



The City of Cedar Hill, Texas

Highlights

September 2008



Once again, it's time for 'Country Day'

One of the most anticipated events on the Cedar Hill calendar is Country Day on the Hill on October 11. This year is the 71st edition of this great fall festival. Once again the city is preparing for about 12,000 visitors to this living, breathing testimony to the unique and distinctive character of our community and the surrounding area.

As usual, most of the streets around the city square will be shut down. Parking shuttles will run from the high school parking lot to downtown.

Don't forget The Old Settlers Reunion scheduled for Friday, October 10. It will draw many seniors and their families to the Downtown Historic District. This fun-filled evening, held under the Main Tent on Cedar Street between Broad & Houston streets, begins at 5:30 pm. Ticket sales benefit Bridges Safehouse, ELF, Inc., and the Cedar Hill Food Pantry.

For more information visit www.countrydayonthehill.org

Heavy equipment petting zoo draws a crowd at Library



Hundreds of youngsters had a great time playing with "big boy" toys at the recent Heavy Equipment Petting Zoo held at the Zula B. Wylie Library. It was a great opportunity for employees of the City's Public Works, Police and Fire Departments to showcase technology and customer service to children and parents.

City's bond ratings earn increases

Both Moody's and Standard & Poor's analysts cite City's sound financial management and controlled growth as reasons for better ratings

Standard & Poor's has raised Cedar Hill's General Obligation debt rating to 'AA'. The increase from 'AA-' is based on the city's historical very strong financial position and continued significant economic expansion. At the same time, Standard & Poor's assigned its 'AA' standard long-term rating to Cedar Hill's \$7.5 million series 2008 General Obligation Bonds. S&P analysts noted that sales tax revenues account for a relatively modest, but growing, 21% of general fund revenues. City officials expect to maintain the property tax rate of 64 cents per \$100 of assessed value where it has remained for nearly a decade.

Standard & Poor's raised its underlying rating on Cedar Hill waterworks



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'Adopt-A Soldier' makes it easier to show them we care

Adopt-A-Soldier is a new program supported by Mayor Rob Franke that can help expedite the process of sending care packages to our troops serving overseas.

Details are still being worked out but the general plan is that shipping boxes will be available at the Government Center.

Residents will be able to pick up a box by paying about \$10 to cover the cost to ship the package overseas. The

boxes are to be filled with items for soldiers and returned to the Government Center for shipping.

Boxes will contain a sheet with suggested items. They need to be returned to the Government Center by early October so they can reach soldiers by Thanksgiving.

Watch the city website at www.cedarhilltx.com for more information and check *Cedar Hill Today*.



First meeting

On leave from Iraq, Peter Brown meets his daughter for the first time after landing at DFW airport. Brown said soldiers feel closer to home when they receive packages. Most appreciated are hygiene items and snacks. But, he added, "We like to get letters, especially from kids and classrooms. Everything we get reminds us that people care."

Bond ratings earn increases *From page 1*

and sewer bonds to 'AA-' from 'AA' based on the system's historically good coverage and healthy customer base expansion. At the same time, S&P assigned its 'AA-' standard long-term rating to Cedar Hill's \$3 million series 2008 water and sewer system revenue bonds.

Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 underlying rating to the City of Cedar Hill \$7.5 million General Obligation bonds, Series 2008. Concurrently, Moody's affirms the Aa3 underlying rating on the City's \$88.925 million in outstanding parity debt. The rating actions reflect the City's growing tax base, positive financial performance despite plans to utilize reserve for economic incentive, and a rising debt burden that is complemented by sales tax support from the Cedar Hill Economic Development Corporation and Community Development Corporation.

Moody's analysts said Cedar Hill's management has made a concerted effort to attract substantial retail and commercial business. Since 1999, the City has added 3 million square feet of retail development and the tax base has grown at a five year average annual rate of 8.7%

Moody's has assigned an A1 rating to Cedar Hill's upcoming sale of \$3 million Waterworks and Sewer System Revenue Bonds. Additionally, Moody's has upgraded from A1 to A2 the underlying rating on the systems other outstanding parity debt. Contributing to the rating upgrade is the system's history of healthy financial performance.

Quicker alarm response can save critical time

The City of Cedar Hill's alarm monitoring service saves valuable time by reporting your alarm directly to the appropriate 9-1-1 emergency dispatcher.

Cedar Hill's 9-1-1 Center offers home and business alarm moni-

toring. The Center uses emergency dispatchers to provide the quickest alarm response available.

Traditional alarm companies require extra steps which consume valuable time. After receiving your alarm

signal, they must call the local 9-1-1 center serving your area, on the administrative line, and verbally pass the information on to the dispatcher, who in turn dispatches the appropriate police, fire or medical unit to your home.

City codes and zoning control gas drilling

The Cedar Hill Zoning Code contains standards that regulate where drilling sites may be located and how they are to be operated.

The Zoning Code requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) be issued by the City Council before drilling activity commences. This permit allows the City Council to set specific standards and requirements aimed at mitigating the negative impacts of drilling and operating a gas well.

Before the City Council considers a request for a CUP they will first conduct a public hearing to take public comment regarding the request. Notice of this public hearing will be published in the local newspaper of record and mailed to all property owners within 200 feet of the proposed well site.

The CUP must be issued by the City Council before drilling activity commences. The City Council may approve the request provided they are satisfied that the conditions for approval, found in ARTICLE 3.20.5 of the Zoning Code, have been met.

The Cedar Hill Zoning Code also requires

a CUP for gathering and transmission utility lines within the City. However, agreements would be required where the pipelines cross public right-of-way (ROW) or other public lands.

The Cedar Hill Code of Ordinances Chapter 13 NATURAL RESOURCES, ARTICLE II., adopted in 1984, specifically addresses the extraction of natural resources. The ordinance allows oil and gas drilling in property districts zoned C - Commercial, I - Industrial or IP - Industrial Park.

However the ordinance prohibits drilling sites on any property zoned for residential use or within 500 feet of any residential or multi-family structure in any zone.

While current City zoning does not allow drilling in residential areas, exploration is underway, with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), in the form of seismic testing. Chapter 15 PARKS AND RECREATION, ARTICLE I., prohibits drilling for gas in City Parks.

Additional Resources

The City of Cedar Hill has compiled a list of helpful resources for additional information about gas exploration in the Dallas-Fort Worth area including the August 14, 2008 presentation of Natural Gas Drilling: 101, meeting minutes and Top 10 Neighborhood Tips. This information is available on the City website at www.cedarhilltx.com/index.asp?nid=915.

Mayor hosts community meeting at Govt. Center

Cedar Hill Mayor, Rob Franke recently hosted residents in the Government Center for a community leadership meeting. Designed to ensure that neighborhoods stayed informed, educated and have a voice at the City level, the quarterly meetings provide residents with important information about Cedar Hill and allow them to hear first-hand what is going on in their community.

The most recent meeting featured the new Government Center in a presentation titled "Why did we get married?" a reference to the partnership between the City of Cedar Hill, the police department and Cedar Hill ISD.

Mayor Franke began with details of the 1999 City facility needs assessment that led to the September 2003 City Bond Referendum and ultimately construction of the multi-purpose, shared facility.



Any Cedar Hill resident with an interest in the community and a willingness to participate is invited to attend these meetings. "I'm always energized by the quarterly meetings because it gives me another opportunity to meet with residents one on one," notes Mayor Franke. "The relaxed format is an ideal way to bring about the constructive dialog needed to make these meetings successful."

Visit the City's website at cedarhilltx.com or contact Neighborhood Services at 972.291.5100 ext. 1084 for specific date, time and location of the November meeting.

Free wi-fi

Wireless internet connection is available at the Zula B. Wylie Library and at the Cedar Hill Recreation Center.

Cedar Hill's five red-light cameras in recorded 282 violations in the month of August.

Community Calendar

October

7 National Night Out

Crime prevention and drug awareness event happening in neighborhoods. For a list of neighborhood activities visit www.cedarhilltx.com/index.asp?nid=901

10 Old Settlers' Reunion

Enjoy live entertainment, dinner, bingo, prizes and the crowning of the King and Queen of the Hill. Call 972.293.4740 for more information. Friday, at 6 p.m., Pioneer Park, Historic Downtown

11 Country Day on the Hill

This fall festival is filled with family-oriented activities: a parade, arts & crafts, food vendors, chili cook-off, belt sander races, 5K run, dog show, children's corner, live entertainment, and the annual Lion's Club Fish Fry. Saturday, all day. Call 972.293.4740 for more information.

12 One Sky One World International Kite Fly

Bring your kites, a picnic lunch and be part of this international celebration promoting protection of the planet, peace, friendship and understanding between all people. More information available at rainbows4sailkites.com Sunday, 1-4 p.m., Valley Ridge Park, 2850 Park Ridge Dr. in Lake Ridge.

14 City Council Meeting

Tuesday at 6 p.m. Council Briefing; 7 p.m. Council Meeting T.W. 'Turk' Cannady/Cedar Hill Room, Government Center, 285 Uptown Blvd.

25 Fall Litter Clean Up

Saturday, 8:45 a.m. to Noon at Virginia Weaver Park, 631 Somerset. Sign in and get assigned clean up area. Pick up litter in designated areas from 9-11 a.m. and return for a hot dog lunch and door prizes. Everyone gets a free t-shirt. Students can receive community service hours.

28 City Council Meeting

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31 Fall Family Festival

Free family event offering a 50's & 60's crazy costume contest, bounce houses, games, PlayStation tournament, karaoke, spades and bid whist tournament and more. Call 972.572.1966 for information.

Friday, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Rd.

Monthly

Readers on the Hill

Literary group meets the first Monday of each month at the Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St. Call the library at 972.291.7323 for more information.

Dallas Area Writers Group

Open to beginning and seasoned writers, this group meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St. For more information visit www.dallaswriters.org.

Cedar Hill Star Party

Third Saturday of each month, Sunset until 11 p.m., J.W. Williams Park, 1065 High Pointe Ln. (Beside West Intermediate School) Telescopes provided by members of the Texas Astronomical Society of Dallas. For more information, please visit www.tasobserving.org. For status and cancellation information, call 214.800.6000.

City Council meetings

are scheduled on the second and fourth Tuesday of most months. Meetings, held in the T.W. 'Turk' Cannady/Cedar Hill Room of the Government Center at 285 Uptown Blvd. start at 7 p.m. and are open to the public. Citizens can address the City Council members during the Citizens Forum.

Visit www.cedarhilltx.com to see more events

Contacts

After hours	972.780.6643
Animal Control	972.223.6111
City Administration	972.291.5100x1010
City Secretary	972.291.5100x1011
Code Enforcement	972.291.5100x1090
Economic Develop. Corp.	972.291.5132
Fire Department <i>Non-emergency</i>	972.291.1011
Human Resources	972.291.5100x1050
Library	972.291.7323
Municipal Court	972.291.5100x1041
Neighborhood Services	972.291.5100x1084
Parks & Recreation	972.291.5100x1500
Parks Rain-outs	214.855.9758
Parks Special Events	214.890.6977
Police Department <i>Non-emergency</i>	972.291.5100x2400
Public Relations	972.291.5100x1032
Public Works	972.291.5126
Recreation Center	972.293.5288
Senior Center	972.291.5353
Tri-City Animal Shelter	972.291.5335
Utility Billing	972.291.5100x1200

New and improved Drop box accepts payments 24/7

You no longer have to leave your car to pay your water utilities bill. The new drop box in front of the Government Center now features drive-up convenience.

To find the shiny, silver payment receptacle, enter the north entrance to the front parking area. The drop box is on your left before you reach the main entrance to the Government Center.

Utility bills can be placed in the box 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Payments are collected at 8 a.m. on days the Utility Billing office is open (typically Monday-Friday, not including holidays).

Payments received after 8 a.m. will be processed with the next day's payments.

Do not place cash in the drop box; personal checks or money orders only.



Hold the grease, save drains, save \$

Putting grease down your drain wastes tax dollars and costs you money.

Last year, City staff responded to over 400 reports of blocked sanitary sewer service lines.

To help reduce the time and expense of these blockages keep the grease out of your drains.

- After cooking, collect small quantities of oil in

a paper towel and dispose of it in the garbage

- Dump fatty foods in the trash not the disposal.
- Take used motor oil to local auto parts stores which collect and recycle used oil
- Collect larger quantities of oil in a container and dispose of it at the biannual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events or take it

to the HHW collection center in Fort Worth.

The City of Cedar Hill provides free access to the City of Fort Worth Environmental Collection Center. You may call the facility for information or instructions at 817.871.5257.

It is open on Thursdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Your premier city is only a click away

On the home page of your City of Cedar Hill website you'll find links to topics of timely interest.

Look for "Popular Links" at the bottom of the right column.

Also in that column you'll find the online calendar and some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). By clicking on the "View All" text you can see all the calendar and FAQ listings.

Department contributors are adding new content and features to the website daily; check the links under the "Departments" menu or search for items of interest in the search box.

We're always interested in your comments and suggestions about how we can improve your website. Click the "Contact Us" link at the top right of every page and click on the "Public Relations" link to email your comments.