



# the Rio Review

THE CITY OF RIO GRANDE CITY'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

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FREE • MONTHLY • ONLINE at [www.cityofrgc.com](http://www.cityofrgc.com)

## All Rio Grande City Municipal Parks Reopen

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# MAYOR: \$25 MM IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The City of Rio Grande City Commission voted to approve several bond measures which authorized more than \$25 million in general obligation bonds and certificates of obligation to complete or begin deferred capital improvement projects that were approved by the City Commissioners. A certificate of obligation is debt issued without voters' approval and is repaid through tax revenue.

"We are currently in the process of securing contractors for these projects," declared Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal. "Our

**The City of Rio Grande City is in the process of developing several multimillion-dollar projects including the construction of a new public safety building.**

residents will see a new Public Safety building, which will house the police departments, the fire departments, our public safety and code enforcement."

According to Villarreal, the City will also soon purchase multiple fire trucks and police units. Over 30 city streets will be repaved, and improvements will be made to the

city dog kennels.

Other projects in the works include the building of a Rio Grande City Boys and Girls Youth Club facility. Another industrial development will be behind Walmart which will include thousands of square feet for storage. It will work together with the Port of Entry to increase commercial trading.

"We will have multiple multimillion dollar developments," added Villarreal. "The St. Ives development of the Rio Grande Village project will bring Starbucks, Buffalo Wings and Rings and a few others still in discussion." The St. Ives project was achieved in partnership with the City and the Economic Development

Administration. The EDA helped bring in federal monies to address the drainage issue that prevented substantial development.

Another multimillion-dollar development that is in the works involves an extension of healthcare services in the City with the help of DHR Health. "This supplementation is meant to grow our medical community with specialties which will bring higher paying jobs and services for our community. Jobs will be created with salaries, mid-level jobs, as well as higher level positions," stated Villarreal.



Artist rendition of future Rio Grande City Public Safety Building.



Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal and Roma Mayor Jaime Escobares Jr. were present to receive acceptance into the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Organization on behalf of all cities in Starr County at a meeting in April.

## Rio Grande City Accepted into RGV Metropolitan Planning Organization

Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal, as well as other Starr County officials, attended the April meeting of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization to accept membership to the group on behalf of the City.

The RGV MPO is a federally funded program that works with Rio Grande Valley communities and the Texas Department of transportation to plan for the region's future transportation needs.

The MPO also serves as a collaborative structure of committees and organizations that creates partnerships to address this region's needs.

This will allow the Valley and Rio Grande City to plan for future development in transportation needs, especially with border crossings in mind. This also allows planning to take place with Starr County cities offering localized feedback.



## 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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# Let There Be Light

## A Message From Mayor Joel Villarreal



Rio Grande City Mayor  
Joel Villarreal

**“Our  
economic  
forecast is  
extremely  
bright”**

The streetlights on Rattler Drive, in the St. Ives Development were turned on for the first time in the history of Rio Grande City on Friday April 30. We are excited about this because of what it represents.

This development is going to transform our region for generations to come. It's not only

lighting up the street, but also the symbolism behind it. This project will bring in hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in the long-term.

Progress and opportunity abound. Our economic forecast is extremely bright. We are investing in our children, the future generation and the leaders of tomorrow.

The Rio Grande City EDC invested approximately \$14,800 for the electrical groundwork necessary for AEP to install the LED street lights. The City's investment was approximately \$34,000 to AEP for the poles/lights. The energy costs for all city street lights will be paid for by the City.

## City Manager's Report

A message from Interim City Manager  
Noe Castillo



### We Are Back Open.

Most Rio Grande City offices and facilities are once again open to the public. I am especially excited to announce that all of our municipal parks are once again accessible to anyone who wants to enjoy them.

I do, however, remind residents that we take these steps with cautious optimism. Although our

vaccination numbers are currently the highest in the Valley, I encourage all residents to please continue to practice safety precautions such as wearing masks and practicing social distancing when visiting City facilities. We must continue to look out for the safety of those most vulnerable members of our community.

## Economic Snapshot



**Sales Tax**  
**April 2021**  
from same period last year **+26%**  
**Year to Date** **+15%**



**Starr County**  
**Unemployment Rate**  
January 2021  
**18.4%** (down 1.0% from March)

### City of Rio Grande City Operating Budget Summary

**Revenue Budget**  
**\$ 6.42 Million**

Projected Revenues  
The revenue sources for the city.

**Operating Budget**  
**\$ 6.41 Million**

provides funds to the city's services.



Rio Grande City Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers recognized for their efforts. Photographed from left to right are; Alondra Guillen, Madeley Morin, Laura Ramirez, Elisa Beas.

## Local VITA Volunteers Recognized for Their Efforts

The efforts of local VITA volunteers were recognized during a drive thru ceremony on Thursday, April 22, outside of city hall where they were given certificates of appreciation.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$54,000 or less, persons with disabilities, the elderly and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide

free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals. Assistance is provided at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations.

For information on volunteering as tax preparer for the VITA program in Rio Grande City, or for the locations of other tax assistance sites, visit the Free Tax Return Preparation for Qualifying Taxpayers page or call 1-800-906-9887.



## RGC PUD Kicks-Off Fire Hydrant Maintenance Campaign

While many of us drive or walk past fire hydrants without much thought, The Rio Grande City Public Utilities Dept. takes great pride in the installation and maintenance of dozens of fire hydrants in Rio Grande City. Fire hydrants provide an essential function in the maintenance of the water system and adequate fire protection for our community.

Over the past few weeks the RGC PUD has been inspecting fire hydrants throughout the community to ensure all fire hydrants in the system are in working order. These inspections

ensure hydrants have not been damaged or are not holding water that could freeze over winter, both of which would render the hydrant unusable in the event of an emergency.

You can help the RGC PUD and your fire department by following these simple tips to keep fire hydrants working properly and accessible when they are needed:

- Keep cars, bikes, toys and other objects away from fire hydrants at all times.
- During winter months, shovel snow away from fire hydrants.
- Mow and trim grass or weeds

around fire hydrants near your property.

- Do not plant flowers or shrubs around fire hydrants.
- Do not paint fire hydrants – the color of the fire hydrant top is indicative of water flow available for fire protection.

If you notice a damaged fire hydrant or witness suspicious activity near a fire hydrant, please call the RGC PUD at (956) 487-0672. Your call is important to the water service and fire protection of your home, business and others around you.



Over the past few weeks the RGC PUD has been inspecting fire hydrants throughout the community to ensure all fire hydrants in the system are in working order.

## In-Office Water Payments are Back

As of Monday, May 3, the Rio Grande City Public Utilities Department is now back to accepting payments in-person at City Hall and through the drive-thru lanes.

Rio Grande City Hall is located at 5332 E. Highway 83, and is open from Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

For more information contact the RGC PUD at 956-487-0672.



## May is National Water Safety Month

A coalition of water safety partners, including the American Red Cross, the National Recreation and Park Association, the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance and the World Waterpark Association, will work together to promote May as National Water Safety Month. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many community pools, aquatic centers and waterparks are delaying their opening dates. However, while the summer swimming season might get off to a later start than usual, the need to educate consumers about safer water practices is as important as ever.

Free water safety tips, resources and activities for parents and

children to use during their stay-at-home-time are available from a variety of trusted sites, including:

- **National Water Safety Month:** [www.nationalwatersafetymonth.org](http://www.nationalwatersafetymonth.org)
- **American Red Cross:** [www.redcross.org/watersafety](http://www.redcross.org/watersafety)
- **Colin's Hope:** [www.colinshope.org](http://www.colinshope.org)
- **CPSC's Pool Safely:** [www.poolsafely.gov](http://www.poolsafely.gov)
- **National Recreation and Park Association:** <https://www.nrpa.org/aquatics>
- **Stop Drowning Now:** [www.stopdrowningnow.org](http://www.stopdrowningnow.org)
- **World's Largest Swimming Lesson:** [www.wsl.org](http://www.wsl.org)

## Is Drought Something We'll Always be Contending With?

Spring's pretty crucial for us for drought statewide. Our big months for precipitation, on a normal basis, would be April, May, and June. And so, if we get average rainfall in April, May, and June, that's usually enough rainfall to keep us out of extreme drought through the rest of the year.

One route that we could take, and this would be the worst possible route, would be something similar to a setup like we got in 2011 where we just didn't get rains in the spring at all. We were dry coming into April, May, and June, and then April, May, and June failed us. We didn't get those rains. And at this point, that looks unlikely to be the pattern that we would follow this year. More likely, the pattern looks like we'll have about average rainfall for April, May, and June, and that will set us up for more average-type conditions for most of the state. That'll prevail in—looks like it'll prevail in—Central Texas and East Texas.

Now of course, all drought's local. And so, our friends out west in West Texas, Midland-Odessa area, they're facing a pretty rough drought right now already, even though in the rest of the state things have eased off a bit.

One of the things that will impact us in our April, May, and

June rainfall will be what's called La Niña conditions. The Weather Service has been forecasting drier than normal precipitation for us because of that. La Niña is expected to break up this spring. And that should get us back to average rainfall conditions.

The most recent seasonal drought outlook from the National Weather Service looking through the end of May anticipates drought returning to all but the eastern edge of Texas. But with the expected breakup of La Niña conditions, we should see more average rainfall by the end of May and all of June. That should be enough to keep us out of a statewide drought scenario similar to what we had in 2011.

It seems like there's almost always some part of our state that's experiencing drought. And so, it's unusual to get a weather system that is wet and above average for the entire state. So that means there will be pockets of drought almost always, whether it be the tip of the Panhandle, the tip of far West Texas. When those areas are wet, then there's a small area over in East Texas that's dry. So, it's unusual for us to be entirely in drought, and it's unusual for us to be entirely drought free. That just comes from being a large state.



## Dalinda Guillen Recognized by RGV Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



Dalinda Guillen, Executive Director of the Rio Grande City Economic Development Corporation, has been selected as an honoree for the 7th Annual Women of Distinction Awards hosted by the Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, which are set to take place on Wednesday, June 9, in Mission Texas.

"Our Women of Distinction 2021 Awards Dinner, [honors] some very amazing women," reads a statement from the RGVCC.

The event is scheduled for Wednesday, June 9th at the Mission Event Center in Mission, and will begin with a cocktail hour followed by dinner and awards.

For more information about ticket prices and sponsorship opportunities please call 956-928-0060.

This year's honorees are: Government- Veronica Gonzalez, Education: Dr. Carolina Perez, Entrepreneur- Ronnie Ontiveros, Professional- Dalinda Guillen, Arts & Entertainment- Mayra Garcia Adam, Humanitarian- Adelita Munoz, Military- Yvette Garcia, Health- Laura Disque, Rising Star- Eliza Garza, and Essential Leader- (HEB Representative).

## SBA Launches Supplemental Targeted Advance for Small Businesses Hardest Hit by COVID-19

The U.S. Small Business Administration launched a new round of Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) assistance – called Supplemental Targeted Advances – on April 22, 2021 that will provide \$5 billion in additional assistance to 1 million small businesses and nonprofit organizations that have been most severely affected by the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Supplemental Targeted Advance program is the latest SBA relief program to launch as part of the American Rescue Plan Act on March 11, 2021.

"The SBA's Supplemental Targeted Advance program aims to reach those businesses with 10 employees or less who need our help today," said SBA Administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman. "The Supplemental Targeted Advance funds will help us make sure that no small business falls through the cracks or gets left behind."

For details about the Targeted EIDL Advance and Supplemental Targeted Advance program, please visit [sba.gov/eidl](https://sba.gov/eidl). Eligible entities can email questions about the SBA Targeted EIDL Advance and Supplemental Targeted Advance to [TargetedAdvance@sba.gov](mailto:TargetedAdvance@sba.gov), COVID-19 EIDL disaster loan payment questions to [DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov](mailto:DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov), and contact SBA's Customer Service Center at 1-800-659-2955 (1-800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard of hearing).



LUPE Organization holds ribbon cutting ceremony for new extension office located on 104 E. Main St. in Downtown Rio Grande City.

## LUPE Organization Opens New Extension on Main Street

A grand opening ceremony for the new extension of La Union del Pueblo Entero – LUPE organization took place on Friday, April 16, in downtown Rio Grande City.

Founded by labor rights activist César Chávez & Dolores Huerta, LUPE builds stronger, healthier communities where colonia

residents use the power of civic engagement for social change.

From fighting deportations, to providing social services and English classes, to organizing for streetlights and drainage, LUPE responds to the needs of the community, and takes action aimed at creating a chance for a better life.

## IDEA Students Help Keep Downtown Beautiful

Students from IDEA Rio Grande City volunteered to clean up several busy streets of our historic downtown area on Saturday morning, April 10.

IDEA Public Schools, Inc (Individuals Dedicated to Excellence and Achievement Public Schools) is a not-for-profit charter

school operator based in Texas. It was formed in June 2000 and is headquartered in Weslaco, Texas.

Any local organization interested in signing up to for the City of Rio Grande City's ongoing Keep Rio Beautiful campaign can call 956-487-0672.



You may have spotted this bunch out on Britton Ave and the surrounding areas on Saturday, April 10. The students of IDEA Rio Grande City spent their Saturday morning beautifying our downtown.

### Funding Programs and Counseling to Help Your Business

[sba.gov/relief](https://sba.gov/relief)

## Rio Grande City EDC Team Participates in Fundraising Golf Tournament



Rio Grande City EDC Golf Team: RGC Commissioner Rey Ramirez, RGC EDC Board member Fred Lopez, and RGC Fire Fighter Chief Manuel Munoz.

RGC Commissioner Rey Ramirez, RGC EDC Board member Fred Lopez, and RGC Fire Fighter Chief Manuel Munoz represented the Rio Grande City Economic Development Corp. at an annual fundraising golf tournament held in Pharr on Monday, April 12.

The goal of the Golf Tournament, hosted by the Rio Grande City CISD is to raise funds for scholarships, and the district held an event at the popular TopGolf venue in Pharr, Texas.

"We were basically on the verge of cancelling it this year. As I mentioned, last year, we didn't have it because of COVID," La Grulla high School teacher Adrian Ozuna said in an interview with local media. "We actually surpassed our goal of \$125,000."



## All Rio Grande City Municipal Parks Reopen

All Rio Grande City Municipal Parks maintained by the RGC Parks and Recreation Department officially reopened to the public on Monday, May 3, 2021.

In order to promote safety, visitors to the park will be required to wear masks and practice social distancing, and the RGC Parks and Recreation Dept. will sanitize all playgrounds and restrooms daily.

The CDC encourages everyone to Follow these actions when visiting a park, or recreational facility: Visit parks that are close to your home. Traveling long distances to visit a park may contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

Check with the park or recreation area in advance to prepare safely. Stay at least 6 feet away from

people you don't live with. Use social distancing and avoid crowded parks.

Wear a mask as feasible. Masks are most essential in times when social distancing is difficult, including when hiking on trails that may be popular or crowded.

Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

Adults and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer: Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and rub hands together until dry, if soap and water are not readily available.

Do not visit parks if you are sick with, tested positive for COVID-19,



or were recently (within 14 days) exposed to COVID-19.

If you are sick with or tested positive for COVID-19, were recently

exposed (within 14 days) to someone with COVID-19, or just don't feel well, do not visit public areas including parks or recreational facilities.



Work crews lay the foundation for future basketball courts at Alta Vista Municipal Park.

## Does The Vaccine Change Any Rules About Hiking During COVID?



The short answer is: not quite yet. The COVID-19 vaccines are totally safe, and we recommend you get one as soon as you can.

Scientists are still working to determine whether and under what circumstances the COVID-19 vaccines prevent one from becoming infected with the virus altogether versus lessening the severity of the symptoms (not unlike the flu vaccine). Because of

that, it is entirely possible that you could be vaccinated but still be an asymptomatic carrier, meaning that you need to follow all proper protocols to keep others safe.

Additionally, it is not yet known when children under the age of 16, especially very young children and babies, will be able to be vaccinated. Until enough of the population is vaccinated to reach herd immunity and therefore critically slow the

spread of the virus (how much is enough is still being studied), we must all follow proper safety protocols.

How strict do you need to be about wearing a mask while outside?

When outside, the risk of spread is lower, but not by as much if you're sitting or standing in place or if you're moving along at the same pace as someone else. If you are spending time outdoors with anyone who is not a member of your household or in your "pod," we recommend that you wear a mask. If you are going for a walk/run/hike just with members of your

household/pod or alone, then, unless you're in a crowded area, you probably don't need to wear a mask.

Occasionally walking/running/hiking past someone going the opposite direction, even if you need to pass closer than 6 feet, does not run a very high risk of COVID-19 transmission (unless they were to cough directly in your face) since the risk of transmission largely depends on the presence of the virus in a person, the effectiveness of the means of transmission (e.g., coughing versus breathing), and the amount of time spent in the presence of the infected person.

## Four tips for hiking during COVID-19

1. Get off the beaten path. If you can, get out on a weekday after work or wake up early to catch the sunrise. Try out some more remote trails - this is an opportunity to step out of our normal hiking habits and try something new.
2. Mask on when passing others. Show respect to others by keeping a mask around your neck or handy so when passing others, you can pull it over your face.
3. Hike in small groups with plenty of space. In general, we shouldn't be out in large groups but this is especially true on tight trails. Once on the trail, if you and your hiking buddy are going to stop for a view, a rest, or just to chat, make sure you're off the trail.
4. Be human. Some eye contact and a "how's it going?" can go a long way. Just make sure you're interacting with a mask on and from a safe distance.

The Rio Grande City Parks and Recreation Department will strive to exceed the future demands of growth and change in our community while keeping true to the tradition and values that have made the City of Rio Grande City a family friendly place to live, work and play.



## Public Safety

# What You Need to Know About CO2 Fire Extinguishers

CO2 stands for carbon dioxide. As the name implies, this type of fire extinguisher uses carbon dioxide to kill fires. CO2 fire extinguishers are also classified as Class B fire extinguishers. CO2 fire extinguishers are for Class B fires.

Class B extinguishers are made to snuff Class B fires or those that originated from flammable liquids such as diesel, oil, and petrol (not including cooking oils) and electrical equipment and appliances.

One of the main advantages of using this type of extinguisher is there will be no mess or residue left upon discharge.

This feature is especially important for areas with sensitive electrical devices that can't come in contact with water.

Utilize fire extinguishers that use carbon dioxide rather than water for Class B fires.

The extinguishing agent used in this type of device makes it the ideal extinguisher in computer and data server rooms, laboratories, engine compartments, clean rooms, boats, generator rooms, flammable liquid storage rooms, and other similar types of places.

## How DO CO2 Extinguishers Work?

Class B fires must be extinguished by CO2 fire extinguishers.

If your property is at risk for Class B fires, then you must always have a CO2 extinguisher easily accessible and available. Also, it would be ideal to have a basic understanding of how this fire protection device works.

As mentioned above, this type of extinguisher uses carbon dioxide as its primary fire extinguishing agent. The carbon dioxide is stored in the device in its liquid state.

When you discharge the device, the carbon dioxide in its liquid form is expelled into the air. It then neutralizes or offsets the oxygen from the air that is fueling the fire.

Once the carbon dioxide interacts with the oxygen in the air, the reaction can quickly disable the growth of the fire.

The liquid state of the carbon dioxide inside the extinguisher is also at freezing temperatures. This means that aside from putting out the fire, it also prevents it from spreading further.

## The Safe Use of CO2 Fire Extinguishers

One of the primary considerations when operating any type of fire protection and safety device is safety. It's no different with CO2 extinguishers. Before you discharge it, you have to make sure it is safe to do so.

As written above, this type of extinguisher is created to combat Class B and electrical fires.

Look out for the following before you discharge the device:

- If the safety pin is bent, don't use it.
- Keep a safe distance between you and the fire before you remove the safety pin.
- If it's safe, turn off the electrical equipment before you aim the extinguisher at the fire and discharge it.
- Make sure you don't come in close contact with the horn – otherwise, it may give you frost burns. For your convenience, you can buy extinguishers with frost-free horns.
- If you're trying to put out flammable liquids, aim the horn of the device at the base and gradually move across the fire.
- Don't clasp the lever too abruptly. Make sure to squeeze it slowly to discharge the device.

# Fire Dept.

## RGC Fire Dept. Welcomes New Volunteers



New RGCFD Volunteer Fire Fighters (Left to Right) Noe Castillo Jr., Victoria Lee Reyes, and Miguel Guerrero and Noe Flores (not pictured).

The Rio Grande City Fire Department welcomes new Volunteer Fire Fighters Noe Castillo Jr., Victoria Lee Reyes, and Miguel Guerrero and Noe Flores to the team.

The Rio Grade City Fire Department is always seeking brave and selfless individuals to step up and join their team as volunteer fire fighters. For more information visit the RGC Fire Dept. located at 910 US-83, or by calling (956) 487-5312.

Becoming a volunteer firefighter is one of the most rewarding and selfless decisions you can make. Volunteer firefighters prevent and put out fires and administer first aid within their communities. Today, volunteers make up 55% of all active firefighters, making it a great first step on the ladder to becoming a paid firefighter. Keep reading to learn what it takes to fill this vital role and find out how you can get started making a difference today.

## RGCFD Helps Spread the Word on Disability Awareness Month



The Rio Grande City Fire Department visited General Sanchez Elementary on Monday, April 19, as part of an effort to promote Disability Awareness Month in the Community.

Each March, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities partners with Association for University Centers on Disabilities and National Disability Rights Network to create a social media campaign that highlights the many ways in

which people with and without disabilities come together to form strong, diverse communities.

The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all areas of community life, as well as awareness to the barriers that people with disabilities still sometimes face in connecting to the communities in which they live.



## RGC Police Dept. Announces New Text 911 Option

The Rio Grande City Police Dept. would like to inform the public they now have the option to text 911 in case of emergencies where making a phone call is 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 instructions:

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

**Step 2:** Compose a 911 text 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 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.

## RGCPD Acquires Defibrillator Devices, Certification



The Rio Grande City Police Department recently purchased 3 medical defibrillators. One will be mounted on the wall of the main PD office, and one will be located at the PD substation. The third device is mobile and will be available to supervisors out on the field.

“All RGCPD staff is now certified in First Aid, CPR, and AED.”

The RGCPD is also proud to announce all staff is now certified in First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and for use of automated external defibrillators (AED).

## RGC Municipal Court Swears in Interim Prosecutor



Municipal Judge Basilio Villarreal Jr. swore in Rio Grande City attorney, John Adam Pope IV, into office earlier this month as interim Municipal Court Prosecutor.

“I appreciate the opportunity of Judge Villarreal swearing me in,” stated Pope following the ceremony. “He has been there during very important matters in my life and I appreciate the consideration from the board for this position. I will do my very best.”

Mr. Pope will serve as Interim Municipal Court Prosecutor for six months, at which point the Rio Grande City Commission may either hire, extend, or relinquish the position.

Mr. Pope has privately practiced law state-wide since 2014 after graduating from Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan. Areas of practice include personal injury, family, criminal, and property law.

## RGCPD. Recognizes Dispatchers During National Public Safety Telecommunications Week

The Rio Grande City Police Department treated its dispatchers staff to a recognition lunch during National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

NPSTW is held annually during the second week of April to honor telecommunications personnel for their commitment, service, and sacrifice.

NPSTW initially started in 1981 by Patricia Anderson of the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office in California. In 1994, President William J. Clinton signed Presidential Proclamation 6667, declaring the second week of April as NPSTW.

This week is a time to celebrate and thank telecommunications personnel across the



Nation who serve our communities, citizens, and public safety personnel 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To learn more about the history of NPSTW, visit NPSTW.org.

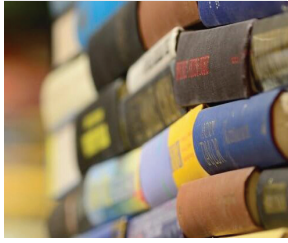


## Starr Project Observes Earth Day with Clean Up Effort

Starr Project youths came together on Thursday morning, April 22, to help clean up busy Rio Grande City streets in observance of Earth Day 2021.

Their efforts were supported by the Rio Grande City Police Department.





## 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 Every Friday. Call 956-487-4389

# RGC Library Reopens

The Rio Grande City Public Library officially reopened its doors to the public on Monday, May 3, with limited services.

"We will be opening by appointment only, in one-hour slots," stated Rio Grande City Library Director Norma

Fultz. "We will have computers available and will sanitize the facility daily."

The Rio Grande City Public Library is located on 5332 E. U.S. Highway 83 and will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Residents are encouraged to call 956-487-0672 to set up appointments.

## Fresh-Picked Produce



Our community garden outside the Rio Grande City Public Library is flourishing! This garden is open for the public to receive fresh herbs & produce. Tag us with your recipes!

## Local Sorority Offers Generous Contribution to RGC Library



The Rio Grande City Public Library received a generous contribution from a local sorority on Friday, April 9.

"Thank you to the Starr County Council of Beta Sigma Phi and all its members for your gift of \$1000 to the Rio Grande City Public Library," declared Rio Grande City Public Library Director Norma Fultz.

"Your gift will support literacy and learning in this community, helping people change their lives through reading," added Fultz. "Thank you for making a difference with your generosity."

The Rio Grande City Public Library is located on 5332 E. U.S. Highway 83. Learn more about all the program the library has to offer at [www.cityofrgc.com](http://www.cityofrgc.com).

For more information call 956-487-4389.

## Virtual Summer Reading Program

The Rio Grande City Public Library is hosting a virtual summer library program for children, teens, and adults in our community starting June 2021. This year's theme is "Tales & Tails". Online registration is now available at [www.rgclibrary.org](http://www.rgclibrary.org).

We will make arrangements to have participants come into the library to check out their books.

This is an important event at our library, encouraging children, teens, and adults 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.

**REGISTER NOW** >  < **REGISTER NOW**

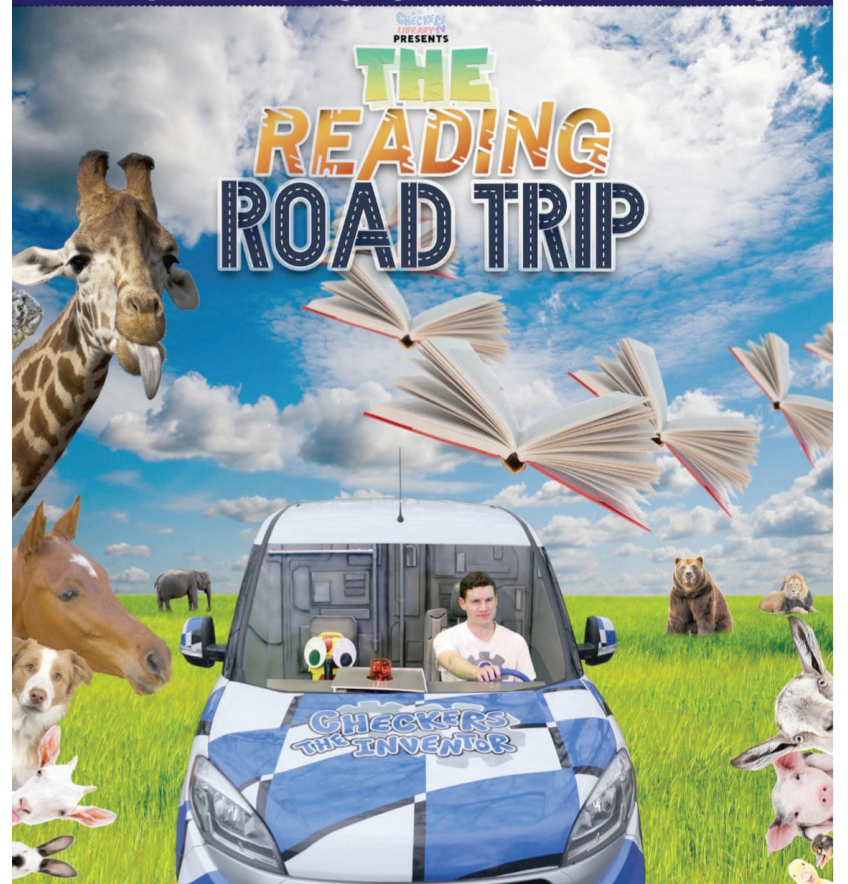
2021 **SUMMER** READING  
VIRTUAL PROGRAM

**RIO GRANDE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY**



**WWW.RGCLIBRARY.ORG**

**New Episodes Coming to your Library All Summer Long!**



**Rio Grande City Public Library Fun Friday's**  
**Presents: CheckersTV "The Reading Road Trip"**  
[www.rgclibrary.org](http://www.rgclibrary.org)



## RGC Kelsey-Bass Museum Officially Reopens to the Public

After being closed for almost a year due to Covid-19 restrictions and out of concern for public safety, the Rio Grande City Kelsey-Bass Museum officially reopened to the public on Monday, May 3.

“Some of the safety protocols in place will be that everyone will be required to wear a mask,” stated Rio Grande City Tourism Director Sara Hernandez. “There will also be hand sanitation stations throughout the museum.”

The museum has also taken the extra step of installing a new air filtration system designed to filter out viruses and allergens.

“There will be some limitations when entering the museum,” added Hernandez. “We will only be allowing in small groups at a time. It is recommended that you reserve your tour in advance.”

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. For more information about the Kelsey-Bass Museum or to reserve your individual or group tour please contact Sara Hernandez at 956-487-0672, or via email [shernanez@cityofrgc.com](mailto:shernanez@cityofrgc.com)

The Rio Grande City Kelsey-Bass Museum officially reopened to the public on Monday, May 3.

## Starr Co. Veterans Honored in Museum’s “War Room”

The Rio Grande City Kelsey Bass Museum encourages residents to tour the museum’s “War Room” exhibit honoring Starr County Veterans.

“With Memorial Day just around the corner we encourage all residents to visit our “War Room” to learn about the many brave individuals from our own home town who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedoms,” stated Rio Grande City Tourism Director Sara Hernandez.

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. For more information contact Sara Hernandez at 956-487-0672, [shernanez@cityofrgc.com](mailto:shernanez@cityofrgc.com)



## KB Museum Relaunches Legacy Brick Fundraising Campaign

**The fundraiser consists of 4x8 Legacy Bricks available for purchase at \$100 and 12x12 Legacy Paver which are available for \$300 each.**

The Rio Grande City Kelsey-Bass Museum is relaunching its Legacy Brick fundraising campaign. Residents and businesses are encouraged to take the opportunity to support the museum while leaving their mark in the community.

**Perhaps you would like to:**

- Memorialize a loved one
- Create a permanent place in the community for yourself and your children
- Honor a soldier, veteran or service person with a patriotic thank you
- Promote your business and show community support



The fundraiser consists of 4x8 Legacy Bricks available for purchase at \$100 and include the option of 3 lines of up to 14 characters. The second option is a 12x12 Legacy Paver which are available for \$300 each and may include 6 lines of up to 14 characters.

Proceeds from the Legacy Brick fundraising campaign will go directly into funding exhibits and events hosted by the museum. 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. For orders or more information contact Sara Hernandez at 956-487-0672, [shernanez@cityofrgc.com](mailto:shernanez@cityofrgc.com)



Stop by the Rio Grande City Kelsey-Bass Museum courtyard located on 101 S. Washington St. to view Legacy Bricks and Legacy Pavers already on display.





## RGC Public Works Dept. Acquires New State-of-the-Art Tractor

The Rio Grande City Public Utilities Department recently acquired a new John Deere 4x4 Tractor and Rotary Unit. This new valuable piece of equipment will be used for the maintenance of right-of-ways, detention ponds, maintenance of the municipal airport as well as general property maintenance.

The tractor was acquired by the City of Rio Grande City through Certificates of Obligations with a total cost of \$60,000 for the tractor unit and a cost of \$20,000 for the Rotary Unit.

For more information about the Rio Grande City Public Works Dept. Please call 956-487-0672

## RGC Public Works Dept. Reminds Residents to Report Abandoned Tires

Tires left near roadways, riverbanks, open fields, or residences can create safety, environmental, and health hazards. For example, tires can pose a fire hazard and provide a habitat for disease causing vectors.

If you notice tires that are improperly disposed of or abandoned, report the location and other details to the Rio Grande City Public Works Dept. at 956-488-8382



## Download the Report a Litterer App From Your Smartphone App Store



Even after more than 35 years of the Don't mess with Texas campaign, litterbugs still roam the roadways, tossing trash from their car windows and letting litter fly out of their truck beds. We're talking about cigarette butts, fast food wrappers, and the like. They're small, but they're still trash.



## Public Works Bulk Drop Off Schedule

RGC residents may utilize the city-wide trash drop off located at the 14 acres property (632 W. Eisenhower St.) with a Driver's License and Utility Bill. This is a great opportunity to throw away any additional brush, appliances, and other bulky items.

Available dates for drop-offs are highlighted in yellow.  
Hours: Monday - Friday 9 AM - 6 PM  
Saturdays 9 AM - 2 PM

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 CityofRGC
  City of Rio Grande City, Texas
  CityofRGC





The Rio Grande City Planning & Code Enforcement Department receive site plans for upcoming new construction projects.

# Starbucks, 7 Eleven-Stripes, Panda Express Site Plans Received by Planning Dept.

The Rio Grande City Planning and Code Enforcement Department is excited to announce it has received site plans for Starbucks, 7 Eleven/Stripes, and Panda Express. This is a crucial first step in the inevitable development of these facilities within the future Rio Grande Village shopping plaza.

RGC Planning Dept. Director Gilbert Milan encourages all residents to call or visit the department for questions about proper procedure when it comes to construction projects within city limits. Homeowners can contact the department with questions about permits and guidelines for major home remodeling projects.

The purpose of the Planning & Code Enforcement Dept. is to provide planning, preservation and design services to make Rio Grande City the most livable city in the country.

The City of RGC is committed to improving the experience of residents, small businesses, developers and other stakeholders needing these services.

The department has undergone an extensive process to lay the groundwork to making necessary changes for Rio's future.

Be sure to contact the RGCCE Dept. at 956.488.8728 for more information on the following permits:

- Building Permit Application
- Cert of Appropriateness
- Electrical Permit
- Mechanical Permit
- Plumbing Permit
- Pushcart
- Roofing Permit
- Sign Permit
- Parade/Special Event Permit
- Fundraiser Permit
- Itinerant Vendor Application
- Mobile Food Vendor Application
- Soliciting Application
- Temporary Food Establishment for Special Events Permit
- Garage Sale Permits
- Questions about Public Signage

# Meet Rocco, RGC's National Pet Contest Winner

The City of Rio Grande City congratulates Rocco for winning our National Pet Day Contest.

Rocco's favorite things to do are fighting with his big brother AJ and popping bubbles.

National Pet Day on April 11th dedicates the day to those pets who may not always get the companionship and attention pets deserve.



# Warm Weather Pet Safety

You might know that cold weather poses health risks to your pets, but so does warm weather – even on days that don't seem that hot to you. Knowing the risks and being prepared can help keep your pet safe.

**Be prepared**

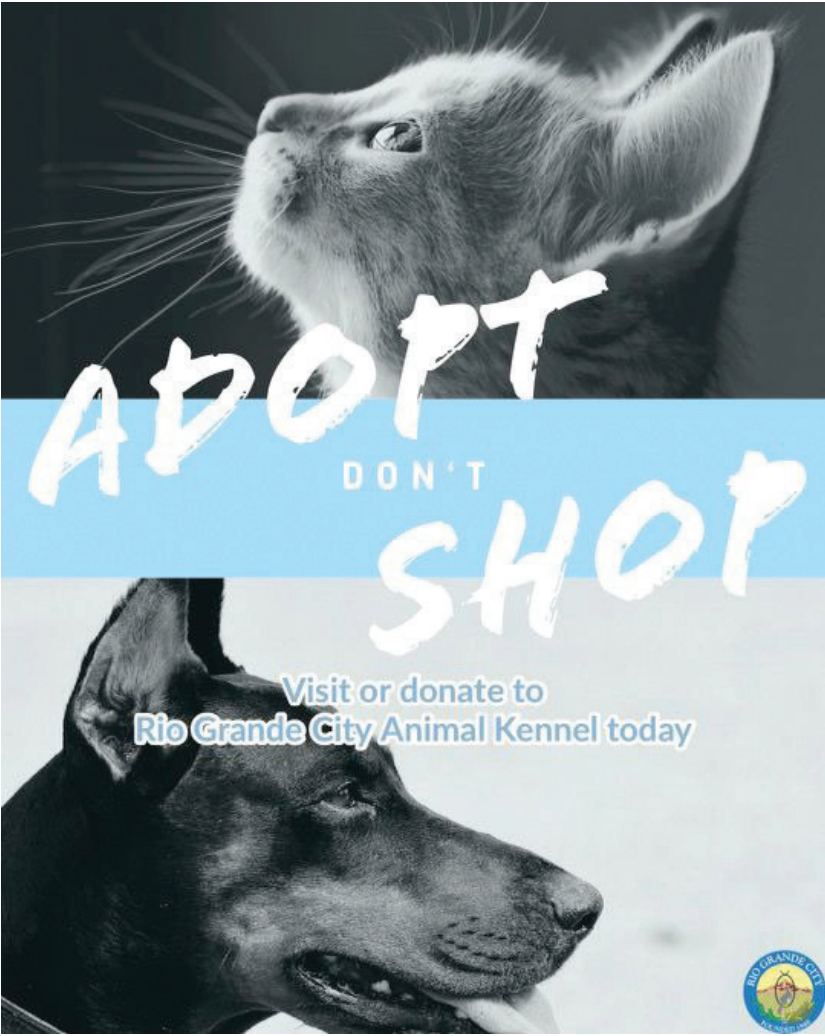
- Talk to your veterinarian about warm weather risks for pets (and travel safety if you plan to travel with a pet).
- Make sure your pets have unlimited access to fresh water, and access to shade when outside.
- Keep your pet free of parasites that are more common during warm weather, such as fleas, ticks and heartworm.
- Ask your veterinarian how to recognize signs of heat stress.

**Keep pets at home**

- Leave your pets at home if possible when you need to go out and about.
- Provide different temperature zones within your house for your pet's comfort.
- Never leave a pet in the car, even in the shade or with windows cracked. Cars can overheat quickly to deadly temperatures, even when the weather isn't severe.

**Signs of Heat Stress. Seek emergency veterinary care if you observe any of these signs:**

- Anxiousness
- Excessive panting
- Restlessness
- Excessive drooling
- Unsteadiness
- Abnormal gum and tongue color
- Collapse





## Rio Grande City Native Featured in Popular Reality TV Show



Rio Grande City native San Juanita Garcia is currently competing in the popular Spanish language television show 'Tengo Talento, Mucho Talento'.

TTMT is a reality show that searches out the most talented individuals within the United States, and is made specifically for a Hispanic audience.

The show allows all who participate to present their talents in front of four celebrity judges, but in the end, the public decides who wins the grand prize of \$ 100,000 and the launch of the winner's professional career.

TTMT also stars singer Ana Bárbara, Pepe Garza, the multi-talented Don Cheto and singer Chiquis Rivera, as the judges.



## Starr County Youth Continues Recycling Efforts

Rio Grande City youth Alma Peña continues efforts to encourage recycling in Starr county.

Peña, who's efforts were recently highlighted in local media started her plastic-only recycling projects almost two years ago when she was only 12 years old.

"It started with the influence of a friend to recycle at home, when I realized that Starr County didn't have a recycling

facility," said Peña. "So, I got to work. I first started with family and my two middle schools. Now I have the support of a few small businesses and the RGCCISD School District. I have recycling bins now in almost all the campuses in the district."

Peña's ultimate goal for the Starr Project is to do her part in helping the city of Rio Grande City eventually open a recycling facility. "For now though, I'm thinking global and acting local," Peña added.

More than 35 million tons of plastics were generated in the United States in 2018, which was about 12 percent of the waste stream. Only 8.7 percent of plastics were recycled in 2018. Some types of plastics are recycled much more than others. Most community recycling programs accept some, but not all, types of plastics. Look for products made from recycled plastic materials.

### In Our Next Issue

Read all about  
Freedom Fest 2021

Updates on Rio Grande  
Village Project

Rio Grande City Parks  
and Rec. Summer  
Programs

and much more!

## Local Clubs Team Up to Clean Up Downtown



The Rio Grande City Rattler 4-H & FJ Scott Women's Club volunteered to help clean up the downtown area on Saturday morning, April 24.



## Local Women's Club Recognized By Texas Library Association



The Rio Grande City Women's Club recently received the Outstanding Community Library Advocate Award

The Rio Grande City Women's Club recently received the Outstanding Community Library Advocate Award from the Texas library Association.

The Texas Library Association Small Community Libraries Round Table (SCLRT) recognizes outstanding advocates who go above and beyond to ensure that small community libraries throughout Texas have the best library services available. This is a chance for librarians to honor those individuals or groups who, through advocacy, fundraising, or library volunteerism, have made a difference to the library in their communities. For the purposes of this award, a small library is defined as one with a population served of under 25,000.

## Promoting Tourism in the Border Area



Starr County Officials met with Miguel Aleman Officials to discuss tourism and health safety measures in Mexico as well as in United States. Miguel Aleman is in a very close proximity to Roma,

Texas and at this time specifically with the expected retail growth in Starr County, ensuring camaraderie between the two nations to promote positive tourism experiences is of great importance.