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River Oaks News

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From the City of River Oaks

River Oaks to Host All American Festival Fireworks Show June 28

The City of River Oaks will celebrate Independence Day early this summer with the annual All American Festival, featuring a family-friendly evening of festivities and a fireworks spectacular on Saturday, June 28.

This year's fireworks show will be provided by the City of River Oaks and will take place at Victory Church, located at 5116 River Oaks Blvd, River Oaks, TX 76114. The fireworks are scheduled to begin at dark, and residents are encouraged to arrive early to find parking and secure a good viewing spot.

The All American Festival is a long-standing River Oaks tradition, celebrating community, patriotism and summertime fun. Families are welcome to bring lawn chairs, picnic blankets and coolers to enjoy the evening together.

For updates or questions about the All American Festival, residents can contact City Hall or follow official River Oaks social media pages.

From the City of River Oaks

River Oaks Moves General Election to November

New legislation passed for home rule, where city manager and city council ruled cities have the option by Resolution to move their general election dates to November of each year, instead of May.

The River Oaks City Council adopted [Resolution 1126-2024](#) on June 18, 2024, changing the date on which the city holds its general election for officers to the November uniform election date, pursuant to section 41.0052 of the Texas Election Code. In the Nov. 4, 2025 General Election, Council places 1 and 3 will on the Ballot.

The first day to apply for a place on the General Election ballot will be July 19, 2025 (*dates are subject to change from the 2025 legislation*).

From SafeGunStorageTexas.com

Secure Firearms, Save Lives: Campaign Promotes Safe Gun Storage Practices

A statewide campaign is reminding Texans that safe gun storage isn't just a personal responsibility, it's a public safety necessity. With firearm-related accidents on the rise, SafeGunStorageTexas.com is encouraging residents to follow three simple but crucial steps to help save lives.

The message is clear: Safe gun storage saves lives.

Whether you're a long-time gun owner or new to firearm safety, experts say proper storage can prevent unintentional shootings, reduce youth suicide, and keep firearms out of the hands of criminals.

The campaign outlines three essential steps:

1. Store Firearms Securely. Always store firearms unloaded and secured using a trigger lock, biometric lock, gun case, strong box, gun cabinet, or gun safe. This prevents unauthorized or accidental access, particularly by children or guests.

2. Lock Up Ammunition Separately. Store and lock ammunition in a separate, secure location away from firearms. Doing so adds an additional layer of safety.

3. Restrict Access at All Times. Ensure firearms are inaccessible to anyone who is not the owner. That includes friends, family members, children, and visitors, 24/7.

The campaign also provides resources and educational materials at SafeGunStorageTexas.com, where Texans can find tips on choosing the right storage solution and understand the legal and emotional consequences of unsecured firearms.

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Legal Notice

Application has been made with a Texas alcohol, beverage commission for mixed beverage permit on premise by The Home Plate Sports Bar Inc., dba The Home Plate. Located at 3137 Alta Mere Dr. B, Fort Worth, TX 76116, Tarrant county Texas. Officers of said corporation; The Home Plate Sports Bar Inc. are Jennifer Mitchell.



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Half-Payment Property Tax Deadline June 30

Wendy Burgess, Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector, reminds Tarrant County taxpayers that they have an option when paying property taxes.

Taxpayers may pay their current-year property taxes in two equal installments. To qualify for this half-payment option, taxpayers must have paid one-half of the total current-year property taxes owed by 11:59 p.m. Central Standard Time on Dec. 2, 2024. “The date was extended from November 30 because it falls on a Saturday this year,” stated Burgess.

If a taxpayer makes a qualifying and timely first installment payment, the second payment is due by June 30, 2025. No penalty or interest will accrue on the unpaid second half until after June 30, 2025.

The Tarrant County Tax Office began mailing property tax statements in mid-October. Most taxpayers should have received their statement by now. If a statement hasn’t been received, one can be printed from our new payment portal at Tarrant County Tax Payer or email taxoffice@tarrantcountytx.gov to request one.

Failure to receive a notice does not impact the validity of the tax, penalty, or interest imposed. Sign up for Paperless Billing on our Property Tax page and have future statements delivered electronically to your email. If your mortgage company escrows your taxes, the property tax statement was sent to the mortgage company the second week of October if requested.

Payments may be made in person at any of the eight Tax Office locations. Operating hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There is no fee for e-checks.

Electronic checks and credit cards are accepted over the internet at Tarrant County Tax Payer or by phone at 817-884-1110. There is a fee for using debit and credit cards payable directly to the card provider. We highly encourage feeless payment by e-check to avert any potential issues with a physical check while in transit to our office.

Contact us with questions at 817-884-1100 or by email at taxoffice@tarrantcountytx.gov.

Unleashed and Unsafe: How Loose Pets in Cars Endanger Texas Drivers

Driving with an unleashed pet in your vehicle, especially on Texas backroads and highways, significantly increases the risk of distraction and injury for both the driver and the animal.



A recent study by Volvo Cars USA (though nationwide) found that unrestrained pets doubled unsafe driving behaviors: drivers exhibited 649 dangerous acts in 30 hours of observation, compared to 274 when pets were properly secured.

The extra distraction and stress, drivers were distracted an average of 3 hours 39 minutes versus 1 hour 39 minutes when pets were restrained, can be particularly hazardous on rural Texas roads, where sudden animal crossings and limited visibility already pose threats.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) reports that in 2024, distracted driving caused nearly 20 percent of crashes, leading to 373 deaths and 2,587 serious injuries.

Adding an unrestrained dog into the mix exacerbates this. In the wild, Texas sees around 8,000 animal-related crashes annually, including collisions with pets and wildlife, many occurring on unlit rural highways.

On such roads, a loose pet can trigger sudden swerving or hard braking, actions frequently linked to rollovers or fixed-object collisions. Moreover, when traveling at 30 mph, even a 50 pound dog becomes a 2,400 pound projectile in a crash

Beyond the physical risk, pets moving around or sitting in the lap digitally narrows the driver’s focus, akin to texting or reaching for a cell phone. Nationwide, AAA found 31 percent of drivers admit distraction by their dog, while 80 percent ride with pets unrestrained.

To protect everyone on the road, it is essential to secure pets using crash-tested harnesses, anchored crates, or dog-specific seat belts.

Research and safety experts recommend this not just to reduce frustration and distraction, but also to comply with Texas laws that increasingly target distracted driving. Securing your pet keeps tails wagging, and roads safer.

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Citizen Prosecutor Academy Fall Application Deadline July 18



The Citizen Prosecutor Academy (CPA) is an 11-week program designed to give citizens an in-depth understanding of the criminal justice system in Tarrant County.

The Citizen Prosecutor Academy is an 11-week class held twice a year – once in the Spring and once in the Fall. Our prosecutors and investigators teach about topics ranging from adult sexual assaults to the juvenile system. This class gives an insider's perspective on how the criminal justice system works.

The Fall 2025 academy begins Thursday, Sept. 4. The class meets every Thursday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., and graduation is on Thursday, Nov. 13.

It is open to the public at no cost. The deadline to submit applications for the Fall 2025 Academy is Friday, July 18.

Graduation will be hosted upon completion of the Academy program.

This topics of the past academy classes have included:

- The Civil Division
- Digital Forensic and Technical Services
- Diversion Programs
- Felony: An Overview
- Gang Unit
- Grand Jury
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Intoxication Manslaughter, DWI and No Refusal
- Introduction to a Trial
- The Juvenile System
- Mental Health & Protective Orders
- Special Victims Unit
- Victim Advocates

Follow this link to view the [Criminal District Attorney Prosecutor Academy Application](#).

For more information on the CDA Citizen Prosecutor Academy call 817-884-1400.

From Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers

Summer Safety: Home Burglary Prevention

Protecting your home from burglary is essential for your safety and peace of mind. Here are some effective tips to help prevent burglaries:

- **Secure All Entry Points:** Ensure all doors, windows, and other entry points are equipped with sturdy locks. Consider upgrading to smart locks or deadbolts for added security.

- **Install a Security System:** A monitored security system with cameras and alarms can deter burglars. Display signs indicating your home is protected to further discourage intruders.

- **Outdoor Lighting:** Keep your home well-lit at night, especially around entryways and dark corners. Motion-sensor lights are effective in alerting you to any movement outside.

- **Secure Garage and Shed:** Don't overlook other structures on your property. Keep garage doors closed and locked, and secure tools and ladders that could be used to access upper floors.

- **Be Cautious with Keys:** Never hide spare keys in obvious places like under doormats or flower pots. Instead, leave them with a trusted neighbor or invest in a keyless entry system.

- **Use Timers for Interior Lights:** When away, use timers to switch lights on and off to create the illusion of occupancy. Remember to pause newspaper subscriptions and mail deliveries to avoid accumulation.

- **Get to Know Your Neighbors:** Building a good relationship with your neighbors increases the chances they'll notice and report suspicious activity when you're not around.

- **Neighborhood Watch:** Get involved in or start a neighborhood watch program. Look out for each other and report suspicious activities to law enforcement promptly.

- **Secure Valuables:** Keep expensive items, important documents, and jewelry in a locked safe. Avoid leaving valuables in plain sight through windows.

- **Trim Landscaping:** Overgrown bushes and trees provide cover for burglars. Keep landscaping well-maintained, particularly near windows and doors.

- **Social Media Caution:** Refrain from posting travel plans or being away from home on social media. This information can be used by criminals looking for easy targets.

- **Home Insurance Review:** Ensure your home insurance policy adequately covers theft and burglary. Document valuables with photographs and keep an inventory.

By implementing these burglary prevention tips, you can significantly reduce the risk of your home being targeted by intruders. Taking proactive steps to secure your home ensures a safer and more secure living environment for you and your family.

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From the American Red Cross

Summer Blood and Platelet Donations Vital to Avoid Blood Supply Impact

Atlantic hurricane season began this month. Disasters like hurricanes and severe summer weather can disrupt blood drives for several days and impact the momentum of a growing blood supply. Help the American Red Cross plan for the unexpected by making an appointment to give blood or platelets.

Even when hospitals are fully stocked with blood products, sudden events can cause a rapid drop in the availability of lifesaving transfusions. While many may be engaging in outdoor adventures this month, the Red Cross asks people to continue making and keeping donation appointments a part of their June plans.

Blood has a shelf life of 42 days, which means ongoing donations are key to ensure medical needs are met. Type O blood donors and those giving platelets are especially needed as the summer season continues.

June 19 is World Sickle Cell Day. Join the Red Cross in celebrating the spirit of humanity by giving blood or platelets. Visit RedCrossBlood.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS or use the Red Cross Blood Donor App to book a time to donate.

Those who come to give June 1-30, 2025, will get a \$15 Amazon.com Gift Card by email and will be automatically entered for a chance to win one of two \$7,000 gift cards. Terms apply. Visit RedCrossBlood.org/June.

Upcoming local blood donation opportunities through June 30:

Cleburne: Tuesday, June 24 - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Elks Lodge 811, 124 FM 1434

Denton: Friday, June 20 - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Medical City Denton, 3537 S. I-35 E.

Fort Worth: Friday, June 20 - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., American Red Cross, 6000 Western Pl., Ste. 100

Friday, June 20 - 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Amon G. Carter, Jr. Downtown YMCA, 512 Lamar St.

Tuesday, June 24 - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Grace Community Church Keller, 3789 Thompson Rd.

Thursday, June 26 - 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Hulen Mall, 4800 S. Hulen St.

Friday, June 27 - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., American Red Cross, 6000 Western Pl., Ste. 100

Saturday, June 28 - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, 5953 Bowman Roberts Rd.

Granbury: Wednesday, June 25 - 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., Calvary Church of Granbury, 4800 Glen Rose Hwy

Weatherford: Friday, June 20 - noon to 6 p.m., Southwest Ford, 3000 Fort Worth Hwy

How to Donate Blood

Download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enable the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

Blood and platelet donors can save time at their next donation by using RapidPass® to complete their pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire online, on the day of their donation, before arriving at the blood drive. To get started, follow the instructions at RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass or use the Blood Donor App.

Amplify your impact – Volunteer!

Another way to support the lifesaving mission of the Red Cross is to become a volunteer blood donor ambassador at Red Cross blood drives. Blood donor ambassadors help greet, check in and thank blood donors to ensure they have a positive donation experience.



May Yard of the Month



Meet Mrs. Shirley Willet Bunker! Her yard is a garden gem, bursting with unique perennials—passion vine, clematis, strawberries, blackberries, larkspur, and more! You'll find something blooming year-round, but you won't find any common bedding plants here! A longtime River Oaks resident, she's a joy to visit with as she shares stories about her one-of-a-kind blooms and the friends, neighbors and family that gifted them over the years.

Texas History Minute by Dr. Ken Bridges

Trailblazing Texas Governor Who Broke Barriers and Battled the Klan - Ma Ferguson



Ma Ferguson poses in period costume next to a cannon in front of the state capitol building. She's wearing a sash reading "Texas 100 Years Old." (Photo courtesy of the Portal to Texas History)

She grew up in a time when women almost never attended college, almost never spoke out on the issues, and certainly never voted. But one woman did all of them, and in the process, "Ma" Ferguson became one of the most unforgettable women in Texas political history.

Miriam A. Wallace was born in Bell County in 1875. She was well-educated, attending Salado College and the Baylor Female College, among the very few colleges in the South that allowed women students at the time. On New Year's Eve, 1899, she married James Ferguson, a lawyer and banker living in Belton. The couple had two daughters and were extremely devoted to one another.

In 1914, her husband was elected governor. Gov. Ferguson, had a stormy two-term reign and was impeached in 1917 over charges of misappropriation of funds regarding the University of Texas as well as embezzlement. He maintained his innocence, and in spite of a ban on him holding office in the state, he ran three more times.

In 1924, he had his wife run for governor in his place. Always the devoted wife, determined to uphold his honor, she agreed. Campaigning on the theme of "getting two governors for the price of one," as she put it, the contest soon became a heated contest between Ferguson and Judge Felix Robertson, the candidate of the Ku Klux Klan. Klan forces in the 1920s attempted to seize control of the major political parties across the nation, Democratic and Republican alike.

The Fergusons and their allies, repelled by the violence and corruption the Klan brought with it, portrayed Miriam Ferguson, "Ma," as the embodiment of traditional Texas values and mother-

hood. The battle of "the bonnet versus the hood" captivated Texans, and she won the election easily.

She became the first woman elected governor in Texas History, and only the second in the nation, after Gov. Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming took office just a few days before Ferguson and served from 1925 to 1927.

Her husband was believed to have been responsible for most of her decisions. The most important law passed was an anti-mask law aimed at the Klan. Ferguson though was very forgiving and pardoned an astonishing 100 convicts per month. Though critics charged that she and her husband accepted bribes for these pardons as well as highway contracts, no evidence ever emerged from these charges. However, the rumors led to her defeat in her 1926 re-election bid and the eventual creation of a commission to oversee all pardon requests before they reached the governor.

Ferguson failed at another run in 1930 before winning again in 1932. She pushed for attempts to control state spending during the cash-strapped years of the Great Depression. However, attempts to consolidate agencies failed. While she advocated old-age pensions, bank reforms, and other measures, the state legislature failed to make any significant progress, and the Fergusons found themselves embroiled in new political fights.

She quietly stepped down in 1934 and stayed away from politics for the next few years. In 1938, voters across the state signed petitions asking her to run for governor once again. She resisted the "Draft Ma" movement but accepted the call when a new draft movement spread in 1940. She attempted to unseat Gov. W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel in the Democratic Primary, but in spite of the many criticisms of O'Daniel, Ferguson could not win the nomination.

With this loss, the Fergusons stepped away from politics for good. After her husband's death in 1944, "Ma" Ferguson lived a quiet life of retirement in Austin until her passing in 1961 at age 86.

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Weekend Forecast



Friday, June 20:

AM - Sunny, with a high near 95. South wind 5 to 10 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
PM - Clear, with a low around 76. South wind around 10 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.



Saturday, June 21:

AM - Sunny, with a high near 95. South wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 75. S/SE wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.



Sunday, June 22:

AM - Sunny, with a high near 95. South wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 75.

Extended Forecast Click Here