

QUESTION

AND ANSWER

Q: How would a Mesquite resident apply to serve on a City board or commission?

A: Residents of Mesquite interested in serving on one of many City boards or commissions are required to complete a personal data form and attend at least one meeting of the board or commission on which they wish to serve. The attendance prerequisite applies only to boards and commissions that meet on a regular basis. The chairperson of the board, or a City staff member, will acknowledge attendance on the personal data form and forward the form to the City Secretary's office. The form will be maintained on file and provided to the City Council as vacancies occur on the various boards and commissions. For more information, please contact the City Secretary's office at 1515 N. Galloway, Mesquite, Texas 75149 or via telephone at (972) 216-6244.

FREQUENTLY CALLED CITY PHONE NUMBERS

Main Number(972) 288-7711
Animal Control.....(972) 216-6283
Building Inspection.....(972) 216-6212
Environmental Code.....(972) 216-6276
Parks and Recreation.....(972) 216-6260
Planning and Zoning.....(972) 216-6216
Trash Collection/Recycling(972) 216-6284
Street/Alley Repair(972) 216-6282
Water Billing(972) 216-6208
Water Leaks/Sewer Back-ups.....(972) 216-6278

MESQUITE
TEXAS

Real. Texas. Flavor.



Mainstream is an official publication of the City of Mesquite to inform and advise citizens of municipal activities.

MAINSTREAM

Mike Anderson, Mayor
John Heiman, Jr.Mayor Pro Tem
David PaschallDeputy Mayor Pro Tem
John MonacoCouncilmember
Stan PickettCouncilmember
Shirley RobertsCouncilmember
Dennis TarpleyCouncilmember
Ted Barron, City Manager

MESQUITE ARTS CENTER

ARTIVITIES

The following activities are funded in part by the City of Mesquite hotel-motel occupancy tax revenues. The Mesquite Arts Center is located at 1527 N. Galloway. For updates, check www.mesquitearts-center.org.

DECEMBER

9 Mesquite Symphonic Band is in concert at 8:00 p.m. in the Concert Hall. Tickets are \$5.00 for adults and \$2:00 for students. (972) 216-8125

9 - February 1

Feast Your Eyes: The Unexpected Beauty of Vegetable Gardens, a Smithsonian traveling exhibition, traces the visual appeal of vegetable gardens across centuries, continents and cultures, from the floating gardens of the Aztecs to the emergence of World War II victory gardens in America.

12 The **Texas Area Artists** monthly *Paint-In* begins at 10:00 a.m. All artists are invited to bring their projects and share successes with others. Free! (214) 566-8269

16 Mesquite Symphony Orchestra in concert with *Music of the Holiday Season*. Performances are at 5:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (972) 216-8127

JANUARY

7 Texas Area Artists will host their monthly meeting at 2:00 p.m. featuring artist demonstrations. The public is invited. (214) 566-8269

8 The **Texas Area Artists** monthly *Paint-In* begins at 10:00 a.m. All artists are invited to bring their projects and share successes with others. Free! (214) 566-8269

8 Mesquite Creative Arts Club monthly meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. featuring artist demonstrations. (972) 463-6004

8 - 10 Mesquite Community Theatre will hold auditions for *Dial M for Murder* 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the Black Box Theatre. (972) 216-8126

12 Art @ Lunch is presented by the Mesquite Arts Council with Master Gardener Dick Coupe in coordination with *Feast Your Eyes: The Unexpected Beauty of Vegetable Gardens*. The event is FREE at noon. Bring your lunch or buy one (reservations required) on site. (972) 216-6444

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MAINSTREAM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 4 City Council meeting**, 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 711 N. Galloway Avenue.
- 7 - 9 Mesquite Christmas in the Park**, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., Westlake Park. For more information call (972) 216-6260.
- 9 Historic Florence Ranch Homestead** is open for tours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 1424 Barnes Bridge Road. For special tours call (972) 216-6468.
- 18 City Council meeting**, 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 711 N. Galloway Avenue.
- 25 City offices closed - No residential waste collection.**

JANUARY

- 2 New Year's Day holiday**. City offices closed. City Council meeting rescheduled for January 3. No residential waste collection.
- 3 City Council meeting**, 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 711 N. Galloway Avenue.
- 13 Historic Florence Ranch Homestead** is open for tours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 1424 Barnes Bridge Road. For special tours call (972) 216-6468.
- 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**. City offices closed. City Council meeting rescheduled for January 16. Residential waste collection as usual.
- 16 City Council meeting**, 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 711 N. Galloway Avenue.
- 25 Historic Florence Ranch Homestead** is open for tours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 1424 Barnes Bridge Road. For special tours call (972) 216-6468.

Mesquite Celebrates Annual Christmas in the Park

The City of Mesquite 20th annual Christmas in the Park will be December 7, 8, and 9. Westlake Park, 600 Gross Road, will be aglow with the Christmas spirit. The festivities will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 7, when Mayor Mike Anderson officially flips the switch to activate the myriad of miniature lights that transform the park into a Christmas wonderland.

Holiday participants of all ages enjoy the varied activities each night from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., Thursday through Saturday. While visitors walk through the splendid array of lights, they will be treated to cookies baked in Mrs. Claus's kitchen and served from the gingerbread house. Santa Claus will make an appearance nightly to visit with children or to take pictures for a nominal fee. Children can write a letter to Santa, make a Christmas decoration, sing carols with Scooter, the Mesquite Police Department robot, or enjoy the Mesquite Fire Department safety house puppets.

A live nativity scene can be viewed to observe the real meaning of Christmas. Pony and train rides are available and children and families can enjoy a hayride all for nominal fees. Carolers from various churches, schools and singing organizations will be present each night. Performing groups interested in participating at Christmas in the Park should contact Misti Bartley at Evans Recreation Center, (972) 285-4145.

Local service groups will distribute hot Dr. Pepper and hot chocolate. You can also roast a marshmallow at the Yule Log. Youth Services will offer ingredients for s'mores for \$1.00. Celebrities that will be making the nightly rounds include Santa Claus, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Frosty the Snowman, Teddy the Bear, Scrooge, the Christmas Mouse and several of their holiday friends.

The lights at Westlake Park will continue to be on until January 1, 2007. After Christmas in the Park festivities end, residents will still be able to visit the park and this wonderland of lights.

Hundreds of volunteers give their time each year to make this holiday event a success. Individuals and groups may volunteer by calling Crystal Cooksey at (972) 279-9285.

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MESQUITE
TEXAS

Real. Texas. Flavor.

December 7 - 9, 2006
6:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Westlake Park

For more information,
please call (972) 216-6260

Visit www.cityofmesquite.com

Mesquite Relies on Opticom for Faster Response Times

In an effort to decrease emergency response time for the Fire Department and improve safety for the motoring public at signalized intersections, the City began a program to install traffic signal pre-emption devices at all signalized intersections in 2001.

Traffic signal pre-emption systems - often referred to by the 3M brand name Opticom - have two components. Emergency vehicles are equipped with a small black box or "emitter." Each emitter has its own unique vehicle code. "Receivers" and "modules" are installed on the traffic signals. Receivers are the small, black soda-can-shaped cylinders mounted atop traffic signal mast arms and poles, and the module is mounted inside the stainless steel traffic signal cabinet. If an ambulance is responding to an emergency call, the ambulance driver activates the emitter upon leaving the fire station or incident scene. As the ambulance travels, the emitter "pre-empts" the traffic signal computer and tells it to either hold the green light or change to a green light for the approaching ambulance so the ambulance does not have to stop. Once the ambulance passes, the traffic signal reverts to normal operation.

The City recently placed another 20 Opticom-equipped traffic signals into operation, bringing the total to 62 of 101 traffic signals so equipped. Funding for the majority of the currently installed Opticom systems was provided by the Mesquite Quality of Life Corporation using 4B sales tax proceeds. Mesquite has applied for grants to equip the remaining 39 traffic signals with Opticom pre-emption devices. As an aside, contrary to popular Internet belief, the signal pre-emption emitters available for sale to the general public will not work on the City system because each emitter has a code that is unique to Mesquite's system. Citizens are advised not to waste their money on such useless devices.

Fried Turkey: Delicious and Dangerous

As the trend towards preparing fried turkey has grown, so has the concern over the possible dangers of deep-fat fryers. Allstate Insurance attributed several home insurance claims to accidents occurring during fried turkey preparation. In 1999, the National Fire Protection Association reported that 500 fires involving a deep-fat fryer took place around the nation, resulting in over \$6.8 million dollars in damage.

But defenders say the fryers are as safe as any appliance, if used properly. If people insist upon frying turkeys

this holiday season, underwriters suggest that they always fry outside on a flat surface, always tend to the fryer, don't overfill it and make sure the turkey is completely thawed before immersing it. Frying turkeys has been a tradition in the South for a long time; the fryer is not just for catfish anymore.



Visit www.cityofmesquite.com

Grant Funds Available to Repair Sewer Lines

The North Texas Municipal Water District recently awarded grant funds to the City of Mesquite for the purpose of repairing sanitary sewer lines for homeowners who are not able to afford the costs of repairs on their own. As sewer lines age and deteriorate, dirt and water seep into the lines that can create problems with the entire sewer system.

Eligibility in the program is based on the neighborhood in which residents live or on the homeowner's income. In order to be considered for the program, a homeowner

must complete an application form. Once the application is received, Utilities Division crews will inspect the homeowner's line to determine its condition. If a homeowner is determined to be eligible and the sewer line repairs are needed, the line is replaced completely at no charge to the resident.

For more information about the program or to request an application, please contact the Utilities Division at (972) 216-6278 or visit the City's Web site at www.cityofmesquite.com.

Stage Three Water Restrictions Still in Place

Despite recent rains, the water levels of the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) reservoirs continue to decline (Lake Lavon and Lake Chapman both serve the City of Mesquite) and long-range forecasts project a continuation of extreme drought conditions. NTMWD initiated Stage Three (Severe) of its Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan effective June 1, 2006. Current Stage Three restrictions will remain in effect until a substantial amount of rainfall is received to replenish supplies at Lake Lavon and Lake Chapman to normal conservation pool levels. Until further notice, Mesquite will continue with Stage Three restrictions throughout the fall and winter months.

Stage Three of the Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan includes the following:

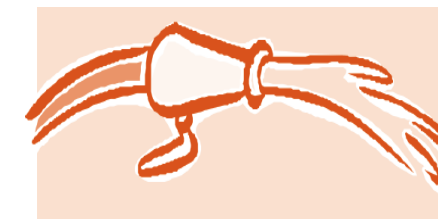
- ❖ Lawn watering is limited to one day per week by address. No watering between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. any day. Lawns become dormant during the fall and winter months and only need one inch of water per month. By adding four to six inches of mulch to beds and trees homeowners can further reduce water needs.
- ❖ Foundations may be watered (not between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.) for up to two hours on any day by a hand-held or soaker hose.
- ❖ In-ground first-year trees and shrubs can be watered (not between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.) with a hand-held or soaker hose up to two hours any day. Stage Three is anticipated to continue through the end of 2006 and possibly through the first several months of 2007.

Over seeding lawns or planting new landscaping for fall and winter is strongly discouraged since most new plants, shrubs or trees will not survive if planted under the current drought restrictions.

- ❖ Operating any ornamental fountain or pond that uses treated water is prohibited except when necessary to support aquatic life.
- ❖ No carwash fund-raising events are allowed.
- ❖ Do not allow water runoff.
- ❖ Pools may not be drained and refilled. Only replace normal water loss. Be sure to check pool levels frequently. Large variations may indicate a leak and should be repaired promptly. New pools can be permitted and filled.
- ❖ Walkways, driveways, parking lots, courts, structures and hard surfaces cannot be washed.
- ❖ Using water for dust control is prohibited unless granted special permission by the City Public Works Director.

You can save additional water by fixing leaks - checking irrigation systems, lavatories and commodes. It's an easy way to save water and to save you money. One slow drip can waste 20 gallons of water daily. It may not seem like much, but every time you practice one of these easy tips you're helping the water supply last.

Reducing consumption through efficient use of existing water resources is crucial to meeting Mesquite's long-term water needs.



Winter Wonderful Hot Cocoa Mix

- 4 cups dry milk
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 2 cups sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon instant decaffeinated coffee (optional)

Mix the ingredients and put them into a plastic container or double plastic bags. Label the mix Hot Chocolate. Use 1/4 cup per cup of boiling water.

Makes 20 cups

