

PRAIRIE PULSE

FEBRUARY 2022



*I love you
berry much*

Visit HeART photo worthy spots in Grand Prairie! From left: butterfly heart at Main Library, fallen log art at Waggoner Park and mural at Farmers Market

What's Inside

At Home COVID Tests

FDA-Approved Covered by BCBSTX

Send a Valentine

Benefiting Prairie Paws

Epic Central Update

Water show installation begins

Update Contact Info. in Lawson

To receive city weather updates

Candy Grams

Submit by Feb. 7

Volunteer at Prairie Paws

Walk dogs or foster an animal



Employee Awards Banquet

Thursday, Feb. 24 • Doors open: 5:30 p.m., Dinner: 6 p.m.

Ruthe Jackson Center, 3113 S. Carrier Parkway

Tickets are \$5. Nominees will receive a free ticket.

Tickets available **February 7-22** at the following locations:

- Human Resources (Euriah Brown)
- Public Safety Building (Stan Steadman)
- Service Center (Gena Naylor)
- Housing (Joshua Jones)



GRAND PRAIRIE EMPLOYEE
AWARDS BANQUET 2022

a world of possibilities

Send a Valentine with Prairie Paws Postage



[Click here](#) to Send a love letter to your valentine with Prairie Paws Postage! From now until Wednesday, Feb. 9, you can sign up to send a valentine for \$15 to a loved one from a dog or cat from Prairie Paws. If you are sending two or more, the cost per valentine goes down to just \$10.

Each valentine will include an adorable Valentine's Day photo of a dog or cat from Prairie Paws, a sweet note, and the animal's pawprint!

All money raised will benefit the Prairie Paws Animal Welfare Fund.

Traffic Signal Box Public Art Project

The City of Grand Prairie Public Art Program invites artists to compete for a public art commission to create art on Traffic Signal Boxes (TSBs) located throughout the city. This project will brighten city streetscapes, enhance community pride and create new, paid opportunities for Texas-based artists. Projects must be submitted by April 28, 2022. [More information](#)

EpicCentral Project Update

Installation of the water/light show at EpicCentral will begin soon, with completion expected in late summer 2022.



To begin the process, the lake with the Willow Tree artwork in it between The Summit and the Public Safety Building will be partially drained in mid to late February. The city will drain about three feet of water, leaving about five feet of water in the center of the lake so that the fish do not have to be relocated. The city's Parks, Arts & Recreation Department has worked closely with an aquatic life consultant to ensure conditions remain safe for the fish. The lower water level will allow workers to install the foundation and mechanics for the water show.

Outside the Lines (OTL), a design-build specialty construction company, designed the water show and is also installing it. OTL is an industry leader in creating one-of-a-kind water features, rock work, and themed environments worldwide. Details about the water show will be released summer 2022.

BCBSTX Covers COVID Home Tests

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of TX (BCBSTX) is now covering FDA-authorized at-home COVID-19 diagnostic over the counter (OTC) tests without a prescription or health assessment from a provider.



What this means to you: BCBSTX

will cover COVID-19 diagnostic OTC tests through their extensive network of participating pharmacies. [Click here](#) to view in-network pharmacies.

- OTC tests purchased prior to January 15, 2022 are not in scope
- Coverage of OTC tests is effective through the end of the federal health emergency
- OTC tests will only be covered under pharmacy at in-network providers (these will not be covered under the medical portion of the plan)
- If an in-network pharmacy cannot submit your claim electronically, you can submit a [Prescription Drug Claim Form](#) along with a receipt for reimbursement up to \$12 per test
- Allows coverage of eight (8) tests per covered member, every 30 days (or, for example, 4 boxes with 2 tests per box)
- If you are not sure if a test kit is FDA-authorized, ask your pharmacist for assistance

AlertGP for Weather Updates

The city's AlertGP emergency notification system will send automated alerts to employees about city building closures and late openings due to winter weather. The city's Office of Emergency Management uses employee contact information from Lawson to push out the automated alerts via text, email, and phone call. Please make sure your contact information is updated in Lawson to ensure that you receive these important updates.



Candy Grams

Our city employees go above and beyond on a regular basis to create Raving Fans by delivering World Class Service to internal and external customers.

If someone has made you a Raving Fan, send them an anonymous Candy Gram in the spirit of Valentine's Day.

Click [here](#) to create your Candy Gram. All submissions must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 7, 2022.



Candy Grams will be delivered on Monday, Feb. 14, 2022.

GP Big Event Set for March 26



Sign up before March 1, 2022 at gptx.org/bigevent with a service project or to volunteer at the Grand Prairie Big Event from 8 a.m.-noon Saturday, March 26, 2022. Teams of volunteers will help residents with qualifying service projects in this one-day city-wide community service project aimed to help those in need. Volunteers are preferred in pre-established groups, but smaller groups and individuals may also volunteer. Jobs may include yard work, spring cleaning or litter patrol, or other work outside a home that requires no power tools. All jobs are vetted in advance, in Grand Prairie, one-time only.

FSA Receipts Due Before March 31

Don't forget to submit receipts on or before March 31, 2022, for qualifying expenses incurred from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. You may visit NAVIA Benefits to begin submitting your receipts today.

To create your account, please use the City's code: CTG

Reminder, the City has opted to allow Flexible Spending Account (FSA) participants to carry over unused FSA funds without penalty.

The maximum unused amount from the plan year starting in 2021 allowed to be carried over to 2022 is \$550.



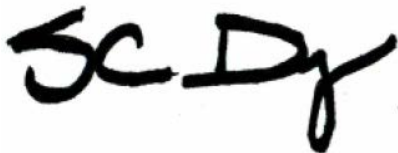
Message from the Manager

Thankfully, the COVID-19 Omicron variant numbers seem to be decreasing. The optimistic view is that enough people will gain immunity from vaccinations and from prior COVID infections so that there will be less transmission and much fewer hospitalizations and deaths, causing the virus to eventually become endemic. Please continue to follow the proper COVID protocol and stay at home if you are feeling sick.

As you know, last year we were unable to have an in-person employee banquet due to the pandemic. Since employee recognition is so important to our culture and to try and have it again, in-person, we have postponed it to Feb. 24. Please join me in supporting our fellow coworkers—recognizing them for their outstanding accomplishments in 2021. See the front page of this newsletter for information on how to obtain tickets.

As can be expected in February, some significant winter weather is predicted for later this week. Please sign up for notifications in the [AlertGP](#) system and stay in communication with your supervisor if the weather creates travel hazards. Take the proper precautions to stay safe and our Office of Emergency Management will keep us timely informed including any needed city facility closures.

Thank you for your service. I sincerely appreciate all employees for the excellent job you do each day.



Steve Dye, City Manager

Volunteer at the Prairie Paws Animal Shelter

Prairie Paws needs the help of everyone in our community to achieve our goal of enriching pet lives.

Wondering how you can help create Raving Fan Favorites?

- Employees can email prairiepawsevents@gptx.org to join our walking club

Enjoy your lunch breaks, but want company on the weekends?

- Sign up at [MyImpactPage - Volunteer Application- Foster Program](#)
Volunteer to become a short (or long) term dog/cat foster.



Events

Vegetable Gardening 101

Saturday, Feb. 5, 2-3 p.m.
Main Library, 901 Conover Dr.
To register,
email: jrudd@gptx.org

Kid's Fishing Day

Saturday, Feb. 12
Registration: 10-11 a.m.
Fishing: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Mike Lewis Park Pond
2410 N. Carrier Parkway
Free for children 16 and younger. A limited number of rods and reels will be available on a first come, first served basis with a drivers license or credit card deposit.
972-237-8100 or
GrandFunGP.com

Epic Plunge

Sunday,
Feb. 27,
1 p.m.
Epic Waters,
2970 Epic
Place
City Employees Receive
50% Off



when you use the code EPICPLUNGE GP online. Must show City of Grand Prairie work ID at Guest Services. A portion of the proceeds will benefit PlayGrand Adventures. This is an all day celebration and participants have to run into the outdoor wave pool COLD water.

[Sign up here](#)