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River Oaks News

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Around the Town with Denise Honeycutt

VFW Post 8235 Receives New Flagpole



Joe Brooks, II, Life Time Member of VFW Post 8235 and his wife, Georgia Hill Brooks, donated a new flagpole to the Post, as theirs was damaged by a storm in March. Representatives from Trail Life Troop 2917 along with a representative from the American Girl Troop 2756 participated at the ceremony.

During a visit to the post with his wife Georgia, they observed the discrepancy and felt the absence of the flags, as they feel that they are significant symbols of our freedom. They decided the Post needed a durable, commercial quality flagpole capable of withstanding strong winds to proudly display the Colors. This contribution not only honors the Post but also pays tribute to the meritorious military service of family members.

Brooks' military background goes as far

back as the Revolutionary War, and has continued through generations. His great grandfather fought in WWI, and his father in WWII was in the Normandy Invasion and Battle of Bulge, receiving numerous medals of valor and a Purple Heart. Georgia's father served in the Pacific during WWII in the Army Air Corp, earning the distinguished flying cross and retired from the US Air Force.

Brooks served in Vietnam before retiring from NC Air National Guard. His son, Joe Brooks III, served in the NC Air National Guard as well.

Brooks is immensely proud of his eldest grandson, Grayson Jarvis, who continues the lineage of service. He is currently in medical school as a 2nd Lieutenant preparing for the Army Medical Corps.

The Commander, Randall High and Post members are forever grateful and humbled by this donation.

Pictured are: Chaplain Glenna Wheatley, Commander Randall High, Quartermaster Philip Casey, House Committee Chair Jim Owens, Lifetime Member Joe Brooks and Troop 2917 Leader Ben Willhite. (front, l-r) Trail Life Troop #2717 representatives Simon Willhite, Clark Willhite with American Girl Troop 2756 representative Devri Hotman.

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Joe Brooks and grandson Grayson Jarvis.



Individuals oversee the flag presentation.

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From the Parks Foundation of River Oaks

Nominate a Yard of the Month!

The Yard of the Month program promotes goodwill and recognizes residents of River Oaks who demonstrate exemplary efforts in maintaining their homes and yards to enhance the overall appearance of the entire community. The City of River Oaks Parks Board will manage the program and judging will be done by those members. For the months of April through September, the Board will choose one yard per month that models curb appeal and beauty.

The Yard of the Month candidates will be judged on the total appearance of their exterior property and front yard as viewed from the street. Criteria for judging will be based on the visual attractiveness, creativity, originality, beautification, and overall maintenance. Special consideration will be given to landscapes that include a variety of native plant species.

All City of River Oaks residential properties are automatically eligible to be nominated for Yard of the Month.

The upkeep of the yard can reflect the efforts of the residents or that of a professional landscaper or groundskeeper.

The same property cannot receive more than one award in the same calendar year (not including Holiday Decoration Contests).

Winners may be disqualified if their property is in violation of any city ordinances, and must be willing to have photos of their yard published on the Parks Foundation of River Oaks website and social media channels.

Yard of the Month nominations are due by the last of the month to be considered for the following month's award. The Parks Board meets on the first Thursday of each month and will vote on nominees.

The Yard of the Month winner will receive a yard sign to keep and is invited to the October City Council meeting to be recognized and photographed with all of the season's winners.

To nominate a yard, email address, names of nominee and nominator, and a pic of the yard to parksfoundationofriveroaks@gmail.com.



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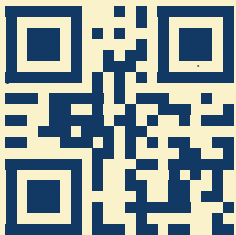
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Easter Celebration at VFW Post 5617

Last week’s storms didn’t deter community members from coming out on Eater Sunday, April 20 at VFW Post 5617.

Kids enjoyed visiting with the Easter Bunny at the egg hunt. The free event drew several neighbors in the community to gather for fun and fellowship.

An array of delicious entrees, salads, veggies, desserts and so much more was offered for everyone to enjoy.



The Mena family wait for the arrival of the Easter Bunny.



Elena Renynse met the Easter Bunny with her Dad.



Ryleigh fills her basket with her found treasures!



Ryleigh fills her basket with her found treasures!

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Legal Notice

ORDINANCE # 1449-2025

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 6 “HEALTH AND SANITATION” IN SECTION 6.03.031 “MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF GRASS AND WEEDS, REMOVAL OF BRUSH, ETC” REVISING SECTION 6.03.031 BY INCORPORATING (b) “DEAD TREES AND LIMBS” CAPABLE OF CAUSING INJURY TO PERSONS OR DAMAGE TO PROPERTY AND MOVING TO SUBSECTION (c) “PENALTY”; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF RIVER OAKS:

SAVINGS

All rights and remedies of the City of River Oaks are expressly saved as to any and all violations of the provisions of the City of River Oaks Code of Ordinances (2020) or any other ordinances affecting possible nuisances involving maximum height of grass and weeds, removal of brush, dead trees and limbs which have accrued at the time of the effective date of this ordinance; and, as to such accrued violations and all pending litigation, both civil and criminal, whether pending in court or not, under such ordinances, same shall not be affected by this ordinance but may be prosecuted until final disposition by the courts.

PENALTY

In accordance to Section 1.01.009, “General penalty for violations of code; continuing violations”, of the City of River Oaks Code of Ordinances (2020) as adopted and as amended; whenever in this code or in any ordinance of the city an act is prohibited or is made or declared to be unlawful or an offense or a misdemeanor, or whenever in such code or ordinance the doing of any act is required or the failure to do any act is declared to be unlawful, and no specific penalty is provided therefor, the violation of any such provision of this code or any such ordinance shall be punished by a fine of not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500.00). However, a fine or penalty for the violation of a rule, ordinance or police regulation that governs fire safety, zoning or public health and sanitation other than dumping of refuse may not exceed two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00); a fine or penalty for the violation of a rule, ordinance, or police regulation that governs the dumping of refuse may not exceed four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00). Each day any violation of this code or of any ordinance shall continue shall constitute a separate offense.

PUBLICATION

The City Secretary of the City of River Oaks is hereby directed to publish in the official newspaper the caption, savings clause, penalty clause, publication clause and effective date clause of this ordinance one (1) time after the adoption of this ordinance as authorized by Chapter 5, Section 5.02(c) of the Charter of the City of River Oaks.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage and publication as required by law, and it is so ordained.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 15th DAY OF APRIL 2025.

Mayor Darren Houk

ATTEST: Paula Luck, City Secretary

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The Semicolon That Shook Texas: How One Punctuation Mark Overturned an Election



The “Semicolon Court” 1874: (seated, l-r) Justice Moses B. Walker, Chief Justice Wesley Ogden, Justice J. D. McAdoo; (standing, left) E. M. Wheelock and Clerk W. P. DeNormandie.

photo courtesy Austin History Center

Every so often, news reports emerge of court cases that hinge upon the meaning of a word, or a spelling error, or even the correct placement of punctuation. Legal documents and statutes often have such complicated conditions or phrases that such exact precision is demanded. One famous Texas case actually determined the entire outcome of an election, all hinging on the meaning of a simple semicolon.

The Semicolon Case, as it has become called, erupted because of a passage in the state’s 1869 constitution. The passage regarding elections simply read that state elections would be held “at the county seats of the several counties until otherwise provided by law; and the polls shall be opened for four days.” Little thought was given to the details. In March 1873, the state legislature passed a law allowing the elections to be held outside the county seat. However, elections were limited to only one day.

The 1873 election became a bitter showdown between the incumbent, Republican Gov. Edmund J. Davis and Democrat Richard Coke. Davis had moved to Texas as a young man in the 1840s and became an attorney and later served as a general in the Union Army during the Civil War. He became governor in 1870 and became increasingly unpopular.

Coke, also an attorney, was a Virginia native who eventually settled in Waco. He volunteered for the Confederate army during the Civil War and became a judge after the war ended, eventually rising to the state Supreme Court. In the Dec. 2 contest, Coke won with more than 67 percent of the vote.

Both sides charged irregularities against the other; attorneys

gathered. The first case appeared before the state Supreme Court just a few days later. A man known only as Rodriguez had been charged in Harris County with attempting to vote twice. His lawyers, however, said his arrest was illegal because the election itself was illegal.

Rodriguez was allegedly imprisoned in Houston, but Democrats believed he had been hired by the defeated sheriff of Harris County, a Republican, to invalidate the entire election on a technicality. The Harris County district attorney, representing the State of Texas at the Supreme Court in Austin, argued that the case should be dismissed as the whole affair was a political question and not a legal one.

The three-judge court, appointed by Davis, disagreed and ordered the case to continue. The Semicolon Case came down to, as so many legal arguments do, understanding the meaning of the fine print.

The semicolon is typically used in sentences to connect two independent clauses that are not connected with a conjunction or to replace commas when writing lists that contain additional commas. The precise rules regarding usage have shifted since the semicolon began appearing regularly in English-language writing in the 16th century.

Rodriguez’s lawyers argued that the election was illegal because when the legislature changed the election law nine months earlier, it only had the power to change the locations of polling places and not the number of days of voting. The semicolon, lawyers argued, made the clause on the four-day voting period separate from the rest of the sentence and meant that the legislature did not have the power to change the numbers of voting days without changing the constitution itself.

The Texas Supreme Court thus ruled that the election was illegal. Rodriguez was free to go; Texas politics exploded in the meantime.

Days of protests met the court’s decision. Thousands gathered at the State Capitol in Austin while Davis barricaded himself in his office in an effort to hold power. Coke ignored the decision and proclaimed himself governor. Days later, Davis resigned.

The Constitution of 1876 replaced the 1869 document. It has served the state ever since, regardless of semicolons. Forever afterward, the court serving under the 1869 constitution would be derisively referred to as “The Semicolon Court.”

In the end, the mighty semicolon prevailed. Aside from the political carnage it caused, the case stands as a critical reminder of the importance of proper punctuation and precision with writing. Even when a teacher may no longer be around to grade any particular writer on matters of punctuation, someone is still watching.

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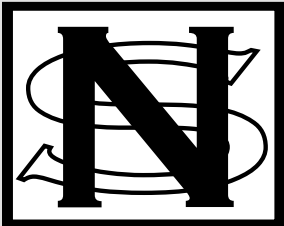
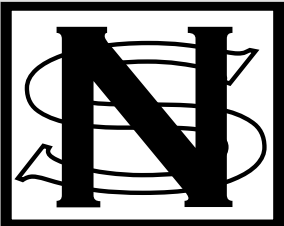
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Weekend Forecast



Friday, April 18:

AM - Showers likely and possibly a thunderstorm. Partly sunny, with a high near 82. South wind around 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

PM - A 30% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 65. SE wind around 5 mph.



Saturday, April 19:

AM - A 40% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny, with a high near 80. S/SE wind 5 to 10 mph.

PM - Slight chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 66. SE wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30%.



Sunday, April 20:

AM - A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms before 1pm. Partly sunny, with a high near 85. South wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

PM - Mostly cloudy, with a low around 67.

Extended Forecast [Click Here](#)