



Dear Mesquite Resident,

As spring approaches, it's a good time to start thinking once again about property maintenance. The desirability of any community can be attributed to well maintained neighborhoods, and that's why I would like to ask you to help us in our effort by keeping your lawn tidy this year.

Well-kempt lawns have a positive impact on property values even in a slower housing market, and the City's Environmental Code team continues to do an admirable job as they encourage residents to maintain their properties while fairly enforcing the City's Municipal Code.

At the City level, the Council and I have made it a priority to have parks, municipal facilities and the City rights-of-way along the road mowed often to ensure they do not become unsightly. We even expend a great amount of resources to take care of TxDOT's lawns along the highway, since the State mowing schedules have been reduced.

I would like to thank the vast majority of our residents as you have proven to be up to the task. The partnership between the City and residents is an important one as we strive for an even better community. To reinforce this, I'd like to remind you of a few important actions you can take as the "spring cleaning" season approaches.

To improve our community's aesthetic appeal and property values, it is essential that regular maintenance of your home's exterior and landscaping be provided. Yards should remain free of weeds and debris, and should never be used as parking or storage areas.

The City Council and I truly appreciate the pride in ownership displayed by our residents, and thank you for your efforts to make Mesquite an even better place to call home.


Sincerely,


John Monaco
Mayor


MESQUITE ARTS CENTER
A R T I V I T I E S

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.mesquiteartscenter.org.


MARCH

5  **The Mesquite Arts Council** presents a concert with jazz vocalist *Sandra Kaye*, pianist *Arlington Jones* and *Curt Bradshaw* and the *Mesquite Jazz Repertory Ensemble*. The performance begins at 7:30p.m. and is free. 972-216-6444

7  **Mesquite Arts Council** presents *Chamber Singers* in its first performance of the year, entitled "I was Glad". The evening musical offering will also include a potpourri of other well-known favorites. The music will be performed in an informal concert fashion. 972-216-6444

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

13 **The Mesquite Symphonic Band** is in concert at 7 p.m. in the Concert Hall. Tickets are \$5 adults and \$2 students. 972-216-8125

27 **The Mesquite Symphony Orchestra** is in concert with the annual *Not Just For Kids* concert. The event will feature music from King Kong, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Batman the Dark Knight, High School Musical and Mary Poppins. The performance will be in the Mesquite Arts Center Concert Hall beginning at 7 p.m. 972-216-8127 

FREQUENTLY CALLED CITY PHONE NUMBERS

- Main Number.....972-288-7711
- Animal Services972-216-6283
- Building Inspection972-216-6212
- 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 Billing972-216-6208
- Water Leaks/Sewer Back-ups972-216-6278



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

MAINSTREAM

MESQUITE BENEFITS FROM 2010 CENSUS



The U.S. Census Bureau will be spending more than a billion dollars to count the number of people in the United States next year, and the investment is providing jobs in Mesquite and throughout the rest of the Metroplex.

The Census started count work in Mesquite in March 2009 when workers began canvassing neighborhoods to confirm mailing addresses. That work employed around 200 people in the area. For the 2010 Census this April, a total of 8,000 persons will be hired across the Metroplex, with most jobs paying between \$9 and \$15 per hour.

Many of those jobs will go to local people who will be retained to help better reach individual communities. The Census says that is one of the best methods to reach out to people since the people who live in the area know their neighborhoods better than anyone else. Bilingual people are also being hired to make sure people who can't speak English are also reached and understand what the Census is all about.

Census counts are critical for deciding district lines for representation in Congress, and determining the distribution of more than \$300 billion per year in federal resources which are awarded to communities to support things like road projects or law enforcement and education grants.

In order to receive its fair share, Mesquite has created a Complete Count Committee to coordinate outreach efforts with the Census so minority and other hard-to-reach populations are accurately counted.

Census results are kept confidential, and not even the FBI or CIA have access to the forms which are submitted. The only information released is statistical information regarding widespread areas.

The Census has a local office in Mesquite located at 711 North Galloway Avenue in City Hall. You can also go to www.census.gov for more information about the Census.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARCH

1, 15 **City Council Meeting** – All meetings are open to the public and start at 3 p.m. in the council chambers located at 711 N. Galloway Avenue.

various **Historic Florence Ranch Homestead** is located at 1424 Barnes Bridge Road and is open from noon - 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and every second Saturday from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. 972-613-7547

27 **Annual Spring Eggstravaganza** egg hunt held at Evans Recreation Center starting at 10 a.m. (Details in Parks and Recreation Corner.)

27 **The Mesquite Symphony Orchestra** is in concert with the annual *Not Just For Kids* concert. (See Arts Center Activities for more information.)

27 **Opal Lawrence Historical Park's S.D. Lawrence House**, open for tours, every fourth Saturday from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. 701 E. Kearney St. 972-216-6468

IN THIS ISSUE

- Income Tax Assistance
- Lawn Preparation
- Summer Lifeguards
- Mayor's Corner

- John Monaco Mayor
- Al Forsythe Mayor Pro Tem, Place 2
- Bill Porter .. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem, Place 1
- Stan Pickett Councilmember, Place 3
- Shirley Roberts Councilmember, Place 4
- Vacant Place 5
- Dennis Tarpley Councilmember, Place 6



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Income Tax Assistance



The Mesquite Public Library is ready to assist citizens needing federal tax forms or help in preparing their federal income tax returns. Copies of the most widely used tax forms and publications are available at the Main Library, located at 300 W. Grubb Drive, and the North Branch Library, located at 2600 Oates Drive.

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) volunteers provide free tax preparation assistance at the Main Library on a first-come, first-served basis. Assistance will be offered on Mondays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. through April 12. In order to receive help, bring a copy of your last year's tax return and paperwork necessary for the volunteers to complete your return. For more information, call the Main Library at 972-216-6220.

Now's The Time To Prepare Your Lawn

February is the month to take action to prepare your lawn for the coming spring. This time of year is usually harsh on ornamental grasses and liriopse. To help your grass return this spring start cutting back your lawn in February.

At this time, you might see development of new shoots in the base of the plant, near ground level, depending on the temperatures. Make sure to cut just above the new growth when removing the old foliage. This will ensure your landscape will look its best in March.



Flash Flooding: A Springtime Hazard

It may seem early to think about, but spring will be here soon, and Mesquite's Office of Emergency Management would like to remind you about the dangers of flash flooding in low-lying areas.

A flash flood is a rapid flooding of geomorphic low-lying areas, rivers and streams that is caused by the intense rainfall associated with a thunderstorm or multiple training thunderstorms. Flash flooding occurs when the ground becomes saturated with water that falls so quickly it cannot be absorbed. The runoff collects in low-lying areas and rapidly flows downhill with sudden rising water. Flash floods most often occur in normally dry areas that have recently received precipitation, but may also be seen anywhere downstream from the source of the precipitation (even dozens of miles from the source).



The U.S. National Weather Service gives the advice "Turn Around, Don't Drive" in reference to flash floods. It recommends that people get out of the area of a flash flood, rather than trying to cross it. Most people tend to underestimate the dangers of flash floods.

Flash floods are extremely dangerous because of their sudden nature. Being in a vehicle provides little to no protection against being swept away. As a matter of fact, it may even make people overconfident and less likely to avoid the flash flood. More than half of the fatalities attributed to flash floods are people swept away in vehicles when trying to cross flooded intersections. As little as 6 inches of water can be enough to carry away most SUV-sized vehicles. In the United States, the National Weather Service reports more people die yearly in floods (99 on average) than by lightning, tornadoes or hurricanes.

Here are some tips to avoid the dangers of flash flooding:

1. Get out of areas subject to flooding such as dips, low spots and canyons.
2. NEVER drive through flooded roadways! Turn around and go another way.
3. If the vehicle stalls in flood waters, leave it immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may engulf the vehicle and sweep it away.
4. Be especially cautious at night when it is hard to recognize flood dangers.
5. NEVER allow children to play around high water, storm drains or viaducts.
6. Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams.

City Seeking Summer Lifeguards

The City is looking to refill its corps of lifeguards for duty at public swimming pools this summer.

Lifeguards are an essential part of the Parks and Recreation Department's summer program. Starting lifeguards make \$8.67 an hour. In order to apply you must be 16 years or older by May 15, 2010, and obtain all required certifications before being hired.



Applicants must obtain a Lifeguard Training and First Aid certification among other prerequisites to work as a lifeguard for the City. You can find out more and apply online at www.cityofmesquite.com.

The Smartest Card. Get It. Use It @ Your Library!



The Mesquite Public Library System wants to make sure you are carrying the smartest card of all – a Mesquite Public Library card.

The library offers books, DVDs, video and audio tapes, and other multimedia materials for loan. All you need is a Mesquite Public Library card. Librarians are always on hand to help recommend materials suitable for various ages and interests.

A library card can be your ticket to a world of opportunity and to resources that can enrich the lives of your family. Libraries are a place where families come to read and relax. Bring your family to the library and get a library card.

Visit the Main Library at 300 W. Grubb Drive or the North Branch Library at 2600 Oates Drive. For more information about library services visit the library's Web site at www.cityofmesquite.com/library.



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MTED Can Be a Senior's Best Friend

Residents who are mobility impaired, or are at least 60 years of age, have a place to turn for a ride. It's Mesquite's Transportation for the Elderly and Disabled (MTED).

You've likely seen the buses driving around town. MTED takes eligible residents to and from work in Mesquite, Eastfield College, the Garland Area Rehabilitation Center for Developmentally Disabled, the East Dallas Rehabilitation Center and non-emergency medical appointments within Mesquite or any adjoining city.

The service costs \$1 per trip, and there is a one-time cost of \$2 for a picture ID card.

All vehicles are accessible for wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility devices. However, you must be able to meet the bus at the curb. Personal care attendants ride free.

The service runs Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m., excluding City holidays. To find out more you can call MTED at 972-329-6833.



Parks and Recreation Corner

Senior Exercise

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
Ongoing
11 - 11:30 a.m.
Evans Recreation Center
55+ / Free



Limber up with a series of stretching and range-of-motion movements done seated and standing. This moderate exercise class utilizes exercise bands and is offered four days per week. This is a great program for individuals beginning an exercise regimen or seeking to maintain flexibility.

972-285-4145

Breakfast with the Bunny

Saturday, March 27
8 - 10 a.m.
\$5 person



Children of all ages are invited to hop on over for some breakfast favorites: pancakes and sausage. The fee includes all you can eat and a picture with The Bunny.



Spring Eggstravaganza

Saturday, March 27
10 - 11:30 a.m.
Evans Recreation Center
Infant to 9 years

Join the fun as the Parks and Recreation Department hosts its annual egg hunt. Infants to 9-year-olds can enjoy the festivities. The guest of honor has planned several activities for the entire family to enjoy. The Bunny and crew will be available for pictures for a small fee. Enjoy games, arts and crafts and much more.

Friday Night Dance

Second and fourth Friday
Ongoing
7 - 9:30 p.m.
Evans Recreation Center
Ages 50+ / \$5



Adults 50+ join us for live music, dancing, fellowship and light refreshments at Evans Recreation Center. Also, new in 2010, dances held on the fifth Friday of the month will occur during the day from 1 - 3:30 p.m. Dress is casual and the music is country. A schedule of bands is available in Yesterday's Kids, the Mesquite Senior Center monthly newsletter.
972-285-6761