



The City of Cedar Hill, Texas

# Highlights

March 2008



## Cedar Hill Government Center

### A unique and efficient solution

The new Cedar Hill Government Center is the only known facility in Texas to house City government and school district offices in the same building. Sharing the building will save taxpayers money and be a benefit to the community.

Shared spaces, like conference rooms, break rooms, lobby and reception areas, parking lots and technology infrastructure will save nearly \$4 million in construction costs, and should show operational savings for many years to come.

The \$27.5 million cost is

funded by bonds approved by voters for new school district and City offices.

The 116,000 sq. ft. facility will house CHISD offices, most offices of City government, and will include police headquarters. The existing police facility will be remodeled for community service operations.

Several other departments will be moving from satellite locations into the new City offices. The Economic Development Corporation will be moving from leased space in the Bank of America

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**Cinema**  
On the Square

**Saturday, March 22**

**At 2 p.m.**  
**Arranged**  
2007 Best Film winner—Brooklyn International Film Festival

**At 5 p.m.**  
**Dreams of Dust**

Films are shown in City Hall. Admission is free, thanks to Cedar Hill Main Street and the Zula B. Wylie Library.

## Quicker alarm response can save lives

Cedar Hill's Southwest Regional Communications Center provides emergency 911 response and dispatch services.

SWRCC also offers home and business alarm monitoring. The Center uses emergency dispatchers to provide the quickest alarm response available.

Reporting residential or business alarms directly to the local 911 emergency dispatcher saves valuable and possibly life-saving time.

Traditional alarm companies require an extra step that consumes valuable time. After receiving an alarm signal, they must call the local 911 center

and verbally pass the information to the dispatcher, who in turn sends the appropriate police, fire or medical unit to respond.

To offset the cost of programming an alarm to the SWRCC network,

equipment.

Wireless alarm systems installed before 2006 generally used analog equipment. Systems should be checked by a professional alarm technician.

Another problem is residents who are using voice over internet protocol (VOIP) phone services. Tim Smith, managing director of SWRCC, said "Most VOIP providers will not support alarm systems.

More information, and a list of alarm system professionals is available at [www.swrcc.net/alarm](http://www.swrcc.net/alarm) or call 972.223.6111, or call Smith directly at 972.230.5053



**Alarm Monitoring Service**

they are offering three months of free monitoring service.

Another alarm system issue is recent Federal Communications Commission radio band changes that may affect services relying on analog cellular radio

## Get rid of dangerous chemicals

Bring your dangerous, yucky stuff to the Hazardous Household Materials Disposal event Saturday, March 22, from 9 to 11 a.m. in the High School parking lot.

This City-sponsored event is a free solution for disposing of unwanted household chemicals, lawn and garden chemicals and other dangerous items. Proof of residency is required.

Accepted materials include: acids, aerosol cans, antifreeze,

brake fluid, craft/hobby chemicals, degreasers, drain cleaners, fertilizer, fluorescent lights, herbicides, motor oil, paints/stains, paint thinners, pest strips, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, photo chemicals, pool chemicals, oil filters, solvents, transmission fluid, varnishes.

Unacceptable items are: ammunition, explosives, medical waste, propane and butane cylinders, radioactive materials (smoke detectors), tires and business waste.

For your safety, and to expedite the unloading process, please keep chemicals in their original containers. Place leaking containers in a second container of like material. If a container has no label, please make a label or clearly mark the contents.

Do not transport chemicals in the passenger compartment of your vehicle.

Materials will be unloaded for you at the collection event.



**U**ptown Village at Cedar Hill combines the best attributes of an open-air shopping environment and a diverse mix of shopping and dining venues. Its unique design and superior location satisfy the demands of the increasing population of educated and affluent customers in Cedar Hill and surrounding areas.

It's not all about shopping. Included in the 725,000 sq. ft. center will be retail, of course, but there will also be a number of restaurants, unique office space and attractive and entertaining public areas. Following the Grand Opening this month, buildout will continue through the summer.

At a recent City Council meeting, Gail Thompson, the marketing director for the site, described some of the amenities included in the center: A 2,500 sq. ft. children's play area, a village green with an interactive fountain and smaller fountains, a chess and checkers set with almost human-sized chessmen, bronze sculptures and more. The green will have artificial turf and be pet-friendly, including water bowl areas and pet pick-up stations.

The public spaces are designed to integrate the center into the community by hosting many types of special events of interest to residents and visitors.

The center has entrances from FM 1382, Hwy 67, Pleasant Run Road and Cedar Hill Road,



## AARP provides free tax forms help

AARP Tax Assistance will be available from 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. on Tuesdays through April 15 at the Zula B. Wylie Library at 225 Cedar St. The free tax help is for taxpayers of low and middle income, with special attention to those who are age 60 and older. No reservations.

## Best Southwest Bookfest brings noted writers

The 2008 Best Southwest Bookfest, being held at the Cedar Hill Recreation Center March 28 & 29 is bringing some highly relevant literary talent to Cedar Hill.

Kicking off the Bookfest on Thursday evening, March 27, author Diane Fanning will present *Booked for Crime: Working for Justice*. She will discuss her work, with others, representing the Texas Innocence Project. The event will be at 7:00 in the Topaz Room of the Cedar Hill Recreation Center. Audience members will have a chance to hear about the speakers' work with wrongly convicted people and learn how to become involved in working together for justice. This is a free event.

### Workshops

Workshops scheduled on Friday include Lorey Hayes and the husband and wife team of Larry Dowell and Martha Hannah. Registration forms are available at [www.bestsouthwestbookfest.org](http://www.bestsouthwestbookfest.org).

To attend a morning or afternoon session the cost is \$25, and the price to attend all day is \$40. Seniors (age 65 and over) or students may register for only \$10 for an all-day session.

### Dinner

Dinner on Friday, March 28 at 6:30 p.m. will include the featured authors, live music and Catherine Whiteman performing *Sojourner of Truth*. Tickets to this event are \$35 each, or a table that seats eight for \$250.

Prizes will be award-

ed at 9:00 am Saturday to the winners of the Best Southwest Bookfest Short Story and Poetry Contests. Throughout the day, workshops will be conducted by: Diane Fanning, Sandra Glahn, Tom Dodge, Terry W. Burns, Larry Dowell and Martha Hannah, Evelyn Palfrey, Paula LaRocque, Jim Henderson and Dave McNeely, Janis Susan May, Carlton Stowers, and Lorey Hayes.

### Keynote speaker

The keynote speaker at lunch on Saturday is Travis Hunter, an author, songwriter and father. His book, *The Hearts of Men* was self-published in 2000 and one week later Hunter received an offer from Random House's imprint, Strivers Row/ Villard for the re-release of *The Hearts of Men*.

Five more novels followed; *Married but Still Looking*, *Trouble Man*, *A One Woman Man*, *Something to Die For* and the current release, *A Family Sin*. Travis is the founder the Hearts of Men Foundation [www.travishunter.com](http://www.travishunter.com), through which he mentors underprivileged children.

The Bookfest, presented by the public libraries of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville, Lancaster, and the University of North Texas - Dallas Library is the area's largest literary event. Proceeds from the Bookfest are used for the promotion of literacy in our community. For more information please visit [www.bestsouthwestbookfest.org](http://www.bestsouthwestbookfest.org) or call Pat Bonds at 972.291.7323.



# Community Calendar

## March

### Hazardous Household Waste Collection Event

Saturday, March 22, 9-11 a.m. Cedar Hill High School parking lot.

Bring household chemicals and other materials for proper disposal. For details visit <http://www.cedarhilltx.com/CurrentEvents.asp?EID=695>

## April

### Art Show

April 4-6 The Visual Artists of Cedar Hill will host a judged art exhibit at the Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville. The show is open to artists age 18 and older. Artists can enter up to three works in oil/acrylic, watercolor, dry media, mixed media or photography. Entry deadline is March 20. Contact Barbara Bailey at 972.291.8056 or [barbara@thevach.org](mailto:barbara@thevach.org) or visit [www.thevach.org](http://www.thevach.org).

### Keep Cedar Hill Beautiful, Spring Cleanup

Saturday, April 12, 9 am to noon. Volunteer individuals or groups should report to City Hall at 9 am to receive an assignment. Clean up areas will be along road right-of-ways in Cedar Hill. Trash bags will be provided. At 11 am everyone returns to City Hall for hot dogs provided by the Lions Club of Cedar Hill. For more information, please call 972.291.5130.

### Every week

#### Fun Time Live

Saturdays, 7-11 pm, Cedar Hill Recreation Center, 310 E. Parkerville Road.

\$10 per child, for 3rd grade through 8th grade. Live DJ, karaoke, dance contests, inflatables, basketball, soccer, tug-o-war and more. [www.funtimelive.com](http://www.funtimelive.com) or call Cedar Hill Recreation Center at 972.293.5288.

#### Preschool Story Time

Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. in the Meeting Room at the Zula B. Wylie Library, 225 Cedar St., featuring stories and crafts for ages 18 months to 5 years and their parents/caregivers.

### Every month

#### Cinema on the Square

Fourth Saturday of each month, 2 pm & 5 pm, City Hall, 502 Cedar Street.

Bring the family to a double feature and enjoy FREE award-winning films. Call the library at 972.291.7323 for more information.

#### 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](http://www.dallaswriters.org).

#### Cedar Hill Star Party

Third Saturday of each month, Sunset until 11 pm, 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](http://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 are open to the public and citizens can address the City Council members during the Citizens Forum.

**Visit [www.cedarhilltx.com](http://www.cedarhilltx.com) to view the Calendar. Click on "View All" to see even more events happening in the city.**

Award recipients at the January Parks Board meeting for active participation in the Adopt A Park Program – AARP Chapter 5013, Community Center Park. In the picture from left to right - Margot Buchholz (AARP President), Ann Holt, Charlotte Weatherford, Shirley Goldsmith.

## Lose it at the Recreation Center

Whether pounds or stress, you can easily lose it at the Cedar Hill Recreation Center. Enjoy our community's premier workout center. More information about classes is available on the city website at [www.cedarhilltx.com/index.asp?nid=230](http://www.cedarhilltx.com/index.asp?nid=230)

### Body Sculpting - Ages 15 and over

Body Sculpting T.O.T.A.L. – Taking Off To Another Level! Any fitness level can join. It's a fun and challenging total body workout guaranteed to develop strong, toned muscles, increase your metabolism and burn calories. Highly recommended to those enrolled in a weight loss program.

Mon., Wed. & Fri. 10:15 - 11:15 am

Mon., Wed. & Fri. 6:30 - 7:30 am

Tues. 10:45 - 12:15 pm

Thurs. 10:45 - 12:30 (body sculpting and spin)

Mon., Wed. & Fri. 6-7 pm

Monthly: \$45 Morning/\$45 Evening

Drop-in fee \$5

Instructor: Charlene Branch

### Basic Yoga - Ages 16 and over

This beginner yoga class is an eclectic blend of traditional Hatha yoga poses drawn from Iyengar, Vinyasa, Kundalini, and Vinyoga practices. Each class consists of a total mind-body workout, including cardiovascular conditioning, strength building, balance, flexibility, and relaxation utilizing Aromatherapy. Variations and modifications for most poses will be demonstrated to accommodate ALL levels of practice.

Mon. & Wed 9-10 am

Tues. & Thurs. 6-7 pm

\$35 per month, Drop-in fee \$5

Instructor: Dawn Harris

### Relax with a massage

Relax those tired muscles or get relief from a stressful day with a chair or full body massage.

Tues. and Wed. 9 am - Noon

\$1 per minute with a 5 minute minimum

Ninah Robinson 972.415.2669

### Nutrition Guidance Program - Ages 16 and over

Geared to help you change your lifestyle! Meet one-on-one with a counselor who will help you change your current patterns of health and fitness.

\$65 for 4 visits

### Sunday Mixer - Ages 16 and over

Maximum calorie burner workout that will tone your entire body.

Sunday 4-5 pm

Monthly \$25, Drop-in fee \$5

# Contacts

After hours  
972.780.6643 Alarm  
Permits  
972.291.5181x1

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  
*Non-emergency*  
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  
*Non-emergency*  
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

## Amazing Spray Gator: innovative and efficient

The Cedar Hill Parks Department is known for premiere service and innovative use of technology. Staff responsibilities include preparing and maintaining the athletic fields each week. Part of the preparation includes marking straight, clean lines on each field. If the field has been measured, it takes a crew of two experienced workers about 1.5 hours, using a walk-behind machine, to mark the lines of each field.



Lupe Ramirez, Florentino Noyola and Shawn Ray realized there must be a more efficient way to mark the fields. They had a John Deere Gator, a utility vehicle used in many parks applications, and decided they would combine it with the walk-behind line sprayer.



They recycled the metal push bumper of a scrapped vehicle to serve as the front anchor point for the nozzle bar. The spray machine is mounted in the rear compartment. A growth inhibitor mixed with the paint extends the time between markings to every other week.

As a result of creative thinking, combined with mechanical skill, the Amazing Spray Gator reduces the time for marking fields from 66 man hours to 11 man hours! The Spray Gator is an example of City staff innovation that results in convenience and efficiency while addressing environmental concerns (reuse, recycle, reduce).



## Government Center *from front page*

building. Code Enforcement, Information Technology, Parks & Recreation, Planning, Building Services and a portion of the Public Works staff will be relocating from other buildings into the central facility.

The current City Hall was built in 1961 and the CHISD Administration

building was built in 1956. Babe's Chicken Dinner House will be moving into the old City Hall and is expected to bring some new vitality to the downtown area.

City officials expect to move into the new building in July. School district officials may move later in the summer.

## City site speeds up hiring

On the new City website ([www.cedarhilltx.com](http://www.cedarhilltx.com)) job applicants can apply online by clicking "Employment." The entire application/resume process is online. No forms are mailed or faxed.

We asked Tracey Tso in Human Resources how it has improved the hiring process.

### Why is it better?

The City can now reach a larger pool of job applicants while potential employees can quickly and easily apply for all the positions for which they are qualified.

**How does the volume of applicants compare?** The volume of applications has more than doubled. We no longer have to advertise positions as often, which saves the City a lot of money.

**What are the advantages to the applicants?** They no longer have to come to City Hall to apply in person or fax in their application.

**Has this system streamlined your operations?** Applicants must apply for an open position. This eliminates the applications we used to receive from those who wanted us to keep them on file for future openings. Applicants receive an automated response letting

them know that their application has been received. We used to send postcards. Online applications are typed, thus easy to read.

### How has it benefited those who make hiring decisions?

They get more applications to choose from in a short amount of time.

**Are we saving time?** Yes, because of the volume of applications we receive online, we are able to close positions quicker. Also, the time to post a position has been reduced from 20 minutes to 2 minutes.

**What feedback have you heard from applicants?** They are very grateful for the ability to apply online. They also like the e-mail feature that alerts them to new openings.

**Would you like to go back to the old system?** No!