

February, 2009



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 Mayor Bobby Waddle



Your City Council and City Staff are keenly aware that you are deeply concerned about how the national economic downturn will affect your city, your city services, your neighborhood, and the quality of life that you have come to expect. For now and for the immediate future, the City of DeSoto is financially sound and secure. Your city services will continue just as they have in the

past and the City of DeSoto is not facing a financial crisis like many other North Texas cities.

In 2010 and beyond, our future is tied to national and international developments largely beyond our control. Charting the course for the future of our city in these uncertain times will not be easy, but we are up to the challenge. DeSoto was named an All-America City in 2006 in recognition of our ability, as a community, to face problems and work together for solutions. We have always addressed problems by frank discussion of the issues facing us. With that in mind, we invite you to join us as we embark on a communication initiative designed to help us become aware of the situation facing us, reflect on the impact it may have on our community and start the dialogue that will best address our concerns.

On Monday, February 23, 2009, the DeSoto City Council will begin a week of Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue. We are by taking a cue from President Obama's campaign and will be "blogging". We will post a link to our blog on the homepage of the city's website at [www.ci.desoto.tx.us](http://www.ci.desoto.tx.us). This blog is intended to engage the community in a dialogue regarding the current economic conditions. We invite you to share your observations, ideas and concerns by offering anecdotal comments and suggestions on how the community should react to the following issues:

1. Are you seeing an increase in crime or code enforcement issues in your neighborhood?
2. Have you experienced a decrease in the value of your home because of foreclosures in your neighborhood?
3. Are you concerned about the local job market? Have

you or a family member recently become unemployed?

4. In difficult economic times, what city services are most important to you?
5. In his inauguration speech, President Obama urged us to "summon a new spirit of service" and called on Americans "to make a more enduring and active commitment to their community". Use of volunteers is one way a city can stretch limited funds. How would you like to see the city expand volunteer efforts?
6. What are you doing to help your child(ren) be successful in school? How can DeSoto ISD better support parent involvement in schools?

If blogging is not your thing, the City will host a Town Hall Meeting at City Hall on February 28, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to give you a "face to face" opportunity to dialogue on these issues. This meeting will begin with a general session at 9 a.m. to set the tone of the day and will follow with breakout sessions on the following topics:

- Home Values & the Current Real Estate Market
- Crime & Code Enforcement
- 2010 Operating Budget & City Services
- The National, State and Local Employment Picture
- Volunteerism & City Provided Recreation & Leisure Time Opportunities
- How Parent Involvement Supports Public Education

The DeSoto City Council is sponsoring this week of Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue to help residents realize that you are not alone and that your concerns are shared by city officials. It is also an opportunity for you to voice ideas on how to address growing needs with shrinking resources and for the city to share information with you that may help you through the difficult times ahead. We hope you will take part in this effort by posting a comment on our blog and/or by attending the Town Hall Meeting on February 28<sup>th</sup>. For more information on the week of Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue, please call the City Manager's office at 972.230.9648.

**Bobby Waddle, Mayor**

## Are You Worried About the Current Economic Situation? Join Us For a Week of Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue.

With the recent news on the economic downturn, foreclosures, government bailouts and the slump in the housing market, you can't help but be concerned about what it all means for you personally as well as how it is affecting your neighborhood and the community. The DeSoto City Council shares your concern and wants to provide forums to discuss and reflect on the issues facing us all.

During the last week in February, the City of DeSoto will provide several opportunities for citizens to do just that. On Monday, February 23, 2009, city officials will post a blog on the city's website at [www.ci.desoto.tx.us](http://www.ci.desoto.tx.us), sharing thoughts, observations and ideas about current economic conditions and you are invited to respond and comment. This interactive dialogue will continue throughout the week. The city will also host a Town Hall Meeting as an opportunity for a face to face dialogue. Here's the schedule:

### Town Hall Meeting - Public Invited Saturday, February 28th 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

#### City Hall, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

9:00 am **Joint Opening Session** - Mayor Bobby Waddle

#### Concurrent Breakout Sessions

**9:30 - 10:25 am Home Values & the Current Real Estate Picture**, resources; Chief Appraiser with Dallas Central Appraisal District & Kenzie Moore, Local Realtor, Council Host – Sandy Respass & Deshaundra Lockhart

**9:30 - 10:25 am Crime & Code Enforcement**, resources; DeSoto Police Chief Mike Brodnax & Code Enforcement Officer Charles Humphrey, Council Host – Denise Valentine

**9:30 - 10:25 am Volunteerism & City Provided Recreation & Leisure Time Opportunities** resources; Renee' Johnson, Managing Director of Parks & Leisure Services & Lucile Dade, Managing Director of Library Services - Council Host - Patricia Ledbetter

#### Concurrent Breakout Sessions

**10:30 - 11:25 am 2010 Operating Budget & City Services**, resources; Jim Baugh, City Manager & Camelia Browder, Managing Director of Financial Services, Council Host - Carl Williams

**10:30 - 11:25 am The National, State & Local Employment Picture**; resource Richard Perez of the Texas Workforce Commission, Council Host - Carl Sherman

**10:30 - 11:25 am Home Values & the Current Real Estate Picture**, resources; Chief Appraiser with Dallas Central Appraisal District & Kenzie Moore, Local Realtor - Council Host – Sandy Respass & Deshaundra Lockhart

**10:30 - 11:25 am How Parent Involvement Supports Public Education**, resources; Lloyd Treadwell, DeSoto ISD Superintendent, District Host, Don Gant President, DISD Board of Trustees

**12:30 pm Joint Closing Session**

## CITY CALENDAR

### February

- 2 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 5 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 5 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 8 Corner Theatre Reception Sponsored by the Arts Commission 3 to 5 p.m.
- 10 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 17 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 23 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 24 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 28 Town Hall Meeting on Awareness, Reflection & Dialogue - City Hall 9 to 12:30
- 28 DeSoto Dining & Dialogue Dinner Event - call 972.230.9648 to attend

### March

- 2 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 3 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 Reception for DeSoto's 60th Anniversary of Incorporation - City Hall 6 p.m.
- 5 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 5 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 9 Arts Commission Mtg.—6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 10 Planning & Zoning Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 12 Board & Commission Banquet - 6:30 pm - Civic Center
- 13 "A Raisin In The Sun" opens in the Corner Theatre
- 17 City Council Meeting - cancelled
- 23 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 24 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. City Hall

## Important Information Regarding our Upcoming City Election

The DeSoto General Election is scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2009. **Available council positions for the May 9th ballot are Place 6 and Place 7.** If you are interested in running for Place 6 or 7 on the City Council, please contact the Office of the City Secretary to request a City Council Candidate Guide, which contains all the information needed to file. They will be available beginning February 2, 2009. The first day for candidate filing is Monday, February 9, 2009 at 8 a.m. Filing continues during normal business hours until Monday, March 9, 2009 at 5 p.m.

The DeSoto City Charter, Article II, City Council, Section 3 outlines these qualifications for City Council candidates :

- U.S. Citizen at least 18 years of age.
- Registered DeSoto voter.
- Resident of the geographical district of Place 6 or 7 for one year prior to Election Day on May 9, 2009. Councilmembers are elected "at large" by voters of the entire city.
- Not in arrears in the payment of any taxes or other liability due the City.

For more information on the City Election, please call DeSoto City Secretary, Laura Hallmark at 972.230.9664.

## City Animal Ordinance Requires That Residents Take Responsibility For Their Pets

While some cities are asking the Texas Legislature to impose stricter regulations on dangerous dogs, DeSoto Animal Control officers and Police would like to remind you that we have laws in place to address the issue. The City Council approved changes to the city's animal ordinance in July, 2007 that require citizens to take responsibility for their animals.

Specifically, the ordinance:

- Defines a "Dangerous Dog" as any dog who makes an unprovoked attack on a domestic animal or person causing serious bodily injury or death and occurring in a place other than an enclosure in which the dog was being kept and that was reasonably certain to prevent the dog from leaving the enclosure on its own or "running at large". By including the definition of "Dangerous Dog" in our Animal Ordinance, we will require that any dog found to be "running at large" who seriously injures another person or domesticated animal will be immediately removed from the City.
- Imposes fines for dogs found to be "running at large" as defined above. The first conviction will



DeSoto Animal Control Officer, Ronnie Littles.

subject the dog's owner to a \$100 fine, the second conviction will result in a \$200 fine, there will be a \$500 fine for the third conviction and all other subsequent convictions will be subject to up to a \$2,000 fine.

- Requires that any dog found by Animal Control or Police to be "running at large" and impounded, will be implanted with a microchip at the owner's expense. The \$30 micro-chipping fee must be paid before the dog is released to the owner. This will aid Animal Control officers in identifying the dog should it be found "running at large" again in the future.

The city held public meetings to discuss the issue of dangerous dogs in our neighborhoods in 2007. Input was received from over 100 people. The majority felt that the only way to address the issue is to require owners to take responsibility. The changes in the Animal Ordinance are intended to make owners responsible for the actions of their pets. To report a dog "running at large" in your neighborhood, please call the Action Center at 972.230.9600.

## Would You Like To Be A Guest At The Next DeSoto Dining & Dialogue Dinner Event?

If so, we invite you to join us!! The next dinner event is scheduled for Saturday, February 28, 2009. It's easy to register, just go to the website at [desotodininganddialogue.org](http://desotodininganddialogue.org) and fill out the guest registration form before February 9, 2009 or call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648. Once registered, you will be assigned to a dinner table and you'll receive an invitation to your dinner table during the week of February 16th. All you have to do is agree to attend the dinner and engage in the discussion.

DeSoto Dining & 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. The focus for the discussion on February 28, 2009 will be the current economic conditions. Facilitators will ask participants to share concerns, reflect on the situation and offer comments on how the

community should react to the difficult economic situation facing us all.

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 by attending the dinner on February 28th. For more information on DeSoto Dining & Dialogue, please call Kathy (Maples) Jones at 972.230.9648.



**AFRICAN AMERICAN**  
REPERTORY THEATER

Presents

**A RAISIN IN THE SUN**

by **LORRAINE HANSBERRY**  
Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray

Sponsored by:

Starring  
**Irma P. Hall**  
as **Lena Younger**

**DeSoto Corner Theater**  
211 E. Pleasant Run  
DeSoto, TX 75115

**Show Dates & Times:**  
March 13 - April 5, 2009  
Fridays & Saturdays @ 8pm **\$20**  
Saturdays & Sundays @ 3pm **\$15**

**To Purchase Tickets:**  
Box Office - **972.572.0998**  
Web - [www.aareptheater.com](http://www.aareptheater.com)

# United States® Census 2010

The U.S. Census Bureau is gearing up for the 2010 Census and is currently hiring Census Takers for the 2010 Ten Census Team. To qualify you must be at least 18 years old, have a valid Social Security Number, take a written test of basic skills, have a valid driver's license and be able to pass a background check.

For more information call the 2010 Census job opportunities hotline at 1.866.861.2010 or refer to their website at [www.2010censusjobs.gov](http://www.2010censusjobs.gov).



## The Digital TV Transition is Coming February 17, 2009.... Are You Ready?

### What is the Digital TV (DTV) Transition?

Currently, many over-the-air stations are broadcasting on both analog and digital TV formats. After February 17, 2009, full-power TV stations will broadcast only in digital. The DTV transition will affect those who watch free over-the-air television (through a rooftop antenna or "rabbit ears").

**What Should I Do to Be Ready?** You have three choices:

**1. Connect your analog TV to a digital-to-analog converter box.** Digital-to-analog converter boxes are in stores and have a one-time cost of \$40 to \$70. To help you pay for the boxes, the U.S. Government is offering two \$40 coupons per household. For more information on the coupons, visit [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov) or call 1-888-388-2009 (voice) or 1-877-530-2634 (TTY). With the converter box you should not need a new antenna.

**2. Buy a digital television (a TV with a built-in digital tuner).** You do not need a High Definition TV (HDTV) to watch digital broadcast television. You only need a digital TV.

**3. Subscribe to a paid TV service.** If your TV set receives local broadcast stations through a paid provider such as cable or satellite TV, it is already prepared for the DTV transition. Cable companies are not required to transition or switch any of their channels to digital. However, if you have an analog TV that does not receive local broadcast stations through your paid provider, you will need a digital-to-analog converter box to watch digital broadcasts on that TV.

