



# the Rio Review

THE CITY OF RIO GRANDE CITY'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

• Vol-01 • Edi-04 • JULY 2021

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

## Freedom Fest 2021 Cook-Off Champs

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# COMING SOON



## STARBUCKS, PANDA EXPRESS, AND BUFFALO WINGS & RINGS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING

Developers, city leaders and other local officials gathered earlier this month for a ground-breaking ceremony of City of Rio Grande City, Texas's first Starbucks Coffee Company, Panda Express and a new Stripes convenience store.

"The City Commission and

I are thrilled to welcome all of these new businesses to Rio Grande City," said Mayor Joel Villarreal.

Located off highway 83, within the new Rio Grande Village shopping plaza, the new Starbucks will consist of a single-story building totaling

2,244 square feet.

Next door, Panda Express is on its way to open its first restaurant in the city this Fall. The 2,381 square foot building is the second construction project at Rio Grande Village, following Whataburger's relocation to the property in the Fall of 2020.

On the west boundary, and at the busy intersection of US Hwy 83 and FM 755, Stripes Convenience Stores is adding its fourth location and bringing with it a Laredo Taco Company restaurant

"We're looking forward to Buffalo Wings and Rings

and a new Hilton hotel with much anticipation," said Rey Ramirez, Rio Grande City EDC Board President. "Clothing retailers are also a large part of the recruitment strategy and workforce opportunities in the city."





## 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  
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Rio Grande City, TX 78582

# We Are in a Position of Strength

## A Message From Mayor Joel Villarreal



"We are in a great position. We are in a position of strength. So we need to continue to promote the areas or pieces of the puzzle as to the betterment of our communities of Starr County, as a whole," RGC

Mayor Joel Villarreal stated in an interview with BorderReport

News of a new initiative between Rio Grande City & Roma Ports of Entry brought a promising outlook on the challenges our two border

communities face.

By restructuring public relation initiatives in a collaborative effort between U.S. and Mexican officials, growth is expected in the region.



Rio Grande City Mayor  
Joel Villarreal

*"We are in a great position. We are in a position of strength. So we need to continue to promote ... Starr County"*

## RGC Mayor Joel Villarreal Represents City at International Trade Meeting



Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal and several other community leaders participated in the first joint trade meeting between the Roma-Miguel Aleman and Rio Grande City-Camargo Ports of Entry which took place earlier this month. The purpose of meeting was to address current trade issues along the border.

At the meeting, CBP Port Director, Andres Guerra, urged the need for a group that represents both ports, on both sides of the

border with a structured plan of how to promote the two crossings.

"Mayor Joel Villarreal offers Rio Grande City's aid in any capacity necessary for the benefit of economic growth to our region," stated Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal. "As the two ports continue to merge under the direction of a single Director, positive changes to the Starr County economy are expected."

## City Manager's Report

A message from Deputy City Manager  
Noe Castillo



Summertime is in full swing in Rio Grande City, and following one of the most difficult years in modern human history, many of us embrace this Summer with a new, and profound sense of gratitude.

Let's keep in mind however that temperatures are reaching historic highs all across the country. Although we may be used to

dealing with South Texas heat, let's be mindful of our friends, family and neighbors.

If it seems like anyone lacks the resources to beat this Summer heat, please lend a helping hand whenever possible or encourage them to reach out to City Hall for information on available resources and/or shelters.







## RGC Public Utilities Welcomes 4-H Water Ambassador

Rio Grande City Public Utilities staff recently met with Maddie Olivarez who is participating in the 4-H Water Ambassador Program. As part of the program, Ms. Olivarez will be traveling to different water sources and facilities throughout Northern Texas as part of her research.

The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program provides high school youth an opportunity to gain advanced knowledge and develop leadership skills related to the science, technology, engineering, and management of water in Texas.

Ms. Olivarez's efforts involve meeting with representatives from

various entities addressing how they have handled water issues.

"Rio Grande City is lucky to have a young spirit eager to bring knowledge and growth back to our environment," stated Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal. "We look forward to hearing how we can help Maddie in accomplishing her initiative of improving water quality. On that note, we'd like to thank Cynthia Escamilla, our Water Department Operations Manager and Alex Guerra from our Public Utilities department for nurturing Maddie's curiosity."

## Administration (Cont.)

### Starr County Ports of Entry Continue Strong Partnership



Rio Grande City and Roma, two neighboring South Texas towns, now have more in common than just a unique history.

Mayor Joel Villarreal and Chief of Police Noe Castillo met with Andres Guerra, the recently named Port Director for both RGC and Roma, a position that was formerly two separate roles.

The Roma and Rio Grande City ports are part of a commercial

trade zone that stretches from Starr County to Willacy County.

Guerra explains that the reason many trucks venture through the southern border versus Arizona and California is due to the cost of US freight vs Mexican freight. Trucking companies heading for the east coast save money while also arriving at their final destinations three days earlier.

Guerra entrusts his goal is to

increase the growth of the port while also contributing to the growth of our communities in a safe and honest effort.

"Rio Grande City is proud to be part of this discussion and working relationship that will bring more jobs, business, and opportunities to our home and the future to come," declared Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

### Rio Grande City, Roma Continue Working Together for a Stronger Starr County



Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal and Roma Mayor Jaime Escobar, Jr. were invited to explore a new addition to the Roma Downtown District. The two have been cultivating ideas that attract new growth and prosperity to their communities.

"Regionalism is achieved through partnerships and collaborations that are mutually beneficial to our municipalities," says Mayor Villarreal.

A shared mission is to embrace the unique southern charm our towns have to offer while improving quality of life.

"As recent events have brought border towns into the national eye, we're working on providing the public with a destination that showcases the rich trade and ranching culture our great cities were forged upon," stated Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.



# IT TAKES A VILLAGE



## How collaboration is raising Rio's most ambitious project

A project like the Rio Grande City St. Ives development takes a lot of planning and collaboration between all team members and organizations involved.

"Years of brainstorming, researching, trial and error, and rejection are part of the process. Sweating in 100-degree weather is just part of the job," declared Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

Rio Grande City Mayor Joel

Villarreal and Interim City manager Noe Castillo met with RGC Economic Development Corporation Director Dalinda Guillen to map out yet another piece of Rio Grande City's future.

"We are excited to share this next idea with you when the details are official," added Villarreal. "This is what the initial stages look like. Thank you, citizens, for placing your trust in our team to nurture RGC growth one hot day at a time."



**Funding Programs  
and Counseling to  
Help Your Business**

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



## Rio Grande City Enjoys Massive Fireworks Display Thanks to EDC



The Rio Grande City Economic Development Corp. was the official sponsor of this year's Freedom Fest fireworks display.

After being canceled last year due to Covid-19 restrictions, Rio Grande City's official 4th of July celebration returned this year to 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 was

presented by the Grammy Award winning band, Grupo Solido and featured vendors, a car show, a cook-off competition and live musical performances by Grupo Solido, The Isaac Jacob Band, and La Mafia.



# PARKED AT THE PARK

This year's Freedom Fest celebration featured a car, truck and bike show at the Basilio Villarreal Municipal Park hosted by Rio G's Car Shows, and sponsored by Starr Trucking, KHP Performance & Tuning, Billet Pros, and Starr Insurance.



## TOP 30 ENTRIES





# FIGHTING FIRES FAST & FURIOUSLY

The Rio Grande City Fire Department's new fire fighting and emergency vehicles are ready to roll.

The Rio Grande City Fire Department recently received its highly anticipated Fire Tanker which was purchased by the City earlier this year, as well as a new 2021 F-550 Super Cab, Skeeter Brush Truck with 400 gallon water tank.

"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.

"We are grateful to provide service to those in need and are prepared to extinguish any fire that stands in the way of public safety," added Villarreal. "Thank you, citizens, Mayor Joel Villarreal and commissioners for making this possible."

On some occasions, a fire engine may be used to transport first responder firefighters, paramedics or EMTs to medical emergencies due to their proximity

to the incident.

The standard fire engine transports firefighters to the scene, carries equipment needed by the firefighters for most firefighting scenarios, and may provide a limited supply of water with which to fight the fire.

The tools carried on the fire engine will vary greatly based on many factors including the size of the department and the usual situations the firefighters handle. For example, departments located

near large bodies of water or rivers are likely to have some sort of water rescue equipment. Standard tools found on nearly all fire engines include ladders, hydraulic rescue tools (often referred to as the jaws of life), floodlights, fire hose, fire extinguishers, self-contained breathing apparatus, and thermal imaging cameras.

The exact layout of what is carried on an engine is decided by the needs of the department. For example, fire departments located

in metropolitan areas will carry equipment to mitigate hazardous materials and effect technical rescues, while departments that operate in the wildland-urban interface will need the gear to deal with brush fires.

Some fire engines have a fixed deluge gun, also known as a master stream, which directs a heavy

stream of water to wherever the operator points it. An additional feature of engines are their preconnected hose lines, commonly referred to as preconnects. The preconnects are attached to the engine's onboard water supply and allow firefighters to quickly mount an aggressive attack on the fire as soon as they arrive on scene.





## LETR Impact



Torch Runners from all 4 counties and LE Agencies in the RGV



Nearly 8,000 athletes in the RGV



12 sports throughout the year in the RGV



Over 10 Fundamentals Skills Events with nearly 2000 participants



**Global Results**  
Gross Revenue  
\$65,659,856



**National Results**  
Gross Revenue  
\$59,240,908

# Law Enforcement Torch Run Relay Makes its way to Starr County



The Law Enforcement Torch Run, or LETR, is the largest grassroots fundraiser for Special Olympics Texas. It was created in 1981 by Chief Richard LaMunyon

of the Wichita, Kansas Police Department.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run started in Texas in 1985 and has raised over \$30 million dollars

since its inception. In 2019, LETR officers from across Texas raised almost 1.4 million dollars to support over 58,000 athletes in their year-round competitions. Funds raised through Law Enforcement Torch Run activities help offset expenses for athlete competitions, facility rentals, housing, meals, uniforms, equipment, and more.

Each agency will be considered a team and each agency will raise money from their community via their social media pages and from plain ol' asking the people they know, fellow officers/ agents, and non-leo staff at your agency. This will bring the local community together in support of Law Enforcement and the local Special Olympic Athletes in their community. Prizes will be given to the top 3 fundraising

individuals and awards plaques will be given to the top 3 fundraising agencies.

Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities, providing year-round training and activities to 5 million participants and Unified Sports partners in 172 countries.

Special Olympics competitions are held every day, all around the world—including local, national and regional competitions, adding up to more than 100,000 events a year.

Like the International Paralympic Committee, the Special Olympics organization is recognized by the International Olympic Committee.

## Law Enforcement Torch Run Relay for Special Olympics Texas RGV

- Law Enforcement only -



**September 25th, 2021**

**Registration 7:00 am**

**5K Relay Run 8:00 am**

### LOCATIONS:

- Cameron and Willacy County law enforcement - Brownsville Police Department
- Hidalgo County law enforcement - Pharr City Hall
- Starr County law enforcement - Rio Grande City City Hall

**AWARDS FOR THE MOST MONEY RAISED**

**JOIN YOUR FELLOW LEO'S IN SUPPORT OF OVER 7,000 CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY BY SUPPORTING THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS TEXAS RGV TORCH RUN**

• COMMUNITY • LEADERSHIP • DUTY

**Start giving today!**

Scan the QR code with your phone camera

For more Information, visit:

<https://givebutter.com/RioGrandeValleyLETR>



**Special Olympics Texas**



## HOW DOES MY SUPPORT HELP?

The positive benefits of your support reach far beyond the day of event changing the lives and perceptions of your employees, your company and your community.

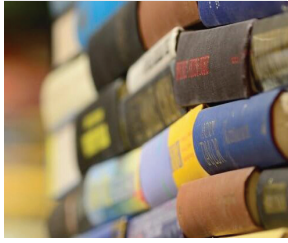
### LETR PARTICIPANTS:

- Promote community wellness by building relationships with athletes and Law Enforcement
- Gain access to easy and fun year-round volunteer options
- Strengthen the partnership between Law Enforcement, your community, and SOTX athletes.
- **100%** of funds raised locally by LETR remain in your community!

### JOIN THE MOVEMENT

LETR exists in over 34 countries. Besides the Torch Run, LETR hosts year-round fundraising opportunities, such as merchandise sales, Polar Plunges, Sports Tournaments, and Fire Truck Pulls that you can definitely get involved in.





## 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

# Read Books, Win Prizes!

The Rio Grande City Public Library's "Myth, Mysteries & Legends," a virtual Summer Reading Program, through July 31. Rio Grande City residents of all ages are encouraged to sign up for this virtual event read, earn badges and win prizes.

To claim prize(s), readers can complete books, hours of reading, or activities. "Participants can log books, hours, and activities online by clicking on <https://rgclibrary.beanstack.org/reader365> or by going to our website [www.rgclibrary.org](http://www.rgclibrary.org).

Library staff will reach out to participants who complete reading goals and challenges for prizes, the first week in August.

Read your favorite books and win prizes and awards. The more you read, the more prizes you get! Stop by the library to look for books by genre, age and author. Register for a library card if you don't already have one at 591 E. Canales (3rd) St, Rio Grande City, TX. For more details call 956-487-4389.



# RGC Library Honors Leticia Guerra for Her 25 Years of Service

The Rio Grande City Public Library would like to official recognize Leticia "Lety" Guerra for 25 years of service to her community as a member of the library's dedicated and hard working staff.

"Thank you Leticia "Lety" Guerra for being an essential part of the Library's success," stated Rio Grande City Public Library Director Norma Fultz. "Congratulations on your 25th work anniversary."

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

# Rio Grande City Newspaper Archive Available Online



The Rio Grande Herald is available online through the support of Rescuing Texas History in partnership with the Rio Grande City Public Library, the Rio Grande Herald collection documents nearly forty years of Rio Grande City's heritage.

"When the Herald closed down the library received the paper copies from 1972- April 2010 (with gaps) of the newspaper. We knew we had to preserve and digitize the newspapers we had. We reached out to the University of North, Texas Portal to Texas History staff. They recommended we first count the pages per issue to know the size of the collection and have them microfilmed. This partnership created an amazing opportunity to get the Rio Grande Herald funded," said Norma Gomez Fultz, Rio

Grande City Public Library Director.

Explore Herald newspaper articles and clippings for help with genealogy, history and other research. It's FREE and easy to search and explore just go to <https://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/RGHD/>.

The Portal is a gateway to Texas history materials contains unique collections from Texas libraries, museums, archives, historical and genealogical societies, and private family collections. The Portal features digital reproductions of photographs, maps, letters, documents, books, artifacts, newspapers, and more.

For more details on the Rio Grande Herald and other library digital resources visit us online at [www.rgclibrary.org](http://www.rgclibrary.org) or call 956-487-4389.

# E-COMMERCE ROADMAP STRATEGIC SELLING II

**July 27, 2021 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM**  
**Virtual Session | via Zoom**  
**Fee: None | General Information: 956-665-7535**

South-West Texas Border  
**Small Business Development Center Network**  
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley SBDC

## Are you interested in launching an online business?

Do you want to grow your existing business through online sales? Join us for the second session of strategic selling! This session is designed to assist any small business owner searching for tips and tools to engage in electronic commerce!

## Session II Highlights

Learn about the following:

- Selling on Social Media
- Determining Your Social Media Audience
- Defining Engaging Social Content
- Understanding Marketing Automation

## Presented by

This webinar is presented by E-commerce Specialist and Educator Edward Lugo.

## Hosted and promoted by

This webinar is hosted by the UTRGV SBDC with promotional support from the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce, Greater Pharr Chamber of Commerce, Palmview Chamber of Commerce, Rio Grande City Public Library, South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce, and Starr County Industrial Foundation.



**Reserve your spot today. Click and register on eCenter Direct.**

**\*Deadline to register is July 26, 2021.**



VISIT US ONLINE: [UTRGV.EDU/SBDC](http://UTRGV.EDU/SBDC)

Funded in part through the State of Texas and a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency will be made, if requested at least two weeks in advance, by calling the UTRGV SBDC at (956) 665-7535. Assistance for the hearing impaired can be obtained by calling the TDD line at 1-866-410-5787 or 1-866-327-8877.



# FREEDOM FEST 2021 COOK-OFF CHAMPS



Several teams competed in the Rio Grande City 2021 Freedom Fest cook-off competition. Teams competed in several categories including Pan de Campo, Ribs, Carne Guisada and Fajita.

After being canceled last year due to Covid-19 restrictions, Rio Grande City's official 4th of July celebration returned this year to 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 was presented by the Grammy Award winning band, Grupo Solido and featured vendors, a car show, a cook-off competition and live musical performances by Grupo Solido, The Isaac Jacob Band, and La Mafia.

This Year's 2021 Freedom Fest cook-off competition winners were;

## **Pan de Campo**

- 1st place - El Rocio Ranch
- 2nd - Red Hot Chili Peppers
- 3rd - Sign Works

## **Carne Guisada**

- 1st Place - 300 Plus Cooking
- 2nd - Red Hot Chili Peppers

## **3rd - Western Glamour**

## **Ribs**

- 1st Place - Under Dogs
- 2nd Place - Chillin & Grillin
- 3rd Place - Pino's Pizza

## **Fajita**

- 1st Place - Big Red
- 2nd Place - Under Dogs
- 3rd Place - Chillin & Grillin

"We would like to thank all the teams that participated in the cook-off competition this year," said Rio Grande City Tourism Director Sara Hernandez. "We had all had a great time, and we invite everyone to compete again next year."



Sign Works - Pan de Campo 3rd Place



Red Hot Chili Peppers - Pan de Campo 2nd Place, Carne Guisada 2nd Place



El Rocio Ranch - Pan de Campo 1st Place



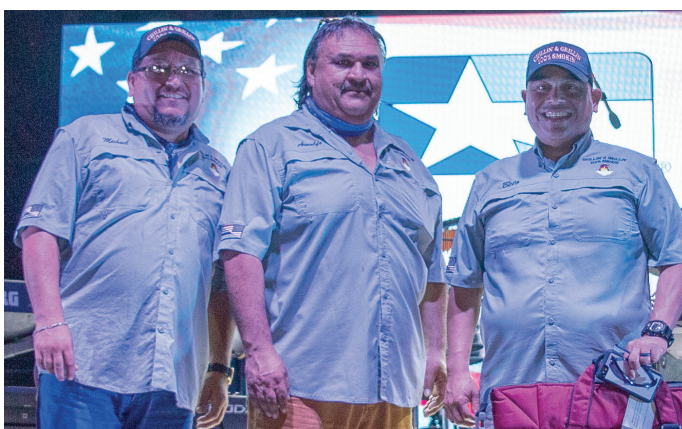
Western Glamour - Carne Guisada 3rd Place



300 Plus Cooking - Carne Guisada 1st Place



Pino's Pizza - Ribs 3rd Place



Chillin and Grillin - Ribs 2nd Place, Fajita 3rd Place



Underdogs - Ribs 1st Place, Fajita 2nd Place



Big Red - Fajita 1st Place



# CLEAN SWEEP

## CLEANING STREETS, SAVING WINDSHIELDS

The Rio Grande City Public Utilities Department recently dedicated resources to update its mechanical street sweepers with new industrial bristles.

Newer street sweepers are capable of collecting small particles of debris. Many street sweepers produced today are PM10 and PM2.5 certified, meaning that they are capable of collecting and holding particulate matter sized less than 10µm and even down to 2.5µm. Despite advancements in

street sweeping technology, the mechanical broom type street sweeper accounts for approximately 90 percent of all street sweepers used in the United States today.

The very first street sweeping machine was patented in 1849 by its inventor, C.S. Bishop. For a long time, street sweepers were just rotating disks covered with wire bristles. These rotating disks served as mechanical brooms that swept the dirt on the streets.



## RGC Public Works Dept. Continues Equipment Maintenance



Public Works Crewmen welding the City's JD Tractor to grabber to continue to pick up brush.

## RGC Drainage Maintenance is Ongoing



Drainages are being cleaned throughout the city to avoid flooding from happening on our city streets and our residence properties.

### 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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# CALL BEFORE YOU RENOVATE

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 proper 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.



**“ 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. ”**

## REASONS

## TO SPAY

## NEUTER

## YOUR PET

## - Spaying

## Your Female

## Pet - Will

## Help Her Live

## Longer

## - Your Neutered

## Male Pet Will

## Be Healthier

## - Neutered

## Pets Are

## Happier at

## Home

## - Neutered

## Pets Are

## Better Behaved

## - Spayed Pets

## Don't Go Into

## Heat

## - Your Pet

## Won't Gain

## Weight From

## Being Spayed

## or Neutered

## - You'll Save

## Money

## - It Helps

## Fight Overpopulation



## How To Keep your House Cool, While Saving on Energy Costs

With temperatures reaching record highs, and energy prices being so unpredictable, here are a few tips to keep your house cooler when the thermometer creeps up and up, and ways to make your A/C use more efficient.

Open windows at night. In places and during times of year where it substantially cools at night (overnight temps in the mid-70s or lower), pop the windows open once the sun goes down. You'll be amazed at how quickly the warm air is replaced with cool, refreshing air.

Better yet, utilize fans (or a whole house fan if you have one) to create tunnels of cool air coming into your home. To get the most out of your efforts with this method, crack a window on the main floor of the house, while widely opening a window on the second floor on the opposite side of the home, with a fan in that one sucking air out. Since heat rises, you'll more quickly get the hot air out and cool air in.

Keep blinds closed during the day. Up to 30% of unwanted heat in your home is coming through your windows via the greenhouse effect — sunlight and heat enter, but cannot escape. The remedy is to keep your blinds closed during the day; if this makes your home feel too much like a cave, focus especially on west- and south-facing windows. Doing this can actually

lower the mid-day temperature of your home by almost 20 degrees.

To make this action even more efficient, get light-colored blinds that will reflect rather than absorb the sun's heat, and open them again at night when it's cool. You can even place cardboard in the windows to further block heat from entering.

Your appliances may also be making your house warmer. The obvious is the oven, but all appliances throw off a lot of heat when running. Below are tips that will mitigate their heat output.

Do chores at night. Laundry machines throw off a lot of heat. The washer is running hot water, and driers are obviously using heated air which inevitably escapes and radiates out from the machine. Now, you can't get away with not doing laundry (hopefully), but you can ensure it's not heating your home during the hottest parts of the day. Do your laundry loads at night to keep things cooler. Also, regularly clean the dryer vent for a quicker cycle.

Your dishwasher also puts out a lot of heat. Like with laundry, run it at night to minimize the heating effect. If you have a quiet model, start it before you go to bed and you'll wake up with clean dishes!

Skip the oven/stove; grill more. Any usage of the oven or even the stove-top is going to heat your

home. So what's one to do? Dust off the grill and get comfortable with it! You can grill many of the things you'd be making in an oven or on the stovetop — meat, pizza, veggies, fish, and even desserts like cobbler!

If you do use the stove, make sure to turn the fan on, especially if it vents to the exterior. If it just recirculates the air, it won't cool things much, but it will at least improve airflow.

Keep the furnace fan on. Most thermostats allow you to manually turn the fan on that blows hot air through your home in the winter. In the summer, that fan can be run on its own to circulate and more evenly distribute the cooler air from the basement or main level. It also acts as another way to keep the air flowing and moving, which makes you feel cooler.

Change your AC filters regularly. Every 4-6 weeks, especially during the months of heaviest use, change out your air filters if you have an air conditioner (check them more frequently if you're running the furnace fan). A dirty filter not only reduces air quality, but also efficiency of airflow. Know your filter size, and always have a few on hand.

Plant shade trees and other greenery. A well-placed tree can make a world of difference for the comfort of your home.



## Lone Star National Bank Opens New Branch Office in Rio Grande City



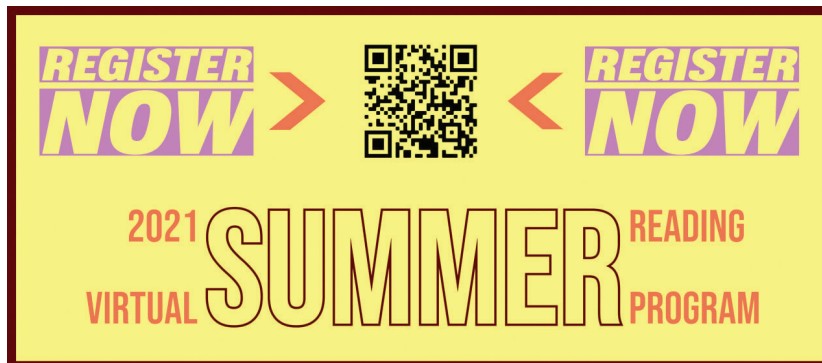
A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held for the recently constructed Rio Grande City Lone Star National Bank branch office on Monday, June 28. Several City staff attended the event, as well as RGC Mayor Joel Villarreal.

"This weekend marked yet another exciting celebration of growth in our beautiful community," declared Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal. "We want to thank Lone Star National Bank for placing their faith and investment in the great

city of Rio Grande."

"Located on Hospital Rd., this addition to our economy will help inject local businesses and residents with more opportunities

to reach their financial goals" added Villarreal. "This was yet another project that took many collaborations to meet its opening date."



## Rio Grande City Staff Participates in Blood Drive

Several Rio Grande City staff members recently volunteered to donate blood. "Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and blood to saving lives. You are a hero," declared Rio Grande City Public Relations Specialist Angelina R. Villarreal.

Every day, blood donors help patients of all ages: accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those battling cancer. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.

Today, most medical care depends on a steady supply of blood from donors, as one in seven

people entering the hospital need blood. For Moffitt, as cancer care increases, so does the demand for blood and platelet donations. An adequate amount of blood is needed in all health care facilities to meet the urgent need for patients facing trauma and other lifesaving procedures, such as blood transfusions – which saves millions of lives each year.

Donating blood is a simple procedure that can be done within an hour. To donate blood in your local community visit [www.lifesouth.org](http://www.lifesouth.org) or [www.scbb.org](http://www.scbb.org).



**WHY: (Benefit)** Revive Fort Ringgold – 501 (C) Historic Preservation  
**WHO:** All ages, all valley all state, Runners and Walkers  
**WHAT:** 4 Miler Trail Run or 2 Mile Walk (All ages)  
**WHEN:** August 7, 2021  
**WHERE:** (Start) Fort Ringgold (Rio Grande City, TX) Parade Field  
**TIME:** Be there no later than 0730, Race gun sounds off at 0800  
**COST:** \$25.00 all ages, Cost includes T-shirt and Finisher Medals  
**DEADLINE:** Register No later than July 30th to secure a T-shirt & Medal  
**RACE DAY Registration: (No T-shirt):** 7:00 AM – 7:45 AM @ the Pavilion  
**VIRTUAL RUN:** Can't make the run? You can sign up for the virtual run too!

**Out of town Visitors:** Showers available after the Race (Villegas Gym)  
 Historic Robert E Lee House Museum will be open from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

**REGISTER ONLINE:** [WWW.ACTIVE.COM](http://WWW.ACTIVE.COM), type in "Fort Ringgold"  
 For more info: Contact Colonel (Ret) Ross Barrera 956-735-4790 or [txross1984@gmail.com](mailto:txross1984@gmail.com)