, with the result being that at least half of their 400 employees are DeSoto residents.
- The completion of a key section of Daniieldale Road – a main thoroughfare to DeSoto's Eagle Industrial Park – was a major milestone for our community. This successful collaborative project was made possible because of the leadership and support of Dallas County and the City of Dallas.
- Construction is underway on DeSoto Heliport in the Eagle Industrial Park. Once completed, it will be the only vertical flight facility on the southern side of the Metroplex providing a helipad, hangar and refueling facilities for corporate and private customers.
- DeSoto ISD launched their College and Career Academies program at DeSoto High School.
- DeSoto's Finance Department received the Texas Comptroller's Leadership Circle Gold Member Award for Financial Transparency.
- DeSoto's bond rating was upgraded to AA- by Standard & Poor's.

Looking ahead, the process is underway to update the City's Comprehensive Plan. City Councilmembers have made appointments to a citizen committee who will be charged with providing input to consultants regarding future land use, the City's thoroughfare plan and economic directions for DeSoto. Stay tuned for information about public meetings scheduled in the coming months to seek further public input. We need your participation.

Someone said "teamwork makes the dream work." Let me assure you that this is reflected in the attitudes of the people you have working on your behalf at the City of DeSoto. We invite each and every one of you to find your niche -- be it getting involved with your homeowners association, applying for a board or commission, or volunteering at one or more of our schools -- because there is room on TEAM DeSoto for everyone. I appreciate this opportunity to serve my community and encourage you to join the TEAM, and become fully engaged in what's going on in our City. We value your participation and input.

**Curtistene McCowan, City Council Place Six**



## City Calendar

### April

1 Poetry In Progress - Civic Ctr. - 5:45 pm  
1 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm  
1 Arts Commission Mtg. - City Hall 6pm  
2 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm  
2 DeSoto Reads Day  
4 KDB Mtg. City Hall - 6:30 pm  
4 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm  
4 Friends of the Library - Library - 6pm  
6 No More Symposium McCowan MS  
9 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
13 Recycling Events Service Ctr. - 9 am  
13 Dallas Black Dance Theater - 3pm  
16 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
18 Mayor's Quarterly Mtg. City Hall - 7 pm  
20 Kidfish - Briarwood Park - 9 am  
22 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall 9 am  
23 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall 7 pm  
27 DeSoto Dining & Dialogue Dinner  
29 Early Voting Begins - Library Assem.Hall

### May

2 National Day of Prayer City Hall—7am  
4 Mother/Son Dance Civic Ctr. - 6pm  
6 Poetry In Progress - Civic Ctr. - 5:45 pm  
6 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm  
6 Arts Commission Mtg. - City Hall 6 pm  
7 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - pm  
9 KDB Mtg. City Hall - 6:30 pm  
9 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm  
9 Friends of the Library - Library - 6pm  
11 Election Day - Library Assembly Hall  
14 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
16 Don Diego Concert, Amphitheater - 7pm  
18 TuTu Jones Concert Senior Ctr. - 9 am  
20 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am  
21 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
26 Richardson Symphony Concert - 5 pm  
27 City Offices & Facilities Closed

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual DeSoto Public Library Teen Empowerment Summit in partnership with Mayor Carl Sherman is Coming in June

The DeSoto Library is looking for teens aged 13 to 18 to participate in interactive teen job readiness workshops on a variety of topics, including resume writing, work ethics, interview skills, and effective communication intended to prepare them for the Mayor's Teen Career Fair. Participants, 16 years and older, are eligible to receive the Mayor's Teen Excellence Job Readiness Certification upon passing an assessment. Registration will begin April 15, 2013. To register, please visit [www.desototeensummit2013.eventbrite.com](http://www.desototeensummit2013.eventbrite.com). For more information, call Marq Runnels at 972.230.9663.

## McCowan 8th Grader, Xavier Newman serves as "Mayor For A Day"

DeSoto ISD recently conducted a district wide contest for 8th graders who would like to serve as "Mayor For A Day". Xavier Newman, an 8th grader at McCowan Middle School, was chosen for the honor and spent March 19th shadowing Mayor Carl Sherman. Their day began by attending the Dallas County Commissioner's Court meeting where Commissioner Price read a Proclamation honoring Mayor Newman. Next, the two Mayors participated in a lunch meeting at Thorntree County Club with DeSoto ISD Superintendent, Dr. David Harris and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. JoAnn Rucker.



Mayor Newman also addressed a group of 6th Graders at McCowan Middle School. Finally, Mayor Newman was sworn in at the DeSoto City Council Meeting that evening and presided over the first portion of the meeting.

"We plan to continue the "Mayor for a Day" program by giving an 11th grader the opportunity to serve," said

DeSoto Mayor, Carl Sherman. "Students, if you are interested in experiencing local government first hand and would like to walk in my shoes for a day, I encourage you to make application for the "Mayor for a Day" program at your school."

## National Telecommunicator Week is April 17th - 20th

If you or anyone you know has ever had to dial 911 because you needed a police officer or an animal control officer, or were looking for general information in DeSoto, Cedar Hill or Duncanville, the call was handled by the Southwest Regional Communications Center (SWRCC).

SWRCC is a 911 regional communications center that dispatches Police, Fire and EMS for the cities of DeSoto, Duncanville and Cedar Hill. In 1998, the City Managers of the three cities came together and created the Southwest Regional Communications Center as a way pool resources and reduce costs.

SWRCC is staffed with a Managing Director, *Karima Dash*, Communications Manager, *Tamara Bell* and a support staff of supervisors and dispatchers. The center operates 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week. 911 emergency and non-emergency calls are answered involving everything from violent major disturbances to barking dog calls in the middle of the night. SWRCC offers a variety of resources to assist with your emergency or just to answer your questions.

National Telecommunicator week is a special week that honors our telecommunicators as the unsung heroes of 911. On Wednesday, April 17, 2013, SWRCC will host an Open House from 2 pm to 4 pm and we invite you, the citizens we serve daily, to meet the voices of 911. We will also be offering tours of the 911 center that day. To schedule a tour, please contact the on duty supervisor at 972.223.6111. SWRCC is located at 200 S Parks Drive in DeSoto.

### Do you need a helping hand? Great Days of Service Can Help!

**Great Days of Service**, a cooperative effort between the City of DeSoto, area churches and community volunteers, is looking for homes in DeSoto that need painting and/or minor repairs. To qualify for the program, these homes must be owner occupied and the homeowner should be elderly, disabled or financially challenged. The work will be done by volunteers during the week of June 17th through 22nd but applications for service must be received by May 1, 2013. If you know of someone who can benefit from this program, please contact the City of DeSoto at 972.230.9643 to request an application for service.



## DeSoto Police & Clergy Group (DPAC) Backed by Errol Spence, Start Youth Boxing Program

By [LOYD BRUMFIELD](#) Best Southwest/Grand Prairie/Oak Cliff editor. This article was reprinted from the Dallas Morning News NeighborsGo, March 21, 2013.

About a dozen people—male and female, black and white—stand in the middle of a cavernous warehouse in DeSoto and marvel at the possibilities.

The dark, largely empty facility—the home of nonprofit Chocolate Mint—has a few shelves stacked with food on one side and a couple more on the other side. Standing in the middle of it, DeSoto Mayor Pro Tem Denise Valentine smiles and makes a bold proclamation.

“In about two or three weeks,” she says, “this place will be boxing-ready.”

Valentine, one of the founders of DeSoto Police & Clergy, a 3-year-old organization dedicated to shining a light on domestic and youth violence and providing aid and comfort to its victims, is spearheading a DPAC-sponsored program to teach area children the finer points of the “sweet science.”

“We’ve been working on this for a couple of years, but the problem was always finding space,” Valentine said. “Churches were leery of liability with any kind of boxing program.”

In addition, some families had qualms about teaching their children the sport.

But then Errol Spence came along.

At the time in 2012, Spence became the center of attention for Americans during the London Summer Olympics when the DeSoto boxer lost a controversial decision but was eventually awarded the victory on appeal.

The controversy elevated Spence’s profile around the nation as he advanced farther than any other American male boxer before losing a decision to Russian fighter Andrei Zamkovoy.

It was about this time that the City of DeSoto was putting its annual budget together, and Valentine saw an opening, appealing to the City Council’s patriotism to help DPAC fund the boxing program.

“We were looking for something for youth to do to get out some of their pent-up aggression and teach them life skills,” Valentine said.

DPAC contacted Spence—now a professional boxer — who agreed to be a part of it.

“They told me their idea, and I liked it,” the 23-year-old Spence said from his DeSoto home. “I liked the way they were going about doing it.”

The class is open to children between the ages of 8 and 13, although coach Rodney Hartman said he’ll teach anyone the sport.

“I don’t care how old you are, whether you are a man or a woman, we’ll go from 8 to 62,” said Hartman, 44, a coach with a Golden Gloves pedigree who had been teaching boxing in his garage until the warehouse became available.

Hartman’s credentials impress Valentine and helps assure her of the safety of this endeavor, she said.

“He’s USA Boxing-certified, which comes with insurance protection,” Valentine said. “And when Chocolate Mint came along [to donate space], this became a Godsend.”

Chocolate Mint, founded by Felicia Frazier, is a general service nonprofit that provides food for the needy every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 4 to 7 p.m.

“We target more toward the elderly, but anyone who needs food can come to us,” said Frazier, adding that Chocolate Mint also participates in DeSoto ISD’s summer lunch program for children.

Chocolate Mint Youth Director Jammy Green said the DPAC boxers have been doing some preliminary training such as weight-lifting and cardio skills at the DeSoto Recreation Center.

“They’re also learning how boxing is more of a skill,” Green said.

Contrary to popular belief, boxing is not about fighting, Hartman said.

“I teach students that boxing is a defensive sport, not a way to start a fight,” he said.

Spence never had a similar program available to him when he was growing up and said his father got him interested in boxing. *(cont. on page 4)*

## The Future Is In Our Hands

### Cancer Prevention Seminar

Join Dario Crosetto, DeSoto resident, inventor, and winner of the Leonardo da Vinci Prize (2011), as he presents “The Future Is In Our Hands: How to Reduce Millions of Cancer Deaths and Trillions of Dollars Lost Every Year” in the DeSoto City Council Chambers, located at 211 E. Pleasant Run, on Thursday, April 25th, from 7:30 pm to 9 pm.

Dario Crosetto is the inventor of the 3-D Complete Body Screening technology (3D-CBS), a low radiation examination targeted to early cancer detection. His research has its roots from the Super Collider (SSC) where his basic invention, which makes possible the discovery of new particles, was recognized as a breakthrough at a major international, public, scientific review requested by the Director of the SSC.

Come learn how to reduce your risk of dying from cancer and be part of a process to save millions of lives.

This program is free and open to the public. Free parking is available near the Jim Baugh Government Center and in the Town Center Parking Garage. For more information, please call Dario Crosetto at 972.223.2904 or [crosetto@att.net](mailto:crosetto@att.net) or go to [www.crosettofoundation.org](http://www.crosettofoundation.org).

### Important Information on the Upcoming Municipal Election

The City of DeSoto will hold a Municipal Election on Saturday, May 11, 2013 to consider the following slate of candidates:

**Place 1 (Mayor)** - Carl O. Sherman

**Place 3** - Kristine Clark

**Place 3** - Nicole Raphiel

**Place 5** - Richard (Dick) North

**Place 5** - Terrence Campbell

**Place 5** - Peggy Mitchell **(withdrawn)**

Voting will take place in the Library Assembly Hall located in DeSoto Town Center beginning April 29th. To be eligible to vote in this election, you must be a registered voter.

Completed registration cards will be accepted by Dallas County Elections through April 11th.

The public is invited to attend a City and School Board Candidate Forum hosted by Concerned DeSoto Citizens on Saturday, April 13, 2013 from 10 am to noon in the City Council Chambers at DeSoto City Hall. We hope you will take this opportunity to meet the candidates for Mayor, City Council and the DeSoto ISD Board of Trustees.

**Youth Boxing Program (cont. from page 3)** Spence never had a similar program available to him when he was growing up and said his father got him interested in boxing.

"I heard he was a good fighter," Errol Spence Sr. said, referring to some scrapes he heard about in his son's youth.

His son echoed several thoughts voiced by parents gathered at Chocolate Mint to discuss boxing.

"Boxing is a good way to channel anger issues, and it's less harmful than football," Errol Spence Jr. said.

One of the arguments against youth boxing is that parents might believe their children are being taught to fight.

"That's not true," Errol Spence Sr. said. "Boxers don't like to fight."

Most of the parents visiting the warehouse encouraged their children to sign up for the program, they said.

"You should have seen the glow on his face when I told him about

it," Shay Paschall of Glenn Heights said of her son, Marquis, a 9-year-old student at Moates Elementary.

So far, one girl, Marquis' 10-year-old sister, Marquita, is signed up to enter the ring,

"I really think it's something to help kids do something positive," their father, Marquis Sr. said. "Boxing is kind of like football in reverse—in football, you are taught to be violent. In boxing, you're taught to be focused."

"I can't wait to get into the ring with them."



Nine-year-olds Casey Flowers (left) and Marquis Paschall lace up the gloves and show their game faces as part of a new youth boxing program.

## The Next DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner Event is Saturday, April 27, 2013

Do you feel connected to the DeSoto Community? Have you ever attended a DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner event? If your answer to these questions is no, please take this as personal invitation to attend our next free dinner event on April 27, 2013. Adults who live or work in DeSoto and care about our community are encouraged to attend. High School students and their parents are also welcome to attend. We offer 5 hours of Community Service Credit for students who attend because their input is vital to the program. As a guest, all you have to do is attend and join in on the discussion. Repeat guests are also welcome.

The topic of this dinner discussion will center around ways to get involved in your community including:

- Participating in the Citizens Police Academy
- Voting in the Upcoming City Election
- Finding out about the Academies and Collegiate Program at DeSoto High School

If these topics interest you, please join us for the discussion. Go to [www.desotodd.org](http://www.desotodd.org) to register by April 15th or call 972.230.9648.

## Kid's Fishin' Day at Briarwood Park - Saturday, April 20th 9 am

Bring the kids out to the fishin' hole at Briarwood Park, 1625 W. Belt Line Road for the City's annual Fishin' Day. The pond will be stocked with lots of fish. All kids under 14 are welcome and must be accompanied by an adult. Bring your own equipment, if you don't have any, a limited number of rods, reels and bait will be available. The cost is \$5 per child, applications are available at DeSoto Recreation Center. For more information, please call 972.230.9651.



**PRAY FOR AMERICA** DeSoto City Hall - Council Chambers  
211 E. Pleasant Run Road

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER**  
MAY 2nd, 2013 7 am

[nationaldayofprayer.org](http://nationaldayofprayer.org) Public Welcome!

**APRIL RECYCLING EVENT**  
April 13th 9 am to noon  
DeSoto Service Center, 809 W. Spinner Rd.

**Document Shredding** - bring up to 10 boxes of personal documents for shredding. Proof of DeSoto residency required.

**E-Recycling** - bring any unwanted electronic items including personal computers, phones, chargers, printers and other small electronics for free recycling with proof of DeSoto residency. For more information please call 972.230.9643.

**5 ART YEARS** 2007-2012

**AFRICAN AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER** PRESENTS

**A LESSON BEFORE DYING**  
by Romulus Linney  
based on the novel by Ernest J. Gaines

**APRIL 5 - 28, 2013**  
Tickets: [aareptheater.com](http://aareptheater.com) or 972.572.0998

starring **IRMA P. HALL**

PG13 - MILD LANGUAGE