August, 2008



City Lights DeSoto, Texas



www.ci.desoto.tx.us

A publication of the City of DeSoto Community Relations Department



Council Corner...... Message from Patricia Ledbetter

When I was younger, this time of year was all about summer vacations from school and family reunions. I looked forward to the summer each year to ride my horse and anticipate my aunts, uncles and cousins coming to Texas to visit. My parent's home was a point of destination

for family and friends during their summer vacations and everyone sat around the round dining room table. That was where we ate and the families and friends during the reunions sat around talking about history, politics, astronomy, science, religion, farming and ranching, the importance of voting, the beauty of poetry. I loved hearing their stories, they were interesting and captivating. It is where I learned about my genealogy and the importance of connecting to my community. There was discourse on working hard, volunteering, helping your neighbors, peace on earth. Luckily, I can still hear their voices even though many of the family members are gone now. I have thought many times... would I have developed as deeply and fully as I have if I had not heard these exchanges among my kinship. They talked about fighting in the Spanish American War, WWI and II, Korea, Vietnam; the woman's movement; Watergate; where they were and their grief when President Kennedy was assassinated; the fall of the Roman Empire; Haley's Comet; The Lost City of Mycenae; the Great Depression. It was a human table full of history, tears, and laughter, more vibrant than any textbook could have displayed.

When I moved to DeSoto in 1992 to work for the Superconducting Super Collider Laboratory, I found a modern city close to all those things I loved to experience – the arts, entertainment, museums; a community where I could volunteer, a place to work and raise my family, neighbors to care about. I found people willing to talk when my growing son was within hearing distance about the "old

days" and what their vision of the future for the city and country could be like. I wanted to continue that tradition of my roots, linking the next generation with the common interest and values of me and my corner of the world. It is my hope that each of you take time this summer to continue that tradition, go to a family reunion and listen to the oldest generation, talk to the young people or find one to mentor, volunteer your time to serve on a city board or commission, think about America and what a world of peace could look like, love your neighbors. Share your wisdom, make your home and table a point of destination.

I leave you with a few lines from a poem by Henry Van Dyke titled *America for Me* that still speaks to my heart and reminds me of that table of history.

'Tis fine to see the old World, and travel up and down Among the famous palaces and cities of renown, To admire the crumbly castles and the statues of the kings,— But now I think I've had enough of antiquated things.

So it's home again, and home again, America for me! My heart is turning home again, and there I long to be In the land of youth and freedom beyond the ocean bars, Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars

Oh, London is a man's town, there's power in the air; And Paris is a woman's town, with flowers in her hair; And it's sweet to dream in Venice, and it's great to study Rome; But when it comes to living there is no place like home.

Patricia Ledbetter City Councilmember, Place 2

Recreation Center Opens New Youth/Teen Activity Room

Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and Nintendo Wii are just a few of the games available in the new Youth/Teen Activity Room located in the DeSoto Recreation Center. There is also a 40" plasma TV, two hockey tables, a foosball table and two Dance Revolution games. Kids aged 3 to 7 who are accompanied by an adult can use the Activity Room on weekday mornings before noon. 8 to 12 year olds can use the facility on weekdays from noon to 4 p.m. and teens 13 to 18 are invited from 4 to 9:30 p.m. (A full schedule is included on page 4).

Use of the Youth/Teen Activity Room is an added benefit for anyone with an active DeSoto Recreation Center membership ID card. ID cards are \$10 per year for DeSoto residents aged 6 to 54. Passes for residents 55 and older are \$5 annually. In addition to use of the Youth/Teen Activity Room, ID cardholders can use the basketball gym, walking/jogging track and other game areas. For more information on obtaining a Recreation Center membership, please call 972.230.9655.



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DeSoto is Looking for Nonprofit Arts Organizations Who Would Like to Apply for Arts Grants

If you enjoyed a performance presented by the African American Repertory Theater in the Corner Theatre, the Juneteenth Evening of Storytelling or the DeSoto Art League Juried Art Shows in City Hall, you enjoyed programs funded by DeSoto's Cultural Arts Grants Program. These are just a few of the arts opportunities made available to DeSoto residents by this program. We are currently accepting applications for projects scheduled for the 2009 calendar year.

For the last couple of years, the City of DeSoto has offered at least \$20,000 in grants to fund arts programming in our city. These funds are derived from the Municipal Hotel Occupancy Tax and state law mandates that a portion of these funds may be awarded as Cultural Arts Grants. These funds are intended to serve as a financial catalyst to assist local organizations in developing opportunities for participation in the arts. The role of the Cultural Arts Grant Program is the encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation. performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms. In addition to monetary funds, the program also grants complimentary use of the Corner Theatre to those who qualify.

The Cultural Arts Grant Program is coordinated by the DeSoto Arts Commission and each year in late summer they put out the call for projects seeking funding. To be eligible, you must be an active nonprofit arts organization who can demonstrate sound artistic direction and financial management. Community involvement is also strongly considered. Funded activities must take place within the city limits of DeSoto. Examples of previously funded projects include community theater, art shows, the CDC Gospel Concert, dance performances and jazz concerts. Applications are accepted from August 1st until September 30th. Qualifying nonprofit arts organizations can request funding for their projects as well as an in-kind grant for use of the Corner Theatre.

Application forms are available at DeSoto City Hall, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, in the Community Relations Department and may also be downloaded from the city's website at www.ci.desoto.tx.us. To request a grant application packet or for more information on the City of DeSoto's Cultural Arts Grant Program, please call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648.

IUIV CITY CALENDAR

- 1 City Council Meeting 7 p.m. City Hall
- 3 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. 6:30 p.m. City Hall
- 3 Library Advisory board Mtg. 7 p.m. Library Conference Room
- 4 July 4th Holiday city offices and facilities closed
- 4 Lancaster/DeSoto Fireworks Show Lancaster Community Park 6 p.m.
- 5 Super Series Youth Baseball Tournament Grimes Park
- 7 Park Development Corp. Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Recreation Center
- 8 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. 7 p.m. City Hall
- 15 City Council Meeting 7 p.m. City Hall
- 22 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. 7 p.m. City Hall
- 24 Presentation of FY2009 Budget to City Council 6 p.m. City Hall
- 28 DEDC Board Meeting noon City Hall
- 31 FY2009 Budget Workshop with City Council 6 p.m. City Hall

August

- 1 FY2009 Budget Workshop with City Council 6 p.m. City Hall
- 2 FY2008 Budget Workshop with City Council 9 a.m. City Hall
- 4 Park Development Corp. Meeting 6:30 p.m. City Hall
- 5 City Council Meeting 7 p.m. City Hall
- 5 National Night Out
- 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 Commission Mtg. 7 p.m. City Hall
- 14 Board & Commission Fair 7 p.m. City Hall
- 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 Briarwood Youth Fishing Day Briarwood Park 9 a.m.

Would You Like To Be A Guest At the Next DeSoto Dining and Dialogue Dinner Event on September 27, 2008?

If so, we invite you to join us!! It's easy, just go to the website at desotodininganddialogue.org and fill out the guest registration form before September 8, 2008. Once you are assigned to a dinner table, all you have to do is agree to attend the dinner and engage in the discussion. You'll receive an invitation to your dinner table in mid-September.

DeSoto Dining and Dialogue is a volunteer-run organization that provides individuals of all ages including high school students who live or work in DeSoto, the opportunity to get to know one another at dinner events with 8 to 10 participants. These dinners are held twice 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.

This program 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. However, we need continuing community participation to keep the program strong which means that we need committed citizens like you, to participate in the program as guests. Join us in building a strong community. For more information on DeSoto Dining and Dialogue, please call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230-9648.

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The DeSoto City Council is Looking for a Few Good Volunteers to Fill Openings on Some of the City's Standing Boards and Commissions - A Board & Commission Fair is Set for August 14th

The DeSoto City Council is looking for willing volunteers to fill current openings on the City's standing boards and commissions. As a result, we'll host a Board & Commission Fair on August 14, 2008 at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

If you have always wanted to be a part of the decision-making process in your city and have been a DeSoto resident for at least 12 consecutive months, we would like to invite to attend this event. Representatives from each board or commission will be on hand to answer any questions and share their first hand experiences with you. Here's a brief overview of the duties for each board or commission:

Arts Commission

- Composed of seven members serving two year terms
- Meets on 1st Monday of the month on an "as needed basis
- Commission reviews grant applications and makes recommendations to the City Council on requests for funding through the City's Arts Grants Program
- Produces the annual DeSoto Star Search Competition

Building & Standards Commission

- Composed of five members and four alternates serving two-year terms
- Meets at City Hall on an "as needed" basis
- Hears and decides appeals of orders, decisions and determinations
- Serves as an advisory commission to review and recommend ordinances to the City Council

Civil Service Commission

- Composed of three members serving two year terms
- Meets on an "as needed" basis
- Commissioners must have been a resident of DeSoto for more than three years
- Commissioners must be over the age of 25
- Commissioners may not have held a public office within the preceding three years
- Commission may investigate and report on all matters relating to the enforcement and effect of Chapter 143 Texas Local Government Code
- Commission determines whether the Chapter and rules are being obeyed
- Commission may hear appeals to decisions made under Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code

DeSoto Economic Development Corp. Board

- Composed of five members serving three-year terms which expire on December 31
- Meets on the 4th Monday each month at noon at City Hall, special meetings may be called as needed
- Promotes quality development within the City of DeSoto
- Oversees funds earmarked to improve and develop DeSoto's commercial and industrial base
- The City Council shall consider an individual's experience, accomplishments, and educational background in appointing members to the Board. Each Director shall meet at least one (1) of the following four (4) qualifications:
- 1. Serve, or have served, as Chief Executive Officer of a Company; or
- 2. Serve, or have served, in a position of Executive Management of a Company; or
- 3. Serve, or have served, in a professional capacity; or
- 4. Have experience equivalent to any of the above qualifications In addition to these qualifications, each member must be bondable.

Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board

Composed of seven adult members and two student members serving two

vear terms

- Meets on the 1st Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall
- Educates the public on litter control and prevention programs
- Initiates, plans and coordinates litter control and prevention programs
- Encourages the planting and preservation of trees, shrubs and flowers
- Promotes a safer, healthier and more beautiful community
- Stimulates interest and action toward conversation of resources through recycling

Library Board

- Composed of seven members serving two- year terms
- Meets the 1st Thursday of the month in the Library Assembly Hall
- Makes recommendations to City Council concerning Library policies and regulations
- May serve as representative to various local, regional and state library organizations and as lay representative to the Northeast Texas Library System

Park Development Corporation Board

- Composed of seven members serving two year terms
- Meets the 1st Monday of the month at City Hall
- Oversees funds earmarked for improving and developing DeSoto's parks using the proceeds from 4-B sales tax
- May raise funds through issuance of bonds, notes or other debt instruments, and secures matching funds from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Planning & Zoning Commission

- Composed of seven members serving three-year terms
- Meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at City Hall, special meetings may be called as needed
- Recommends approval or disapproval of changes in the City's Zoning Ordinance, Comprehensive Master Plan, and Major Thoroughfare Plan
- Reviews and updates the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Serves as the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee to the City Council and provides Impact Fee Advisory

Tri-City Regional Animal Shelter Advisory Board

- Composed of three members, one from each of the cities of DeSoto, Duncanville and Cedar Hill each serving three-year terms
- Meets on an as-needed basis
- Reviews and considers Shelter policies
- Makes recommendations and serves as an Advisory Board to the City Councils of the three cities

Zoning Board of Adjustment

- Composed of five members and four alternates serving two-year terms
- Meets when there is a case to be considered on the 3rd Thursday of the month
- Authorizes expansion or continuation of non-conforming structures and variances to the Zoning Ordinance under certain conditions
- Hears and decides appeals that allege error in an order, requirement, decision or determination by an administrative official

Applications will be available at the Board & Commission Fair on August 14th and are available in the City Secretary's Office in City Hall at Town Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road or may be downloaded from the city's website at www.ci.desoto.tx.us. The deadline for submitting completed applications is Monday, August 25, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. The City Council will conduct interviews with all applicants. If you have any questions or need further information regarding serving on any of DeSoto's Boards or Commissions, please call the City Secretary's office at 972.230.9646 or e-mail to lhallmark@ci.desoto.tx.us.

Take a Seat in



Coming Attractions:

A Soldier's Play September 5th through 28th A Pulitzer Prize winning drama by Charles Fuller presented by the African American Repertory Theater

In a Louisiana army camp in 1944 Capt. Taylor, the white C.O. has a problem. He commands a black company whose sergeant has been murdered. He is worried the murderer may be a white officer or the local Klan. When a black investigator, Capt. Davenport, is assigned to the case there is concern it will be swept under the rug. Capt. Davenport preservers and, as he probes deeper, he finds the black soldiers are as corrupted with hatred as the whites. Each one had a motive for the killing. Davenport solves the case and the truth is even more shocking than the murder itself. "A work of great resonance and integrity." - Newsweek "One of the contemporary American theater's most forceful and original voices." - New York Times. A Soldier's Play is the winner of the 1982 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

A Soldier's Play is the African-American Repertory Theater's first main stage production and will open on September 5th and run on the weekends through September 28th at DeSoto's Corner Theatre, in DeSoto Town Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road. Visit the African American Repertory Theater website at www.aareptheater.com for tickets or additional information.

Planning is underway for VIVA DeSoto and Toad Holler Creekfest

VIVA DeSoto is coming up on September 13, 2008 at Elerson Park and Toad Holler Creekfest will be October 4, 2008 at Town Center. Planning is currently underway for both events and we are looking for volunteers to help. You are invited to attend a planning meeting for VIVA DeSoto on July 29, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. and/or for Toad Holler Creekfest on August 4, 2008 at 6:30 pm. Both meetings will take place at the DeSoto Civic Center. For more information on special events call Special Event Coordinator, Carolyn Campbell at 972, 230.9651.





Come out to the fishin' hole at Briarwood Park for the city's annual Kid's Fishin' Day on Saturday, August 30, 2008 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 August 18th or on-line at www.ci.desoto.tx.us. You can also register at the event. For more information, call 972. 230.9651.

Help Take a Bite Out of Crime by Planning a National Night Out Block Party in Your Neighborhood

This year's National Night
Out event is scheduled for
Tuesday, August 5, 2008
from 7 to 9 p.m. Crime
watch groups, homeowners
associations and
neighborhood groups are
encouraged to come outside
their homes that evening
and join together for a show
of community support. This
year, why not help "take a
bite out of crime" by joining
your neighbors in planning a
block party on National Night
Out?

If your neighborhood group would like to organize a block party and would like to schedule a visit by a City official or police officers, please contact Officer Cindy Mendez at 469.658.3055 or Tracie Hlavinka at 972.230.9689.

2008 NGA DeSoto
Southwest Classic Muscle
& Figure Pro Qualifier



July 25th & 26th Corner Theatre For more info call Chris Glover at 972.230.9668.

DeSoto Recreation Center Hours of Operation

 $\begin{array}{lll} \mbox{Monday - Thursday} & 5 \mbox{ am - 10 pm} \\ \mbox{Friday \& Saturday} & 5 \mbox{ am - 6 pm} \\ \mbox{Sunday} & 1 \mbox{ pm to 5 pm} \end{array}$

Youth/Teen Activity Room Hours of Operation by Age

Monday - Thursday

8 am - noon Ages 3 to 7 with an adult 12pm - 4 pm Ages 8 to 12

4pm - 9:30 pm Ages 13 - 18

Friday & Saturday

8 am - 11 am Ages 3 - 7 with an adult 11 am - 2 pm Ages 8 - 12

2 pm - 5:30 pm Ages 13 - 18

Sunday

1 pm - 2 pm Ages 3 - 7 with an adult

2 pm - 3 pm Ages 8 - 12 3 pm - 5 pm Ages 13 - 18

For more information on programs and activities at the DeSoto Recreation Center, please call 972.230.9655.