

# Monthly Update

# DE SOTO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Jan. 2016

## De Soto Chamber Annual Dinner to be Held in January

Dueling Pianos Back by Popular Demand

Friday, January 22, 2016 is quickly approaching for the annual De Soto Chamber of Commerce Membership Dinner and 5 i Wh ] c b " ' H \ ] g ' m Y U f Ð g ' Y b h Y f h U

demand- Big Show Dueling Pianos, who can best be described U g ' h k c ' k c f ' X ' W ' U g g ' j c W U ' ] g h g ' U b X ' d ] U b c ' d ' U m Y f g ' d Y f Z c f a have you singing along and dancing with a few laughs and good natured comedy sprinkled in for good measu guests will request songs to be performed, so begin thinking of your favorite song to submit!



In addition to the entertainment, there will be a Wine Pull and Silent Auction. Proceeds benefit your De Soto Cham of Commerce. Members are asked to donate a bottle(s) of wine with a minimum value of at least \$15. Part have the chance to pull a cork and receive a bottle of wine that is valued at \$100. Please contact Sara Ritter at-9 5831585 for more information and if you are able to donate items for the silent auction and/or wine pull.

The Annual Dinner Committee has worked very hard this year to provide you with caliber entertainment activities as our way of thanking the membership for a wonderful 2015. Reservations can be made by mailing [mbefort@desotoks.org](mailto:mbefort@desotoks.org) or by calling 913831585. Sponsorship opportunities are still available. See you there!

## Annual Dinner Reservation Information

January 22, 2016

Tickets for the annual dinner are \$40 per person. Save money and get a reserved Table of 10 for only \$360.00.

For credit card purchases, call Maureen at 9135831585 or -mail [mbefort@desotoks.org](mailto:mbefort@desotoks.org) Checks can be mailed to P.O. Box 70, De Soto, KS 66018.

Deadline for Reservations is Monday, January 18

Underwriter opportunities are still available and include complimentary tickets to the event. For more information or to secure your sponsorship, please contact Sara Ritter at 913831585 or via-mail at [sritter@desotoks.org](mailto:sritter@desotoks.org)



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**Happy New Year!**  
by Stephanie Swenson, Chamber President  
GreatLife Golf & Fitness



Happy 2016 and get ready for another fantastic year at the De Soto Chamber of Commerce. I am extremely honored to serve as your Chamber President.

I understand that each and every business has options for marketing and promotion of their business. I am a firm believer that this should start with the De Soto Chamber of Commerce. Clients know about your business than the Chamber. Whether it is through the Membership Directory, meet potential clients and long-lasting friends at monthly luncheons or networking events, there is a wide variety of options out there to let people know De Soto is a place to live, work and play.

I am extremely honored to have a great group of Executive Members this year which includes: Julie Coover American Family Insurance, Julie Coover Agency, Diane Redford, Huhtamaki Americas, Inc., and Anton Topf, Topf = business. Chamber President get away that easily. Mike Rogers with Mike @ will return as the Past President.

I am asking each and every member to take a moment to think about what your expectations are for your Chamber and put them to action. Last year, the Board created Committees which focus on efforts such as membership, Fundraising, Networking, Finance, Business Recognition, New Members and more. These committees will have direct focus on their particular interests. I urge you to consider signing up for a Committee to provide insight and guidance on how we can make the Chamber even better for you, our valued member.

For more information on the Committees, contact Julie Coover at 913-831-219 [jcoover@amfam.com](mailto:jcoover@amfam.com) or Sara Ritter at 913-831-585 [sritter@desotoks.org](mailto:sritter@desotoks.org). This is your chance to get involved and keep your Chamber strong. See you on January 22nd.

**From the Director's Corner**  
by Sara Ritter, IOM, Executive Director



It is exciting to see the Chamber going to keep that word going in 2016 as we build on what the 2015 Soto Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council accomplished. I am very excited with all of the new ideas and programs that were put into place that we will keep moving forward this year. The Boards have been working very hard to increase services for you, our valued member, and encourage you to take a look at the new opportunities.

The Annual Membership Dinner will be here before you know it! Again, I am energized at the outstanding work the group has done assembling fun and entertainment for our members. Many annual meetings center around reflection and looking forward. Our meeting will include this as well; however, we have had a longstanding commitment to use the meeting as a way to thank members and give them a night of camaraderie and entertainment.

Yes, the annual membership meeting is about fun, entertainment and reflection but it is also much more than that. This is our opportunity to share the accomplishments of the Chamber, give you the opportunity to network with some of the local businesses in the area and promote your business. This will be the event of the year and I hope you have had a chance to review the election invitation that was sent to you last month. If you have issues opening the invitation or would like me to send it to you, please let me know.

Economic development activities are at a rapid pace already in 2016. David and I are actively meeting with developers and interested parties who are looking at De Soto for potential locations. One of the current priorities for the EDC this year is housing as the demand for housing in De Soto is at an all-time high.

The EDC Quarterly meetings promise to be informative and substantial, so I invite you to join the EDC and take advantage of the updates and be a proactive participant on economic development efforts.

Thank you and get ready to be energized in 2016!





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## Webphibian Merges with Strategy LLC

Webphibian is merging with Strategy LLC, a local marketing and technology firm. Together we will continue to provide the same excellent website design, development, digital marketing services. And now you'll also have access to a full range of marketing and technology solutions. Strategy provides.



Here's some information we hope will be useful as we begin our new partnership.

- < Communication: I'll continue to be your primary point of contact but will look forward to introducing you to the Strategy team. Call me at 913.461.6909 or [joel.johns@strategynewmedia.com](mailto:joel.johns@strategynewmedia.com)
- < Hosting: There won't be any change to your website hosting, your website will remain on the same servers as are using today.
- < Support: Have a question, need a website edit, or help with an issue? Call us anytime for support at 913.461.787.
- < Rates: Rates for monthly services will stay the same through December 2016.
- < New Services: Strategy provides traditional and digital marketing, web design and development, branding and design services, and technology services.

I'm grateful for the chance to serve you and I look forward to this new partnership with Strategy. If you have questions about the merger or would like to talk about improving your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) or a mobile update to your site, getting help with your IT support or another project, we're here for you! Together, we can help you build your business, connect with prospective clients, and better engage with customers.

Sincerely,  
Joel Johns  
Webphibian/Strategy LLC  
16500 Indian Creek PKWY, Suite 104  
Olathe, KS 66062

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<http://www.strategynewmedia.com>



MORE THAN JUST BOOKS!

Hands-On Puppetry @ the De Soto Library!  
Saturday, February 13, 11:00 am-1:00 pm

From hit TV shows and movies to our very own 6-week program, puppets play an important role in imagination and creation. Join us this month to make your very own puppet. Each participant will walk away with a finished sock, or a finished puppet. Each participant will walk away with a finished sock, or a finished puppet. Each participant will walk away with a finished sock, or a finished puppet.

## Our Newest Chamber Members

Protocol96 represented by Dustin L. Hennis

## 2016 EDC Officers Elected

The De Soto Economic Development Council is pleased to announce the following slate of officers for the 2016 De Soto EDC Board of Directors:

Chairman: Adam Santa, Rehrig Pacific  
Vice-Chairman: Adam Santa, Rehrig Pacific  
Board Member: Carol Lehman, Jo. Co. Community College  
Board Member: Dante McGrew, Westar Energy  
Board Member: John Olson, KBS Constructors

City representatives include Mayor Tom Maniez and City Council members Bill McDaniel and Rick Walker. Ex-Officio Positions: Past Chairman Bill Severns, SKW, Inc., City Administrator Cynthia Wagner, and Chamber President Stephanie Swenson.







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## City of De Soto Update

by Cynthia Wagner, City Administrator



Each new year brings new opportunities and new challenges. 2015 was a good year for the City of De Soto and we hope 2016 will be the same. There will be many opportunities later to do a full recap of 2015. I do want to take a moment to let you be aware of some news that affects water customers within the City.

Last Summer, De Soto issued \$3.2 Million in bonds to fund a water main replacement project in the City. This project will take place over the next 18 months and involves the construction of a new water treatment system at the water treatment plant facility. This is the first phase in a \$7.5 Million plan which began in 2010 to renovate the water treatment plant, well field, and portions of the distribution system. To date, the City has implemented approximately \$2.5 Million in system improvements. It is estimated that an additional \$1.8 million will be needed to complete the renovations after the current phase is complete.

Early in the process, the Council elected to implement the project in phases over a number of years so we could assess the debt burden would impact the rate payers in the system. After careful study of the water fund last year, the City Council has approved a 10% increase in water service charges by an average of 10% in 2016 in order to meet the debt obligations. This rate increase will likely be followed by an additional increase in 2017, which is currently estimated at 8%. A full copy of the utility rate study is available for viewing at [www.desotoks.us/announcements.html](http://www.desotoks.us/announcements.html)

For 2016, several different rate structure scenarios were considered, each of which would produce the necessary increase in revenues from water service charges. In the end, the Council elected a rate structure increase that attempts to equalize the burden among all the water customers. The table below shows the existing and proposed water rates and examples of monthly water bills. The new water rates will take effect January 1, 2016.

*Continued on Page 7*

## 2016 Chamber Officers

The De Soto Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce the following appointments for the 2016 Board of Directors:

President- Stephanie Swenson  
GreatLife Golf & Fitness De Soto

Vice President- Julie Coover  
American Family Ins. Julie Coover Agency

Secretary- Diane Redford  
Huhtamaki

Treasurer- Anton Topf  
Topf Insurance Services

Past President- Mike Rogers  
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## City of De Soto Update, Continued

### Rate Structure

Usage From (Gallons)	Usage To (Gallons)	Existing Rate Structure	2016 Rate Structure
0	1500	\$19.27	\$22.00
1501	4500	\$6.06 per 1000 gal	\$7.20 per 1000 gal
4501	8500	\$7.43 per 1000 gal	\$7.85 per 1000 gal
8501	1000000	\$8.05 per 1000 gal	\$8.70 per 1000 gal

### Monthly Water Bill Examples

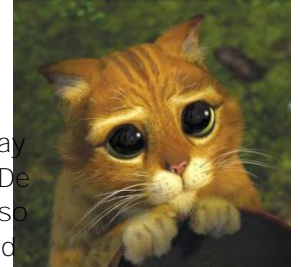
Monthly Water Use (Gal)	Existing Monthly Bill	Monthly Bill After Rate Increase	Increase in Monthly Bill
1,000	\$19.27	\$22.00	\$2.73
2,000	\$22.30	\$25.60	\$3.30
3,000	\$28.36	\$32.80	\$4.44
4,000	\$34.42	\$40.00	\$5.58
6,000	\$48.59	\$55.37	\$6.78
8,000	\$63.45	\$71.07	\$7.62
10,000	\$79.23	\$88.03	\$8.80
20,000	\$159.73	\$175.03	\$15.30
30,000	\$240.23	\$262.03	\$21.80
50,000	\$401.23	\$436.03	\$34.80

As noted, the new rate increases were effective Jan and will be reflected in January water bills. In review the utility needs, sewer rate increases were also identified but in light of the significant increase in water rate Council elected at this time not to increase sewer rates

## Your Help is Needed!

The Chamber Annual Membership Dinner Committee needs your help!

### Silent Auction Items



The Silent Auction is a fun way to help raise funds for your De Soto Chamber of Commerce so that membership dues and service fees are kept to a minimum. This allows the organization to also increase services to the members. We pride ourselves in having some of the most affordable services around, and in order to keep these benefits for our members, donation items are needed.

What kinds of items can I donate? The sky is the limit accept gift cards, sports tickets, hotel pack memorabilia, gift baskets or anything that will generate funds. Many of our members have contacts that they can reach out to in order to secure items.

Members having items to donate can contact the Chamber Office at 913831585 to arrange for a pickup or to drop items off at the Chamber. Deadline to donate items is Monday, January 18.

### Wine Pull

Back by popular demand! In 2015, for the 7th year, the Chamber sold all 50 wine corks and some members took home some fantastic wine, too!

The Committee has a goal to sell 100 wine corks this year. Members are asked to donate bottles of wine with a minimum value of at least \$15. We also need medium to high ranges of wine (up to \$100).

If you are able to donate wine, please contact the Chamber Office as soon as possible so that we can track donations. Bottles should be collected no later than January 18.

For more information or to make a donation, please contact the Chamber at 913831585. The Chamber Annual Dinner Committee thanks you!



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## Five USD 232 Seniors Nominated to U.S. Military Academies

Representative Kevin Yoder (RS) nominated five USD 232 students to three of the five U.S. Service Academies for class entering 2016. After receiving their nominations, the applicants must now meet the requirements of each Service Academy to be considered for appointment. Ultimately, the Academies make the final decision on who receives an appointment of admission.

Yoder made the nominations of the following outstanding Kansans from the 3rd Congressional District very well represented. These young men and women are our future and I wish them well as they seek an appointment to the United States Military Academies.



**Kaitlyn Moore**, Mill Valley High School is nominated to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado.



**Rex Templin**, De Soto High School, is nominated to the United States Naval Academy in Maryland. Templin is also nominated to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado.



**Brenden Shutt**, Mill Valley High School, is nominated to the United States Military Academy West Point in New York.



**Ryan Anderson**, Mill Valley High School, is nominated to the United States Military Academy West Point in New York.



**Travis Hodge**, De Soto High School, is nominated to the United States Military Academy West Point in New York.

*Congratulations to these  
fantastic students  
on their nominations!*

USD #232 Update  
by Alvie Cater



## The Pursuit of Excellence

Learn more about our Big Ideas



The Board of Education in July 2015 renewed a focus on The Pursuit of Excellence and dedication to serving Children First. Through the process the district participated in discussions regarding the need and purpose for characteristics of a school district we all desire, building trust and confidence. Doing the Right Things. As part of its commitment to Continuous Improvement the Board and administration intend to make further improvements in the district with a focus on student learning opportunities. We have identified these notable advancements as

**Big Idea #1 - Special Programming** The school district will begin a process to explore possible learning opportunities to reflect contemporary areas of study. Special programming, if implemented, would not only provide more opportunities for students, but would also help provide voluntary choice in senior high school attendance through program-based transfers to De Soto High School. The district would seek to address programming at Mill Valley High School.

A quick study of surrounding school systems in Johnson County reveals our students should have similar learning opportunities. Existing special programs in our area can be found in the Blue Valley School District (Centennial Advanced Professional Studies), Olathe School District (21st Century High School Programs), and Shawnee Mission School District (Signature High School Programs).

While the process is being identified, USD 232 will seek input from a variety of stakeholders to develop a program that could integrate multiple subject areas and program interests to students across all grade levels. Simply put, we want to look at what we provide and Think Outside the Box.

**Big Idea #2 - Rebranding the School District** We also want to develop a school/community process to create a Shared Vision or Theme. The Pursuit of Excellence will only be successful with a shared vision to focus our efforts on students, teamwork and passion to do our best. This will become a vision we can all support.

The rebranding process is also designed to increase unity of the school district and to build a school system for the future. Vibrant communities from four cities make up our school district: De Soto, Shawnee, Lenexa, and Olathe. We are an area of 100+ square miles of Johnson County.

At times in our history, we have seen ourselves as a district of schools instead of a school district. The rebranding process could also include a new logo and a new common name identity to reflect all communities within the district designed to pay tribute to our past while looking forward to our exciting future.

The legal name of the school district will never change. Unified School District No. 232, Johnson County, State of Kansas. We are committed to the same committed business of serving students and preparing them to be successful in life. Our district currently "De Soto School District." (We would not change the names of any schools.) With the purpose of our school district, we are considering a new common name representative of all areas within the district.

We need and want our communities to help us continue moving forward in the right direction. Please visit our online form to submit your ideas for special programming and suggestions on a possible common name to reflect our communities and a school district for the future.

Those are the two big ideas. It is a process that will take time to develop and discuss. Thank you for helping us build a unified community, dedicated (together) to serving Children First. Learn more >> [www.usd232.org](http://www.usd232.org)



De Soto Chamber of Commerce Luncheon

Due to the Annual Membership Dinner on January 21<sup>st</sup> there will not be a luncheon in January. The next luncheon will be held on Thursday, February 11, 2016.

## January, 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Events listed in BOLD are Chamber events					<b>1</b> New Year's Day	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> De Soto City Council Meeting 7:00 p.m. De Soto City Hall	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> USD 232 Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. 35200 W. 91st	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> De Soto City Council Meeting 7:00 p.m. De Soto City Hall	<b>22</b> Annual Dinner De Soto VFW Registration 6pm -Prepaid event -	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> EDC Board of Directors 11:30 a.m. Chamber Offices	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> Deadline to remit Chamber/EDC Membership				Due to the Annual Dinner, there will not be a monthly chamber luncheon in January. The next luncheon will be the State of the City Address on February 11 <sup>th</sup> .  Remember that Chamber/EDC Dues should be remitted by January 31 <sup>st</sup> in order to ensure the timely completion of the		