

DeSoto City Lights

A Message from DeSoto's New Mayor, Curtistene McCowan



My Fellow DeSoto Citizens,

It is with a deep sense of gratitude and honor that I accept the opportunity you have granted me to serve as mayor of our All America City. I am very excited about continuing to represent the citizens of this great community and am especially pleased to be the key champion of a city to which I have been committed more than half of my lifetime. Along with my unwavering commitment to the city, I bring to the job a wealth and breadth of experience in business, leadership and public service, which I will leverage to capture opportunities to help move our city to

the next level. One writer stated it this way, "Nothing is so often irretrievably missed as a daily opportunity." I fully understand that regardless of the scale of the opportunities we face daily, we can only respond conscientiously if we are ready, knowledgeable and intentional.

I believe DeSoto's leadership has and will continue to respond conscientiously, and I am confident that, together, we will achieve our shared vision that "DeSoto is an All America City rich in history and educational opportunities, where people come to live, work and play in a safe, attractive and culturally-inclusive community that is a destination for the arts, family entertainment and sports." To that end, my key focus areas will continue to be:

- (1) Strategic and focused economic development;
- (2) quality of life;
- (3) educational excellence; and
- (4) preserving DeSoto's rich heritage.

I solicit your prayers, support, and full engagement in all things DeSoto.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and well-wishes to former Councilwoman Kristine Clark for her dedicated service. I would also like to extend congratulations to Councilmembers DeShaundra Lockhart Jones, Dick North and Candice Quarles on their successful elections. I look forward to working with the City Council, City Manager and the amazing team we have in the City of DeSoto and of course, our citizens who are valued members of the team. Let's get busy!

The City of DeSoto congratulates and salutes the DHS Class of 2016. Have a safe and happy Independence Day. God bless you and God bless DeSoto!

Curtistene S. McCowan, Mayor of DeSoto



City Calendar

June

6 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6 pm
6 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
7 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
8 Library Summer Reading Kick-off - 1 pm
9 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
9 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
11 Landscape Classes - Civic Ctr. - 9 am
14 Planning & Zoning Mtg. -City Hall -7 pm
18 BSW Juneteenth - Grimes Park - 6 pm
21 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
24 Natural Change Concert Amphitheater 7p
27 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am
27 Arts Commission Mtg. Civic Ctr.- 6 pm
28 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm

July

4 Fireworks Lancaster Community Park 6pm
2 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
5 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
6 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm
6 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm
6 Historical Foundation Mtg. - 6 pm
15 Inside Out Movie Amphitheater - 8:30 pm
19 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm
22 Council Budget Meeting - City Hall 6 pm
22 Funky Knuckles Amphitheater - 7 pm
25 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am
26 Planning & Zoning Mtg. City Hall - 7 pm
28 Council Budget Meeting City Hall - 6 pm
29 War Room Movie Amphitheatre- 7 pm
29 Council Budget Meeting City Hall - 9 am

Would You Like to Attend the Next DeSoto Civic Academy?

The City of DeSoto wants your participation in this year's Civic Academy, which is scheduled to begin in August.

The Civic Academy is a series of eleven educational sessions designed to teach DeSoto citizens about their local government. Participants will learn about DeSoto's history, tour City facilities, get a behind-the-scenes look at each department and the services offered, and experience first-hand the equipment used to provide these services. The Civic Academy also affords the opportunity to meet department heads one-on-one. (Contd. Page 4)

Update on Meadow Creek Youth Football Complex

DeSoto's Meadow Creek Youth Football Complex has been closed to the public since December 26, 2015, when it sustained significant damage from winds and falling debris resulting from a tornado. A review of the Park facility shortly after the tornado revealed dangerous debris embedded into the ground, as well as damage to the buildings, goalposts, scoreboards and other structures. Because this facility is primarily used as a complex for youth football, it is incumbent upon the City of DeSoto to utilize special precautionary measures to ensure the safety of all Park patrons.

"City staff and an outside contractor began initial cleanup of the large debris on Sunday, December 27th," said DeSoto Parks and Recreation Director Renee Johnson. "We found a significant amount of dangerous debris embedded into the ground, such as large roofing nails, shards of glass, and other pieces of metal or glass that could not be picked up by hand. These small pieces of debris are difficult to remove and pose the most danger for youth football players," said Johnson.

The City's primary focus is to make sure that when the Park reopens, it is safe for youth football games. The City is also faced with a secondary concern, while working with State or Federal agencies who may help with the costs to reopen the Park, proper procedures must be followed. Since the damage spans the entire 107-acre Park, the City felt the need to have it professionally assessed. The City has entered into a contract with Pacheco Koch which generated a Damage Assessment Report of the entire Park and all the repair or replacement needs.

"It is important to note that Meadow Creek Park is not a passive park or playground," said Phil Lozano, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation with responsibility for Park Maintenance. "Meadow Creek is a youth football complex where young children play the sport. The embedded ground debris is sharp enough to penetrate shoes and

protective football equipment, heightening the need for careful recovery measures."

The Damage Assessment Report submitted by Pacheco Koch contains over 400 pages of details about the repairs and replacements needed for the Park. It estimates the cost for full repair and remediation at approximately \$2.2 million.

"Some of the repair costs are covered by our insurance policy," according to Lora Stallings, Assistant City Manager with responsibility for Risk Management for City of DeSoto. "Covered items include repairs to buildings and replacement of the goalposts and scoreboards. However, removal of the debris and other groundwork are not covered under our policy," said Stallings. "The debris removal makes up a significant percentage of the preliminary estimates for repair of the Park."



Because of this significant cost, the City has pursued every avenue for Federal or State assistance and has found that the Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA provides the only opportunity for partial reimbursement. Every step of the remediation and repair process must be approved by FEMA.

"FEMA Representatives have been helpful and responsive, and we greatly appreciate their assistance," said Stallings.

City staff recently filmed a Focus On DeSoto Today segment which outlines the issues with Meadow Creek Park and discusses, in detail, the steps that will be taken to repair and remediate the damage. That video is available for viewing on the City's YouTube channel (desotocity) and website at www.desototexas.gov. For more information, please contact 972.230.9650.

★ LANCASTER COMMUNITY PARK ★

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION JULY 4TH 6:00 PM

FIREWORKS! GAMES! VENDORS! FOOD! LIVE MUSIC!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 972-218-3700
OR VISIT WWW.LANCASTER-TX.COM

FIREWORKS SHOW 9:00 PM



LANCASTER

FREE EVENT



CITY OF DESOTO
MAKING THE DIFFERENCE



DeSoto Municipal Court Judge Scott Kurth swore in four new police officers recently. Pictured above from left, Assistant Chief Gary Perkins, Officer Cody Laws, Officer Patrick Krekel, Judge Kurth, Officer Jared Phillips, Officer Ryan Money and Chief Joe Costa.

Fighting Mosquito Borne Illnesses In DeSoto

Dallas County Health and Human Services will continue to conduct ground spraying throughout the summer in DeSoto when positive mosquito traps are found in our city. When a positive trap is identified, DCHHS moves quickly, usually within 12 hours, to spray the affected area. They notify the City of DeSoto's Environmental Health Specialist when they plan to spray in DeSoto and the City immediately puts the information out to local media and posts it on our website, Facebook and Twitter pages.

If you would like to receive an email or text message about the spraying as soon as the information is made available to the City, please go to the City website at www.desototexas.gov, click on "Notify Me" on the left hand side of the home page and register for the notification list called "Mosquito spraying by DCHHS" by providing your email address and/or telephone number.

Spraying is one way to address the issue. Residents can also help reduce exposure to mosquitoes by using the **4D's**:

- DEET All Day, Every Day:** Whenever you're outside, use insect repellents that contain DEET or other EPA approved repellents and follow

instructions.

- Dress:** Wear long, loose, and light-colored clothing outside.
- Drain:** Drain or treat all standing water in and around your home or workplace.
- Dusk & Dawn:** Limit outdoor activities during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.

Standing water can be treated with EPA-approved larvicides called "dunks". The



City of DeSoto has a supply of these dunks that are available, free of charge, for DeSoto residents at the Action Center in City Hall. These mosquito dunks float on the surface of water and will

keep working for 30 days or longer. While floating, they release long-term mosquito larvicide at the water's surface where it is eaten by growing mosquito larvae. One dunk can treat up to 100 square feet of stagnant water. Mosquitos that carry WNV breed in places where stagnant water accumulates such as drainage ditches, stagnant swimming pools, bird baths, plant containers and old tires. Contact the DeSoto Environmental Health Specialist if you have questions at 972.230.9600.

Would You Like to Apply for an Arts Grant from the DeSoto Arts Commission?

If you have enjoyed a live concert at the DeSoto Corner Theatre, a performance by Texas Winds Musical Outreach at a local nursing home, or one of the Juried Visual Arts Shows sponsored by the DeSoto Art League on display in the DeSoto Library, you have enjoyed programs funded by DeSoto's Cultural Arts Grants Program. These are just a few of the arts and entertainment opportunities made available to DeSoto residents by this program. Applications for funding are currently being accepted for projects scheduled to take place in 2017.

The Cultural Arts Grant Program is coordinated by the DeSoto Arts Commission. Each summer, they put out the call for projects seeking funding. To be eligible, you must be an active nonprofit (501(c)3) arts organization or an individual affiliated with a nonprofit 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 but your program does not have to be based in DeSoto to apply.

Applications are accepted from July 1st through August 31st each year. Qualifying nonprofit arts organizations can request funding for their projects by completing the application form available at www.artsdesoto.com or by calling the DeSoto Arts Commission staff liaison at 972.230.9648.

DeSoto Public Utilities has expanded its Online Bill Pay System and now offers
AUTOMATIC BILL PAYMENT

at www.desototexas.gov

DeSoto Public Utilities has implemented a new online payment system with enhanced services and new features. We think you'll be pleased with the changes!

New features include:

- The ability to set up monthly online AutoPay on a monthly, weekly or bi-weekly basis
- A new number to Pay-by-Phone — 1.855.748.6063
- Quick account balance review
- The ability to save your payment information in the system
- Access to past billing statements

In order to take advantage of the new features, you will need to go to the City of DeSoto Website at www.desototexas.gov. Scroll down on the homepage to the On-Line Bill Pay icon. Click on it and you will be taken to the registration page. The 13-digit water account number and 8-digit PIN printed on your bill will be required to register. Even if you are already receiving ebills you will need to register again to receive access to the new features. If you have any questions, please call the Public Utilities Department at 972.230.9627.

Would You Like to Attend the Next DeSoto Civic Academy? *Continued from Page 2*

Any DeSoto resident, 18 or older, willing to commit the time necessary to complete this informative, interesting, and intense program is eligible to participate. The sessions are FREE and include all supplies and dinner for participants. The sessions will be held on eleven consecutive Thursday evenings from 5:45 pm to 8:30 pm beginning in August. To attend, simply complete the Civic Academy Application and return it via mail, fax to 972.230.5793, email, or bring to the DeSoto Town Center, 211 E. Pleasant Run Road, DeSoto, Texas 75115. The Civic Academy is open to the first 25 DeSoto citizens who return their applications. To request an application or for more information, please contact Nelda Bond at 972.230.9643 or by email nbond@desototexas.gov.



Summer is Rockin' in DeSoto

DeSoto's Outdoor Amphitheater at DeSoto Town Center 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

Art & Music Festival
Saturday, September 3
Noon-10 p.m.

Concerts Beneath the Stars

Poetry Slam begins at 7 p.m.
Concerts start at 8 p.m.

Movies

Gather at 8:30 p.m.
Movies start at 9:00 p.m.

Inside Out
Friday, July 15

War Room
Friday, July 29

Zootopia
Friday, August 5

All events are FREE to enter. Bring your blankets and lawn chairs to events. Concessions will be available for purchase.

For more information, check out www.artsdesoto.com!

Brought to you by:
DeSoto Arts Commission

VENDOR OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE. CALL 972.230.9648 FOR INFO.

Sponsored by ReunionCapitalofTexas.com

THE OBSCURE LAKE SIDE