



# THE STAFFORD NEWSLETTER



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## CONTRACTS ISSUED FOR ENHANCEMENTS TO US 90A AND MONUMENTS FOR US 59

It has been a long time coming but with funding support from the Stafford Economic Development Corporation, City Council has awarded contracts for extensive landscaping and numerous other enhancements, including sidewalks, ramps, irrigation, extension of the TXI wall, as well as a monument at the Present Street intersection identifying Stafford. These contracts for US 90A total about \$1½ million. Moving northerly to US 59, four 55-foot monuments, costing \$444,000, will be erected (two on each side of US 59) that will clearly inform motorists that they are in Stafford and not in Houston or Sugar Land. Construction on these projects will



begin shortly and are to be completed by early summer. With these improvements will come a significant elevation in the image and identity of this City.

## After 150 Years, No More Train Horns

### WAYSIDE HORNS/QUIET ZONE COMING SOON

After more than 150 years of being woken and shaken by horn blasts as trains rumbled through Stafford, these disturbing noises at all hours of the day and night will be completely eliminated in the next several months. City Council, with support and funding from the SEDC,

has authorized contracts with Union Pacific Railroad for the installation of wayside horns at the Present Street and Kirkwood intersections to supplement the Quiet Zone structures at the Stafford Road, FM 1092 and Promenade intersections. The combination of these additions will translate into no horns being blown by trains passing through Stafford.

This effort took more than three years due to the slow and tedious negotiations with UPRR but, with the contracts signed, this annoying feature of daily life in Stafford will be eliminated.



## Impressive and Inspiring Program

# MARGARET HAVENS HISTORICAL MEMORIAL GARDEN DEDICATED



On the evening of August 9, 2009, the Margaret Havens Historical Memorial Garden was dedicated. It was attended by about 200 people - - many of whom had traveled from long distances to participate. The program included a presentation by Mayor Leonard Scarcella on the history of the City and the creation of SMSD. Events from the conception of the idea for the garden through its completion, including recognizing Mrs. Havens' work, were addressed by Councilman Jeff Smith, who was President of the Stafford Historical Society which recommended naming the garden in honor of Margaret Havens; John Ferro, who was a strong proponent and sold the benches, pavers and bricks; and Public Works Director, Lawrence Vaccaro, who attended to the many details in both the design and construction of the project. A stirring and inspiring invocation and benediction honoring Mrs. Havens were given by Pastor Richard Ford of the Family Worship Center. Council and active participants performed the ribbon cutting. Guests were entertained by a chamber trio from the Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra. Comments from many of those in attendance praised the impressive facility and the inspirational function.

## "Here Comes Santa Claus"

# HOLIDAY SEASON WILL LIGHT UP IN STAFFORD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30

The City of Stafford and the Stafford Historical Society will sponsor the annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on Monday, November 30, at the Stafford Centre, beginning at 7 p.m.

The event will include a program by the SMSD Pre-K and Kindergarten students and performances by the Middle and High School Choirs. As the Choir sings "Here Comes Santa Claus," Santa will arrive on the fire

truck to hand out treat bags. Mayor Leonard Scarcella will pull the switch and officially light up the City for the holidays. Cookies and punch will be served in the Ballroom Lobby.



This event is promoted with the children of Stafford in mind. We encourage you to bring them so that they and the entire family can get the holiday season off to an exciting start.

# RECESSIONARY BUDGET MAINTAINS QUALITY SERVICES, FUNDS MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Despite a severe recession which some say is over but has left people and businesses on Main Street grappling with the devastating effects of this downturn created by Wall Street, City Council has adopted a budget for the new fiscal year of October through next September which addresses many of the damaging results of this economic slide to our City and its citizens. This budget, which will see the City spend \$27½ million and the SEDC devote nearly \$6 million, will rely for some shortfalls on the nearly \$30 million of cash reserves that this City, through sound fiscal policy and planning for the rainy day, has accumulated over the last decade.

Primary among the features of this budget are: 1) no additional personnel, but no layoffs, 2) extensive support of SMSD, 3) maintaining an outstanding healthcare, prescription medicine and retirement program for City employees, including a 3% pay raise - - the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive raise - - all totaling approximately \$10 million, 4) continuation of the policy of “pay-as-we-go” and further reduction of the City’s debt which is now less than \$2 million, 5) a major construction project on Stafford/Staffordshire Road and

substantial renovation to Dulles Avenue, 6) major enhancements to US 90A along the Island and monuments on US 59, and 7) refurbishing of the 23-year old Civic Center and upgrades to the 26-year old swimming pool. Of critical importance and one of the main postulates maintained in this budget is the zero property tax which was initiated 15 years ago by eliminating city property taxes on all properties in the City - residential and commercial.

In order to make this budget as responsible as possible it will take a concerted effort on the part of City Council, City Department Heads and employees to carefully scrutinize, and eliminate, all unnecessary expenditures. It must be emphasized that this budget maintains all services at the current or superior levels while providing for the numerous projects and activities recited above, and more.

At the conclusion of the Budget Message by Mayor Leonard Scarcella, there was a quotation from the *Congressional Record* entered by Congressman Ron Paul on June 19, 2009, praising the City on its fiscal responsibility and the elimination of the city property tax.

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## CITY TO VIGOROUSLY DEFEND LAWSUIT

You have no doubt heard or read about the family of Aaron Hobart filing a lawsuit against the City of Stafford, our Chief of Police and one of our police officers in connection with the death of Aaron Hobart. The City intends to vigorously defend against

this lawsuit.

In order to obtain a full understanding of the City’s position in the matter, you are welcome to go to [www.staffordpd.com](http://www.staffordpd.com) or to come to City Hall for a copy of the Press Release dated October 15, 2009.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS AT STAFFORD CENTRE



Chuck Negron (of Three Dog Night) and Blood, Sweat & Tears, November 28

Neal McCoy, December 5

Fort Bend Symphony: Deck the Halls, December 6

New Year’s Rockin’ Eve Bash, December 31

Ray Price, January 9

Steve Tyrell, January 16

Fort Bend Symphony: Saddle Up, February 21



**City of Stafford**  
2610 South Main  
Stafford, TX 77477

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Register at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) to view Alerts, Advisories, and Community Information from the Stafford Police Department.

Renew your **Alarm Permit**. 2009 Alarm Permits expire December 31, 2009. Renew by January 31, 2010, for \$15. The fee is \$25 on February 1, 2010. Alarm Permits are available at the Stafford Police Department. For questions, call 281-261-3955.

### City Offices will be closed:

Thanksgiving, Thursday-Friday,  
November 26-27

Christmas, Thursday-Friday,  
December 24-25

New Year's Day, Friday,  
January 1

For information on the **Flu and H1N1 Flu**, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) or [www.texasflu.org](http://www.texasflu.org).

For information on the **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** program, go to [www.fbcoem.org/go/doctype/1528/30168/](http://www.fbcoem.org/go/doctype/1528/30168/). To sign up for classes in Stafford, on Monday's, January 11 through March 1, 2010, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., visit [www.fbcoem.org/go/survey/1528/1747/](http://www.fbcoem.org/go/survey/1528/1747/).

The next **Tree Limb Pickup** will be Monday, December 7.

If you have contact information for the homeowners' association in your subdivision, please send to [mrocha@cityofstafford.com](mailto:mrocha@cityofstafford.com).



**NEED A GIFT IDEA?** The *History of Stafford* book makes a great gift. Anyone will enjoy the historical beginning, the development of the townsite, and present day growth and transformation as well as the many interesting photos. To purchase, at \$75 a copy, contact Jean Court (281-499-1869) or Sadie Williams (281-499-4432) with the Stafford Historical Society. Or, e-mail [historyofstaffordbook@yahoo.com](mailto:historyofstaffordbook@yahoo.com).

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### 2010 CENSUS: "It's In Our Hands" - - DO YOUR PART AND BE COUNTED!

- The Census is mandated by the Constitution, and your participation is required by law.
- The Census determines the annual distribution of \$400 billion for community services.
- All residents must be counted – citizens and non-citizens.
- Questionnaires will be delivered or mailed by U.S. mail in March 2010.
- The Census consists of 10 questions and takes 10 minutes to complete.



- Census workers will visit households that do not return questionnaires.
- Call 1-800-563-6499 to verify Census workers in your neighborhood.
- Census data is confidential.
- The Census Bureau **DOES NOT** conduct the Census via email or Internet.
- For employment and job testing, call 1-866-861-2010.
- For more information, visit <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/>.