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RESIDENTIAL  
CUSTOMER

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New West Irving Library

## New Net Zero Library Brings Advanced Technology to Irving

Final touches are being added to the West Irving Library, 4444 W. Rochelle Road, in anticipation of its grand opening from 10 a.m. to noon April 9.

Grand opening festivities will include a ribbon-cutting ceremony, presentations, building tours and children's activities. Following the grand opening, the library will close from noon to 2 p.m. and then reopen for regular business hours.

More than \$8 million was invested in this 25,000-square-foot facility that sits on a 6.5-acre site on the corner of Rochelle and Esters roads. Completion of the environmentally friendly, technology rich facility marks another milestone in the city's master plan for four stand-alone libraries.

"We are looking forward to opening the West Irving Library for the community," said West Irving Library Manager Tracy Bearden. "At the new library, residents, visitors and businesses will enjoy traditional library services and experience amazing technology."

The new facility is three times larger than the storefront Northwest Branch that it replaces. In fact, the West Irving Library will open with 100,000 items that may be checked out including books, audiobooks, DVDs, music, newspapers and magazines. The expanded electronic collection will include downloadable eBooks, audiobooks and music.

### Library Features

Based on public input, the West Irving Library was designed to represent the city's cultural diversity. Using the "Our World" theme, glass etchings in the interior display various phrases in several languages.

Other features include dedicated spaces for children, teens, and adults to use and enjoy the library. The children's area will feature a storytime room with built-in puppet stage and an area for conducting craft programs.

The library also is equipped with a large meeting space, study rooms, quiet reading room and a computer lab. The library will house 55 computers for public use, including computers dedicated for use by children, teens and adults. Adjacent to the computer lab is a business center that will provide print and fax services.

SMART Tables will showcase educational software that encourages collaborative learning for children of all ages. SMART Boards combine the simplicity of a whiteboard with the power of a computer. West Irving Library also will be one of the few libraries in the nation to house Microsoft Surface tables. The tables will include custom software to educate and inform customers in interactive, collaborative and entertaining ways.

"With its substantial collection, modern booth seating, and computers, the teen area should be a popular afterschool destination," said Bearden. "The adult area will include reading areas along the north wall with views of the surrounding landscape."

Read about the library's environmentally friendly features on Page 7.

## FIRE RESPONSE TIME IMPROVES

The Irving Fire Department has decreased its response time for the third consecutive year. It now takes an average of only 4 minutes, 17 seconds for emergency responders to arrive at the scene of a call.

The faster response time is expected to continue to improve the city's cardiac survival rate, which is already double the national average.

The department's percentage of emergency responses, kept under the 5 minute national average, continues to improve because of measures such as keeping vehicles in close proximity to their stations, the community's efforts to stay safe and an increase in public fire prevention education.

During October, November and December, the Fire Department conducted 211 fire drills and safely evacuated 118,235 children from school buildings. Fire personnel also conducted 78 safety classes reaching more than 4,200 residents.

"We are dedicated to providing the best service possible to residents, visitors and businesses," said Fire Chief Mario Molina. "By improving our processes and making our response time faster, we not only make Irving safer, we make it a better place to live." ■

## Community Fest

Enjoy a free day of food, games and entertainment March 26 at Community Fest. Informational booths about city services will be available. See story on Page 6.



## City Named StormReady Community

The City of Irving has been named a StormReady Community by the National Weather Service. The StormReady program equips communities with the safety skills needed to save lives before and after severe weather events. Following are requirements met by the city.

- ◆ Establishing a 24-hour warning point (fire dispatch office) and an Emergency Operations Center.
- ◆ Providing more than one way to warn residents about severe weather.
- ◆ Having a system that monitors local weather conditions.
- ◆ Promoting the importance of public readiness.
- ◆ Developing a formal hazardous weather plan.
- ◆ Training severe weather spotters.
- ◆ Performing routine emergency exercises.



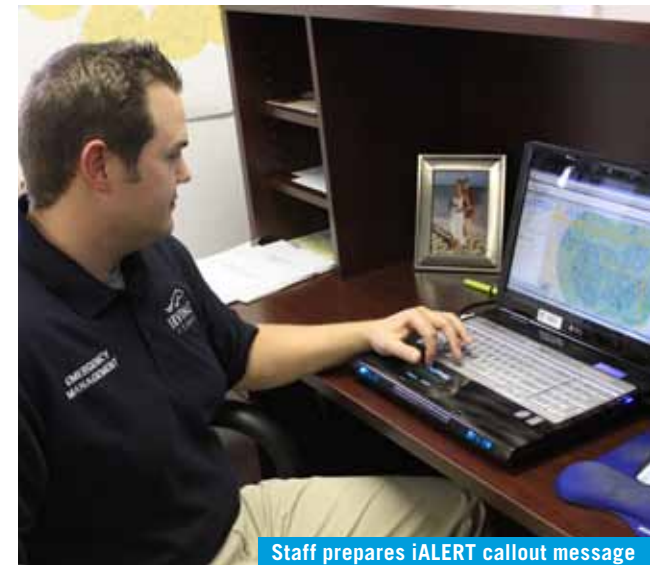
## Child Recovered with iALERT

The city's new iALERT callout system was used for the first time Jan. 30, resulting in the safe return of a 13-year-old runaway who suffers from Asperger's syndrome.

The Police Department was notified of the missing child and assisted with sending the iALERT message. The child was located less than 90 minutes after the message was sent. The system called 25,000 phone numbers to alert residents of the situation, asking for assistance if they had seen the child.

Through iALERT, residents are quickly notified of incidents such as unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. Residents are encouraged to sign up for the free alerts at [www.cityofirving.org](http://www.cityofirving.org).

Residents and businesses with listed telephone numbers have already been included in the system. However, they are encouraged to use the registration link to include additional ways to be contacted such as cell phone numbers or e-mail addresses. All information provided will be kept confidential.



The system was purchased as part of a Homeland Security Grant received by the city. ■

## Disaster Planning Tips for Irving Residents

### Create a Family Disaster Plan

- ◆ Meet with family members and discuss the need to prepare for a disaster.
- ◆ Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- ◆ Pick two places to meet.
- ◆ Develop an emergency communication plan.
- ◆ Ask an out-of-town relative or friend to be a family contact.
- ◆ Discuss what to do if authorities request evacuation.
- ◆ Be familiar with escape routes.
- ◆ Plan how to take care of pets.

### Preparation

#### A. Disaster Kit

The kit should include enough supplies to meet needs for at least three days. Store supplies in a sturdy, easy to carry, water-resistant container. Keep a smaller kit in the car trunk. The disaster supply kit should include:

- ◆ A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person, per day) and food that will not spoil.
- ◆ One change of clothing and footwear per person.
- ◆ One blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- ◆ A first aid kit, including prescription medicines.
- ◆ Emergency tools, including a battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
- ◆ An extra set of car keys.
- ◆ Cash.
- ◆ Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- ◆ An extra pair of glasses.
- ◆ A week's supply of medicine and a copy of prescriptions and dosage information. If a weeklong supply is not possible, keep as much on hand as possible and talk to a doctor about what else should be done to prepare.
- ◆ Auto emergency kits should contain at a minimum: blankets and warm clothing, booster cables and tools, bottled water, canned fruits and nuts, first aid kit, flashlight and batteries, traction mats or chains, a shovel, and emergency prescription medication.

#### B. Safe Room

When severe weather threatens, individuals and families need protection from the dangerous forces of extreme winds. Specific guidance is available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by calling the Office of Emergency Management at (972) 721-2100. Ask for information on the construction of a residential safe room.

#### C. Evacuation Plans

Plan how to escape from the house in the event of an emergency. Identify at least two exits from each room. Clear doors, hallways and stairs of obstructions. Conduct emergency drills.

#### D. Driving Tips

Disaster driving is one part preparedness, one part common sense, and one part learning from experience. For example:

- ◆ Be aware of the changed environment and stay away from downed power poles.
- ◆ Do not attempt to drive through water.
- ◆ If possible, avoid driving in severe winter storms, but if caught in a storm and the car becomes immobilized, stay in the vehicle and wait for rescue.

#### Learn More

To learn more about how to prepare for severe weather conditions, visit any Irving library and check out the free DVD produced by the Office of Emergency Management. For other emergency preparedness materials, call FEMA at (800) 480-2520, or visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.knowwhat2do.com](http://www.knowwhat2do.com). ■



## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

An Emergency Preparedness guide is available at [www.cityofirving.org](http://www.cityofirving.org) to assist residents in preparing for potential disasters. The guide includes information about the most threatening natural and man-made disasters in North Texas. By being prepared, residents will be able to act with confidence and help neighbors should an emergency arise. For more information, call (972) 721-2100.

### Outdoor Warning System Reminder

If the sirens are activated during inclement weather:

**DO** – Take cover inside a building on the first floor, in an interior room, a closet or a bathroom that does not have any windows.

**DO NOT** – Call 911, police or fire dispatch for information. If there is inclement weather in the area and the sirens are activated, assume there is the possibility of a tornado and take cover immediately.

**Tornado Warnings** – A steady tone means a tornado warning. Sirens will be activated when there is a threat of a tornado in the area.

**Siren Testing** – The sirens are tested on the first Wednesday of every month at 1 p.m. unless the sky is overcast or there is inclement weather in the area. ■



Family Advocacy Center staff

## Irving Family Advocacy Center Helps Families

The Irving Family Advocacy Center (FAC) is a 22,000-square-foot facility that assists victims of crimes and their families.

The Police Department brings together a wide variety of resources at the FAC focused on providing assistance and services to community members.

Under the command of Lt. Ron Hubbard, the FAC and its services are available to any Irving resident, not just victims of crimes. Services and programs offered at the FAC include:

- ◆ Anger management classes
- ◆ Child play therapy
- ◆ First Offender Program
- ◆ Grief counseling
- ◆ Shelter placement
- ◆ Short- and long-term counseling

These programs are administered by the many FAC components including the Domestic Violence Unit, Victim Services Unit, Family Counseling Services Unit, Child Protective Services and Family Outreach Services. In addition, Irving's FAC is one of two facilities in the county that has staff who are authorized to conduct child forensic interviews.

"Having all of these different resources in one building allows the Irving Police Department to provide a supreme level of service to our community," said Sgt. Jim Sears, who supervises the investigators. "The investigators work with the different groups on a daily basis, which allows them to build a good working

relationship ultimately resulting in a more efficient process."

Irving is one of very few cities that has a facility such as the FAC. The facility, opened in January 2002, was made possible by the approval of a \$2.5 million bond expenditure by Irving voters. Private and corporate donations also helped finance the facility.

### Service Directory and Contacts

#### Domestic Violence Unit

Investigators are assigned domestic violence offenses, youth-related investigations, runaway and missing person cases.

Contact:  
Domestic Violence Unit — (972) 721-6560

#### Child Protective Services

Investigates reports of child abuse and neglect, and provides a range of services to address the needs of a family including parental education, therapeutic services and in-home case management.

Contact: Child Abuse Hotline — (800) 252-5400

#### Victim Services Unit

Assists victims of crime with crisis counseling,

information, referrals, safety planning, legal and personal advocacy, and information about Crime Victim's Compensation program.

Contact:  
Bilingual Counselor — (972) 721-6553  
Crime Victim Coordinator — (972) 721-6551  
Domestic Violence Counselor — (972) 721-6552  
Victim Services Supervisor — (972) 721-6550

#### Family Counseling Services

Provides individual, couples and family counseling, as well as parenting classes and support groups. Therapy for crime victims and play therapy for children also is available.

Contact:  
Bilingual Counselor — (972) 721-6531  
Counseling Services — (972) 721-6521

#### Family Outreach Services

Provides in-home mentoring for families, parenting classes, teen support group, information and referral services, and community education.

Contact:  
Family Outreach Services — (972) 721-6591

## Warrant Roundup

During March, the Irving City Marshal's Office and the Irving Police Department will participate in the Texas Warrant Roundup. Across the state, law enforcement officials are focusing on defendants with outstanding warrants for Class C misdemeanor violations. Offenders can be arrested anywhere, including at their place of employment.

Those with outstanding warrants are urged to contact the Irving Municipal Court at (972) 721-2671, or visit the Irving Municipal Court, located at 305 N. O'Connor Road, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Last year, Irving Municipal Court reported a total of 2,724 Irving Class C misdemeanor warrants cleared by arrest, collection and other court dispositions during the Texas Warrant Roundup. ■



Criminal Justice Center

## Fireman Reaches 55 Years of Service with the City

Capt. Billy Holder, known to many as "Shakey," recently celebrated 55 years as a member of the Irving Fire Department. News of Shakey's accomplishment made it to the Texas State Capitol where state legislators recognized Holder for this rare accomplishment. The nickname, Shakey, dates back to 1955 when he joined the department as a 21-year-old rookie who exhibited first-day jitters. More than half a century later, and with nervousness being a thing of the past, Holder takes much pride in reflecting on his career as a firefighter.

"It's been quite a ride and I don't think I could have done anything else," Holder said. "If you work this long, you've got to love what you do."

Since reaching this milestone, Holder admits that retirement may be in store for him in the near future, but warns that nothing is set in stone. At the age of 76, Holder is a member of the Fire Department's swift water rescue team and he continues to conquer the same physical tests, entrance exams and combat challenges as firefighters a third of his age. Moreover, his dedication to the job has earned respect from colleagues including Fire Chief Mario Molina.

"Capt. Holder's servant leadership philosophy is witnessed everyday through the exceptional customer service delivered by the hundreds of officers, firefighters and paramedics he has developed and mentored over five decades," Molina said.

At an Employee Recognition Ceremony, Mayor Herbert A. Gears and City Manager Tommy Gonzalez recognized Holder and more than 100 employees who celebrated 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of employment with the city. Collectively, their service totaled 2,650 years. ■



Council members with Capt. Holder (at center) at State Capitol

# Public Libraries Offer New Electronic Resources

Keeping up with new and emerging technologies, the Irving Public Library has added electronic resources to meet the needs of the now generation of community library patrons.

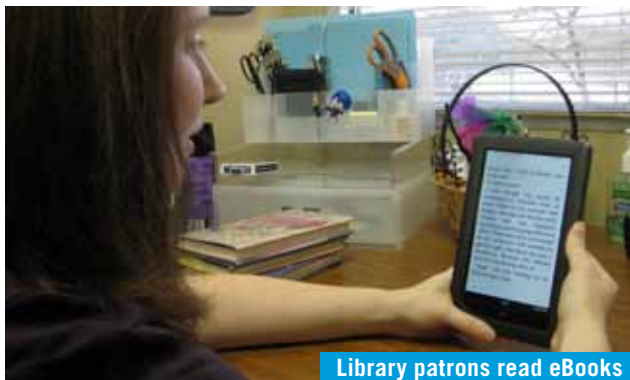
## Digital Media Catalog Expansion

eBooks are now available for download from the Irving Public Library's website. With hundreds of popular, best-selling novels, children's books, and nonfiction titles to choose from, the new collection is guaranteed to have something for everyone.

Members may browse the library's website, check out titles with a valid library card, and download to a personal computer or mobile device. Titles can be enjoyed immediately or transferred to a variety of devices, including iPod, Sony Reader, Barnes and Noble Nook and many others. To read eBooks, users will need to install free Adobe Digital Editions software available through the library's digital media catalog. Library cardholders can check out and download audiobooks, eBooks, and music by visiting [www.cityofirving.org/library](http://www.cityofirving.org/library) and selecting the Digital Media Catalog icon.

## NetLibrary eBooks

NetLibrary, a database of full-text scholarly, reference and professional eBooks, enables users to download and transfer select titles to mobile devices. A free



Library patrons read eBooks

NetLibrary account and library card are required to check out and download the titles available for transferring to devices; all titles may be viewed online. To view or download NetLibrary eBooks, visit [www.cityofirving.org/library](http://www.cityofirving.org/library) and select Databases.

## New Databases

Two new career-building databases have been added to the Irving Public Library's repertoire. CareerCruising, a new job search and career assessment tool, helps users explore career options, and review recommendations suited to their interests and skills. Job seekers can use the Assessments menu to

reach a career "Matchmaker" tool that helps users identify possible career paths. There are more than 500 occupation profiles that include job descriptions, education and training requirements, and earnings potential. Job and Career Accelerator, part of the LearningExpress Library, supplies everything necessary for a successful job search combined into one easy-to-use online application. This database provides detailed information on more than 1,000 different occupations, as well as guides on creating professional résumés, cover letters and interviewing skill builders. To view these career databases, visit [www.cityofirving.org/library](http://www.cityofirving.org/library) and select Job Center. ■



## Library Briefs

- ◆ **Bookmark Design Contest** – This year's Design-a-Bookmark Contest, from March 1 to April 30, celebrates Irving's history with the theme, Irving: Then and Now. The contest is open to all ages. Entries must be original artwork and suitable for public display. Entry forms are available at all Irving libraries and recreation centers. For rules, visit [www.cityofirving.org/library](http://www.cityofirving.org/library) and select "KidSpace."
- ◆ **Spanish Mother Goose Storytime** – 7 p.m. Tuesdays, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. A new weekly program has been added to the ongoing storytime schedule. The Mother Goose Storytime will present stories, songs, rhymes and finger plays in Spanish for children ages 4–18 months and their caregivers. For more information, call (972) 721-2458.
- ◆ **ASL Conversation Tables** – The Irving Public Library and Nimitz High School students provide an opportunity for American Sign Language (ASL) signers to practice their skills. The ASL tables are available at the East Branch Library, 440 S. Nursery Road, on Thursdays and the Central Library, 825 W. Irving Blvd., on the second Friday of each month. Both table times start at 4:30 p.m. The practice sessions are open to all ages and no registration is required.
- ◆ **Irving Chautauqua** – The McTeggart Irish Dancers will perform a variety of foot-tapping, high-energy routines, accompanied by rousing traditional Irish music. The event is set for 2 p.m. March 12 at the Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd.
- ◆ **Teen Tech Week: Mix and Mash @ Your Library** – Teens celebrate Teen Tech Week with the following marathons at the Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd.:
  - **Movie Marathon** – 1 p.m. March 15. Enjoy back-to-back mind-bending movies on the big screen, along with free popcorn and drinks. For more information and movie details, call (972) 721-2606.
  - **Gaming Marathon** – 4 to 9 p.m. March 18. The spring break gaming marathon and tournament for teens includes pizza, snacks, drinks and prizes for the winners. Open to ages 14–18, sponsored by the Anime Club and Young Adult Action Council. For more information, call (972) 721-2606.
- ◆ **Kalinka Traditional Ensemble Performance** – 4:30 p.m. March 16, East Branch Library, 440 S. Nursery Road. Listeners of all ages will learn about Russian history and folklore through music. Presented as part of the Many Voices series sponsored by the Friends of the Irving Public Library.
- ◆ **Irish Stories** – 2:30 p.m. March 19, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Master storyteller Tom McDermott presents the Luck of the Irish: Irish Stories, sharing clever and moving tales from Ireland. The free performance for all ages is flavored with music on guitar, flute, bodhran and spoons. Presented as part of the Many Voices series sponsored by the Friends of Irving Public Library.
- ◆ **Job Fair** – 1 to 4 p.m. April 7, Central Library, 801 W. Irving Blvd. Recruiters from local companies will meet with job seekers to discuss employment openings, collect résumés and schedule interviews. Call (972) 721-2326.



Master storyteller Tom McDermott

## Library Calendar

- ◆ **March 8** – 6:30 p.m. Movies @ Your Library, Central Library
- ◆ **March 9, 16, 23 and 30** – 6:45 p.m. Conversaciones @ Your Library, East Branch Library
- ◆ **March 9** – 7 p.m. Based on Reality, Central Library
- ◆ **March 10** – 7 p.m. Tea & Talk, Central Library
- ◆ **March 10, 17, 24 and 31** – 6 p.m. Conversaciones @ Your Library, Central Library
- ◆ **March 12, 19 and 26** – 12:15 p.m. Conversaciones @ Your Library, Central Library
- ◆ **March 12, 19 and 26** – 2 p.m. Family Movie Time, Valley Ranch Library
- ◆ **March 13** – 2 p.m. Anime Club, Central Library
- ◆ **March 14** – 2 p.m. Family Movie Time, East Branch Library
- ◆ **March 17** – 7 p.m. Heritage Book Club, Heritage Senior Center, 200 Jefferson St.
- ◆ **March 19** – 10:30 a.m. African-American Authors Book Circle, Northwest Park Recreation Center, 2800 Cheyenne St.
- ◆ **March 20** – 1:30 p.m. PAWS for Reading, Central Library (registration required)
- ◆ **March 22** – 4:30 p.m. Family Movie Time, Central Library
- ◆ **March 22** – 7:30 p.m. First Look Book Club, Central Library
- ◆ **March 24** – 7 p.m. Anime Movie Night, Central Library
- ◆ **March 24** – 7 p.m. Valley Ranch Reads!, Valley Ranch Library

For a complete list of programs, classes and storytimes visit [www.cityofirving.org/library](http://www.cityofirving.org/library).



Princess Giant Mummy, 13th–14th century



Golden earring and golden knobs, 13th–14th century

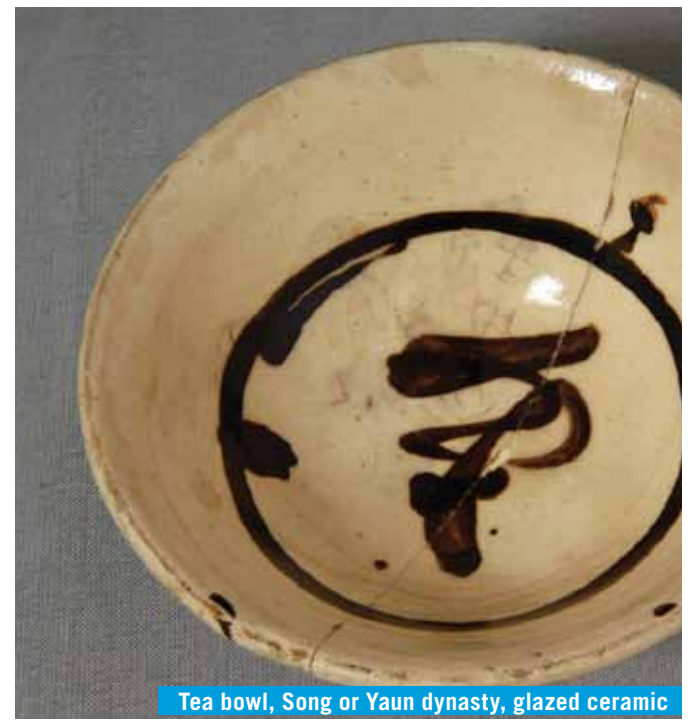
## Ghengis Khan Spotlight: Princess Giant Mummy to Come to Irving

The Irving Arts Center’s world tour exhibition, *Ghengis Khan*, opens this summer. More than 200 artifacts will tell the story of one of history’s greatest conquerors, and allow spectators to explore everyday life in 13th century Mongolia.

Of note are the mummified remains and tomb treasures of a Mongolian noble woman. Nicknamed the Princess Giant Mummy for her unusual size, the noble woman’s tomb was recently uncovered in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia and transferred to the Smithsonian Institution for preservation. Her remains will be respectfully displayed along with her silk robes, ceramics and jewelry.

*Ghengis Khan: The Exhibition* will run from June 1 through Sept. 30 at the Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd.

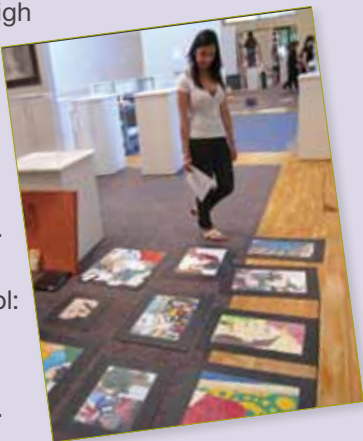
Tickets prices are: \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors 55 and older, \$8 for children 18 and under, and \$8 for Art Connection members. Call (972) 252-2787 or visit [www.khanirving.com](http://www.khanirving.com) for more information. ■



Tea bowl, Song or Yuan dynasty, glazed ceramic

### ARTS CENTER EXHIBITS, EVENTS

- ◆ **Through April 24 | *Russell Lee: Photographs***, Dupree Lobby. The traveling exhibition of photographs by renowned documentary photographer Russell Lee.
- ◆ **Through May 1 | *Young Ballerinas – Step-by-Step: Photographs by Clarence Saunders***, Carpenter Lobby. Photographer Clarence Saunders captures the movement and emotion of young ballerinas in this exhibition.
- ◆ **March 5–April 10 | *Annual Exhibition of Irving ISD Student Artwork***, Main Gallery. This annual exhibition features artwork of Irving ISD elementary, middle and high school students. Elementary: March 5–20, open house 6 to 7:30 p.m. March 11; Middle School: March 23–27, open house 6 to 7:30 p.m. March 24; High School: March 30–April 3, open house 6 to 8 p.m. March 31; and Senior Portfolios: April 6–10, open house 6 to 8 p.m. April 7.



The Irving Arts Center is located at 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. Call (972) 252-2787 for more information.

## Free Green Events for Environmental Sustainability

### Hug-a-Tree Walk

Residents will have a chance to learn about flora and fauna along Irving’s Mountain Creek Preserve Trail (the southern sector of Campión Trails) with the help of nature professionals and assisted by Irving’s interpretive naturalists. This will be an easy level, casual and informative walk. Dress appropriately for the weather. Comfortable, close-toed shoes are recommended. Consider bringing a hat, bug spray, sunscreen and water (reusable water bottle is recommended).

#### April 2

8 a.m. to noon  
Mountain Creek Preserve  
1000 E. Hunter Ferrell Road

### Lawn Care: How to Have the Best Lawn on the Block

Managing a manicured lawn does not have to include over watering, over fertilizing and over maintenance. Participants attending Lawn Care—How to Have the Best Lawn on the Block will hear Jim McAfee with Texas AgriLife Extension Service discuss lawn care basics from turf selection to maintenance and irrigation techniques.

#### April 14

6 to 7:30 p.m.  
Valley Ranch Library  
401 Cimarron Trail

### Water Conservation In and Around the Home

City water conservation expert Barry Allen will show students how to recognize and successfully address wasteful water habits in and around the home. Participants also will learn about drought tolerant plant species that they can incorporate in their landscapes, reducing the need to irrigate.

#### April 23

8 a.m. to noon  
Valley View Municipal Complex  
333 Valley View Lane

To register for any of these free classes, visit [www.cityofirving.org/begreen](http://www.cityofirving.org/begreen). For more information, call (972) 742-2296.



## Community Fest

Enjoy a free day of fun at Community Fest from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 26 at Senter Park Recreation Center, 901 S. Senter Road.

A variety of food, games, entertainment and children's activities will be provided. Informational booths from businesses and city departments also will be available. For more information, call (972) 721-2641. ■



## New Design Standards Adopted

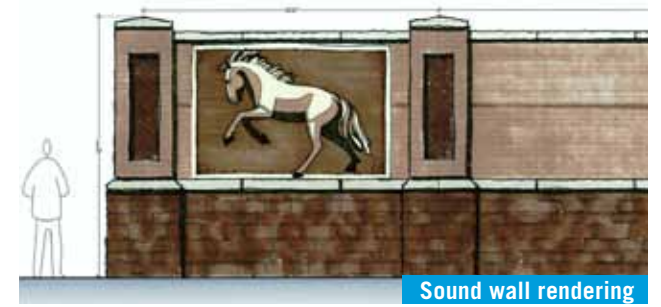
The City Council has approved design standards for State Highway 183 in preparation for the expansion of the east-west corridor. During the past 18 months, public input was received in developing guidelines for new and existing development, land use and public right of way.

New standards require enhanced landscaping; the use of specific materials and designs for new development; sleek, modern lighting; parking lots that include wide pedestrian walkways; and alterations to existing structures that are being significantly renovated.

Meetings were held to give business owners and nearby residents a chance to provide feedback," said Steve Reed, the city's planning manager. "As a result of those meetings and listening to the voice of the customer, we made several changes to the original proposal."

The new plan allows for offices, retail, restaurants, auto service and educational facilities along SH 183. Other uses are limited to designated sections.

By having the design standards, the city expects to improve the appearance of the corridor and attract new businesses to the area. The guidelines will establish a consistency of standards and community identity.



### Sound Wall Construction

This spring, construction will begin on 10-foot sound walls along SH 183 in three locations adjacent to neighborhoods. In addition, a new service road is being constructed near Jaycee Park. In the future, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will expand SH 183 to 12 lanes. At least eight of the lanes will be non-tolled. So far, TxDOT has secured approximately 65 percent of the land needed for expansion and has demolished several buildings to make way for improvements. TxDOT is now working with the state legislature to secure funding for the project. ■

## Home Security Tips for Residents to Reduce Crime

Although crime has reached a record low in the city and the Irving Police Department remains committed to keeping neighborhoods safe, there are several steps that residents can take to help protect their families and homes.

In the law enforcement community, it is a well-known fact that burglars tend to look for the easiest targets. Use of a burglar deterrent such as an alarm system or barking dog can greatly decrease the chance of a home invasion. Choosing the best anti-theft deterrent can depend on a number of factors, including budget and living situation. Fortunately, there are different devices and methods to suit a variety of budgets and needs.

### Watch Dogs

A barking dog is a good deterrent in preventing home burglaries. However, a watch dog cannot always be reliable. Some professional burglars have been known to carry dog snacks in their pockets, and some watch dogs make friends easily and forget their purpose of guarding the premises.

### Home Security Alarms

Many types of burglar alarms can be obtained for residential use. For home protection, the most reliable safeguard is an audible alarm system. An audible alarm is usually recommended over silent alarms for residential use to first protect persons and secondly, property.

"It is not necessary to purchase the most elaborate or expensive alarm system," said Police Department Public Information Officer John Argumaniz. "The bottom line is that burglars dislike noise because it attracts attention."

When choosing an alarm system, the following features are important.

- ◆ A battery-powered, fail-safe back-up
- ◆ Fire-sensing capability



- ◆ Read-out ability to ensure system is working
- ◆ Horn-sounding device installed in attic through the vent

Residents are warned not to depend completely on an alarm system for protection. Security systems should be used in tandem with proper locking devices on windows and doors.

### Alarm Ordinance

When police are dispatched to an alarm call, 98 percent of the time it is false. This is true in Irving and across the nation. False alarms cost the city and its residents thousands of dollars per year, and take officers and firefighters away from addressing actual emergencies.

To reduce unnecessary emergency response to false alarms, a city ordinance was adopted to encourage all alarm users to maintain their alarm in good working condition and know how to properly use the alarm equipment. A registration process requires business and residential alarm users to register their system with the city.

For more information about the ordinance or to download the City of Irving Alarm Permit Application, go to <http://www.cityofirving.org/police/alarm-permits.asp>. ■

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Code Enforcement Department receives numerous complaints each year regarding holiday lights that are left up after Christmas. Temporary holiday lighting is permitted for a period not to exceed 90 days. Standard enforcement procedure for removal of temporary lights begins April 1 each year. For more information, call (972) 721-4929.

### Ordinance Revisions

New ordinance changes are being implemented by Code Enforcement for signs and dumpsters. Community input and customer response through public meetings led to amendments to the following ordinances.

#### Sign Ordinance

- ◆ Existing pole signs may remain but will need to be in 35-foot compliance if they are refaced
- ◆ Plexiglas is now allowed and wall signs are allowed on all sides of a building up to a total of 25 percent of largest façade
- ◆ Neon signage is allowed but is calculated in overall 25 percent of wall area
- ◆ Ground-mounted banners will be allowed with a permit two times a year for 14 consecutive days
- ◆ Contractor registration is required only for structural or electrical sign work

#### Dumpster Ordinance

- ◆ Deadline for dumpster screening has been extended until Dec. 31
- ◆ Material options for dumpster enclosure now include stained cedar panels on three sides of enclosure
- ◆ Gate will only be required on dumpster corral if opening is visible from the street
- ◆ Dumpsters on industrial-zoned property placed as far from street as practical do not require an enclosure



# New West Irving Library Designed to be an Eco-Friendly Destination for Children, Teens, Adults

Serving as a perpetual reminder of the new West Irving Library’s unique energy-conserving design and construction, a kiosk in the lobby will display how much energy is being generated and used—in real time.

## Environmentally Smart Elements

The library construction incorporated the latest green building techniques. The building will achieve a net zero designation by using solar panels and geothermal energy to generate as much energy as it will use over the course of a year, with excess energy going back into the grid.

The library’s renewable energy systems will use geothermal energy for heating and cooling, strategically placed windows to light the building, and solar power to generate electricity.

In addition to the renewable energy sources, other environmentally sensitive development measures include:

- ◆ Recycling of construction waste
- ◆ Energy building ventilation management
- ◆ Environmentally friendly materials
- ◆ Eco-friendly furnishings

The library will be submitted for LEED certification in accordance with the standards established by the U.S. Green Building Council. The city anticipates that it will be a Gold LEED Certified building, which is the

second-highest green building status available.

## Service Hours

To prepare for the opening of the new West Irving Library, the last day of operation for the Northwest Branch will be March 5. West Irving Library’s hours of operation will be 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday; and noon to 9 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.

For more information, call (972) 721-2692 or visit [www.cityofirving.org/library](http://www.cityofirving.org/library). ■

## Recreation Briefs

### Cimarron Park Recreation Center 201 Red River Trail, (972) 910-0702

- ◆ **Drama Camp** – 1 to 5 p.m. March 14–18. Youth/teens will learn basics about acting, theater, creating commercials, puppets, musicals, monologues, pantomime and set building. Cost: \$35.
- ◆ **Spring Break Camp** – 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 14–18. Children ages 6–12 can enjoy a week of field trips, games, arts, crafts and more. Lunch is included. Register by March 10. Cost: \$110 per child.
- ◆ **Flea Market** – 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 16. Spring is here, which means it’s time to clean out the garage, closet, attic and turn trash into cash! No food can be sold. Rent a 8’ x 10’ booth space for \$15 or an 8’ x 10’ booth space, six-foot table and two chairs for \$20. Registration deadline is April 15 or until booths filled.

### Georgia Farrow Recreation Center 530 Davis St., (972) 721-2519

- ◆ **Spring Break Camp** – 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 14–18. Children ages 6–12 can enjoy a fun-filled week of games, movies, field trips, arts and crafts and more. Campers must bring a sack lunch. Register by March 10. Cost: \$95 per child.
- ◆ **All About Kids** – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 16. Enjoy a day of outdoor activities including a bounce house, face painter, vendors and entertainment for kids of all ages. This year’s events also will feature a spring egg hunt. Admission is free, but there will be a small charge for some of the activities and concessions.

### Heritage Senior Center

200 S. Jefferson St., (972) 721-2496

- ◆ **Brainastics** – 10 to 11 a.m. every Tuesday. Stimulate the brain with games, puzzles and activities during this session. Free.
- ◆ **There’s Nothing Like Great Book Club** – 7 to 8 p.m. every third Thursday. The Irving Public Library will provide the books for a discussion and a fun time with friends. Free.
- ◆ **Creative Writing Circle** – 7 p.m. first, second and fourth Thursday of the month. Bring written



Recreation activities

stories to share. No harsh critique, just fun, honest discussion of each group member’s writing. Free.

- ◆ **Heritage Singers** – 7 to 8 p.m. second and fourth Mondays. Be a part of this unique and fun mixed chorus for men and women ages 50 and older. Free.
- ◆ **Monday Night Bingo** – 6 p.m. each Monday. Bring a covered dish and bingo prizes.

### Lee Park Recreation Center 3000 Pamela Drive, (972) 721-2508

- ◆ **Spring Break Camp** – 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 14–18. Children ages 6–12 can enjoy a fun-filled week of games, movies, field trips, arts and crafts and more. Campers must bring a sack lunch. Register by March 10. Cost: \$95 per child.
- ◆ **Preschool Camp** – 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. March 21–May 14. Games and crafts. For ages 3-6. Cost: \$120 per child.

### Lively Pointe Youth Center

909 N. O’Connor Road, (972) 721-8090

- ◆ **Splash JAM** – 7 to 11 p.m. April 9, Heritage Aquatic Center. Teens will enjoy an evening of swimming and water volleyball, and underwater Easter Egg Hunt. “Egg”citing prizes will include prizes such as candy, and tickets to Six Flags and Hurricane Harbor. Pizza and sodas will be served while a DJ plays music. Free.

### Mustang Park Recreation Center 2223 Kinwest Parkway, (972) 556-1334

- ◆ **Family Movie Night** – Dusk to 8 p.m. March 11. Families are encouraged to bring their lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy a family movie outside in the amphitheater. Concessions will be available at this free event.
- ◆ **Spring Break Camp** – 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 14–18. Children ages 6–12 can enjoy a fun-filled week of games, movies, field trips, arts and crafts and more. Campers must bring a sack lunch. Register by March 10. Cost: \$95 per child.

### Northwest Park Recreation Center 2800 Cheyenne St., (972) 721-2529

- ◆ **Spring Break Camp** – 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 14–18. Children ages 6–12 can enjoy a fun-filled week of games, movies, field trips, arts and crafts and more. Campers must bring a sack lunch. Register by March 10. Cost: \$95 per child.

### Senter Park Recreation Center Senter Park 901 S. Senter St., (972) 721-2641

- ◆ **Spring Break Camp** – 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 14–18. Children ages 6–12 can enjoy a fun-filled week of games, movies, field trips, arts and crafts and more. Campers must bring a sack lunch. Register by March 10. Cost: \$95 per child.
- ◆ **Community Fest** – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 26. Fun family event that provides entertainment and information about city services and local businesses. Free.



Spring Break Camp

## NEW CUSTOMER SERVICE HOURS

Effective Feb. 28, Customer Service at City Hall, 825 W. Irving Blvd., will have new operating hours for residents who want to pay utility bills in person.

Window hours will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Extended hours will be available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, unless the following day is a holiday.

Residents also may pay utility services bills online at any Fiesta Mart or Western Union in Irving, or at any ACE Cash Express location in the nation. Automatic deduction/draft services are available at no cost.

Descriptions of all payment options are available at [www.cityofirving.org](http://www.cityofirving.org). Select "Municipal Services" under the "Payments" tab. ■



Customer receives service

# Lean Thinking Saves Money, Time

The City of Irving continuously looks for ways to simplify and streamline business processes to ensure the most effective use of time and tax dollars. The Lean Thinking program educates employees on how to analyze their daily tasks and look for ways to eliminate unnecessary steps and become more efficient.

"City employees have consolidated operations and eliminated wasted time, effort and supplies by streamlining processes while still providing exceptional services," said Chief Performance Officer Lynda Johnson. "Customers still receive the high quality of service they expect and deserve while staff completes tasks in less time."

Since October 2007, the city has saved more than 26,000 employee work hours and \$18 million using Lean Thinking. Following are some results from the program.

### Street Cut Repairs

Concrete pavement often has to be removed when water and sanitary sewer lines are repaired. The Water Utilities Department will make a temporary pavement repair after the water or sanitary sewer line is repaired and the Streets Division will make the permanent concrete pavement repair. The departments worked together to reduce the time between the temporary pavement repair made by Water Utilities and the permanent concrete pavement repair made by Streets.

In 2009, it took an average of 14 weeks for a permanent concrete pavement repair to be completed. It now takes an average of five weeks with 75 percent of the repairs being completed in less than six weeks. "This project has had a positive impact on customers, whose curbs and sidewalks are restored much more quickly,



Crew makes pavement repairs

resulting in higher satisfaction ratings," said Dan Vedral, interim traffic and transportation director.

### Improved Customer Service

The Capital Improvement Program has created an alternate work schedule for inspections outside of normal business hours to improve customer service and reduce the amount of staff overtime. Two inspectors now work 10-hour days—one Monday through Thursday and one Wednesday through Saturday—to review construction of capital and private projects so that contractors can meet their required timeline. Compared to this time last year, overtime expenses have been reduced by 64 percent. Completing a project on schedule, or in some cases earlier than schedule, helps shorten delays and inconveniences to residents, visitors and businesses. ■

## City of Irving Recognized with Top Awards for Outstanding Initiatives

### Outstanding Municipal Utility Award

The Irving Water Utilities Department has been honored with the Outstanding Municipal Utility Award for the second consecutive year.

The award, which is presented by the Texas Municipal Utility Association, is based on leadership in the industry, developing innovative solutions to utility problems, providing measurable improvement to customer service and enhancing the prestige of all municipal utility systems.

Application highlights included several examples:

- ◆ Partnership with the Irving ISD to train students to become state-licensed water and wastewater system operators.
- ◆ Continuous improvement to customer service and work processes.



Water Utilities named outstanding utility



ICVB receives industry awards

- ◆ Commitment of staff to volunteer and lead professional organizations, teach classes and share expertise with other utilities.

### Adrian Awards for ICVB

The Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International has recognized the Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau (ICVB) with four gold, one silver and five bronze Adrian Awards for compelling advertising, public relations and marketing campaigns in the 54th annual Adrian Awards Competition.

It is the largest and most prestigious travel marketing competition globally. The bureau took home the most Adrian Awards of any other visitors bureau, business or travel entity recognized in the competition.

### American Heart Association Recognition

The City of Irving has been recognized by the American Heart Association (AHA) with three awards for innovation and leadership in health and wellness initiatives in the workplace. Irving was honored as both a Worksite Innovation and a Platinum employer. The city was one of only four employers to receive the top awards and the only municipality recognized in the top award category.

This is the second consecutive year that the City of Irving has been recognized for its health and wellness initiatives by AHA. In addition, Maria Williams, who has been with the city for 28 years, was recognized with AHA's Lifestyle Change Award. Williams is being recognized for significant lifestyle changes she's made as a result of an employee wellness program, Irving Wellness Incentive Now (I Win).

The I Win program is one of the chief reasons the city is garnering triple recognition from the AHA. As a result of the program, city employees are healthier and collectively, they have lost more than 1,200 pounds. ■



City employees receive AHA awards

City Spectrum is published monthly by the City of Irving Corporate Communications Department to keep residents informed of activities and news that may be of interest to them.

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