



by Vicki Powers, Houston on the Cheap

Kids are out of school now -- so summer 2012 is here! Here is a round-up of free and cheap things to keep your family fun alive this summer -- without the "I'm bored" statements. Plus you can do most of these for FREE! I have added a link in the top navigation bar at Houston on the Cheap so you can find the updated list as needed. I will cover all these on my blog over the next few weeks, but here is a list I've created of summer fun on the cheap:

MOVIES

Free and \$1 Summer Movie Camps: Cinemark \$1/each or 10 for \$5, start 6/19; Rave Cinemas free, 2x week, 10 am start 6/4; Studio Movie Grill M-F, 11 am, \$1 kid/\$2 adult, 6/4-8/20; Santikos Silverado, Free 6/12-7/21, 11 am; Regal Summer Movie at Edwards Marq*e, 10 am, \$1 movies start 6/5; Alamo Drafthouse (Mason Park in Katy), free movie weekdays at 11 am from June 4 – June 20, June 25 – 28 and July 10-14

Free Outdoor Movies at Miller Outdoor: *Joyful Noise* (6/8), *Jaws* (7/3), *Forrest Gump* (7/5) and more

Free Outdoor Movies at Discovery Green: IKEA Screen on the Green, *The Muppets* (6/9), 9 pm; Date Night Movie (6/23) featuring *Dirty Dancing*; Julydoscope (7/28) featuring *The Wiz*

Friday Night Films at Whole Foods Market: *The Chronicles of Narnia* (6/8), *Ghostbusters* (6/22). Movies start at twilight. Only at the Montrose store, 701 Waugh.

Alamo Drafthouse Rolling Roadshow at Market Square Park, 8pm: *Mr. Mom* (6/17), *National Lampoon's Vacation* (7/11)

MUSIC

Free Summer Symphony Nights: Miller Outdoor (6/15, 6/16, 6/22, 6/23, 7/4), 8:30 pm

Free Sounds Like Fun Series (in the community) by Houston Symphony: 6/26, 11am @ Miller Outdoor; 6/26, 7:30 pm @ The Centrum in Spring; 6/27, 11am @ Pershing Middle School, 3838 Blue Bonnet Blvd.; 6/28, 7:30pm @ Church Without Walls, 5725 Queenston; 6/29, 11am @ Ripley House, 4410 Navigation; 6/30, 7:30pm @ St. Bernadette Catholic Church, 15500 El Camino Real

Houston Chronicle \$1 Concert: 7/15, 7:30pm at Jones Hall by Houston Symphony. \$1 tickets are general admission. Premium reserved seats available for \$10.

BOOKS

Free Summer Reading Programs at Local Public Libraries and Barnes & Noble

Story time Tours at Rienzi: “*Tales & Tours*,” Wednesdays, June-July, 10 am. MFAH home, 1406 Kirby

Camp Blue Willow: Wednesdays, June & July, 4 pm, 1st-5th gr.; Blue Willow Bookshop (Memorial)

Page to the Stage Book Club: 6/9, book study of *Pinkalicious* w/ Main Street Theater at Blue Willow

SAGOSTUND (Story time) at IKEA Houston: Tuesdays (noon – 2pm) in the IKEA restaurant.

Magicians, storytellers and more for all ages. Kids eat free every Tuesday all day!

Story time at Pottery Barn Kids: Tuesdays, 11am, The Woodlands Mall

Toddler Tuesdays: Storytime and activities at Discovery Green with favorite look-a-like characters, 10:30 am such as Scooby Doo and Curious George

THEATER

Free Disney Musical: *The Little Mermaid Jr.*, Miller Outdoor Theater, June 6-8, 11 am

Free Children’s Theater at Miller Outdoor, 11 am: *Pinocchio* (6/12), *The Three Little Pigs* (7/24), *Hansel & Gretel* (7/25), *Goldilocks* (7/26), *Pinocchio* (7/27)

Free TUTS’ Summer Musical: *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, Miller Outdoor Theater, July 17-22, 8:15 pm

Free Shakespeare in the Park, Miller Outdoor: *Hamlet* and *Comedy of Errors*, August 3, 4, 7-12

Free Theater District Open House: 8/25, 12noon, featuring tours of Jones Hall, Hobby Center, Wortham Theater Center, and Alley Theatre, lively performances, food, costume trunk dress-up, and discounts to season packages

CULTURE

Target Free First Sunday: Free admission at Children’s Museum of Houston – June 3, July 8, August 4

Detective Days at Bayou Bend Collections and Gardens: Self-guided adventures through August 31 for young detectives (ages 6 and up). Each week features new educational themed scavenger hunt such as “The Case of the Missing Trees” and “Mysterious Messages”. Special pricing for Detective Days: kids 12 and under free, adults are \$5. Adventures are outdoors in June & July and inside the historic house in August.

B of A “Museums are Us” program: Free admission first full weekend of each month for Bank of America cardholders to Houston Zoo, Children’s Museum of Houston, and Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Cardholders are free, but kids are not.

Free Museum Days in Houston Museum District:

- **Buffalo Soldiers National Museum** – Monday, 10 am – 5 pm
- **Houston Museum of Natural Science** – Tuesday, after 2 pm
- **Museum of Fine Arts** — Thursday 10 am – 9 pm
- **Children’s Museum** — Thursday 5 pm – 8 pm
- **The Health Museum** — Thursday 2 pm – 5 pm
- **John C. Freeman Weather Museum** — Thursday 12 pm – 4 pm

OUTDOOR FUN

Free Houston Zoo after 2 pm, first Tuesday/month: June 5, July 3, August 7

Noah's Ark Pool at First United Methodist Church's Quillian Center in Westchase: Open Monday-Saturday 10 am – 4 pm; \$6 each (under age 1 free), 10570 Westpark

Family Bat Nights Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through Labor Day: Watch bats emerge under the Waugh Bridge. Arrive 20-30 minutes before sunset to hear a brief presentation on Waugh Bridge Bat Colony. Free public parking at Spotts Park, 401 S. Heights Boulevard at Memorial.

Kayak Boat Rides at Discovery Green: Saturdays and Sundays, 11 am – 5 pm, \$5

Kayak Camp on Kinder Lake at Discovery Green: June 3, July 1, \$5 (kids & teens age 5-16)

Free Skateboarding Classes: 6/2, Novice Skateboard Workshop, 8-9 am; Beginning Skateboarding Classes 7/17 – 8/9 Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 – 9:50 am; 10 – 10:50 am for Intermediate and Advanced; Lee and Joe Jamail Skatepark, 103 Sabine

OTHER

Free LEGO Mini Model Build, 5 pm, first Tuesday/month: June 5, July 3, August 7

Houston Family Summer Fest at Discovery Green: 7/1 by *Houston Family Magazine*, 12-4pm featuring music, arts-n-crafts, bounce houses, face painting, hooping and more

Aurora Picture Show's **Popcorn Kids: I Can Do Anything** at Discovery Green– 6/8, Film Shorts by and for kids

Free Apple Camp, 3-day workshop on iMovie for kids 8-12. Summer 2012 dates not announced.

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www.houstononthecheap.com

Twitter: HOUcheap

Facebook: facebook.com/houstononthecheap

houstononthecheap@gmail.com