

Rio Review

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FREE • MONTHLY • ONLINE at www.cityofrgc.com

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RGC FREEDOM FEST IS BACK!





This year's Rio Grande City Freedom Fest is presented by Grupo Solido

After being canceled last year due to Covid-19 restrictions, Rio Grande City's official 4th of July celebration is back this year and is set to take place at the Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park on Friday, July 2.

The City's Tourism Department began planning for this year's Freedom Fest this spring as soon as vaccines started to be issued on a mass scale, and after the State of Texas relaxed most of the Covid-19 restriction in place at the time.

This year's Freedom Fest is presented by

the Grammy Award winning band, Grupo Solido and will feature vendors, a car show, a cook-off competition and live musical performances by Grupo Solido, The Isaac Jacob Band, and La Mafia. The event will conclude with a major fireworks display. All of the festivities will be free and open to the public.

For more information about Freedom Fest, residents are encouraged to visit the City's official website, www.cityofrgc.com or call the Rio Grande City Tourism Department at 956-487-0672.

This year's celebration will feature music by La Mafia.





(Artist Rendition) A groundbreaking ceremony marking the start of construction for three highly anticipated new businesses coming to Rio Grande City will be held at 10 a.m. on June 16 at the new Rio Grande Village commercial subdivision.

Groundbreaking Ceremony Set for Three Major Franchises Coming to RGC

A groundbreaking ceremony marking the start of construction for three highly- anticipated new businesses coming Rio Grande City will be held at 10 a.m. on June 16 at the new Rio Grande Village commercial subdivision. City officials will be joined by representatives of Starbucks, Panda Express and Stripes as they unveil their site plans to the public. Announcements regarding new activity at the commercial development are expected to be shared at the event.

"There's so much excitement for the new construction taking shape in Rio Grande City," said Dalinda Guillen, Executive Director for the Rio Grande City EDC. "We welcome these new businesses to our city and look forward to the many opportunities they bring with them."

The Rio Grande City EDC shall continue to target new business and aim meet the growing needs of Rio Grande City.

Administration

The City of Rio Grande City



Rio Grande City Hall

Located at:

5332 E. Highway 83, Rio Grande City, TX 78582

Phone No.:

956-487-0672

Website:

www.cityofrgc.com

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Closed

Saturday - Sunday



Explore Our Beautiful City

The mission of the City of Rio Grande City is to provide quality municipal services in partnership with our citizens to build a progressive city and to provide a better quality of life for all our residents. Rio Grande City is rich in history and honors traditions. Come and explore a multitude of historical sites, take a walk run or bike ride through our Fordyce Trails, and enjoy our many festivals.

A Publication by the Rio Grande City Tourism Dept.

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Questions or Comments may be submitted via email shernandez@cityofrgc.com

South Texas Media

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A Major Symbolic First Step

A Message From Mayor Joel Villarreal



It's looking extremely well for us when it comes to getting past the Covid-19 pandemic, and we're looking forward to all our upcoming projects especially our 2021 Freedom Fest celebration which will be [a major symbolic first step] towards a state of prepandemic normalcy as far as the City is concerned. We will, of course, still follow CDC guidelines to their

We have also returned to inperson commission meetings. Texas Governor Greg Abbott has made it so mask mandates are no longer allowed within government entities, however that was something that we were planning to do as we moved forward, so it falls in line with our intensions as far as returning back to a level of normalcy.

As mentioned, we will continue

to follow CDC guidelines, and recommendations, especially in proximity, but at this point we can officially no longer mandate mask wearing.

As a reminder, there are a lot of vaccines available so for those that have not yet been vaccinated please consider being vaccinated, for your safty and that of our community, but we understand it's a personal choice.



Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal

"We are looking forward to all of our upcoming projects, especially our 2021 Freedom Fest Celebration"

City Manager's Report

A message from Deputy City Manager Noe Castillo

The safety of all our employees, as well as the safety of all who visit our facilities is a top priority for myself, the Mayor, and our City Commission.

We are all aware of the sad, and unfortunate rise of mass violence across the country. That is why here at City Hall, all offices can expect a new layer of security to better protect everyone.

Over the past week, new security measures have been added to the main City Hall building. A new and improved alarm system has been installed. Keyless entry in the form of card swipe for side and back doors will be available to staff for a quicker and safer option to enter the building.

City Commission Moves to Seek Permanent City Manager

RGC City Commissioners approved a motion to seek a permanent city manager at the regular meeting of the City Commission of Rio Grande City held on Wednesday, May 12, at City Hall.

The City Commission approved an action authorizing the City to initiate the process of accepting and reviewing applications for a permanent city manager. At the same meeting, the Commission also authorized a motion to make an appointment filing the vacant deputy city manager position.

Former interim City Manager, Noe Castillo, was appointed Deputy City Manager.

"At this point there's no better person for that than Chief Castillo," stated Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal. "He's been doing a tremendous job [as interim City Manager]."

RGC Commission Moves to Create New In-House City Engineer Position

At the regular meeting of the Rio Grande City Commission held on Wednesday, May 12, the commission approved the first reading of Ordinance No. 2021-3 which would create a position for a full-time City Engineer position.

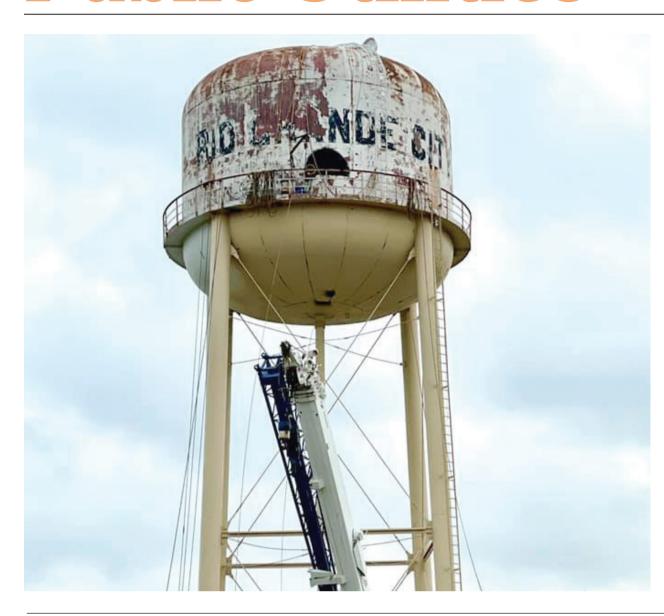
"Over the next few years, we're going to have a lot of construction both in building and infrastructure, and it's going to be a lot of work,"

state Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal. "This is something that is long overdue."

The meeting, held at City Hall Commission Chambers, was the first in-person meeting of the City Commission following the City's official reopening on May 3. The City closed most of it's facilities to the public in early 2020 in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.







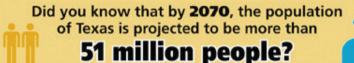
Rio Grande City Public Utilities Initiates Water Tank Restoration Efforts

The Rio Grande City Public Utilities began working on restoration efforts to the water tank located on N. Garcia St.

"It's official, our Rio Grande City water tower is undergoing a complete renovation," stated Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

"Keep an eye the next time you're passing by to see updates."

The Rio Grande City Public Utilities Department is located withing City Hall at 5332 E. U.S. Highway 83. Residents with questions or concerns can call 956-487-2702 for more information.



8.9 million acre-feet in a severe drought (that's 2.9 trillion gallons of water).

Texas Water

Development Board

Find out more info at TexasStateWaterPlan.org

Administration (Cont.)

Mayor Joel Villarreal Named TML Vice President, RGC Earns Golden Glove Award



The Texas Municipal League held its 10th Annual training workshop over the weekend of, May 15, at South Padre Island Texas. At the event, Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal was named TML Vice President, and the City of RGC was awarded the League's Golden Glove award.

The Texas Municipal League has 15 sub-state regions that were formed in 1958. Regions

exist to promote interests in city government on a regional level, facilitate the exchange of information among the cities in a region, and assist the TML Board of Directors in formulating policy that represents the diverse interests of the state.

Each region elects officers and conducts regional meetings at least twice each year. Each region also elects a representative to serve on

the TML Board of Directors. The board representative must be an elected official from a city within the region and serves a two-year term of office with a maximum of two full terms. Each region may have only one board representative.

TML Region 12 is comprised of Brooks, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Kenedy, Starr, Willacy and Zapata counties.

RGC Sales Taxes Show Huge Jump from Last Year



Rio Grande City's sales tax allocation soared last month reporting a 28.98% increase over May 2020. These allocations are based on sales made in March by businesses that report tax monthly and sales made in January, February and March by quarterly filers.

"Last March, many businesses had to shut down due the coronavirus pandemic, said Dalinda Guillen, Rio Grande City EDC Executive Director. "This March was significantly different with businesses reopened and local vaccination deployment in full force."

The upswing in sales tax collections has resulted in a 19.54% overall increase for Rio Grande City since October 2021.

EDC/Main Street

RGC EDC Thanks Partners During National Economic Development Week

The Rio Grande City Economic Development Corporation recently thanked all its partners in local economic development with a video greeting card presented on social media. "Partnerships are essential for the long-term growth of Rio Grande City," declared RGC EDC Executive Director Dalinda Guillen. "Together, we can make great things happen."

Economic Development Week was created by The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in 2016 to increase awareness of local programs that create jobs, advance career development opportunities, and improve the quality of life in communities everywhere. Since 2016, technology has opened new doors for creativity, which EDOs have taken advantage of by creating

and sharing videos, infographics, banners, and many other types of materials which were spread far and wide on social media, websites, and in print.

The International Economic Development Council is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 5,000 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience.

Free Training Available for Restaurant Owners and Operators in Adapting to Customers' New Expectations



The Texas Workforce
Commission (TWC) in partnership
with the Texas Restaurant
Association (TRA) has launched
a Restaurant Recovery Initiative
to assist Texas restaurants in
developing new strategies to

operate safely, leverage new technologies and maximize profits in the modern era. The Restaurant Recovery Initiative is built around a series of training videos in English and Spanish that will share best practices to assist employers

in adapting jobs to contactless operations and new service trends.

The videos include a number of topics, including off-premises food sales, maximizing drive-through window sales, creating a menu for off-premises sales, negotiating third party delivery contracts, alcohol-togo sales and many others.

In addition to the owner/ operator training videos, TWC and TRA are also providing free online access for restaurant workers to attain their state-required Food Handler and TABC Seller/Server Certifications.

For more information visit: https://www.twc.texas.gov/restaurants

Memorial Day Observance Held on Main Street



A Memorial Day Observance ceremony was held on Thursday Morning, May 27, at the Kiosk located on Rio Grande City's Historic Mainstreet.

"This morning's memorial observance lit a reminder that our freedom isn't free," declared Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States for honoring and mourning the military personnel who have died in the performance of their military duties. The holiday is observed on the last Monday of May. The holiday was observed on May 30 from 1868 to 1970.

Funding Programs and Counseling to Help Your Business





RGC Main Street receives 2021 National Main Street Accreditation



For the fifth consecutive year, Rio Grande City Main Street Program has been designated as an Accredited Main Street America™ program. Accredited status is Main Street America's top tier of recognition and signifies a demonstrated commitment to comprehensive commercial district revitalization and proven track record of successfully applying the Main Street Approach™.

"Our Main Street pivoted operations to navigate and thrive despite the everchanging challenges brought about by the COVID-19 global pandemic," said Mayor Joel Villarreal. "This achievement is a testament to the resiliency of our downtown business community."

As downtown small businesses coped with COVID-19, Rio Grande

City Main Street worked in tandem with several City and Rio Grande City EDC COVID-19 safety initiatives and campaigns, this included the Rio Grande City Top Rated COVID-19 Best Business Practices – a campaign encouraging businesses to go beyond the minimum state COVID-19 safety and health standards.

Digital and virtual activities comprised of the Grab-n-Go Rio Grande City program, which promoted and listed restaurants offering take out or delivery and the Rio Grande City Eat, Shop, Play Local campaign, a Facebook group where businesses could reach their current and potential customers by sharing specials, sales, messaging, hours and COVID-19 precautions. This page is listed on Main Street

America's online resource center which highlights the approaches Main Street America programs are taking in response to the pandemic and the recovery process.

Another pandemic support project was the PPE Safety Kit distribution. Businesses had a chance to receive a free safety kit to further help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Eat kit contained disposable gloves, disposable face masks, liquid hand sanitizer, health and safety protocol information, floor decals and posters.

"We are thrilled to acknowledge this year's Accredited and Affiliate programs and their dedication to advancing economic opportunity and quality of life in their downtowns," said Patrice Frey, President & CEO of Main Street America. "During an incredibly challenging year, these programs have demonstrated the power of the Main Street movement to champion small businesses, drive recovery efforts, and lift up their communities. I am inspired by their efforts and know that these Main Street programs will continue to help their districts flourish in the next stages of recovery."



Mental Health Month Proclamation Ceremony Held at Basilio Villarreal Park

Starr County's official Mental Awareness Month Proclamation ceremony was held at the Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park on Thursday morning, May 20.

Rio Grande City mayor Joel Villarreal spoke at the event which was organized the Border Region Behavioral Health Center. The event featured many vendors from around the County who distributed goodies in drive-thru fashion. The goal of the

event was to raise awareness of the importance of mental nurturing as well as ending long held stigmas.

Mental Health Awareness Month began in the United States in 1949 and was started by the Mental Health America (MHA) organization.

The purpose of Mental Health Awareness Month is to raise awareness and educate the public about: mental illnesses, such as the 18.1% of Americans who suffer

from depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder; the realities of living with these conditions; and strategies for attaining mental health and wellness. It also aims to draw attention to suicide, which can be precipitated by some mental illnesses. Additionally, Mental Health Awareness Month strives to reduce the stigma that surrounds mental illnesses.

TRINGGOLD

Celebrate 'Go Skateboarding Day' at the Rio Grande City Skate Plaza



The City of Rio Grande City invites residents to celebrate 'Go Skateboarding Day' on June 21st at the only skate plaza in Starr County which is located within the Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park.

Go Skateboarding Day (GSD) is an annual promotional event Association

"SriKala" Roach and Bryan Chin in 2002 in New York City, and was renamed Go Skate Day in 2004.

In 2006, more than 350 events took place in 32 countries. The following year, the IASC received Special Congressional Recognition from US Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez for its work in promoting skateboarding and encouraging young people to get outside and practice the sport.









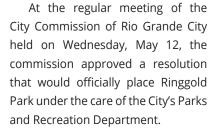












RGC Resolution No. 2021-22 accepts the dedication of the Ringgold RGCCISD Park, as reflected in the RGC Consolidated Independent School District Resolution No. 01-14-2021 authorizing the City Manager and City Attorney to execute all documents

necessary on its behalf.

COUNTY PARK

"This is a welcomed addition [to the Rio Grande City Parks and Recreation Department]," stated Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villareal referring to the 20-plus acre park located across Fort Ringgold.





Fire Dept.

Public Safety

Get Ahead of What's Ahead. Build **Your Disaster Supply Kit**

Build your kit all at once or step-by-step. Start with what you already have at home; then shop for the rest, as needed.

Pack the basic supplies for each person or pet in a portable container or backpack. A waterproof container is best. You'll need these supplies whether you stay in your home (shelter in place) or evacuate to another

Use the list below or download a PDF of the Disaster Supply Checklist to help you be Texas Ready. https://texasready.gov/resources/assets/ TexasReady-Build-a-Disaster-Kit-English.pdf



FOOD AND WATER

- 3-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned or pouched food 1 gallon of water per day for each person and pet
- Manual can opener
- Baby items (baby food, formula, bottles, diapers)
- Pet supplies



FIRST AID, MEDICATION, **HYGIENE SUPPLIES**

- First-aid kit
- Medications
- Hand sanitizer, wipes
- Bleach (To purify water, mix 1/8 teaspoon per gallon. Stir and let stand for 30 minutes.)
- Toilet paper, paper towels, garbage bags
- Dental care products (toothpaste, toothbrushes)
- Hearing and vision products (hearing aids and batteries, glasses, contact lenses, contact lens solution, sunglasses)
- Soap, shampoo, personal hygiene supplies
- Sunscreen, insect repellent
- Face masks to filter air



COMMUNICATION, LIGHTING, DOCUMENT BAG ITEMS

- Battery-powered radio with extra batteries or crank radio (emergency alert radio is best)
- Extra cell phone battery and car charger
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Matches and lighter keep in a waterproof container or sealable plastic bag
- Whistle
- Document bag items

Rio Grande City Fire Dept. and PD Staff Attend SWIFT **Water Rescue Training**



Several Rio Grande City Fire and Police Department staff recently participated in a Flood and Swift Water Rescue Technician Course in New Braunfels, Texas.

Swift water rescue (also called "white water rescue") is a subset of technical rescue dealing in white water river conditions. Due to the

added pressure of moving water, swift water rescue involves the use of specially trained personnel, ropes and mechanical advantage systems that are often much more robust than those used in standard rope rescue.

The main goal is to use or

in the rescue of the endangered person(s), as in most situations there is no easy way to overcome the power of the water.

Staff who attended the training were; Lieutenant P. Morin, Driver Bryan Villareal, and Fire Fighter Randy Romero, and RGCPD officers deflect the water's power to assist Epifanio Perez, and David Campos.



Rio Grande City Fire Dept. Implements Fire Hydrant Color Code

Volunteer fire fighters with the Rio Grande City Fire Department have been continuing their efforts to maintain, and color code fire hydrants throughout the city.

The National Fire Protection Association recommends that the bodies of municipal hydrants, private hydrants, and non-potable hydrants be distinctively color

The National Fire Protection Association is an international nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. As of 2018, the NFPA claims to have 50,000 members and 9,000 volunteers working with the organization through its 250 technical committees.

The Rio Grande City Fire Department's **New Fire Tanker has Arrived**



The Rio Grande City Fire Department recently received its highly anticipated Fire Tanker which was purchased by the City earlier this year.

"Our RGC Fire Department & Emergency Management team received a beautiful addition to their fire squad that brings inventory equipment up to standards of our growing population," said Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.



The Rio Grande City Police **Dept. Reminds Residents They Can Now Text 911**



The Rio Grande City Police Dept. would like to remind the public they now have the option to text 911 in case of emergencies where making a phone call in not possible.

How to text 911

Using the text-to-911 feature is no different than texting any other number. Still not sure how to text 911? Here are step-by-step

Step 1: Enter 911 in the number field of the messages section of your phone.

indicating the nature of the emergency you are experiencing. Be sure to include the following if you have time: What the emergency is: Include information about anyone who is hurt, if there are weapons, or if there is an active scene such as a fire. Including as much information as you can in the first message will save time, prevent your phone screen from continuing to light up if you are hiding and potentially save your phone's battery.

Where you are located: If you know Step 2: Compose a 911 text the address, type that, but also

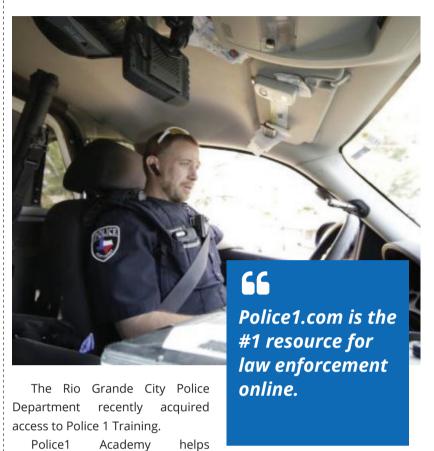
include any nearby landmarks. Don't assume the 911 operator will immediately be able to trace your location from your cellphone. Not every 911 responder has the equipment to do this. How does 911 know where you are? Often, it's because you tell them, so make sure you provide detail about your specific location.

What type of emergency response you need: Example, fire trucks, ambulance or police.

Something important to remember: What happens when you text 911 is that the operator who receives your text will commonly reply to your initial text message asking you to call if possible. If you are unable to call for safety reasons, include this in your first message so you can reduce the amount of back and forth with you and the operator.

Step 3: Send your message. As a follow up, once you have started a text conversation with the 911 operator, you can ask additional questions such as how to immediately help any victims in front of you if there is first aid you can begin to administer.

Rio Grande City Police Dept. Acquire Access to Police 1 Training



accredited or accepted for training in 37 states. Built specifically for law enforcement, it allows departments to deliver, track and assign policies and training online, in person and at roll call and is used by more than

1,500 departments of all sizes.

Municipal Court Ends Amnesty Program



Our Amnesty period has officially come to an end.

Now that the Municipal Court Amnesty opportunity has closed, we would like to remind citizens that class C misdemeanors will be enforced. Failure to appear for Texas Capias Warrants will result in arrest.

Come in and take care of your responsibilities before it's too late. Call 956-487-8889 to schedule an appointment.

If you need a payment plan, we are more than glad to help our citizens. We know these are hard times for all of us, so we are trying to make life a little easier for all. Thank you and stay

> **Basilio D. Villarreal** Municipal Judge Mayra Garcia **Court Administrator** Rebecca Saenz Administrative Assistant **Rosabel Martinez** Court Clerk

> > Bailiff

Javier Gonzalez

Here to serve you!

H-E-B Honors RGC Police Dept. Officers In Observance of Police Week

departments more efficiently and

cost effectively deliver training that

helps them better protect their

communities and improve officer

short-formattraining videos that are

It offers 200 courses and 1,000

safety.



Local grocery store H-E-B gifted treats to Rio Grande City Police Departments on Friday, May 14, in observance of National Police Week.

"We would like to recognize H-E-B for their generous gratitude and providing our Officers with some treats," state RGC PD Public Relations Rep. Ana Ramirez. "Thank you, from all of us at the RGC Police Department."

In 1962, President Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15 falls, as National Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others.

collaborative effort of many dedicated organizations honoring America's law enforcement community. principal organizers of National Police Week include: National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), Fraternal Order of Police/Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary (FOP/FOPA), and Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.).

National Police Week







ESL Classes

Free Virtual English as a Second Language Classes Every Tuesday. Call 956-487-4389



Gardening Classes

Free Virtual Gardening Classes every Tuesday. For more information call 956-487-4389



Toddler Time

Free Virtual Toddler Time Activities Ever Friday. Call 956-487-4389



RGC Library Kicks-Off "Tails & Tales" Summer Reading Program

Rio Grande City, Texas -- Summer is here so make plans to be part of our Summer Reading Program. The theme this year is "Tails & Tales". Registration for children and teens is now available online at www.rgclibrary.org.

Registered participants will get a bag

filled with goodies: craft kits, reading log, bookmark, pencil, Peter Piper coupon, folder with instructions for crafts and a special bookmark with QR codes to weekly videos. Participants may schedule a time with library staff to come into the library to return and check out books.

This is an important event at our library, encouraging our community to read and enjoy the many online/in-person benefits that the library offers over the course of the summer. We have added many FREE digital resources for our community to foster the love of reading and learning.

This summer our Fun Friday virtual programs feature CheckersTV's "The Reading Road Trip". CheckersTV is a weekly Whether people visit in person or virtually, libraries offer opportunities for everyone to explore new worlds and become their best selves...

educational entertainment program featuring Checkers the Inventor, his robot sidekick, Snoozer, and a variety of special visitors including medical professionals, community leaders, police and fire men and women, and other special guests in highly-produced 30-minute episodes. Each weekly episode also includes

segments featuring storytelling, author interviews, art projects, science experiments, interactive games, contests, comedy, magic, and exciting short films that will have children on the edge of their seats.

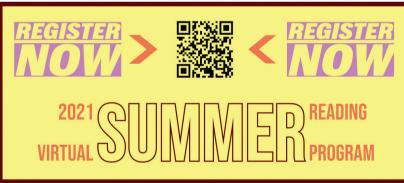
Like our Facebook page and check out our website for more information: http://www.rgclibrary.

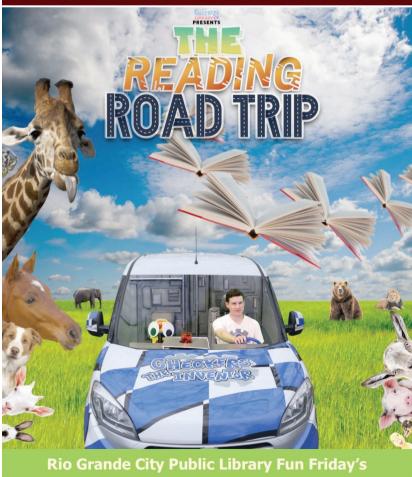
org/ .

All the programs are free. Participants will turn in their reading logs to be eligible for a T-shirt. We will also be giving away certificates and prizes at the end of the Summer Reading Program to those who turn in reading logs and submit photos of craft projects.

We would not be able to do

this without donations or grants. We want to thank the following businesses and organizations: United Way of South Texas, Medina Electric Co-op, Starr County Council of Beta Sigma Phi, Calixtro Villarreal Attorney at Law, Peter Piper Pizza, Chili's Grill & Bar, H-E-B Plus, AMC Classic Rio Grande 10, Walmart Supercenter, Rodeo Dental & Orthodontics, Taco Bell, and the Friends of the Rio Grande City Public Library.





Presents: CheckersTV "The Reading Road Trip"

www.rgclibrary.org

Rio Grande City Public Library Celebrates Dia Del Nino



The Rio Grande City Public Library, and other local organizations celebrated Dia Del Niño with a community drive-through event at Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park on Thursday, May 6.

"[This year's] Día Del Niño event was a blast," stated Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villareal. "Thank you, parents, for bringing your kids out for some fun and treats."

"Thank you to each and every individual that made this event possible, especially our Rio Grande City Public Library," added Villarreal. Since 1925, Día del niño, or the Day of the Child, has grown as an annual celebration throughout Mexico. This day recognizes children, pays homage to their importance in society, and endorses their

wellbeing.

Special thanks to Rio Grande City Police, Fire, EDC, Parks, Medina Electric Co-op, H-E-B Plus, Peter Piper Pizza, Avance Head Starts, South Texas Literacy Coalition, GFWC Florence J. Scott Women's Club, United HealthCare Dental Plan and the Friends of the Rio Grande City Public Library.



The Kelsey Bass Museum is moving forward with establishing a nonprofit organization to support museum exhibits and activities after a lapse of activity and closure due to COVID-19.

Photo
JUAN MORIN

Rio Grande City Kelsey-Bass Museum to Seeks Non-Profit Status

The Kelsey Bass Museum is moving forward with establishing a nonprofit organization to support museum exhibits and activities after a lapse of activity and closure due to COVID-19. Members of the Non-Profit Board include: David Porras, Elizabeth "Bitsy" Margo, Belinda Trevino, Robert Capels, RC Salinas, Dennise Alaniz, Dina Gutierrez, Esther Ayala, and Thelma Molina. The mission of the non-profit is to solicit for artifacts to be added to current exhibits and

fundraising activities. The group voted to use the name Kelsey Bass Heritage Foundation as its official filing name with the IRS.

Nonprofits can qualify under the 501(c) federal corporate income tax exemption. After establishing this exemption, most nonprofits are exempt under state and local tax law.

The Kelsey Bass Museum is located on 101 S. Washington St. and is open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Covid-19 Memorial Set for July 2 at Freedom Fest 2021.

A Covid-19 Memorial Ceremony is set to take place at the 2021 Freedom Fest Event happening July 2, at the Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park.

Any one who lost a loved one to Covid-19 is encoraged to contact Rio Grande City Tourism Director Sara Hernandez via email at shernandez@cityofrgc.com or by calling 956-4870-672.

As part of the memorial ceremony, photographs of those we lost to Covid-19 will be displated on the even's main stage.

Freedom Fest is an annual event held by the City of Rio Grade City and seves as the official 4th of July event for the community.

Freedom Fest 2020 was canceled due to Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time.



Main Street Launches Imagine the Possibilities Virtual Tour



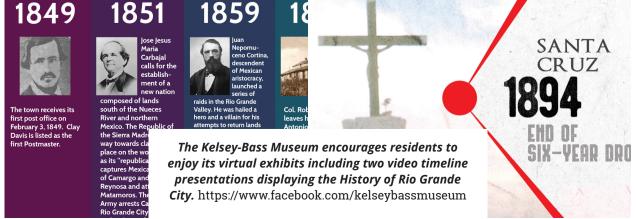
Rio Grande City Main Street premiered its 'Imagine the possibilities Virtual Tour' on Thursday afternoon, May 13, on the City's Social Media outlets.

"The Imagine the Possibilities Tours bring to life one of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) initiatives, DowntownTX. org.," stated Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal. "They are traditionally

held in May during Preservation Month, but we are hosting a virtual tour due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

"These tours will showcase available downtown properties as a way to engage potential investors, entrepreneurs, developers, residents and anyone else who has imagined themselves running a business, owning a building or living in Historic Downtown City

of Rio Grande City, Texas," added Villarreal. "We hope this event will create synergy and excitement for our historic downtown and connect the right people to the right spaces." Rio Grande City business owners who own property in the Rio Grande City Main Street District and wish to be featured in upcoming virtual tours can contact RGC Main Street at 956-487-3476.



Public Works



RGC Public Works Continues Alley Cleanup Efforts

The Rio Grande City Public Works Dept. continues its alley cleanup efforts as recent rains yield excessive brush overgrowth.

"Our public works department has been diligent in their work. In some areas around town, you'll see the difference that our hard-working employees can make," state Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

"As citizens of RGC, we hope you will join us in preserving the beauty our town has to offer and taking pride in our land," added Villarreal. "Thank you team, for making Rio radiant."

For more information about the Rio Grande City Public works Dept. residents are encouraged to call 956-488-8382, or visit www. cityofrgc.com.

RGC Public Works Dept. Crews Work to Clear Drainage

Rio Grande City Public Works
Department crews recently
dedicated time to clean out
drainage accross Rio Grande City to
reduce the risk of flodding, just in
time for Hurricane Season.

The Atlantic hurricane season officially starts June 1, and lasts through Nov. 30, usually ramping up in August, and hitting a peak in mid-September



Public Works Dept. Acquires 2 New Trailers



These two new trailers will help with citywide cleanup efforts, helping pick up brush and bulky items.





RGC Planning Dept. Reminds Residents to Acquire Permits Before Summertime Renovations

A home renovation is a great way to add value and satisfaction to your beloved abode. After all, who doesn't love stepping into a new room, a finished basement, or a renovated bathroom?

However, before "undertaking any of the character-building, heavy-lifting labor" The Rio Grande City Planning and Code Enforcement Dept. encourages residents to be sure to always acquire the propter permits.

Unpermitted work refers to any modifications made to the home that should have been permitted but were not.

Aside from a sunken property value, your biggest risk may lie in

the job itself. Without the proper permits, there's no guarantee that your contractors will execute a professional job. The results of this could be disastrous. For instance, if you sell, those substandard improvements might cause you trouble during a home inspection. Another area of concern is that any unpermitted additions may not be covered, and even violate your insurance policy. It is especially concerning if an accident or disaster occurred in that part of your home. If there's been a house fire caused by faulty wiring due to poor electrical work, or if someone fell and seriously injured themselves you could be facing a

costly nightmare.

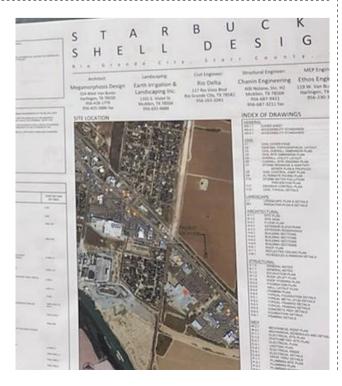
Failing to get permits could cause the value of your home to drop. Why? For starters, real estate information in your local municipality needs to be up to date to help maintain home values and stay current with taxes and insurance. Renovation permits will help ensure that your property keeps up with the latest health and safety standards.

Before starting on your summertime home renovation project please contact the RGCPCE Department at 956-488-8728 to inquire about permits, or visit in person at 5332 E. Highway 83.

RGC Sees Millions of Dollars worth of Construction and Renovations

The Rio Grande City Planning and Code Enforcement Department saw a valuation of over four million dollars in new developments in construction and renovations in the City.

"For the month of May, the Planning Department processed permits with a construction valuation of \$4,651,520 and 183,735 square feet of construction of both commercial and residential improvements," stated Rio Grande City Planning and Code Enforcement Director Gilbert Millan.



Construction Company Announces Popular Coffee Shop Coming to RGC

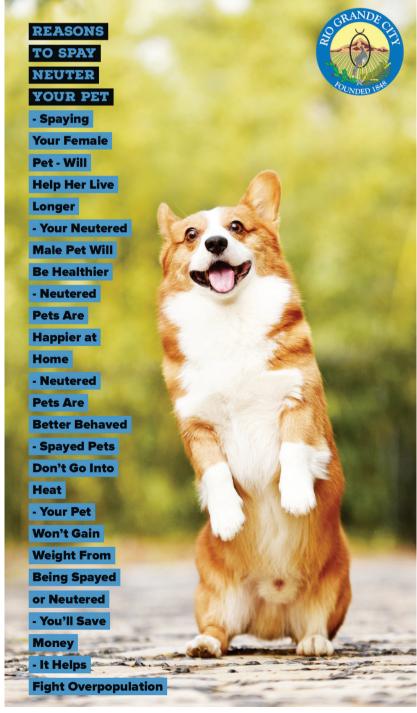
RGV Construction recently announced via social media that it had begun construction on a Starbucks Coffee Shop to be located at 4533 E. Highway 83, within the upcoming Rio Grande Village shopping plaza.

According to documentation released by the company, construction on the new 2,200 ft2, facility began on May 17, and is expected to conclude on New Year's

Day 2022. The construction effort is valued as a \$700,000 endeavor.

Starbucks Corporation is an American multinational chain of coffeehouses and roastery reserves headquartered in Seattle, Washington. As the world's largest coffeehouse chain, Starbucks is seen to be the main representation of the United States' third wave of coffee culture.





Community

Rey Ramirez Named Region 7 Athletic Admin. of the Year



Rio Grande City CISD Athletic Director Rey Ramirez was named Region 7 Athletic Administrator of the Year by the Texas High School Athletic Directors Association during their 2021 State Conference.

"Special Congratulations to our Athletic Director Rey Ramirez for being honored at the PBK Sports Hall of Honor Celebration in Round Rock Texas as a 2021 THSADA Award Winner," reads a statement from the district. "He was selected as the Region 7 Regional Athletic Administrator of the Year. Great job representing our district Coach."



Rio Grande City Staff Aids South Texas Food Bank



Rio Grande City Staff helped the South Texas Food Bank distribute boxes of food to residents on Friday morning, May 21, at RGC High School.

"There is an immeasurable amount of thanks we give to all volunteers from every city, county,

Border Patrol Installs Rescue Beacon in Rio Grande City

City officials met with Border Patrol earlier this month to learn more about a Rescue Beacons and 911 Location Marker recently installed by Duran St., on the West end of Rio Grande City.

"This beacon provides an emergency button for individuals who find themselves in a state of emergency. Each beacon placed has a specific location identifier to aid an efficient search," stated Rio Grande City Public Relation's Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

Human smugglers often abandon migrants in the harsh Texas terrain. These individuals are often left with little to no water, not knowing where they are nor how to get to their destination. As a result, many perish along the border every year. Border Patrol rescue beacons and the 911 Location Marker Project have been put in place to help prevent deaths as a result of being lost or abandoned.

The rescue beacons provide the capability for a migrant to call for medical assistance or rescue while automatically providing a location. Rescue beacons are self-contained, solar powered units placed in remote locations considered to be high risk for people in distress. Approximately 35 feet tall, each is equipped with a high visibility strobe light on top of the structure. Many of the towers utilize a camera system to determine an appropriate response and aid in the rescue effort. U.S. Border Patrol encourages anyone in distress to activate a rescue beacon or call 911 before they become a casualty.

In Our Next Issue

Freedom Fest 2021 Contest Winners

New Rio Grande City Library Programs

Rio Grande City New Development Updates

and Much More

RGC Main Street Gets a Colorful Facelift



Several of Rio Grande City Main Street Planters were recently beautified with colorful artificial flowers.

have contributed to the success of today's Food Drive Distribution event," stated Rio Grande City Public Relation's Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal. "South Texas Food Bank brought so many people together for one purpose: serving our community. Each helping hand

The South Texas Food Bank seeks to end hunger in South Texas by collecting and distributing food through many partnerships while raising awareness and educating the community on the realities of

represented one step in the mile we all walked together this morning. And together is the only way to

make substantial progress."

public and private entity that

For more information about upcoming Food Bank Distributions visit southtexasfoodbank.org.

Rio Grande City Commission Recognizes FJ Scott Women's Club



The Rio Grande City Commission took a moment to recognize the F.J. Scott Women's Club the Regular Meeting of the City Commission held at City Hall on Wednesday, May 12.

At the meeting, the City Commission thanked the club for their all their efforts in supporting the Rio Grande City public library for over three decades.

"The support of a 30-year relationship between the Rio Grande City library and members of the Florence J. Scott Women's Club caught the attention of the Texas Library Association. So much so, the non-profit organization earned the 2021 TLA Community Advocate Award," declared Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.