



March 11, 2016

Charles Cato takes Chief of Police oath of office

On Monday, March 7, Charles Cato took his oath of office as Mesquite's Chief of Police. A reception followed welcoming Chief Cato to the community. The public attended both events.



Firefighter entrance exam administered

On Saturday, March 5, the Civil Service Division of Human Resources and the Training Division of the Fire Department administered the 2016 entrance exam for 250 applicants wanting to become Mesquite Firefighters. The test was held at Evans Recreation Center.



City to launch new Code Ambassadors program

The City will begin a new program called “Mesquite Code Ambassadors” to enlist the help of citizen volunteers in identifying common code violations throughout the community. Once trained, Code Ambassadors will survey neighborhoods in city-provided vehicles for code violations visible from streets and alleys. Volunteers will undergo background checks and commit to six hours per month of volunteer time. The program is expected to be operational by early summer.

An orientation meeting for residents interested in the program will be held Thursday, March 24 at the Mesquite Arts Center, in the Rehearsal Hall, 1527 N. Galloway Avenue. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact the Neighborhood Services Department at 972-329-8704 or visit www.cityofmesquite.com/CodeAmbassadors.

City awards first construction contracts for Real.Texas.Roads.

The City Council awarded three construction contracts at the March 7 City Council meeting to begin repairs under the Real. Texas. Roads. program. The repairs are the first to be funded by the \$125 million bond sale approved by voters in November 2015. The contracts include miscellaneous concrete work, pavement milling, and surface reconstruction of the first residential streets selected for repairs in the Northridge and Country Club Estates neighborhoods.

For more information, visit www.cityofmesquite.com/RealTexasRoads.



National Pancake Day Celebration

On March 8, Mayor Pro Tem Greg Noschese participated in National Pancake Day at the International House of Pancakes (IHOP) on IH-30 to support the efforts of local Shriners to raise funds for charities. Since beginning its National Pancake Day celebration in 2006, IHOP restaurants have raised nearly \$20 million to support charities in the communities in which they operate.



Mesquite Animal Services to host free cookout

Mesquite Animal Services invites the community to a free cookout on Saturday, March 19. The cookout will begin at noon and will be held at the Mesquite Animal Shelter, 1650 Gross Road. Come and enjoy complimentary food, drinks and fun activities for the entire family. The Mesquite Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association will also be on site offering child fingerprinting. At 1 p.m. the shelter doors will open, and the public can take advantage of the "Name Your Price" adoption special. Animal Services volunteers will also be recognized at this celebratory event. For details, call 972-216-6283.



Mesquite named a 2015 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation

Mesquite has been named a 2015 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation. This is Mesquite's 26th consecutive year to receive the designation since the program began in 1976. Visit www.arborday.org/TreeCityUSA for more details.



TREE CITY USA®

Credit rating agencies affirm City's strong financial condition...receives upgrade from Moody's

Both Standard & Poor's and Moody's have assigned the City AA/Aa2 credit ratings. Similar to a person's credit score, a city's bond rating affects its ability to borrow money and determines the interest rate it pays. The ratings are used by municipal bond investors to evaluate a city's financial outlook and assess its ability to pay off debt. As the City of Mesquite looks to issue \$125 million in street bonds over the next 10 years, the high credit ratings – second only to the highest AAA rating – will save Mesquite taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars over the life of the bonds. Moody's Aa2 rating represents an upgrade from the Aa3 rating it last assigned the City in 2009. For more detailed information on the City's bond ratings, visit the City's *Transparency Portal* at www.cityofmesquite.com/transparency.

Monthly sales tax report

The State Comptroller's Office reported a 5.6 percent increase in the City's sales tax collections for the month of March, which is \$115,000 more revenue collected for the same period last year and the third consecutive month of sales tax increases this year. The total sales tax rate in Mesquite is 8.25 percent for all retail sales and other taxable services. Local businesses file their returns and pay the State on a monthly or quarterly basis, and for some small businesses, on a yearly basis. The State retains their 6.25 percent portion and returns 2.0 percent back to the City every month. Three-quarters of the City's portion supports General Fund operations and the other quarter, or ½-cent, goes to fund eligible projects and operations that promote economic development within the City. More information on how the City uses sales tax revenue is available on the City's website.

Monthly Sales Tax Revenues

Percent Change from Same Month in Prior Year



Shell Shack Restaurant coming to Mesquite

Shell Shack Restaurant is renovating the former Stateside Pies location at 1335 N. Peachtree next to On the Border. The seafood restaurant will feature crab, oysters and clam dishes in a relaxed atmosphere. The Mesquite location is expected to open in May and will join the company's other operations in Arlington, Dallas, west Plano and Uptown.

IntegraColor merger announced

IntegraColor's Horticultural Marketing and Printing division announced a merger with global packaging company Orora. This merger will bring a \$77 million investment into IntegraColor's Mesquite operation off Town East Boulevard at Innovative Way. IntegraColor is one of Mesquite's largest employers.

Charles Gillenwater appointed to state board

Charles Gillenwater, Risk Manager for the City of Mesquite, was appointed by the Texas Insurance Commissioner to serve on the Texas Property and Casualty Insurance Guaranty Association Board. The purpose of the board is to provide protections to Texas insurance policyholders and claimants when an insurance company fails. Charles will serve with eight other board members and will be the only member representing Texas municipalities.

Contact your City

Let us hear from you. If you have a concern, have a question or are experiencing an issue, please contact the City at (972) 288-7711 or visit the City's website at www.cityofmesquite.com/questions.