



*Serving the Cities of River Oaks and Westworth Village*

# River Oaks News

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*From Tarrant County Tax Office*

## Property Tax Deadline Jan. 31

The last day to pay 2021 property taxes to avoid penalty and interest is Tuesday, Jan. 31. On Feb. 1, current year taxes become delinquent and will incur penalty and interest.

An additional collection penalty will be charged on accounts that are delinquent on April 1 for personal property or July 1 for real property. Mineral accounts are considered real property.

The collection penalty will be 15 percent or 20 percent of the total taxes, penalties and interest due, depending on your taxing jurisdiction.

After July, interest continues to accrue at 1 percent per month. Taxes not paid by Jan. 31 will increase, unless the half payment or a quarterly installment is applied to the account.

The first installment of half payments must be paid on or before Nov. 30. The second installment must be paid on or before June 30. Installment Payments for Over 65 or Disability Exemption: due Jan. 31, March 31, May 31 and July 31. Penalty and Interest will be applied to accounts paid after the due date.

### Payments by Mail

Checks/Cashier Checks/Money Orders are accepted by mail.

All payments must be postmarked by Jan. 31, or the half payment/quarter payment due date if eligible, to avoid penalty and interest. The postmark is the U.S. Postal Service cancellation stamp. A metered postage stamp with a date is not a postmark.

All checks received are electronically cleared through your bank. A check copy will be imaged and is available through the Tax Office. Your check will not be returned. Accounts will incur a \$25 service charge on returned checks.

Make checks payable to: Wendy Burgess, Tax Assessor-Collector.

Tax Payments may be mailed to:

Wendy Burgess, Tax Assessor-Collector

PO Box 961018

Fort Worth, TX 76161-0018

Our physical address is:

Wendy Burgess, Tax Assessor-Collector

100 E. Weatherford Street

Fort Worth, TX 76196

*Please note: The zip code for our physical address recently changed. It is 76196. The U.S. Postal Service will return mail that has an incorrect zip code.*

### Payments by Phone

Have your account number ready and call our third party payment processor at 817-884-1110 from your home phone or mobile device. Press '0' to speak to an agent if you do not have your account number, or if you are making a partial payment of the total due.

In a hurry? Call while you are in line. No need to continue waiting once the payment is accepted! Debit/Credit (American Express, Mastercard, Visa or Discover) cards are accepted by phone. No gift cards, payroll cards, etc. E-Checks are also accepted. Due to a high volume of calls October through January, you may experience an extended wait to speak to an operator.

Access our online payment application to verify payment has been posted or to print a receipt. Allow one to three days for a payment by phone to be posted. There are no fees for E-Check payments.

The following debit/credit cards are currently accepted online and in person: American Express, Discover, Mastercard and Visa.

The following fees may apply:

In Person: Face-to-Face Credit 2.15 percent, with a \$2.50 minimum

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Online or by Phone Debit: \$2.95

*Please note: Tax Office representatives are not able to take your payment by phone. When calling (continued on page 7)*

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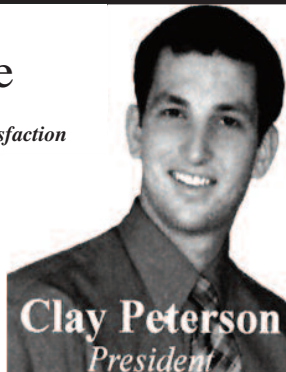
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From Tarrant County

# Dial 2-1-1 to Access Free Assistance

Getting free information about support services for older adults, housing, transportation and other topics is as easy as dialing 2-1-1. That's the toll-free telephone number that connects people with community organizations and government agencies across Texas.

Just as 9-1-1 became an easy way to reach emergency medical, police and fire services, 2-1-1 is revolutionizing the way Texans get information about important non-emergency services. (This information can be reached by dialing 817-258-8100.)

Highly-trained information and referral specialists housed at Tarrant County United Way assist callers in an eight-county area. This confidential and nationally-accredited service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The information specialists help callers find answers to questions about issues such as: Caregiver Support; Child Care; Financial Assistance; Food; Health Services; Housing; In-Home Services; Legal Assistance and. Transportation.

Tarrant County United Way is one of the Area Information Centers that make up the 2-1-1 Texas network now serving all Texas counties. 2-1-1 Texas is a program of United Way in collaboration with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

2-1-1 information is also accessible over the Internet at <http://www.tarrant-county211.org>.



## STEAK NIGHT! Public Welcome

**Saturday, Jan. 7 • 5:30-7:30 p.m.**  
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**Meal includes:**

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**Thank you for your support!**

# Scholarship Applications Accepted Through April 1

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater North Texas (RMHCNTX) announced the opening of applications for its Scholarship Program, which grants more than \$60,000 to 30 local high school seniors each year. Funded by North Texas McDonald’s owner/operators and donations from the community, the annual scholarships recognize students for their outstanding academic achievements and community involvement.

Applications are open online at [rmhcntx.org/scholarships](http://rmhcntx.org/scholarships) and must be submitted by April 1, 2023. All students can apply regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or national origin. To qualify for an RMHC Scholarship, students must:

- be a high school senior
- be younger than 21 years old
- be eligible to attend a two- or four- year college or university with a full course of study
- be a legal U.S. resident
- live in the geographic areas of the RMHC of Greater North Texas Chapter
- and submit a complete application and all required documentation by the deadline.

“Each year, we’re proud to support high school seniors in our community as they pursue their education,” said David Floyd, local McDonald’s Owner/Operator and Board Treasurer of

RMHCNTX. “We hope this scholarship allows students to focus on their academics without having to worry about finances.”

Since the Scholarship Program was founded in 1988, more than \$2.5 million has been awarded to more than 1,500 North Texas high school seniors. For more information and to apply, visit [rmhcntx.org/scholarships](http://rmhcntx.org/scholarships).

## About RMHC of Greater North Texas

*Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater North Texas (RMHC of Greater North Texas), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that creates, finds and supports programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children and their families. Our programs are grassroots-driven to enable us to offer help where children and families need it most – right in their own communities. RMHC of Greater North Texas is part of a global network of Chapters making a positive impact on the lives of children and families in 65 countries and regions around the world.*

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2009 VOLKSWAGEN	WVWBB71K69W044364
2015 DODGE	2C4RDGCG5FR603960
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1995 NISSAN	JN8H017Y8SW890043
2004 GMC	1GKEC13V64R147424
2017 CHEVY	1G1BC5SM7H7281528
2005 HONDA	JHMES26795S000119
2012 NISSAN	3N1BC1CP8CK200588
2017 CHEVY	1G1BC5SM1J7122736
2012 HYUNDAI	KMHDH4AE0CU448114
2009 CHEVY	3GNCA23B59S512238
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2011 CHEVY	1G1PF5S99B7265170
2011 DODGE	2C3CDZAG9JH116381
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# Jury Services: Reporting for Jury Duty

Jury service plays a vital role in sustaining the American system of justice.

## Why was my name drawn for jury service?

The Texas Legislature is responsible for all laws pertaining to jury service. Every other year the Secretary of State receives the Tarrant County voters list, the driver's license and identification card lists from the Department of Public Safety. The Secretary of State then combines these lists and sends Tarrant County their jury list for the upcoming two years. The Tarrant County jury list begins in January of the even years and ends the last week of December in the odd years. Currently, there are over one million names on our jury list and we mail over 200,000 summons annually. The reason some people never receive a summons is because we are not able to exhaust the list before the end of the two-year cycle.

However, it is now easier than ever to report for jury service. Gone are the days of reporting to the Central Jury Room and waiting all day to see if the courts would need a jury. Now you have a choice. You can report in person as summoned to the Central Jury Room. Or, you can use our online system, [eResponse](#). As long as you register online at least two business days in advance and confirm your status; we will email your jury service instructions. The date you are summoned to appear will not change. If you receive an online assignment, your time and place will change. By using eResponse, you will be sent an email with instructions regarding your jury service which generally, allows you to bypass the Central Jury Room.

## E-Response Online Services Requirements:

- Must have daily email access
  - Must have telephone number
  - Sign into eResponse using your candidate number and date of birth from the summons.
  - Check your email daily
    - You will receive an email to verify your email address.
    - Add juryroom@tarrantcounty.com as safe sender to avoid emails going to the Junk Folder (especially if you are a gmail or yahoo user.)
    - Generally all email notifications are sent out by 5 p.m.
    - Read all emails, remembering to scroll down to read entire email. Follow instructions in the emails.
  - Complete two questionnaires:
    1. Qualification questionnaire will determine qualifications along with verification for legal excuses. Read each question thoroughly.
    2. Court specific questionnaire - accessed through email when notified of court assignment -- requires some duplicate information.
- If no email is received from Tarrant County Jury Services, then appear at the date and time listed on the summons.

## The Selection Process

When you arrive at the Central Jury Room in the Tim Curry

Justice Center, you will check in and be assigned to a court. The courts are primarily in the downtown area. The courts adhere to a strict appearance policy. Appropriate dress for your court assignment should be whatever you would wear to a job interview: no shorts or inappropriate t-shirts and tank tops.

There are two basic types of cases, criminal and civil (including family cases). A criminal case results when a person is accused of committing a crime. You, as a juror, must decide whether the person charged is guilty or not guilty. The accused person is presumed innocent, and the state, represented by the district attorney, must prove guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt." A civil case results from a disagreement or dispute between two or more parties. In a civil case, you, as a juror, must answer questions of disputed facts based upon the testimony and evidence admitted by the judge. The answers to these questions are called the verdict.

Cases will usually be heard by juries of six or 12 jurors (six in county courts and 12 in district courts). A larger group, called a panel, will be sent to the trial courtroom. When you arrive at your court, the bailiff there will instruct you.

Jurors will be questioned by each of the lawyers under the supervision of the judge. This interview process is called voir dire. The voir dire is a way for the parties to select an impartial jury. You may be questioned individually or as a group to determine selection of the jury. For example, the lawyer may ask you questions to see if you are connected to the trial or if you have any prejudice or bias toward anyone in the trial.

The questions of the attorneys and judge are not intended to embarrass you, but rather to help the lawyers in the jury selection process. You may ask the judge to allow you to answer some questions away from the other jurors. A juror may be excused from the panel if it is shown that the juror cannot act impartially concerning the case to be heard. In addition, each side is allowed to remove a given number of jurors from the panel without having to show any reason.

The trial jury will be the first six or 12 of the remaining jurors on the panel. After the voir dire, the selection of jurors will be announced and the remainder of the panel will be returned to the central jury room. If you have a special need or an emergency after you have been selected as a juror on a trial panel, tell the bailiff in the courtroom.

Should the parties to a suit unexpectedly reach a settlement or agree to a plea, the bailiff will announce this to the panel and instruct you to return to the jury room for further instructions. A settlement or plea does not mean a juror's time has been unproductive.

**NOTE:** You may be asked to complete a questionnaire either in the central jury room or after you arrive in the court. The information on these forms is used by the attorneys for both sides during the voir dire process to expedite the jury selection. The oath has been administered to you, therefore you are still under oath when you answer these questions.

# Here's to a New Year - 2023 *by Dr. Ken Bridges*

Once Christmas has passed, the world looks to a new year. Many wonder what the new year will bring. It will be a year marked with war in some nations and peace in others. There will be triumph, and there will be heartbreak. But in the meantime, the world pauses to celebrate the end of one year and the hopes for the next.

In New York City, the famous dropping of the Times Square Ball marks the new year. It is a tradition dating back to New Year's Eve 1904 when Adolph Ochs, then owner of *The New York Times*, devised it as a way of celebrating the new year by having the glass ball lowered on the roof of his newspaper building. The modern ball, its fifth incarnation, is glass, six feet in diameter, and weighs more than 1,200 pounds. It was manufactured by Waterford Crystal and has more than 9,500 LED lights illuminating it. It is the most popular new year's observance in the United States.

Observances of the new year date back thousands of years as ancient peoples recognized the regular shifting patterns of stars at night and the sun in the day and their connection to particular seasons. The earliest observances of Jan. 1 for the beginning of the year began with the Romans around 713 BC. The Romans named the first month of their lunar calendar year January after the Roman god Janus, who supposedly was the god of time and also the god of beginnings and transitions. According to legend, Janus had two faces, one looking into the past and the other looking into the future. It was a day marked with great celebrations.

The tradition of Rosh Hashanah marks the tradition of the Jewish new year, which means "head of the year" in Hebrew, a tradition dating back to the Old Testament. This holiday is not observed in January but sometime in September or October, depending on the lunar calendar. The two-day celebration includes many symbolic foods, including apples dipped in honey to mark a sweet new year. It is a national holiday only in Israel and Ukraine. In 2023, it will begin at sunset on Sep. 15 and run through Sept. 17.

In most countries throughout the world, Jan. 1 is an official holiday to mark the beginning of the new year. Even many non-western countries will observe Jan. 1 as New Year's Day because of the overwhelming influence of European and American business and culture for the past few centuries as they ultimately adopted the modern Gregorian calendar used throughout the West, even in officially atheist nations like China.

The Chinese New Year will not start until Jan. 22. Under the Chinese Zodiac system dating back many centuries, 2023 marks the Year of the Rabbit. In China, the rabbit is associated with luck, so the Year of the Rabbit is usually considered a lucky year. In China, fireworks are set off to mark the new year and to also scare off demons and forces of darkness.

Similarly, Jan. 22 will mark the traditional Vietnamese New Year, known as Tet. The Vietnamese lunar calendar is very simi-

lar to the Chinese calendar. The Vietnamese Zodiac, however, makes the cat a symbol of 2023 instead of the rabbit but similarly considered to be lucky. By tradition, a great feast is prepared, family reunions are held, and many celebrations are held in cities across the country. Many in Vietnam see Tet as the beginning of spring as well. Cleaning the home is also part of the traditional observances to symbolically clean out the bad spirits from the previous year.

Different types of food are also associated with the New Year's celebrations. In India, rice is eaten for prosperity in the new year. Buttered bread is supposed to be good luck in Ireland. In Spain, people traditionally eat 12 grapes at midnight, one at each chime, to bring luck for the year. In the American South, black-eyed peas are eaten for good luck for the new year. Leafy green vegetables like collard greens are supposed to symbolize prosperity.

In some cultures, it is also customary to exchange gifts on New Year's Day. In Ancient Persia, eggs were given as symbols of fertility in the new year. When observances of Christmas and religion were outlawed in the Soviet Union, Russians responded by shifting gift-giving from Christmas to New Year's Day.

In Scotland, gifts of silverware or pastries are traditionally given for luck. In the Philippines, Christmas and New Year's Day celebrations are often combined.

There are many other superstitions for luck surrounding celebrations. In France, the weather on New Year's Day is supposed to be an omen for the year's weather. Brazilians wear white for good luck while households in Puerto Rico sprinkle sugar outside their homes to invite good fortune inside. In Scotland, the first person to enter the home in the new year is also supposed to symbolize a person's luck for the year.

To this day, New Year's Day is still a time to reflect on the past and look forward to the days ahead. What 2023 and the years beyond hold is as yet a mystery. But as Winston Churchill once said, "The further in the past we look, the farther ahead we can see."

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*From Castleberry ISD*

## ***Castleberry ISD Annual Report Public Hearing***

Statute requires that each district's board of trustees hold a public hearing to discuss the district's annual report within 90 calendar days of receiving the PDF TAPR report.

The Board of Education of the Castleberry Independent School District will hold the public meeting in a Special Meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023, at the Castleberry ISD Board Room located at 5228 Ohio Garden Road, Fort Worth, TX 76114.



# Property Tax Deadline

(continued from page 1)

817-884-1110, you are accessing our third party payment processor.

**Payments by Drop Box**

No need to wait in line! Drop box payments are available inside [select locations](#) during normal business hours. Only checks are accepted in drop boxes, and please include your account number and phone number on your check.

- Locations include:
- outside the Tarrant County Administration Building, at the northwest corner of the building on Main Street, in downtown Fort Worth. The address is 100 E. Weatherford Street. This payment option is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
  - outside the Arlington sub-courthouse located at 700 E. Abram Street in Arlington.
  - outside the Mansfield sub-courthouse located at 1100 Broad Street in Mansfield.

Your payment is posted with the date you dropped the payment. Cash and credit/debit cards are not accepted in the Drop Box. Please mark your statement if you would like us to mail you a receipt. Allow up to four weeks to receive a receipt during peak times. Access our [online payment application](#) to verify payment has been posted. Please allow 72 hours during peak times.

**Payments by Kiosk**

Payment kiosks are located inside the property tax lobby of the downtown Fort Worth location only with no need to wait in line.

Debit/Credit card (American Express, Mastercard, Visa or Discover) or E-check accepted at the kiosk. No gift cards, payroll cards, etc.

The kiosk is easy to use; however, instructions are located at the kiosk should you need assistance.

Search your accounts, verify payments are made, print a statement or print a receipt.

There are no fees for E-Checks.

## From StatePoint Unexpectedly Useful Housewarming Gifts

Attending a housewarming is a great that includes all those essentials we some-way to celebrate a friend’s new home, but times forget, like high-quality hangers, how do you find the perfect present to drawer organizers, rubber bands and paper accompany the visit? These unique gift clips for paperwork.

ideas are not only bound to make a state- Stock the Bar: Wine is fine, but why not equip your friends with what they need to

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away. Kick off the entries by including a

orchid for a gift that lasts and makes your

cute photo of yourself!

Gift giving at a housewarming doesn’t

have to be stressful. By getting creative

with a variety of useful items, you can help

make a house a home while making a last-

ing impression on those you love.


Organization Must-Haves: Create a

welcome home gift that will prove useful

ing impression on those you love.

for years to come. Put together a basket

The next  
River Oaks  
City Council  
meeting  
will be held  
on  
Tuesday,  
Jan 10  
at  
7PM



CASTLEBERRY

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY ACCOUNTABILITY

B

86

OVERALL DISTRICT RATING

87

A.V. CATO  
ELEMENTARY

97

REACH HIGH  
SCHOOL

92

JOY JAMES  
ACADEMY

83

CASTLEBERRY  
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78

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77

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## Three Day Weekend Forecast



### Friday, Jan. 6:

**AM** - Sunny; high near 70. South wind 5-15mph, with gusts as high as 25mph.  
**PM** - Partly cloudy, low around 52. S wind 10-15mph, with gusts as high as 20mph.



### Saturday, Jan. 7:

**AM** - Mostly sunny, high near 63. SW wind around 5mph becoming 10mph in the afternoon.  
**PM** - Partly cloudy, low around 40.



### Sunday, Jan. 8:

**AM** - A 20% chance of showers. Mostly sunny; high near 55.  
**PM** - A 30% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, low around 39.

[Extended Forecast Click Here](#)