



PICNIC WITH THE MAYOR & COUNCIL

Date: Saturday, April 22, 2023

Time: 11 am – 1 pm

Where: Grassy area in front of
Conference Center

This never-before-held event will take the place of the Quarterly Coffee with the Mayor & Council, with the goal of attracting more young people and families, as well as the “regulars” who usually attend the Coffee. The idea of the picnic came from the Earthwise Living Committee, who will also sponsor this event by promoting eco-friendly practices in honor of Earth Day, April 22nd. Participants are asked to bring your own picnic lunch, cups for drinks, and chairs and blankets. We ask that whatever you bring to the picnic, you will pack it out. This is to build awareness of the amount of

Mayor's Message

By Mayor Chris Riley

“Teach this triple truth to all: A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things that renew humanity.”

- Buddha

trash we generate. Coffee, water and lemonade will be available for anyone who brings their own cup. Cookies and fruit will complement your picnic lunch, provided by the City. The Earthwise Living Committee will be raffling off a Picnic Basket, recycled products for your home, and door prizes which include two restaurant gift certificates, a family pass to the Aquarium, and a gift certificate to Bandera Bowl. **PLEASE NOTE:** The City Council and staff will be present to hear from you, our citizens, on any concerns, compliments or ideas to improve our community. If it is raining (when does it ever rain?), this event will be cancelled. Hope to see you there!

PENDING POLICY DECISIONS

Over the last several months, the council has been discussing these important policy issues:

A. Red Light Cameras – On February 21st, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution supporting Senate Bill 446 and the companion House Bills 167 & 177 to explore options to remove or phase out red-light camera

enforcement. The contract with American Traffic Systems (ATS), does not expire until 2039; the legislation will enable the city to exit the contract. The City Council has sent a follow up letter to the members of the transportation committees in the House and Senate seeking support. Several current council members will testify at committee hearings in Austin. If passed, this will impact the city's future budgets since several police and administrative positions are funded with red-light camera money. The contracts of Amarillo and Balcones Heights with ATS expire next year, leaving Leon Valley the only city in the state with red-light cameras.

B. Review of VIA Transit's relationship with the City – In February, Councilors Hefner and Stevens asked for a review of the \$1.6 million in sales tax we are paying to VIA to determine if the City is getting value for its membership in VIA. The citizens of Leon Valley voted in 1978 to pay ½ of 1 percent in sales tax to become a member city in VIA. VIA presented the following facts regarding service in

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Mayor's Message

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Leon Valley: Citizens have access to 6 VIA routes with 104 stops. Before COVID, Leon Valley ridership was 279,200 per year; in 2022, ridership had increased by 30% to 187,400, following the severe drop due to COVID. VIAtrans, which transports the disabled and handicapped, has 167 active clients in Leon Valley. Total VIAtrans trips in Leon Valley in 2022: 31,649 trips. The cost of a VIAtrans ride is \$2 one way and the bus or VIA Link is \$1.30.

Revenue generated from sales tax is \$1.66 million, added to line service passenger fares of \$101,223 and VIAtrans fares of \$50,235, for a total annual revenue from Leon Valley of \$1.814 million.

Expenses from line service is \$1.62 million, plus expense from VIAtrans of \$682,518, with a total of \$2.3 million in expenses. VIA subsidizes our Leon Valley transit service in the amount of \$491,840, through federal and other sources of funds.

If this or a future council votes to withdraw from receiving this service, an election by the citizens would take place. If the citizens voted to leave the VIA system, all 104 stops within Leon Valley would close and VIA buses and VIAtrans vans would no longer stop within the city limit. VIA also notified the council of Texas Transportation Code, Sec. 451.611 which states that, if it elects to leave VIA, the City would have a financial obligation to reimburse VIA capital costs, with sales tax receipts being paid to the State Comptroller some years after ser-

vice is terminated. VIA representatives will return on April 18th to address this question as well as a number of other questions asked. The suburban cities are represented on the VIA board by Louis Cooper, former Mayor of Alamo Heights and Kevin Wolff, former Bexar County County Commissioner, Precinct 3.

C. Proposed Homestead Exemption Increase - Staff was asked to give numbers of how much it would cost the City of Leon Valley to increase the 1% homestead exemption (for all homeowners) to 5% or 10%. Finance Director Wallace stated the City has a long-established (since 2005) homestead tax freeze for homeowners over 65 or disabled. Last year the tax freeze reduced the property tax burden of seniors and disabled by approximately \$450,000. The following preliminary totals of the amount of revenue loss if we increase tax exemptions, are only estimates: To increase the homestead exemption to 5% will cost the City \$49,016, and to 10%, will cost the City \$124,311. The Council took no action, but will revisit this topic in April when more solid numbers may be available. Finance Director Wallace and City Manager Caldera both communicated that costs for the City are rising, not coming down, and the Council will need to adjust the budget to cover this loss if they vote to increase the homestead exemption.

D. Town Hall Meeting poll results on how to spend remaining American Rescue Program (ARP) funds: Resurfacing both swimming pools were high on the priority list. Due to the lateness in the year and opening of the pools

at the end of May, the resurfacing of the pools will begin in the fall after the swim season is over. More information about the pool schedule, fees, and swim team will be forthcoming, but both pools will open this summer.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The May 6th general election for City Council Places 1,3 and 5 will be conducted by Bexar County elections office. A Candidates Forum supervised by the non-partisan San Antonio League of Women, will be held on Saturday April 15th from 9 am – 10:30 am at the Conference Center. The candidates for Place 1 are incumbent Benny Martinez and Drew Power; and in Place 3 are Danielle Bolton and Philip Campos. Councilor Will Bradshaw, incumbent in Place 5, is running unopposed. Wishing everyone a Happy Easter and Happy Fiesta! My door is always open. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely, Chris

(210) 618-2092 (cell)

mayor@leonvalleytexas.gov



Photo by Mark Mayfield



Engage with the Community



Programs for Teens by Teens



Volunteer

The mission of Teens Speak is to provide a place of support for teens to express their opinions, connect with the community, and inspire change through educational programming, entertaining events, and volunteer opportunities while closing the achievement gap and inspiring teens to become life-long users of the library.



VISIT FOR MORE INFORMATION
<https://www.leonvalley.lib.tx.us/>



Benefits:

- Voice Your Opinion ✓
- Inspire Change ✓
- Have an Input on Programming ✓
- Make Community Connections ✓
- Earn Volunteer Hours ✓
- Get a T-Shirt ✓





“Alan Gonzalez”

Please welcome the newest addition to the Leon

Meet your Leon Valley Police Department Member

Valley Police Department. Officer Alan Gonzalez joined the Leon Valley Police Department in February 2023. Officer Gonzalez has aspired to be a police officer from a very young age after interacting with officers of the Dallas Police Department. Officer Gonzalez participated with the San Antonio Police Explorers Central Substation program while attending Thomas Jefferson High School. After high school, Officer Gonzalez pursued

his dream of becoming a law enforcement officer and enrolled at the San Antonio College Law Enforcement Police Academy, where he graduated in 2022. Officer Gonzalez chose Leon Valley Police Department as he stated it is known for training and development of officers. Officer Gonzalez stated he hopes to get to know the community he serves and become a part of the fabric of this community.

Election Day
is May 6, 2023.

Here is what is on your ballot:

General Election for Council Place 1, 3, and 5

Special Election: "Whether the City of Leon Valley Crime Control and Prevention District should be continued for five (5) years and the crime control and prevention district sales tax should be continued for five (5) years."

A Special Election: "The Reauthorization of the Local Sales and Use Tax in the City of Leon Valley, TX at the Rate of One-Quarter (1/4) of One Percent (0.0025000) to Continue Providing Revenue for Maintenance and Repair of Municipal Streets. The Tax Expires On The Fourth Anniversary of the Date of this Election Unless the Imposition of the Tax is Reauthorized."



MORE ELECTION UPDATES AT WWW.LEONVALLEYTEXAS.GOV

May 4 - 7, 2023

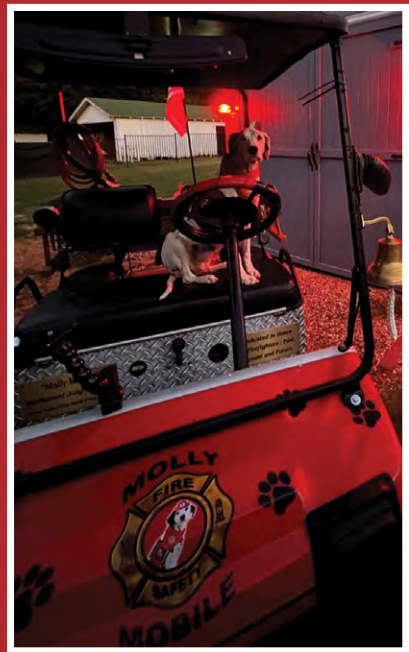
#nffflightthenight2023

#firehero2023



LIGHT THE NIGHT

for Fallen Firefighters



LIGHT UP RED FOR FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS



Join the *National Fallen Firefighters Foundation* on May 4-7, 2023 in honoring and remembering the sacrifice of America's fallen fire heroes. We invite landmarks, fire and community organizations, businesses, and homes across the nation to *light up red* starting on International Firefighters' Day and through the *National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend*. Learn more or watch live at: weekend.firehero.org.

Sign up & find resources at: firehero.org/light-the-night

Leon Valley Economic Development

The City Council of Leon Valley has established a program to provide assistance to households and residents in Leon Valley in an effort to mitigate the financial burden and continuing effects caused by Covid-19. The program will be administered by Ascension DePaul Services.

Grants administered under the Utility Assistance Program shall meet the following parameters:

- Utilities shall mean and be defined as; Electricity, Natural Gas, Water, Sewer, and Sanitation Services
- Recipients of funds shall be residents of Leon Valley, Texas.
- Disbursements and assistance must be directly associated with and are necessary expenditures incurred as a result of partial or complete loss of income.
- Accounts MUST be 45 days overdue. Payments are made directly to the service company. No reimbursements are paid.



To complete an application, go to Leonvalleycares.com



CITY- WIDE GARAGE Sale NEW DATE!!!

Saturday, May 20, 2023 | 8 AM - 6 PM
NO PERMIT REQUIRED

Call the city secretary at 210-684-1301 ext. 216
or Email s.pass@leonvalleytexas.gov to get on the
list of participants.

www.leonvalleytexas.gov



Leon Valley Public Library Launches 1000 Books Before Kindergarten May 1, 2023!

The concept is simple, the rewards are priceless. Read a book (any book) to your newborn, infant, and/or toddler. The goal is to have read 1,000 books (yes you can repeat books) before your precious one starts kindergarten. Does it sound hard? Not really if you think about it. If you read just 1 book a night, you will have read about 365 books in a year. That is 730 books in two years and 1,095 books in three years. If you consider that most children start kindergarten at around 5 years of age, you have more time than you think (so get started).

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Read with your child! Studies have shown that reading with your child provides a great opportunity for bonding. Reading together is fun and will create life-long memories for the both of you.

Keep track of the titles of the books that you read with your child using a reading log available at the Leon Valley Public Library starting May 1, 2023.

The key is perseverance. Make it exciting. When your children reach a milestone, take them to the library for a small reward and to move their name up our reading chart!





Leon Valley City Hall
6400 El Verde Road
Leon Valley, TX 78238

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CITY COUNCIL

- Mayor** Chris Riley
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- Place 1** Benny Martinez
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- Place 2** Josh Stevens
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- Place 3** Jed Hefner
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- Place 4** Rey Orozco
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- Place 5** Will Bradshaw
will.bradshaw@leonvalleytexas.gov

LION'S ROAR

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CITY STAFF

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210-684-1391 x 234
- LV Public Library**
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210-684-0720, x 240
- Fire Department**
Michael Naughton, Fire Chief
210-684-3219, x 281
- Police Department**
David Gonzalez, Police Chief
210-684-3215, x 255
- Public Works**
Melinda Moritz, Director
210-681-1232, x 203
- HR Director**
Lisa Hernandez
210-681-1391, x 212

CITY MEETINGS

All meetings at City Hall unless otherwise specified. All meetings subject to change due to Covid-19

- City Council**
1st & 3rd Tuesday - 6:00 p.m.
- Board Of Adjustment**
Meets as required
- Citizens Police Advisory Committee**
Quarterly, 3rd Wednesday - 6:00 p.m.
- Coffee with the Mayor**
Quarterly, 4th Saturday - 9 -11 a.m.
- Earthwise Living Committee**
2nd Wednesday - 5:30 p.m. City Hall
- Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee**
Meets as needed
- Library Board**
2nd Tuesday - 5:30 p.m. - Library
- Park Commission**
2nd Thursday - 6:30 p.m. - Conference Center
- Tree Advisory Board**
2nd Monday - 6:00 p.m. Public Works
- Planning & Zoning Commission**
4th Tuesday - 6:30 p.m.

CITY NUMBERS

Keep these numbers handy

- Emergency Number for POLICE, FIRE and EMS** 911
- City Web Site Address**
www.leonvalleytexas.gov
- City Hall** 210-684-1391
- Animal Control & Code Compliance** 210-684-6557
- Non-Emergency Fire** 210-684-8897
- Police** 210-684-3215
- CAT** 210- 684-ONIT (6648)
- Human Resources** 210-684-1391
- Dead Animal Pickup** 210-684-6557
- Public Works** 210-681-1232
- Library** 210-684-0720
- Tiger Sanitation** (210) 333-4287
- Community Center Rental** 210-684-1391 ext. 228

City Hall, non-emergency Police and Fire operations may be contacted at the above numbers Monday - Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays.
Public Works Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

