THE BIG BEND
Sentinel

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BURN BAN IN EFFECT, NO GROUND FIRES

by order of Presidio County

Happy holidays and see you in the New Year

MARFA — *The Big Bend Sentinel* staff wishes our community a peaceful holiday season and a happy new year. We appreciate your continued readership this year and look forward to covering Far West Texas with you in 2021. As usual, *The Big Bend Sentinel* will not publish issues for the final two weeks of the year, so our next edition will hit newsstands on January 7, 2021. Happy holidays!

Relatives providing childcare may qualify for new financial support

WEST TEXAS — Workforce Solutions Borderplex (WSB) announced last week that the organization will be broadening child care services, offering financial support to pay for child care centers or to pay unemployed relatives who provide childcare.

Open enrollment for general child care is active now, allowing families the opportunity to potentially qualify for coverage of child care expenses. Due to circumstances surrounding the pandemic, WSB is only accepting applications electronically at https://www.borderplexjobs.com/what-we-do/child-care. For more information or assistance, please call (915) 500-7665.

"Now more than ever are we seeing a surge in child care center enrollment. With parents working and so many students in distance learning mode, it is critical that we make sure our children are cared for properly," said Leila Melendez, CEO of WSB.

Due to the rising demand in child care, WSB will be opening the program to a new group of caregivers by expanding support to unemployed relatives serving in roles as providers. The process to become an approved provider begins with a background check with the Department of Family and Protective Services. Once qualifications are confirmed, WSB determines eligibility and pay rate for the listed provider. The timeline to complete the entire process could take up to 75 days. It is critical that the child's parent also qualifies for child care services.

"We know there are so many extended family members caring for children of relatives and often helping them with distance learning from home. It would be great to see those family members earn a little income while doing so," added Melendez.

WSB is also prepared to assist existing child care centers with the qualifications needed to become part of its Child Care Services network. Interested child care centers should visit https://bit.ly/WSBProviders, email WSB at eligibility.ccs@borderplexjobs.com or call (915) 500-7665.

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The West Texan Media Group, LLC

'Those are the things we've lost': locals mourn Big Bend residents lost to COVID

By STEPHEN PAULSEN
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TRI-COUNTY — He was a pillar of the Alpine community, a master phone-line repairman, a bail bondsman so generous that he often lost money on clients — but to four boys growing up in Alpine in the 1970s and '80s, Joe "Magoo" Torres was just dad. "His favorite hobby was his family," said his son Joe "Jo-Jo" Torres, "and of course my mom was the best friend he ever had." Magoo was close to his father Horacio, and when the boys were young they would pile into the back of Horacio's baby blue pickup for a drive down to Lajitas. They foraged for cactus fruits and fished in the Rio Grande. "We were as tight as could be," Jo-Jo said: "A woven family."

Magoo was a hard worker, and as his boys got older, the family moved from a one-room trailer to a three-room trailer and finally to a brick home on the west side of Alpine. Eventually his sons had children of their own, and Magoo grew close to them too. He took them across the state to visit amusement parks. He took his grandson Zane, who lived in Beaumont, to see Galveston Island.

When Magoo retired from Southwestern Bell/AT&T in the early 2000s, he stayed busy, throwing himself into other projects. He opened Magoo's Place, a casual Tex-Mex eatery with his wife Marta. He started a bail bonds company, helping criminal defendants get back on their feet and making sure they made it to court.

"I wouldn't say he was a star, because he was so humble," Jo-Jo reflected in a phone call last week from Odessa. "He let his work speak for itself. He never bragged and boasted about anything."

In late September, after around a month of illness, Magoo died of COVID. It was the fifth COVID death in Brewster County, the 12th in the tri-county and roughly the 203,000th in the United States. Around 100,000 more Americans have died of coronavirus since then, including at least eight more Big Bend residents.

As temperatures drop and Christmas approaches, experts warn the pandemic could get even worse as people travel across the country to see family and gather inside for celebrations. But for some families in the region, the struggle is different, as they head towards Christmas with a family member missing. "One of the closest

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Frustrated by vandals and trespassers, landowner topples Marathon Target

By STEPHEN PAULSEN
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BREWSTER COUNTY — It was a funky public art destination and a draw for tourists in the region — but now, the Marathon Target is no more. Workers last week started demolishing the icon, posting a no-trespassing sign in front of rubble of the former landmark.

News of the demolition quickly spread far and wide. On social media, residents and tourists posted homages to Marathon Target and cracked jokes.

"I was just there on December 6th," one person wrote. "[I] didn't find any toilet paper."

"It even had a Starbucks!" another person wrote. She posted a photo of a coffee cup in front of the Target.

A tongue-in-cheek parody of Prada Marfa, the Marathon Target was painted under the cover of darkness in 2016. To this day, no one has stepped forward to publicly claim credit for the piece. Given its proximity to the luxury store-inspired Prada installation, the two pieces shared a kinship.

The (relatively) nearby Prada Marfa, which was built by artists Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset in 2005, was often seen as a critique on consumerism. But that message has become more muddled in recent years, as models and Instagram celebrities have flocked to the site for glamour shoots. In a 2009 paper, Nicky Ryan, a British art critic, argued the piece "unintentionally reinforced the capitalist values it criticised."



Photo by Lisa Rayburn

The Target Marathon after its demolition last Thursday.

In that sense, the Marathon Target was a working-class play on Prada Marfa, a fake store with a brand name and a cult following but without the high-end connotations. Tourists still flocked to the landmark, but models and influencers were less common.

There were no doors on the Marathon Target, meaning tourists could walk right in, even if they were technically trespassing. Someone later added a red shopping cart, but there was never any merchandise. That was a different experience from the one offered by Prada Marfa, which is closed to the public but suffered at least one break-in by burglars seeking designer shoes.

The Marathon Target, which was originally built as a railroad structure, had started falling into disrepair, Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson said in an interview last week. Earlier this year, there was a local effort to repaint the building after it was heavily graffitied.

But the building was still a safety hazard, Dodson said — and the Paisano Cattle Company, which owns the property and never approved its status as a landmark, was growing tired of the trespassers. (The company did not respond to requests for comment.)

"People were taking bricks from it, and the structure was unsafe," Dodson explained. "It was full of bees." Making matters worse, social media posts show that in the hours before its demolition, someone had riddled the structure's front wall with bullets.

Last week, Dodson said, the owners finally decided they'd had enough of the vandals, tourists and bees. After being demolished last week, the Marathon Target was finally bulldozed on Tuesday.

Presidio gets train system back on track

By BECK ANDREW SALGADO
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PRESIDIO—Earlier this week, as the sun started peeking out from behind the West Texas mountains, residents of Presidio heard an unfamiliar, but not quite new, sound — this was the sound of a train engine. After over two decades of trainless tracks as a result of fires that destroyed the international rail bridge, the restoration of the railway that runs through Presidio and into Mexico was announced last year, and as of early 2021, intends to be fully operational into Mexico and will be run by TexasPacifico.

First proposed by Benny Matchett, a former member of the old Presidio County Railroad District, the completion of the restoration project was in part due to Brad Newton, the Presidio Municipal Development District executive director. Newton believes the railways can bring much needed opportunities to Presidio.

"This is a gateway to Mexico, and with it being one of only six train crossings from Texas to Mexico, we anticipate it doing positive things for us economically," said Newton.

The train, which passes through Presidio, also moves through Ojinaga, Fort Stockton and San Angelo, which serves as the rail access to major cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Central Texas area. Similarly, the rail eventually connects to Chihuahua City, which gives it increased routes to some of Mexico's major cities.

"While some are working hard to build walls, we are working hard to build bridges," said Newton, who saw the infrastructure project as a key to creating international commerce in the economically struggling border city of Presidio. It is important especially for Presidio, since this direct access to Mexico could be seen as a favorable route for commerce to be done.

Newton said that, for now, the trains are slow, moving around approximately 25 miles per hour, with a possibility of getting up to 40 miles per hour in the future. Because of this, the trains occupying these tracks will be moving cargo for now, not people.

John Ferguson, mayor of Presidio since 2013, said his job was simply to make sure Presidio was noted as a place that would be right for

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Sexual assault case against Leach going to trial

By STEPHEN PAULSEN
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BREWSTER COUNTY — The sexual assault case against Terlingua hotelier Jeff Leach is going to trial. At a virtual court hearing last week, District Attorney Sandy Wilson said her office had offered Leach its "best and final plea offer."

The details of that plea weren't disclosed in court — but Leach, who sat silently for most of the short hearing, told Judge Roy Ferguson he understood the terms of the deal and was rejecting it. Judge Ferguson then brought the hearing to a close, telling Leach he would face a jury trial, likely around August.

Leach, the founder of Basecamp Terlingua and a self-described diet and gut researcher, has been on a strange ride through the local courts system for around a year. He started as a civil plaintiff, suing a former employee for defamation after she told authorities he had assaulted her.

As more allegations surfaced, a local grand jury in February indicted Leach on a felony sexual assault charge. Now, even as his defamation lawsuit continues, Leach is also a defendant in a criminal case.

The controversy started in the summer of 2019, when Katy Milam, a former employee of Leach, told police that Leach allegedly pinned her down and told her "he gets what he wants." Leach sued her last September for defamation and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Someone put disparaging stickers up around Terlingua and Alpine, declaring that "Katy lied." But then, as *The Big Bend Sentinel* first reported, two more women filed affidavits of their own. Those women accused Leach of sexual assault and rape.

First, there was a woman who filed a sworn affidavit on November 5, 2019. That woman, who has asked *The Big Bend Sentinel* not to identify her in our reporting, said Leach had allegedly raped her.

"This was a violent assault," she stated in her affidavit. "There was no consent."

The woman stated she viewed Leach as a

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FACE COVERING ORDINANCE IN EFFECT

by order of the State of Texas

Alpine woman killed by law enforcement during welfare check

By STEPHEN PAULSEN
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BREWSTER COUNTY — A young Alpine woman was killed by authorities last week after a welfare check on the woman and her friend ended in deadly gunfire. That woman, 27-year-old Evatt Hernandez, leaves behind two young children.

Last Wednesday at around 8:30 p.m., Hernandez was in a car a few miles west of Marathon with a friend, whom authorities have not yet identified. Someone called in a welfare check to Brewster County Sheriff's Office, according to the Texas Rangers, who are now investigating the killing.

The Texas Rangers declined to offer details on what prompted the welfare check, citing their active investigation. But "while conducting the welfare check," the Texas Rangers said in a statement last week, a deputy noticed that Hernandez, who was in the driver's seat of the parked car, was allegedly intoxicated.

What happened next is less clear. The Texas Rangers said there was not a pursuit.

The deputy "came upon the vehicle," a spokesperson for the Rangers said. "She observed the vehicle on the side of the roadway."

Then, the Rangers said, there was an "altercation" with the female deputy, who has still not been officially identified. According to the Brewster County Sheriff's Office, one shot was fired.

The Texas Rangers declined to comment on how many bullets were fired, citing the active investigation. Hernandez was killed, and the deputy was injured in her hand.

The deputy was transported to Midland Memorial Hospital for treatment and later released. Sheriff Ronny Dodson declined to give a status on the deputy's condition, saying this week that doctors were not yet sure if her hand would remain fully operational.

Susana Gonzales, the justice of the peace for Brewster County Precinct 3, declined to comment on the incident. But Gonzales did say she had requested an autopsy report

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Documentary from Sentinel editorial team will premiere at Sundance Film Festival

PARK CITY, UTAH — Sundance Film Festival announced this week that *At the Ready*, a new documentary film directed by *Big Bend Sentinel* Editor-in-Chief Maisie Crow, is slated to premiere on January 31, 2021, in their U.S. documentary competition.

The film follows students at Horizon High School in El Paso as they train to become police officers and Border Patrol agents, while grappling with the reality that their personal beliefs and family life are sometimes at odds with their career goals.

The film is produced by Crow, along with *Big Bend Sentinel* Managing Editor Abbie Perrault and Marfa resident Hillary Pierce, who most recently produced the West Texas documentary *The River and the Wall.*

Residents lost

(Continued from page 1)

connections we had every year was when we had Christmas," Presidio native Vicky Carrasco said of her big brother Elias, whom she lost last week. "If he wasn't there, it just felt like we were waiting for someone."

Even after Magoo was hospitalized, he kept up with his work, Jo-Jo said. "He was literally working until the moment he was intubated," he said. "Calling clients, texting clients, making sure they were on their court cases."

Magoo was 69 and had diabetes — factors that some might use to excuse or explain away his death. But his family said he was full of life. His death certificate listed COVID as the primary cause of death.

In a heartfelt media post in October, Magoo's daughter-in-law Daniela Martinez reflected on what Magoo had meant to her son Zane, his grandson.

"Man what a team they were," she wrote. "I've never hurt so much in my life, seeing him in more pain than he's ever known. Pain that I can't heal. Pain that can't be 'fixed.'"

Magoo's son Victor, a veteran, still lives in a trailer at his family's home. "One of the reasons he moved my trailer here," Victor explained, "is because he always wanted to know I was okay and what I was doing."

Victor sat outside his trailer one afternoon last weekend. Tears broke through his tough demeanor.

"I got to talk to him, and then he was gone," he said. "Life happens so fast. Life isn't fair."

In Alpine, the city issued a proclamation in October declaring a "Joe 'Magoo' Torres week." The city did so, Mayor Andy Ramos explained in the document, because Magoo served in several public roles, had a "profound impact" on Alpine residents and "always demonstrated compassion and concern for all members of the community."

In a statement to *The Big Bend Sentinel*, Judge Roy Ferguson called Magoo a "good human being" and an "irreplaceable part of the Big Bend criminal justice system."

"I was lucky to be his friend," Ferguson added. "He is truly missed and will never be forgotten."

James McDermott, a public defender in Alpine, broke down as he explained why Magoo was loved in the local courts system. Magoo was a bail bondsman — a job that involves billing people accused of crimes in exchange for their freedom. It doesn't always attract the most caring of souls.

Magoo was an exception, McDermott said. He extended lines of credit to defendants — an act of generosity that's virtually unheard of in the industry. He fed and clothed his clients, found them hotel rooms and made sure they made it to court. "He was the best bondsperson that I've worked with in the entire state."

Joe Greer Denham III, a funeral director at Alpine Funeral Home, said he's handled several funerals for local COVID victims. Alpine was having around 30% more funerals. In Van Horn, where he also works, they're up around 50%. Those include not only COVID deaths but normal deaths from despair, which typically spike during the holiday season.



Photo courtesy of Joe "Jo-Jo" Torres

Joe "Magoo" Torres poses with his grandson Zane.

COVID funerals could be harder, Denham said, because families didn't get to touch their loved ones. But at least they got to see them. "They come in and you see this relief on their faces," he said.

Asked what advice he had for the families of COVID victims, Denham sighed. He took a long pause.

"During the grieving process, they need to reach out to family, friends and whatever higher being they believe in," he said. "If they just close themselves off and retreat inward, while they think that might help them, it won't."

Growing up in Presidio, Vicky Carrasco viewed her older brother Elias almost like a father. He was 22 years older than her. When their father died, he helped the family take care of their mother. He tended to the family ranch in Mexico, caring for goats, building paths and exploring the mountains.

Last week, Carrasco got a frantic call from her relatives in Odessa. Elias, 62, was "really sick." He was taken to the hospital in an ambulance and died later that night.

"It was very quick," Vicky said. "It was a complete shock to all of us."

Elias died of a heart attack, but with morgues facing shortages and backlogs, the Carrascos haven't yet received a death certificate that could confirm whether Elias died of COVID. They know he was around people who later tested positive for coronavirus, after both his son Elias Jr. and a coworker got sick. At press time, Elias Jr. was in the same hospital.

The family stressed that the sudden death of a loved one — not the specifics of how he died — is what matters most right now. They urged residents to continue taking coronavirus precautions, especially during the grieving process when family members might be tempted to get together.

When Elias was younger, he worked at the family ranch in Mexico. Later, he owned and managed it. It was his passion in life, Vicky said, exploring and caring for the land. He avoided plants he thought were beautiful when he cleared new paths.

"Those are the things we've lost now," she said.

A few years ago, the family got together at the ranch. Elias told them about a place called Pancho Villa Canyon. Vicky hadn't heard of it before.



Photo courtesy of Vicky Carrasco

Elias Carrasco (left) hikes across their ranch with his family, including younger sister Vicky Carrasco (right).

They drove into the mountains. They hiked along a narrow cliff trail. "It was very scary for me, but I thought, 'If he's doing it, I better do it,'" Vicky said. "That's always how it was." When they reached their destination, Vicky was stunned. It was beautiful, a landscape of swimming holes with creeks flowing between them.

In Odessa, Magoo spent 17 days in the hospital before he died. When the doctors decided to intubate him, Jo-Jo thinks his father knew his time was up.

"Some of his last words were, 'That's it. I'm done Jack,'" Jo-Jo said. The family sent him encouraging messages through safety glass. On the day before he died, Jo-Jo suited up in protective gear and spent the day in his father's room, holding his hand. Workers finally kicked him out. Jo-Jo spent the night awake in the parking garage, watching his father through the big glass hospital windows.

A little after 4 a.m., Jo-Jo drifted to sleep. He thought he woke to feel a tug on his shirt. "When I looked, my dad was sitting right beside me," he recalled. "He said, 'Take me home, son.' He said, 'Hurry up and take me home before they come and get me again.'"

"My father taught me everything," he recalled, his voice breaking. "He taught me how to love, how to be a good father, how to be a charitable person. But the one thing he never taught me was how to cry. I learned that the day he passed away."

Magoo loved golf, gambling and fishing. He loved bologna sandwiches with jalapeños, which only his wife Marta could make right. He was known for his "Magoo-isms," which were his tics, malapropisms and unique turns of phrase.

"Comb your face and wash your hair," Jo-Jo said, laughing as he remembered one of those Magoo-isms. "We'd always joke with him, 'Dad, did you brush your face and wash your hair?' He'd tell us to shut up."

Sometimes, advice was couched in metaphors about golf. "If you don't get the ball to the hole, it'll never go in," Jo-Jo recalled. "It doesn't matter how you play, so long as you look good." Victor, another son, thought of Magoo-isms as specific actions that made his father who he was. Like the way he would bounce his leg instinctively, or how he'd fall asleep suddenly in those moments where he finally allowed himself a break from work.

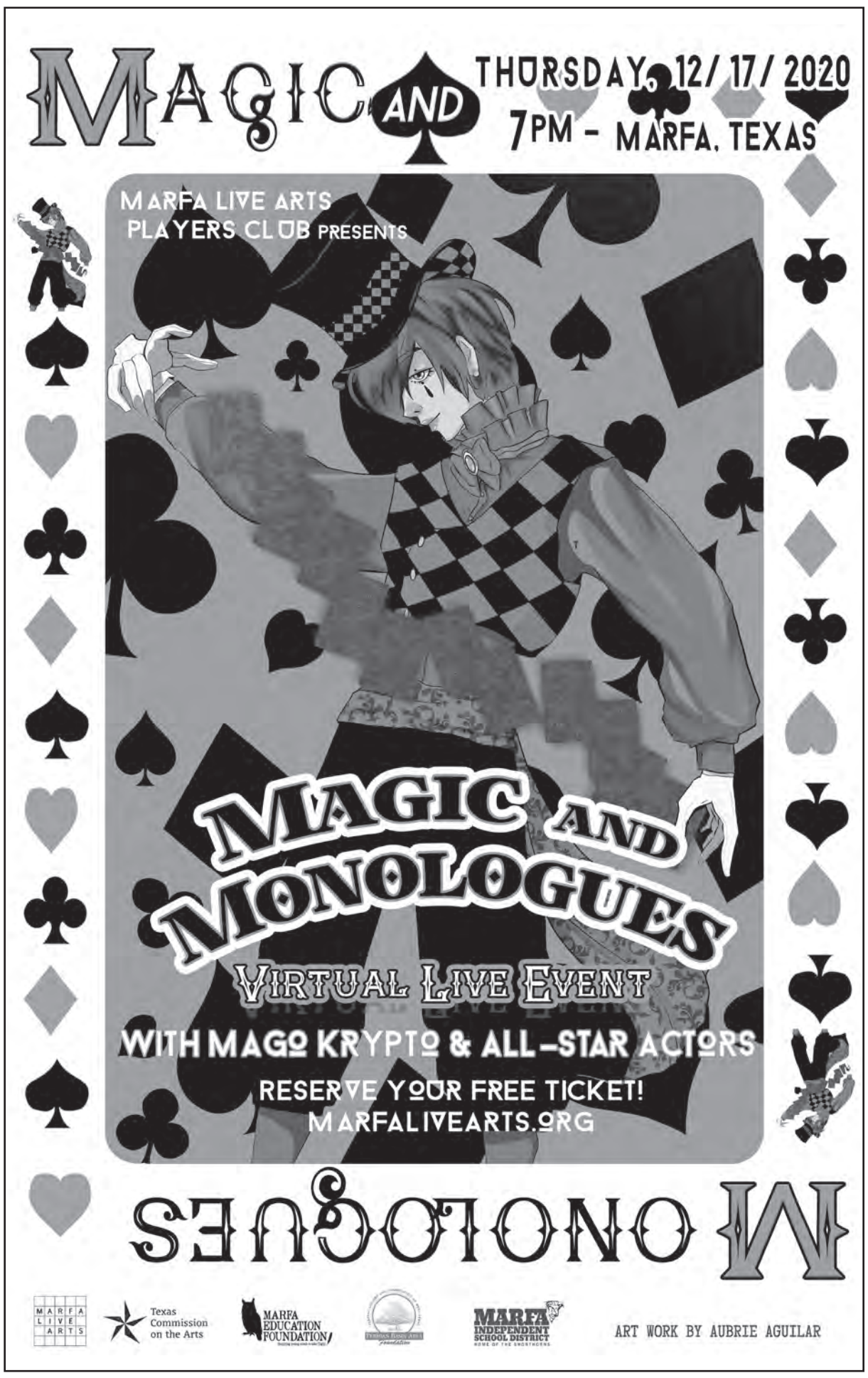
The rebel of the family, Victor has drifted apart from some of his relatives as he's gotten older. But he was close to his father until the end, he said. Magoo hated Victor's rap music, but he'd still sit front row when Victor had a show.

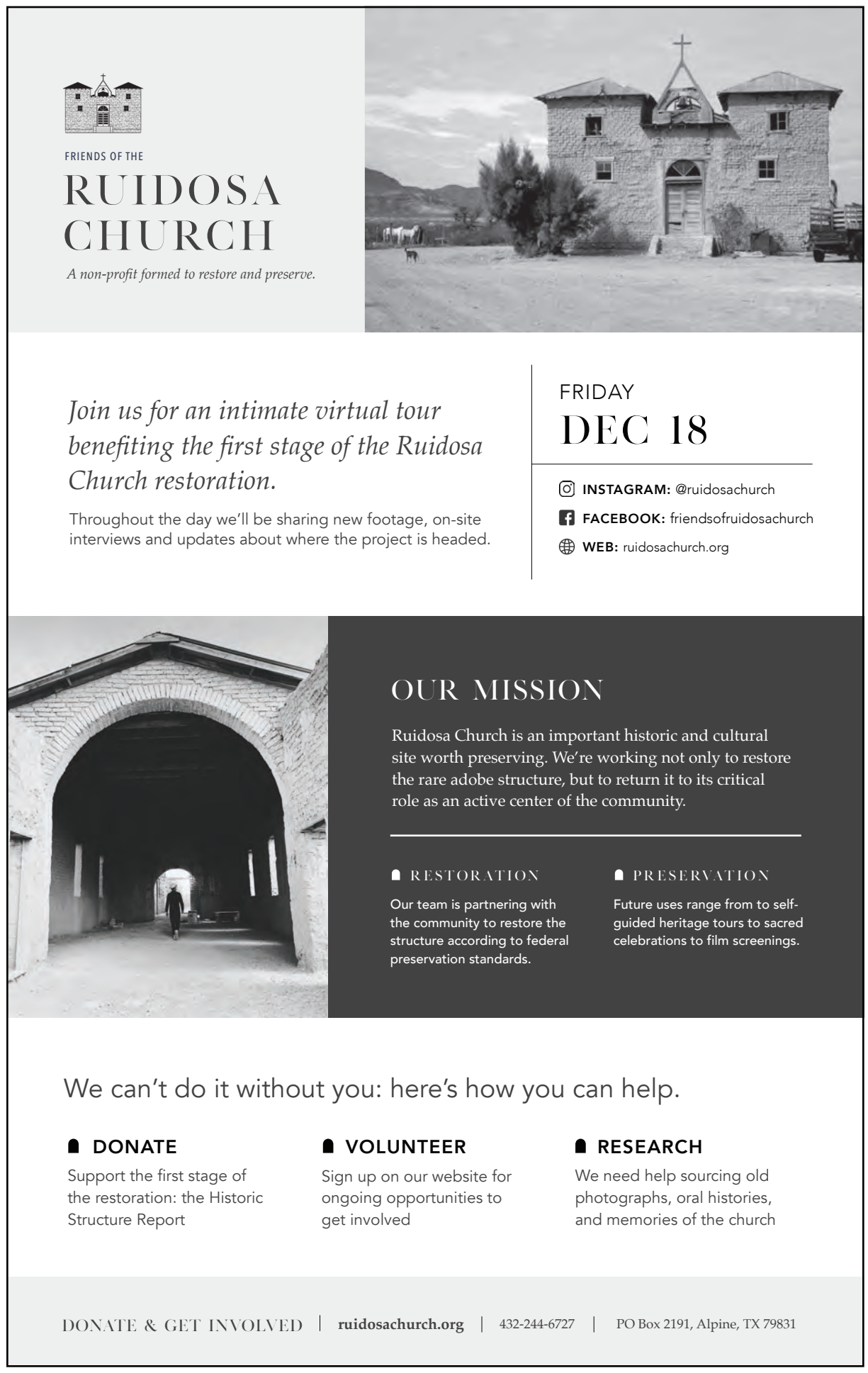
"Victor was the favorite," Jo-Jo said. "There's no ifs, ands or buts about it."

"He did a damn good job taking care of us boys," Victor said. "There ain't no amount of money that could buy the knowledge he's given me." He remembered how worried his father was when he joined the military, and how his father brought him to the airport to say goodbye. "My dad's always been — for lack of a better term — the mother hen," he explained. As the plane rose that day, Victor could see his father standing there until he was just a speck on the ground.

On a recent afternoon, Victor went to visit his father's grave with his dog Lucious. He's been visiting every day, he said, "just to talk to him" and "thank him for everything he's done for me." He pulled into the Holy Angels Cemetery and stopped at a small plaque. He set up a speaker. He got a bag of golf balls from his car, and he cut free a golf driver he'd zip-tied to a wreath by the grave.

Victor put on one of his dad's favorites, "El Coco Rayado" by Ruben Vela. He whacked the golf balls, sending them flying off towards the Del Norte and Glass mountains. "He was 69," Victor said. "I thought he was going to live to be 140. I thought he had at least 20 years left in him."





Leach

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"powerful man in the area" and that she worried "how he may have influenced people's feelings about my reputation."

"I avoided Terlingua," she stated. "I was scared to return to Terlingua alone for some time."

It was her accusations that ultimately led to Leach's indictment in February of this year. She declined to comment for this story.

A couple days after the second affidavit, on November 7, 2019, a third woman came forward.

That woman — Alaine Berg — said she was with Leach at a gathering in Marathon in 2018 when Leach put his hand on her leg.

Berg initially took the gesture in "a friendly way, kind of like [he was] patting my leg," Berg stated in her own affidavit. Then, Leach allegedly put his hand up her shorts "without any warning" and sexually assaulted her.

"Coming forward was not something that I did lightly," Berg stated. "But I have come forward because I feel that Jeff Leach is a dangerous person to women and our society."

"I feel a responsibility to speak truthfully about my assault by Jeff Leach," she stated. "I do not want this to happen to others in our community."

Airbnb and local authorities started taking note. The short term rental service kicked Basecamp off its platform in November of last year, court documents showed. In an email to Leach, a company representative cited *The Big Bend Sentinel*'s reporting on "multiple sexual assault allegations" against him, which the rep said violated "Airbnb community standards."

As the defamation lawsuit against Milam continued, Leach and his lawyer, Rae Leifeste, introduced affidavits, photos and text messages in an effort to discredit the victims.

One filing included a photo of an alleged victim with Leach after the alleged assault occurred, which was presented as evidence that the assault did not happen. They also introduced multiple affidavits from women, including Leach's girlfriend, disputing the alleged victims' versions of events.

But the allegations kept coming. In February, a fourth woman gave an affidavit against Leach, also accusing him of sexual assault. That woman, who formerly worked with Leach on business projects, asked *The Big Bend Sentinel* not to name her in our reporting.

In the summer of 2017, that woman stated, Leach had allegedly sexually assaulted her. "I had to fight him off to get him to stop," she stated. "This sexual contact was non-consensual."

A couple weeks later, the woman and Leach got into an argument at her house. Outside, she alleged that Leach "threw his glass into the night" and "knocked some things off of a table." The woman "ran out into the desert and hid in the bushes," and Leach got some clothes from inside and left, according to her affidavit.

"I stayed hidden in the desert for a while after Jeff left," the woman stated. "I remember feeling like it was over, and I was relieved." After the woman stopped working with Leach, he at least twice "threatened me with litigation," she stated.

Separately, new details started to emerge about a fifth woman, who called police on Leach in September 2015. That woman has not responded to requests for comment from *The Big Bend Sentinel.*

According to an incident report, that woman said she had an "altercation" with Leach and was "worried he [would] come back." Leach allegedly "went off on [the woman] for no apparent reason," "began throwing things around the house," "grabbed her and shoved her around" and then left.

When the deputy questioned Leach at his home, Leach said the woman had "jumped on him and attacked him" — allegedly hitting him on his neck and head around 20 times. But the deputy found no "signs of a struggle" on Leach. He "determined Leach to be the aggressor" and arrested him for assault/family violence.

In February — just weeks before Leach was indicted — a judge threw out his defamation case. That Judge, Stephen Ables, didn't rule on the veracity of the sexual assault claims against Leach but instead said that Milam was within her free speech rights to talk about incidents that had allegedly happened to her.

In an interview at the time, Milam said she was glad the case was over and was ready to move forward.

"I want to urge anybody who's suffered from any kind of assault or trauma to go to the police and know they're not alone," she told *The Big Bend Sentinel* earlier this year. "They don't have to hold it in. There's strength in numbers. We can't allow people like this to think they can do whatever they want with no consequences."

But the defamation suit wasn't quite over. In March, Leach's lawyers appealed to the Eighth Court of Appeals in El Paso, where the lawsuit got an unexpected life as a personal-injury mediation case. Milam's lawyer Jodi Cole opposed the move, arguing in a legal filing that the defamation lawsuit was "not a personal injury case." That appeal was still pending at press time.

Milam's lawyers, Cole and Liz Rogers, have argued that the case against Milam, who also goes by Schwartz, is baseless. They've cited the First Amendment and the Texas Citizens Participation Act, which prevents people from getting sued for using their legal rights.

"Mrs. Schwartz has a protected constitutional right to express what happened to her," they wrote in one motion from October. "Her communication was by definition a public concern, because it was related to her own, and other women's, safety." And besides, the lawyers argued the affidavits from multiple people demonstrate Leach's alleged "propensity to assault women."

Leifeste, Leach's lawyer, did not respond by press time to requests for comment, including on the terms of the plea agreement offered by local prosecutors. A local jury is expected to start hearing the case against him next year.

Alpine woman

(Continued from page 1)

on Hernandez, the results of which are still pending. There would also likely be a toxicology report, Gonzales said.

Hernandez leaves behind little online presence, at least publicly and under her birth name. One of the only online references to her name is a 2005 obituary from *The Odessa American* newspaper, when her mother Teri died.

But as news of her death reached friends and family, online tributes started pouring in.

"It still hurts knowing it was her," one friend wrote. "God bless y'all and take care."

A childhood friend of Hernandez, Mary Alice Estrada, wrote on social media she was "sending condolences" to Hernandez's family, including to her children.

"My homegirl made it to Heaven," she wrote in another post. "The rain is falling so softly. She was mad earlier w[ith] that wind."

The Big Bend Sentinel was unable to reach Hernandez's family by press time and is still working to confirm a more complete narrative of the shooting.

But the basics of the account by Estrada, who said she was in contact with Hernandez and saw social media posts from her prior to the fatal shooting, matches up with unconfirmed reports from sources with knowledge of the incident.

According to Estrada, Hernandez was at Spicewood in Alpine earlier that day with a friend, who was later in the car with Hernandez when she died. (The restaurant confirmed Hernandez had been at Spicewood but said she was not an employee.)

The pair left Spicewood, later ending up at the 12 Gage Restaurant in Marathon. It was there, at the restaurant of the Gage Hotel, where the call for a welfare check was reportedly made.

It's unclear who made that welfare call or why. A manager at the Gage Hotel did not respond to a call seeking more information. But regardless, the pair later left the Gage as well. They were apparently headed back to Alpine when the shooting occurred.

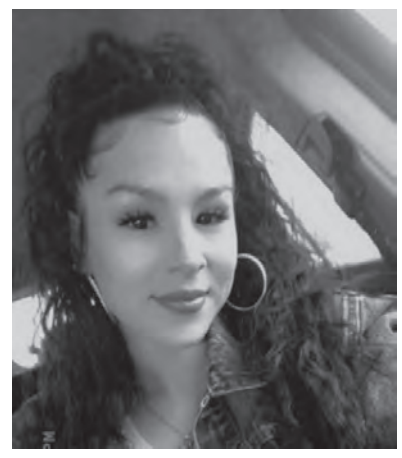


Photo courtesy of Mary Alice Estrada

Evatt Hernandez

Hernandez was in the driver's seat. Her friend, the passenger, whose identity *The Big Bend Sentinel* was unable to officially confirm, was released after the incident and is not expected to face charges.

Hernandez, who was born and raised in Alpine, had recently moved back to Alpine after some time living in Houston. She has two daughters, who Estrada said are around 6 and 10 years old.

Growing up, Estrada said Hernandez had a "hard life," especially after her mother passed away. "We were crazy," Estrada said. "We would run the neighborhood, tagging up trash cans and stuff." But in recent years, Estrada said, Hernandez had been trying to settle down and give her daughters a better life.

While Estrada said she could imagine Hernandez getting "sassy" with law enforcement, she couldn't imagine Hernandez escalating the situation to the point of physical conflict. "We still have blanks to the story, as to what exactly happened," she said.

Estrada wanted to speak up about Hernandez's killing, she said, to "clear her name." She said Hernandez would have done the same for her.

"She's not the bad person people make her out to seem," Estrada said, her voice breaking. "She wasn't like that. She was the most caring person ever."

Train

(Continued from page 1)

the railroad. After doing so, the restoration project was then funded by state and federal grant money.

As for what the railroad can provide, Ferguson mentioned jobs as a significant positive. With increased business in the area and a rail to upkeep, he hopes this will translate into work for his community.

"Presidio can struggle to provide jobs because it is so far out, so this could be a major tool for us to ease that worry," said Ferguson.

While the train will only be carrying cargo for now, Ferguson expressed a desire to one day possibly have passenger trains running through Presidio. Seeing the idea as both practical and good for tourism, Ferguson said he may not have a large say in the matter, but he will certainly "root from the sidelines" for that possible outcome.

Stan Meador, vice president of sales & marketing for TexasPacifico, said that because of Presidio's location in proximity to Mexico and the resources that surround it, TexasPacifico felt there was a lot of opportunity for the rail.

Additionally, Meador mentioned that because of the new rail being one of six to run to Mexico, businesses would have incentive to use it because of low shipping costs and more efficient transportation.

Meador also explained that the rail would provide environmental benefits, as every rail cart is equivalent to what would be four truckloads of cargo. The rail will likely eliminate some trucking emissions as well as ease the burden on congested highways in the Permian Basin.

"With the four to one conversion of trucks to rail carts, the positives of railways really shine. When loads get heavier and distances get further, it provides ample space to move it in a cost effective way," said Meador.

As for whether the rails will ever be used for passenger trains, Meador said, "Nothing is impossible, but that is highly unlikely," saying it would be hard to find the demand in the area that would justify train service to Mexico.

Meador said that additional construction on the railway from Presidio to Mexico is scheduled to be fully completed in the second quarter of 2021.



Photo by Brad Newton

The first train to ride the newly restored railway through Presidio arrived on Sunday.

SATURDAY
DEC
26
8-10AM



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BIRD COUNT

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DEC 26
Saturday
8-10AM

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HOW TO IDENTIFY & COUNT

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TALLY SHEET

NAME:

LOCATION:

1	COOPER'S HAWK		18	CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN	
2	RED-TAILED HAWK		19	CACTUS WREN	
3	GOLDEN EAGLE		20	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	
4	AMERICAN KESTREL		21	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	
5	SCALED QUAIL		22	CURVE-BILLED THRASHER	
6	KILLDEER		23	EUROPEAN STARLING	
7	WHITE-WINGED DOVE		24	PYRRHULOXIA	
8	EURASION COLLARED-DOVE		25	CHIPPING SPARROW	
9	INCA DOVE		26	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	
10	GREATER ROADRUNNER		27	WESTERN MEADOWLARK	
11	BARN OWL		28	HOUSE FINCH	
12	GREAT HORNED OWL		29	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	
13	NORTHERN FLICKER		30	HOUSE SPARROW	
14	LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER		31		
15	SAY'S PHOEBE		32		
16	LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE		33		
17	COMMON RAVEN		34		

NOTES:

SHARE YOUR RESULTS

Don't forget to turn in your form! Snap a photo with your phone and email it to **marfabirdcount@gmail.com.** Look for the results in the Big Bend Sentinel in the new year. Thank you for participating!

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Opinions

OP-ED

229 years ago, America became . . . America

By KEN PAULSON

This Tuesday marked a hidden holiday, as uncelebrated as it is unappreciated. It was 229 years ago today that the United States ratified the Bill of Rights, ensuring unprecedented freedom for the people of an emerging nation.

Bill of Rights Day has actually been a national holiday since November 28, 1941, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt designated December 15 "Bill of Rights Day." Roosevelt had big plans, envisioning flag-flying and ceremonies nationwide. Roosevelt observed that Adolph Hitler feared "our freedom of speech, press and religion." Unfortunately, the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7 erased all the ambitious plans to mark the date. There's no time to celebrate freedom when you're fighting to preserve it.

That was almost 80 years ago, and America continues to take the Bill of Rights for granted. At just 500 words, it packs more than 20 rights into 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Moreover, a promise of a Bill of Rights was the key to getting the Constitution ratified in the first place.

Given that there won't be cake or gifts or greeting cards, the best way to celebrate Bill of Rights Day is simply to reflect on its importance. And depending upon your personal priorities, some liberties may loom larger than others.

The National Rifle Association touts the Second Amendment as America's "first freedom." That's either bad math or poetic license, but you get the point. If our government took those freedoms away, you might have to wrest those back with "the right to bear arms."

Americans with a deep and abiding faith are grateful for the freedom to worship and be free of government interference with their faith.

Those who treasure personal privacy and the sanctity of their homes would be thankful for the Fourth Amendment protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

Those who have been accused of a crime would welcome the fair trial guarantees contained in the Sixth Amendment.

All of these liberties are critical to the kind of nation we are, founded on freedom and fairness.

I am particularly grateful, though, for the one-two punch of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Together they protect our free expression and safeguard the entire Bill of Rights.

The preamble to the Constitution set forth the goal of "a more perfect union." The phrase was both aspirational and wise. There was no way a fledgling country could get everything right, let alone draw up a blueprint that would guarantee the liberty of every American.

And of course, the Constitution didn't. Slavery was left intact and women were left without a voice or vote. As lofty as America's ideals were, there were still inequities and injustices to address.

It would take centuries of free speech and press to illuminate and address the needs of this imperfect union. Although critics of the contemporary press — which includes newspapers, radio stations, television stations, websites and every other form of informational media — like to use phrases like "fake news," the truth is that the newspapers of 1791 were far more biased than their modern descendants. They were largely political organs full of outrage, exaggeration and lies. Yet it was in that very environment that the American people demanded a free press be a part of the Bill of Rights. They saw it as a check on a new and powerful central government and a protection against abuse of the Constitution and yes, the new Bill of Rights. Journalists who do their jobs well today are fulfilling the mission set forth for them in 1791.

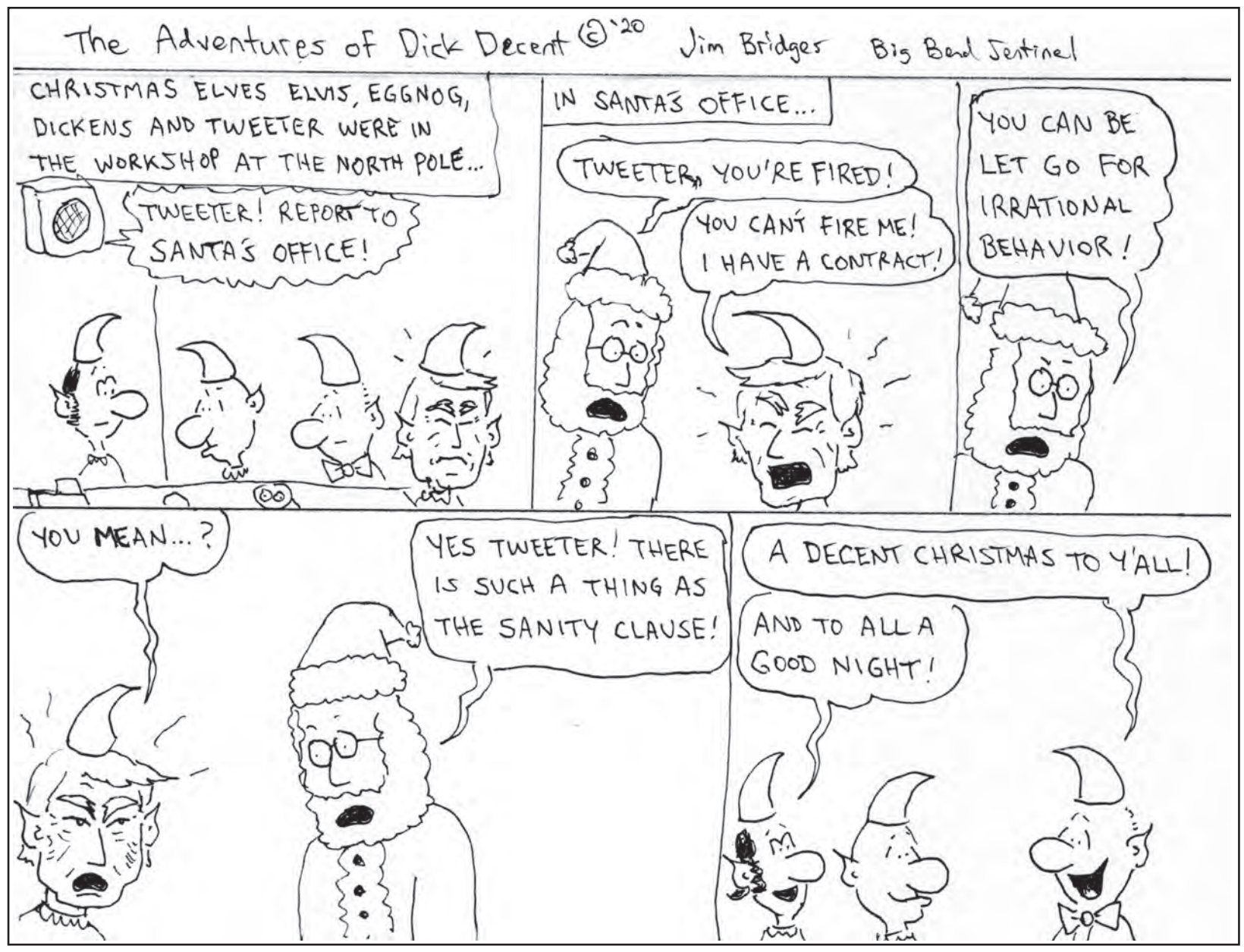
The most impressive thing about the Bill of Rights is that a document written 229 years ago remains so vital, vibrant and essential.

The aggressive journalists empowered by the First Amendment have gone on to monitor and irritate every president from John Adams to Donald Trump. The assembled citizens who spoke out against slavery and demanded universal suffrage have contemporary counterparts demanding racial justice today. Those 10 amendments have served us well.

Of course, when it comes to patriotic holidays, none rival Independence Day. But that holiday recalls a nation just starting out, committing, in general terms, to a nation founded on liberty.

On December 15, 1791, the first generation of Americans fulfilled that promise. We could love our country, but also voice our concerns about its actions and priorities. That honest exchange of ideas – fueled by freedom of press, speech and assembly – can make for dissonance and division in our politics. But it also makes for the strongest and most enduring nation on the face of the earth.

Ken Paulson is the director of the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University. Learn more about the First Amendment at freespeech.center.





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Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

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PAGE 8

THE BIG BEND SENTINEL PRESENTS:
A MARFA HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE





GIFT GUIDE
PAGE 7

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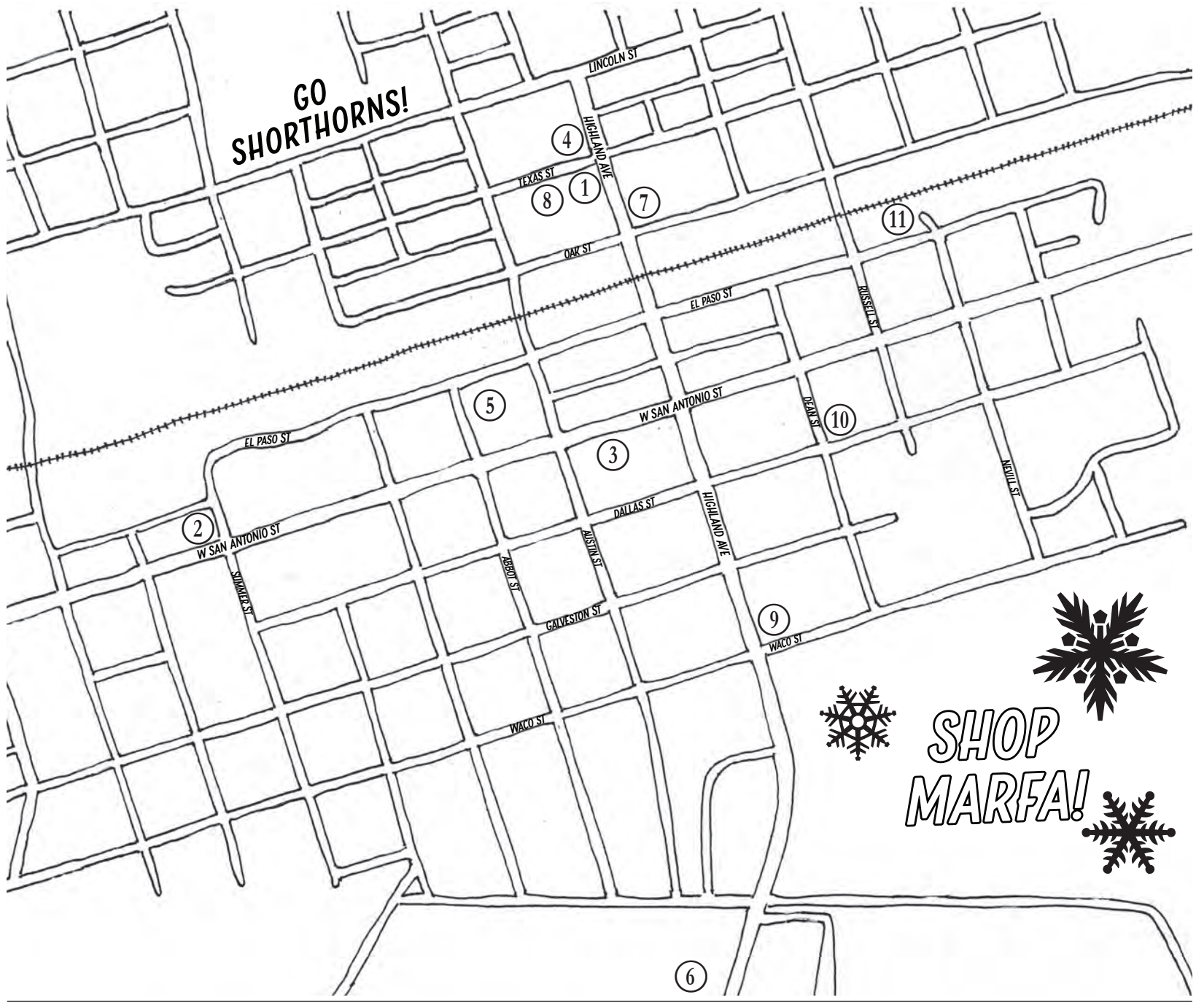
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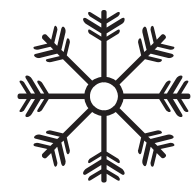


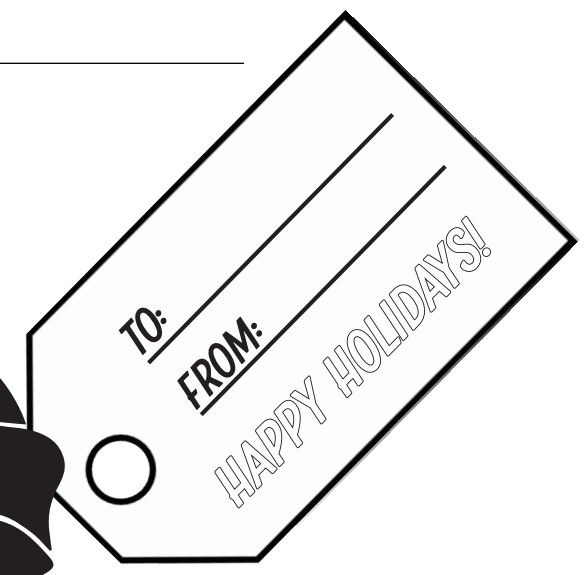
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BY JERRAM ROJO

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- *.5 OZ LIME JUICE*
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- *1 EGG WHITE*
- *ANGOSTURA BITTERS*

INSTRUCTIONS:

ADD ALL INGREDIENTS EXCEPT FOR THE BITTERS INTO A COCKTAIL SHAKER. DRY SHAKE FOR ABOUT 15 SECONDS. ADD ICE AND SHAKE VIGOROUSLY. STRAIN INTO GLASS OF CHOICE OVER ICE. ADD A FEW DASHES OF BITTERS TO THE TOP OF THE COCKTAIL. GARNISH WITH LEMON OR LIME WHEEL.



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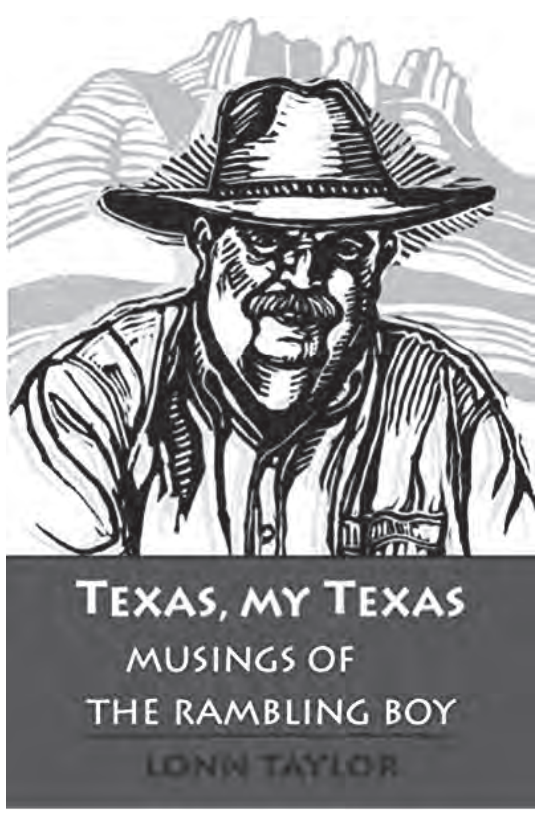
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Editor's pick



The Big Bend Sentinel recommends picking up a copy of late Sentinel columnist Lonn Taylor's 'Texas My Texas: Musings of the Rambling Boy,' a wise and wit-filled book of essays for the history buff in your life.

The Sentinel



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Dear Santa...

MS. VILLARREAL'S PRE-K CLASS

Dear Santa, I have been a very good girl this year. Please bring me a toy from Frozen II and a new puppy.
Thank you, **Emma Alvarez**

Dear Santa, I would like an LOL doll and a mini mailbox for my dolls to play with. Please bring my mom some jewelry that she can wear every day.
Thank you, **Sabrina Amaro**

Dear Santa, I would like it to snow outside again. Please bring me a scooter to play with, a new bike and a dinosaur with a dinosaur egg. Can you please bring my brother a Pokemon toy box and my other two brothers a new Xbox?
Thank you, **Asher Kelly**

Dear Santa, I have been a very good girl this year. Please bring me a new tablet and a teddy bear to play with. Please bring my mom a new iPhone.
Thank you,**Victoria Urrutia**

Dear Santa, I would like an Elsa doll and some clothes to dress her up. Please bring my mom some real flowers. She loves flowers. Please make it snow again. I want to have a snowball fight.
Thank you, **Evalyn Bejaran**

Dear Santa, I have been a very good boy this year. I would love to have a dinosaur bike. Please bring my brother a Go Kart and a trampoline. I will have some chocolate cookies and some milk waiting for you at my house.
Thank you, **Damian Estrada**

Dear Santa, I have been a very good girl at school. Please bring me a mermaid Barbie and Barbie Dolphin Magic Ocean Boat playset. Can you please bring my mom and dad some flowers and candy.
Thank you, **Maggie Wilcoxen**

Dear Santa, I would like a Barbie doll playset and some reindeer stickers to put on my wall. Please bring my grandma some new cooking pots. I promise I will be a good girl and do good in school.
Thank you, **Victoria Pippen**

Dear Santa,
Can you please bring me some Pokemon cards and Rainbow High dolls for Christmas.
Thank you, **Esmeralda Guillen**

Dear Santa, I would like a special gift from your workshop. Can you please give gifts to the whole world and bring snow on Christmas Day? Take care and take care of Mrs. Claus.
Thank you, **Paolo Barraza**

Dear Santa, I would love to have a riding horse like Spirit. Can I please draw a picture of you standing by my Christmas tree?
Thank you, **Hadasa Salgado**

Dear Santa, I hope you and Mrs.Santa are doing well. I have been a very good boy this year. For Christmas my big brother and I would love a swing set. Can I also have an Avengers airplane, Star Wars and Pokemon toys? My brother and I will leave you cookies and milk by our tree. We will also leave some carrots for the reindeers. Be safe Santa.
Thank you, **Brayden Simpson**

MRS. EPPENAUER'S KINDERGARTEN CLASS

Dear Santa, I have a classroom full of wonderful children! Please send Christmas Blessings to each of them! My wish for Christmas is that my students would stay healthy and safe during the Christmas break!
We will have fresh hay out at the ranch for your reindeer!
Merry Christmas to All,
Mrs. Eppenauer

Dear Santa, My name is Yalexa Contreras. I want a Barbie car and a Barbie airplane. I have been a good girl this year. I am doing a very good job in school. Mrs. Epp is proud of me. I will leave you some cookies and milk!
Thank you Santa! **Yalexa Contreras**

Dear Santa, My name is Alika. I am 5 years old. My favorite animal is a unicorn, but I am too young to take care of one, so a stuffed unicorn toy will do just fine. I love dressing up Barbies, so I would love some Barbie clothes. Thank you Santa! Ah, don't forget about the other kids!
Sincerely, **Alika Flores**

Dear Santa, I have been a good boy! My teacher said I am doing good work in school! Can you please bring me a drone and v bucks? Please bring my mom a present too!
I will leave you milk and cookies!
Rudy Francis

Dear Santa, This year I want an elf, and I would love to see you on Christmas Eve and take a picture with you! I have been a good girl at home and at school! I am "rocking in my school shoes" and doing a great job learning to read! Mrs. Epp is proud of the way I help others! I wish you a Merry Christmas!
Serenity Garcia

Dear Santa, My name is Sofia Aliana Guzman. I am 5. Merry Christmas! I really love you and that Rudolph too. Can you please bring more snow on Christmas? I would also really like a Barbie camper, a mermaid Barbie and a Color Reveal Slumber Party Barbie. I think that is all.
Thank you Santa! **Sofia Guzman**

Dear Santa, My name is Alexander and I am 6 years old. This year I have been very nice at school and at home. I would really like a fire truck with a lot of lights, and I would also love to get a Paw Patrol Tower with all the characters. Marshall is my favorite because he is super funny. Please be careful flying around the world and wear your mask! There will be lots of cookies and milk waiting for you!
Love, **Alexander Jacquez**

Dear Santa, I want a yellow notebook. I want a fake flower. I want a Nintendo Switch with Fortnite and a Minnie Mouse Kitchen with fake food. I have been working very hard on my school work! Merry Christmas!
Love, **Elana Marquez**

Dear Santa, Hi! I hope you are having a great day at the North Pole!
For Christmas this year, I would like Paw Patrol toys, an Xbox and some warm pajamas. Also, a new tennis ball to play fetch with my dogs and a PS4 game for my big brother.
Merry Christmas Santa!
I love you! **Aaron Morin**

Hello Santa! I have been a good boy this year. For Christmas I want a bunch of toys and a Nerf gun if you have any. We're taking good care of Elfie in Mrs. Epp's Kindergarten room!
Merry Christmas!
Be Safe! **Aiden Ramos**

Hello Santa! My name is Jen Carlos and I am 5 years old. This year I have been very nice. Mrs. Epp likes my manners and how I help other friends. For Christmas, please bring me a Hot Wheels car. Please help everyone stay well!
Feliz Navidad!
Jen Carlos Saldana Munoz

Dear Santa, How have you been? I have been a good boy this year! Thank you for sending Sam, our Elf, early to our house this year! He has been so helpful and funny! For Christmas I would like the limited Pez edition Star Wars set, Pokemon cards and action figures. My brother, Brayden, and I would also like a swing set if it fits in your sleigh! Also my little puppy Buster would like a new squeaky toy! We will leave extra cookies and milk by our Christmas tree! Oh! And we will leave a big bag of carrots for your reindeers!
Thank you Santa! Travel safe!
Love, **Jacob Simpson**
P.S. Say hi to Rudolph for me!

Dear Santa, Merry Christmas! I have been good this year and would like some presents. I want a drone, a Nerf gun, a soldier and a helicopter. I have tried hard to be good at home and at school. Mrs. Epp is very proud of me. We are learning to read in Kindergarten. Did you hear me read? I hope Mrs. Claus fixes you some hot cocoa with marshmallows!
Merry Christmas!
From, **Julion Torres**

Dear Santa, My name is Emma. I want the LOL Bigger Surprise and a big LOL doll. Santa, I hope you are not cold at the North Pole! I have worked very hard with my mom to do good school work. My mom and my teacher think I am doing a great job!
Santa, I love you SO much!
Emma Van Etten

Dear Santa, I would like a dirtbike, a Batman monster truck, and some Legos. Bring my mom a present too! Mrs. Epp thinks I have been really good in school! I hope you have a nice Christmas and you don't get cold in your sled! Mrs. Epp said you know where my new place is.
Love, **Cooper Wilcoxen**

MS. HARMS' FIRST GRADE CLASS

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. I have been helpful to my friends. Please bring me an OMG doll. Please bring my mom a car.
Your Friend, **Jaylynn Jacquez**

Dear Santa, Thank you for the presents every year. I wanted to know if you could bring me a Littlest Pet Shop mom and baby set and some zombie toys for my brother. I hope Rudolph gets to guide the sleigh to my house, he is my favorite!
Love, **Kira Acosta**

Dear Santa, I have been very nice this year. I have been good to my sister. Please bring me an LOL. Please bring my mom a hat.
Your Friend, **Kaleeah Rodriquez**

Dear Santa, I have been very nice this year. I have been helpful to my mom. Please bring me an Xbox. Please bring my dad some tools.
Your Friend, **Brody Corralez**

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. I have been helpful to my cat. Please bring me a cat. Please bring my mom a necklace.
Your Friend, **Areceli Ortalejo**

Dear Santa, I would like an LOL doll house, Rainbow High dolls, and LOL dolls for Christmas. Please bring my brother a Toy Story toy and my sister an LOL doll.
Thank You, **Elena Guillen**

Dear Santa, I have been very nice this year. I have been good to my brother. Please bring me a Nintendo Switch. Please bring my mom a kitchen.
Your Friend, **Briseis Valenzuela**

Dear Santa, I have been very helpful this year. I have been nice to my sis and brother. Please bring me an electric scooter. Please bring my dad a leg holder.
Your Friend, **Lucilla Pippen**

Dear Santa, I have been great this year. I have been nice to my puppy. Please bring me lights for my room. Please bring my puppy a chew toy.
Your Friend, **Camila Loya**

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. I have been helpful to my family. Please bring me a Nintendo Switch. Please bring my mom a car.
Your Friend, **Julio Gonzalez**

Dear Santa, I have been very helpful this year. I have been helpful to my mom. Please bring me a dirt bike. Please bring my mom a necklace.
Your Friend, **Jace Wilcoxen**

Dear Santa, I have been very good this year. I have been good to my family. Please bring me a dragon. Please bring my sister a cat.
Your Friend, **Ezra Medrano**

Dear Santa, I have been good this year. I would like an Among Us plush and a robot Batman action figure.
From, **Leium Dueñez**

Dear Santa, My name is Alex, and I am 7 years old. This year I have been very nice for Christmas. Please send toys, Wwe and Fortnite. Please send toys for all the children in the world.
From, **Alex Martinez**

MRS. ROMAN'S SECOND GRADE CLASS

Dear Santa, For Christmas, we will decorate our Christmas tree. This year, I wish for a Nintendo that will always turn on, a game like a Mario Car, and any kind of phone. Every time you come, you make kids happy when they open their presents. You are a very important part of Christmas. I hope I see you, Santa.
Sincerely, **Allan Martinez**

Dear Santa, Thank you for giving me a four wheeler last year for Christmas. This year, I would like a PS5, an iPhone 12 and a pair of Jordans. I wear size one. I would be so happy! Thank you Santa for all the gifts you bring to everyone.
Love, **Landyn Baeza**

Dear Santa, I have been a very good boy. This year for Christmas, I would like Legos, Hot Wheels, a truck, art supplies and books to read. I will leave you yummy cookies and milk.
Thank you always.
Your friend, **Jonathan Torres**

Dear Santa Claus, I want a "Hello Dream House," but this year, I think I have not behaved very well. I hope for even a little gift. Thank you, Santa Claus! Love, **Mia Rosas**

Dear Santa Claus, Can I have gaming headphones? I wish to help people with COVID. Thank you, Santa!
Sincerely, **Adiel Zubia**

Dear Santa, I just want two things. I want a guitar and a Nintendo Switch with sword and shield. And Santa -– because you work sooo hard, I'm going to give you a present. Remember Santa, you are the BEST!
Sincerely, **Crixus Kelly**

Dear Santa, I want an Xbox with a Minecraft DVD and $1,000 to help my family.
Love, **Matthieu Bejaran**

Dear Santa, I want a "feisty pet owl," an Xbox, headphones and little clothes for my dog. I also want soft and pretty snow.
Love, **Lillian Estor**

Dear Santa Claus, I just want one thing. I want a computer. I will be respectful, nice and helpful. If you come, I will give you some cookies and milk. Maybe I can have some football gloves, too.
Sincerely, **Aiden Salgado**

Dear Santa Claus, This is the best holiday in my life! I would like a hug from you, and I will give you five cookies and some milk. I wish I had a jelly shirt and a Star Wars Lifesaver toy.
Sincerely, **Landin Salcido**

Dear Santa Claus, Thank you for spreading joy and Christmas spirit. I hope I will get a phone with a password that my mom won't know, and I wish for 10 dollars.
Love, **Jade Martinez**

Dear Santa Claus, If I see you, I would like a hug. I know you love cookies and milk for Christmas. I will give you some chocolate chip cookies and lots of milk. This is what I wish for: Ten dollars, an iPhone, and a tablet with a password on it. Most of all, I want a gray or white baby kitten!
Love, **Aubrianna Medrano**

Dear Santa, I want an iPhone 12, a JoJo Siwa Long Sleeve Doll, a computer, airpods, a bucket of slime and something for my baby sister. She likes stuffed animals and little chew toys for teething.
Merry Christmas!
Love, **Zaelynn Baeza**

Dear Santa, When you come, I will give you a gingerbread house and a gingerbread man. May I get an iPhone 12, an Xbox 360, a puzzle and a chromebook?
Love, **Matthew Marquez**

Dear Santa, Hi Santa! I hope you make people happy. You have a good day for Christmas! I hope you are happy at the North Pole! I love you Santa Claus!
Sincerely,
Aubrey Ceniceros
P.S. I want an iPhone 11 and airpods.

Dear Santa, My name is Jody Martinez. This year, I have been good. Do you think you can bring me an Adventure Force 50 pack Die Cast, and a WWE Motu Ring Bundle Snake Mountain?
Sincerely, **Jody Martinez**

MS. ENRIQUEZ' THIRD GRADE CLASS

Dear Santa, I wish for the LOL O.M.G and the books, "Dog Man Brawl of the Wild" and "Dog Man Fetch-22." I also wish for money and for my Dad to get a job. I wish to go to Ojinaga for Christmas. I wish health to everybody and my family! I wish a happy holiday to everyone.
Happy holidays, **Mariela Rojas**

Dear Santa, For Christmas I want a hoverboard, a tablet, an LOL Boy Surprise, and maybe a phone and TikTok.
Love, **Alexia Ramos**

Dear Santa, I want Minecraft for my brother, and we would so like it. Then we would get to play Apex and Fortnite. For my mom, I would get more makeup. For Nana, I will give Nana a new cat.
Love, **Ty Bejaran**

Dear Santa Claus, I will write a list of things I want: 10K Robux, if you can't get that that's okay, 100 dollar desktop, snow!!!, Magic Tracks that we have, COVID-19 stopping!, Zearn to not be crazy confusing, Ring 3 in Roblox, and I don't want Alberto to leave. Christmas isn't only presents, it's fun for family and friends!
Love, **Giovanni van Etten**

Dear Santa, I want for Christmas an electric scooter and my sister that is coming soon!!!
Love, **Lea Alvidrez**

Dear Santa, All I want for Christmas is my family, love, a nice teacher and a nice school. I already have 2 nice teachers! That's it.
Thank you, Santa, **Malenny Quezada**

Dear Santa, For Christmas, I want paint, a canvas, color pencils, an art kit, sketch pad, markers, 10,000 dollars for my mom, an LOL doll for my sister, cosplay stuff for my sister, a watch for Sam and my Dad, sunglasses for Tracy, 10,000 dollars for my grandma and grandpa, and for everyone to be safe.
Sincerely, **Alba Amaro**

Dear Santa, For Christmas, I just want my family to get what they want for Christmas. I can't stay here for Christmas. I have to go to Austin.
Love, **Kathleen Hower**

Dear Santa, Hello! Are you real? This year my grandma is sick. What should I do? We are planning to move soon. All I want for Christmas is family.
Love, **Rayleeah Rodriguez**

MRS. TRAVIS' FOURTH GRADE CLASS

Dear Santa, Hi Santa! I'm Tayvian and I've been really good this year. I've been doing my math and it's really hard. I know I haven't written in a while, maybe 3 to 4 years. Well, it's nice writing to you again. All I want is happiness and kindness and this virus to go away.
Thank you, **Tayvian Valenzuela**

Dear Santa, I have been good so far. For Christmas, I would like a game called Spiderman Miles Morales, a Naruto shirt and Naruto action figures. Can you also bring my little brother a Paw Patrol toy? Also, please bring a charm for my Mom's charm bracelet and a Steelers shirt for the man. I hope you are doing okay in the North Pole.
Merry Christmas!
Love, **Eric Morin**

Dear Santa,
All I want for Christmas is to go to the fifth grade!
Love, **Jerika Rodriguez**

MRS. BARTON'S MONTESSORI CLASS (1ST, 2ND AND 3RD GRADES)

Dear Santa, The North Pole must be fun and you must get a lot of snow. What I want for Christmas is a wooly mammoth plush because I really like the Ice Age and dinosaurs and stuff like that. It's my favorite thing to do and I really want Corona to go away.
Thank you, **Sienna Barton (3rd grade)**

Dear Santa, I am 9 years old and live in Marfa. I thought you should know that I have been extra nice. My favorite thing that happened this year was getting a new puppy. For Christmas I would like playing in the LOL surprise OMG remix dolls.
Thank you, **Tallulah Bird Anders (3rd grade)**

Dear Santa, I am 9 years old and live in Marfa. I thought you should know that I have been extra nice. My favorite thing that happened this year was our first time, well second time, decorating our house for Christmas. For Christmas I would like some robux and an RC car.
Thank you for reading this,
Mateo Grajeda (3rd grade)

Dear Santa, I am 9 years old and live in a house. I thought you should know that I have been extra nice. My favorite thing that happened this year was that we got a house and decorated. For Christmas I would like a lava lamp, milky way chocolate bar, rc police car, grian merch, and robux.
Thank you, **Eli Grajeda (3rd grade)**

Dear Santa, Trixie is watching me. Can I please have a LEGO Mario set and Mario House?
Aiden Daugherty (3rd grade)
P.S. House 708

Dear Santa, How is Mrs. Claus? I am really good. What I want for Christmas is slime, an American Girl doll, a dog, my grandma, a room, a phone, an airpad, and love from my family. I would also like a phone, a watch, and a pet puppy. Have a nice Christmas and Mrs. Claus too. Good morning and goodnight to you and Mrs. Claus. I would also like a pool and a baby sister. Happy Holiday!
The End, **Dania Fernandez (2nd Grade)**

Dear Santa, My parents will tell you I've been nice. What I'd like most is a skateboard to ride on.
Love, **Azul Alviderz (2nd Grade)**

Dear Santa, I've been really good. I am cleaning my room and I did my chores. I take care of my baby sister and sometimes I help my mom and dad cook. I play with my baby sister and I help my mom and dad make my sister's bottles. What I want for Christmas is a phone and this kind of watch that can call people and an LOL doll house and a big LOL doll.
Thank you Santa and I love you,
Nyla Gonzalez (2nd Grade)

Dear Santa, I am 7 years old and live in Marfa. I thought you should know that I have been extra nice. My favorite thing that happened this year was we went to play in the snow on Antelope Hills with snowballs and I raised a feral kitten. We made him healthy and we found him somewhere by the ruins. So we planted a veggie garden and then we also jumped on a trampoline and swung from a tree. Even though we had a hard year, it was a lot of fun. Learning with Mrs. Barton was really fun! For Christmas all I want is for Coronavirus to be over so I can squeeze my friend until her eyes pop out.
Thank you, **Alexandra Maxine Clifton (1st Grade)**

Dear Santa, My parents will tell you I've been nice. I want a bike with a baby carriage. I also want to ask you why you are dressed up like a red cat?
Merry Christmas, **McKayla Daugherty (1st Grade)**

Dear Santa, My parents will tell you I've been naughty and nice. I want a skateboard and a Beyblade set. Santa Claus, I like you as a friend.
Love, **Elijah Mackie (1st Grade)**

Dear Santa, How was your day? For Christmas I would like a telescope and a car with a control. I would also like a racing hot wheel with road set. I would also like a touch screen computer and that is all. Have a good Christmas Day.
Love, **Saul Razo-Leeper (1st Grade)**

Dear Santa, I am 6 and 1/2 years old and live in Marfa. I thought you should know that I have been kind of nice. My favorite thing that happened was when my uncles came to visit. It was special because we have hardly seen any family or friends this year because of Corona. For Christmas here is what I was thinking, I would like my own coloring tablet where I can create and design my own art.
Thank you, **Amaya Nico Fuentez (1st Grade)**

Dear Santa, I am 6 years old and I live in Marfa in a yellow house. I thought you should know that I have been extra nice. My favorite thing that happened this year was getting to see my grandma and grandpa after a long time, and I liked going to Zion with them. For Christmas I would like a computer, a Nintendo Switch, Covid to be over and everyone to be happy.
Thank you and I hohohope you have a good Christmas, **Cypress Watts (1st Grade)**

SUBMISSIONS FROM LOCAL CHILDREN

Dear Santa, I've been a good girl. For Christmas can I please have play-dough, a slide and oranges?
Love, **Twyla Siegel-Gardner (2 years old)**

Dear Santa, Please since I've been a good boy, can I have 2 Hot Wheels race cars, a submarine Lego and remote-controlled train?
Love, **Levi Siegel-Gardner (6 years old)**

Dear Santa Claus, I love you very much dear Santa. I want to tell you that I am on the nice list and would you please bring me a triple chocolate candy cane with whip cream inside. Please also some toy Christmas lights and new shoes.
And also I want a regular candy cane OK?
Love, **Louie Byrne (Alpine Montessori)**

Dear Santa, Can I ask Santa for The Train of The North Pole, and can I also have other trains, another drum stick and a stilt bird? **Gabriel Camacho Jones (3 years old)**

Dear Santa, How was your summer? Here is my Christmas list: Defensor Kre-O Combiner, Lord of the Rings LEGO set, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, The Child from the Mandalorian and a snow globe. That's my Christmas list. Thank you, Santa!
Love, **Levi Cashiola (6 years old)**
P.S. Please hide all the presents and mark them on a map.

Dear Santa, I want: Ninja Turtles (Leonardo with a piece of pizza), hot chocolate to share with you, a robot named Optimus, a buildable house with a tiny little apple cake like a dollhouse, a butterfly book and a painting set. Anything you want to tell me, send me a letter, Santa!
Love, **Eero Cashiola (3 years old)**

Dear Santa, I would like to have a new chair to sit in while playing games and two new controllers, so my brother Cy can play with me. I have been very good and safe and I still believe in your magic. **Easton Watts (10 years old)**

Arts & Community

Presidio County will be closed Dec 23, 24, 25 & Jan 1.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, may it be filled with miracles and the true meaning of this beautiful season!

BBT Announces Grant Award

Alpine, TX - The Foundation for Rural Service recently announced the recipients of 23 grants totaling $104,000 to advance the quality of life and enable economic development in communities served by members of the Rural Broadband Association.

BBT announced that Texas Tech University Health Science Center at El Paso was one of the recipients, receiving $5,000 to purchase telehealth equipment to provide neurological service in rural communities of Public Health Region 10 in West Texas, including Brewster, Presidio, and Jeff Davis counties.

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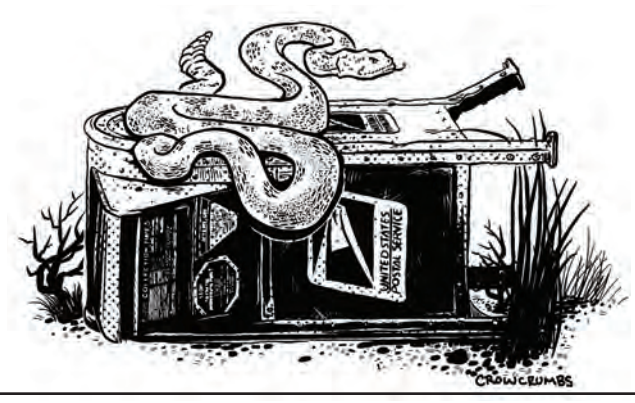
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HIGH DESERT SKETCHES

'Tis the season to be jolly … Really??

By GEORGE A. COVINGTON

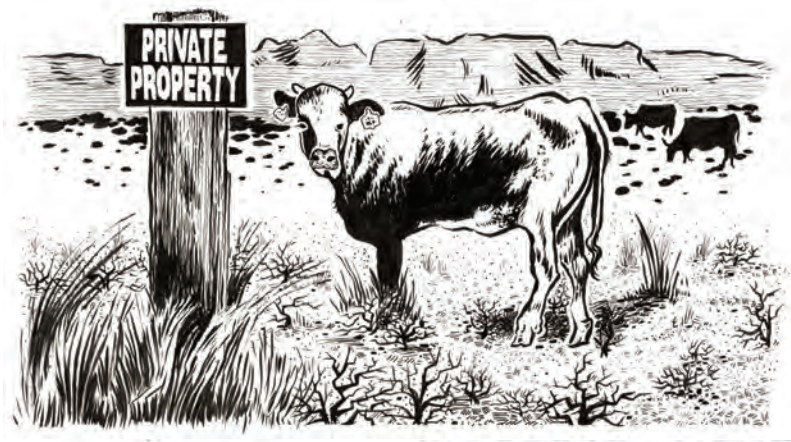
To keep up the spirit of Christmas, past and present, I would recommend my two favorite books by Lonn Taylor, *Texas My Texas: Musings of the Rambling Boy* and *Turning the Pages of Texas*. Lonn, who died June 26, 2019, was that consummate writer, a person who could both entertain and inform. His weekly column in *The Big Bend Sentinel*, and his recitation of his column every Friday on Marfa Public Radio wrapped humor and history in a way unique with Lonn. We met more than 50 years ago as young men at the University of Texas. He was a young Democrat and I was a young Republican. Four of his last books are available at Front Street Books.

Although we both wrote columns for *The Big Bend Sentinel*, my column ("High Desert Sketches") tended to be of a satirical nature, and thus had more pointed edges than a porcupine, while his ("The Rambling Boy)" tended to be kinder and gentler. Vaya con Dios, old friend.

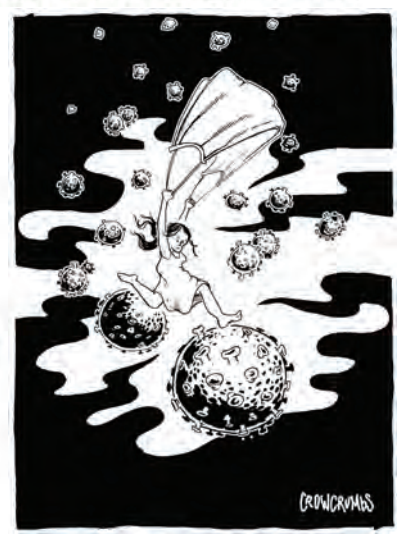
More than a dozen of Lonn's earlier works can be found at amazon.com. My novel, *Photo Hero: A Satire of Photography*, is also available on Amazon.

In this issue of *The Big Bend Sentinel* is an interview with Valerie Howard, aka "Crowcrumbs." I once asked Valerie why she used the name Crowcrumbs to sign her illustrations. Her answer was simple, "Bad hair day." I also think it has something to do with her Cherokee heritage. I have often marveled at how she can take one of my small seeds of an idea and turn it into a captivating illustration bearing little resemblance to my meager suggestions. Be sure to read her interview with Abbie in this issue of *The Sentinel.*

George A. Covington has worked in the fields of law, education, journalism and disability rights. He considers himself retired from every one of them with the possible exception of journalism.







Getting to know Valerie Howard, the illustrator behind 'Crowcrumbs'

By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com

TEXAS – It was 2006 when Valerie Howard, the illustrator behind the pseudonym "Crowcrumbs," first landed in the Big Bend region. She quickly settled in, stepping into a job at the *Alpine Avalanche* where she had the fortune to meet George Covington. Covington had a standing column at the Alpine news outlet at the time, and Howard recalls that when he would arrive at the office to deliver his writing, there was always a chorus of "George!" from the staff.

"He came in and – George is larger than life, likes to talk, never met a stranger – so of course we were introduced there and he was looking for somebody to help him write his columns," she said. He needed a transcriber as his eyesight was deteriorating, and as Howard describes it, "We just immediately started working together."

Making illustrations for his column came quite a bit later though. While Covington was legally blind at that point, he had some partial vision and was still taking his own photographs to accompany his writing.

"I would transcribe his column and would do a little bit of manipulation on the computer of photos he would take," Howard recalled. "I would convert the photo into black and white outlines and that was how he could see the photo at the time, if it had a high enough contrast."

It wasn't until 2010 that she began the first few drawings for him. Though Howard had an undergraduate degree in graphic design, she didn't go to school for drawing or take many studio classes. Still, she's always enjoyed the craft and even had experience drawing for her high school newspaper. Pen in hand, she began her first illustrations for "High Desert Sketches."

A job at the Alpine library eventually led Howard away from the Big Bend area, as she departed for Denton to pursue a library science masters at University of North Texas. But her working relationship with Covington stayed intact even across the distance.

In fact, "That's when it really picked up, and I started doing drawings regularly for the column," she said. "His vision started to decline a bit more, so he was taking the photographs less and less, but he still wanted some kind of imagery to go along with his column. So naturally we just increased."

As she puts it, "It was never really quite a decision, it just kind of happened. Now I do every single one."

She had another stint in Alpine when she returned to work at the Sul Ross State University Library, but ultimately she settled in her native Houston, where she resides today. By day, she's a user-experience architect contractor, working with startups or companies looking to up their digital presence.

But Howard never has kicked the habit of drawing for Covington's columns. Their friendship grew and Howard had fun translating Covington's ideas into a visual. "He usually has tons of ideas," she says of the days he will call to talk about the latest column.

"Sometimes before I even get a full draft of the column, he'll say, 'The topic will be food insecurity,' and I'll do my own, thinking how can I present this using visual symbols."

"Luckily he gives me a lot of creative freedom," Howard said. When the column and visual are finally printed in *The Big Bend Sentinel*'s latest issue, Covington's sighted assistants will see the illustration for the very first time. It's after that that Covington will call Howard, recounting to her the exact reaction the assistant had.

"It's such a genuine thing, because George can't really see the art at this point," Howard said, "but it's so fun to hear him describe their reactions."

Howard shows her work with Houston's Insomnia Gallery and she informally sells her original art, including art from "High Desert Sketches" columns, through Instagram and Facebook under "Crowcrumbs" and at www.crowcrumbs.com.





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Arts & Community

DRAWING OF THE WEEK



Drawing by Aubrianna
"Self Portrait with Mask"
Mrs. Roman's second grade class

'Magic and Monologues' – a virtual holiday event

By JD GARCIA
Marfa Live Arts

MARFA — Marfa Live Arts' "Magic and Monologues" playwriting showcase goes live tonight, Thursday, December 17, at 7 p.m. on Zoom, with professional actors performing monologues written by Marfa students over a weeklong workshop taught by Marfa Live Arts.

The award-winning Marfa Junior High writers who will have their words brought to life are: Ava Flores, Kassandra Garcia, Amaya Gomez, Amber Hinojos, Diego Jurado, Sara Salgado Martinez, Katana Melendez, Ayven Pippen and Isaiah Ramos.

Opening the show this year is Mago Krypto, a Guadalajara-based magician, who will wow the virtual audience with a selection of his best card tricks. Among the roster of actors performing student-written work is Alpine-based actor David DeLaO, whose credits in the entertainment industry includes the recurring role of Diego on the hit AMC series "Better Call Saul," Arturo on the USA series "The Purge," and roles in upcoming feature-length films, "The Marksman" (starring Liam Neeson), and "Silk Road."

"It's cool to help out the kids," said DeLaO of working with Marfa Live Arts. "It's a great opportunity for them. It's one thing for them to write, but seeing their work come to life is a different thing. It shows them that they can do this if they want to."

For DeLaO, the fact that he's a working actor based in the tri-county area may also serve as an inspiration for students aspiring to work in the entertainment industry. "I think it helps the kids realize that they can be actors, writers, showrunners or directors no matter where you're from," said DeLaO, who has participated in several past Marfa Live Arts shows. "Working with Marfa Live Arts and the kids has always been fun. Those kids write cool characters with a lot of heart and it's awesome to bring that to life," he explained. "I'm glad we've found a way to keep it going despite coronavirus. I hope people enjoy it."

Performing in both English and Spanish, Diego "Mago Krypto" Zenteno has been performing magic for over a decade, having found his calling at the age of eight while watching television. "The first time I saw magic was on a TV special. The magician was doing an act with a piece of thread and I ran to my parents and said, 'I want to be a magician,'" he said excitedly. "I found a universe of tricks and secrets. It took me 12 years before I was able to perform a one-hour show." Zenteno's hard work and dedication, he added, has garnered him five first-place trophies in national magic competitions in Mexico, work with international companies such as Nissan and Coca Cola, and the ability to help found a magic school in Guadalajara. This year's Marfa Live Arts showcase, he said, will add a bit of a challenge due to the ZOOM platform, but magic and art will nevertheless overcome the obstacles inherent in the format. "The thing I love about being part of this project, right now with the [coronavirus] situation, is to find out new ways to connect with the audience. One thing that's beautiful about magic is that we can connect with people all around the world. It doesn't matter the language or where you are," he said. "The fact that I have to do magic for a camera and no live audience will be a different experience, but at the end, we can all feel that connection. It's an amazing project and I'm excited to share my magic with you all."

For Marfa Live Arts Director Jennie Lyn Hamilton, there is still excitement among the students despite the change of platform for this year's show. "Typically, every year we award the winners and hit the stage of the Crowley Theater. We have dinner for all the kids, and they come early to watch the actors at rehearsal," she said of past performances. "We usually have a big audience of teachers, families and community members. We're hoping people will still join us tonight on Zoom. It's an all ages, all-are-welcome event."

The students' work, she added, will make it worth registering and logging on. "It's amazing seeing what happens when these kids bravely share their inner voices and tell us their stories, dreams and secrets, as well as tackle solving big problems and conflicts," she said. This year's addition of Mago Krypto, Hamilton said, will also add a little more excitement to the Marfa Junior High tradition. "With Mago Krypto, we wanted to add a little extra," she said. "Everyone is tired of staring at the Zoom screen, so this will literally add some magic."

Joining DeLaO and Mago Krypto in performing are Giselle Marie Muñoz, an Austin-based theater and film actor who co-founded the Austin Arthouse Film Festival; Austin-based playwright Raul Garza, who received the National Latino Playwriting Award for his full-length play, "Fantasmaville"; and actor Mindy Escobar-Leanse, whose credits include Henson Studios/PBS' "Dinosaur Train Live! Buddy's Big Adventure," the UK and Japan tour for off-Broadway show "The Very Hungry Caterpillar," and "Puppet Titus Andronicus."

Registration is required. For free tickets and reservations, visit www.marfalivearts.org.

Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering begins virtual events

ALPINE — Tickets are now on sale for the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering's first virtual events, December 16-January 3 and January 22-31. The gathering is streaming an 81-minute film, "Keeping the Tradition Alive," featuring poetry, musical performances and interviews with poet Joel Nelson and musicians Dale Burson, R.W. Hampton, Randy Huston and Rod Taylor. Commissioned by the gathering and filmed in the fall of 2020 on location in Alpine and on ranches in Texas and New Mexico, it is a thoughtful, informed and humorous introduction to Alpine, the gathering, and the poetry and music created by working cattlemen and women.

Tickets are $20 for a single ticket, $5 for each additional ticket and for Bronze Members, and free to Silver Members and above. A ticket provides access for any number of viewers on one screen. Ticket holders can watch online as many times as desired, using any internet-connected device. Purchasers can enter an email address to send a ticket to a gift recipient. Tickets are available online at LoneStarCowboyPoetry.com/tickets.

Between songs and poems, the participants talk about topics near to their hearts: horse training, becoming cowboys, horse wrecks, finding water and living a life outdoors. Eschewing glitz and stage performances, the film is intimate and compelling, with gorgeous footage of Texas and New Mexico vistas near the participating sites.

The Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering was formed in 2019 to continue the tradition of cowboy poetry in Alpine, Texas, and held its inaugural gathering February 21-22, 2020. It is a nonprofit organization promoting narratives of the cowboy life told in poetry, song, stories and art by those who have lived it. In September 2020, the gathering announced it would postpone its next in-person gathering to February 18-19, 2022 and would develop a series of virtual cowboy poetry events to showcase cowboy poets and musicians and the beautiful Alpine area for an online audience. In October and November 2020, the gathering raised $29,386 through a donor match challenge to fund the production of subsequent online cowboy poetry events after these three showings of "Keeping the Tradition Alive."

Membership in the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering starts at $5 per month or $50 per year (Bronze level). Members at that level can purchase their ticket for $5. Higher-level memberships ($10 per month or $100 per year, and up) include a complimentary ticket to every virtual event the gathering offers during their year of membership. Members are the core supporters of the gathering, sustaining it for the future.



Alex Leos poses for a photo with his grandson Sebastian Loya. Leos stepped down this month from the Marfa Parks and Recreation board after 15 years of service. "It was a pleasure working with Alex over the past decade," said Marfa Mayor Manny Baeza. "He helped tremendously in the transformation of Marfa City Parks. He will be greatly missed on the parks and recreation board. I wish him well and can't thank him enough for his time and dedication to the City of Marfa. Godspeed!"

Virtually tour the Ruidosa church and help fund its restoration

By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com

RUIDOSA — Guests from far and wide are invited to the remote border town of Ruidosa on Friday for an intimate exploration inside the adobe church that once housed the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. And because of coronavirus, instead of joining in person, attendees will tour the historic structure with experts virtually on social media, from the comfort of their couch.

Friends of the Ruidosa Church, a nonprofit set to restore the adobe structure, are using the virtual event to reintroduce people to the building and begin fundraising for the planning phase of the restoration. "We need to take some time before we start putting shovels in the ground to do the research and planning," said Mike Green, a volunteer with the organization who has a background in architectural restoration.

The group has a goal of raising $50,000 to fund a site analysis by an adobe expert and hire a structural engineer that can assess what types of shoring or bracing the building may need to continue standing proud in the border town. "There's a lot of careful planning that needs to take place before we start getting dirty down there, so that's what we need to fund, or a portion of it."

Once the site is safe, they intend to fund a historic structure report – a detailed study of the site's history and archaeology. They will also assemble historic accounts of the building and are hoping to speak with anyone who experienced the building when it was still functioning as a Catholic church.

Join the virtual tour on December 18 throughout the day on social media platforms @ruidosachurch on Instagram and Friends of the Ruidosa Church on Facebook, and contact them to share your stories about the building. Donations can be made at www.ruidosachurch.org.



Puzzle solution for this week's issue are on back page.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

		7		6			8	1
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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

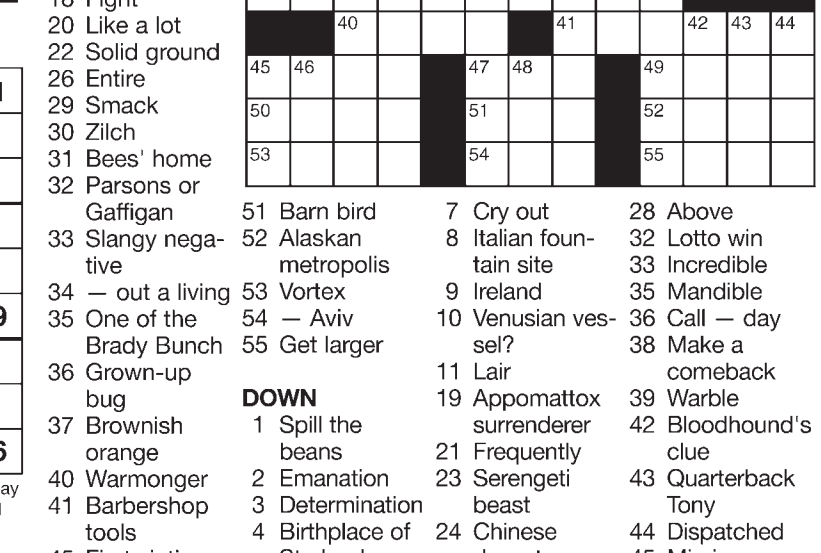
◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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King Crossword

ACROSS
1 Porter's burdens
5 Before
8 Dull sound of impact
12 Enticement
13 Blend
14 Abundant
15 Opera showstopper
16 U.K. broadcaster
17 Black, in verse
18 Fight
20 Like a lot
22 Solid ground
26 Entire
29 Smack
30 Zilch
31 Bees' home
32 Parsons or Gaffigan
33 Slangy negative
34 — out a living
35 One of the Brady Bunch
36 Grown-up bug
37 Brownish orange
40 Warmonger
41 Barbershop tools
45 First victim
47 Luau bowlful
49 "American —"
50 Ring out
51 Barn bird
52 Alaskan metropolis
53 Vortex
54 — Aviv
55 Get larger

DOWN
1 Spill the beans
2 Emanation
3 Determination
4 Birthplace of Starbucks
5 Fireplace bit
6 Cage component
7 Cry out
8 Italian fountain site
9 Ireland
10 Venusian vessel?
11 Lair
19 Appomattox surrenderer
21 Frequently
23 Serengeti beast
24 Chinese dynasty
25 Choir member
26 Sharpen
27 Raise
28 Above
32 Lotto win
33 Incredible
35 Mandible
36 Call — day
38 Make a comeback
39 Warble
42 Bloodhound's clue
43 Quarterback Tony
44 Dispatched
45 Mimic
46 Foundation
48 Didn't pay yet



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Puzzle solutions for last week's issue

	B	U	M			J	A	B
	B	O	N	E		B	E	N	E	S	
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9	2	6	8	3	5	4	1	7
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8	5	3	1	4	7	2	9	6

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MARFA 12 STEP MEETINGS ONLINE

Go to zoom.us or download the app:
ACA - ***Thursday 5:30 PM*** https://tinyurl.com/y7qyghga
Al Anon. - ***Sunday 2:00 PM*** https://tinyurl.com/yd78lsa6
AA - ***Monday, Tuesday 6:00 PM*** https://tinyurl.com/y6okgzry
AA - ***Wednesday 6:00 PM*** St. Paul's Episcopal Church (masks, distance, sanitizer, wipe down surfaces required)
AA - ***Friday 6:00 PM*** https://tinyurl.com/yxw5bsu6
AA - ***Saturday 12:00 Noon*** https://tinyurl.com/yafles7y
*Please note that if any of the links don't work or there aren't attendees, you can find online meetings at any time at https://aa-intergroup.org/oiaa/meetings/

Linnaeus H. Lorette Collections: A Memorial Exhibit opens today

By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — Today Inde/Jacobs will open a new exhibition, Linnaeus H. Lorette Collections: A Memorial Exhibit. It's the first exhibition of Lorette's extensive art collection since his passing, and to the gallerists, the first real chance for the public to memorialize a unique Marfa resident.

When Lineaus Lorette passed away in April, friends and family mourned the loss of the eccentric accountant, medicine ball maker, dog lover, lamp salesman and art collector. Vilis Inde, a friend of Lorette's, was named as executor of the will, and found himself suddenly tasked with handling the personal effects, inventory and massive art collections that filled Lorette's homes in Fort Davis, Marfa and El Paso.

In the will, Lorette requested that if financially feasible, his collection be used to establish a museum, or to financially support El Paso art institutions. Lorette's collections are as wide ranging as they are unique. Across his three homes, he left behind over 100 Chinese cultural revolution figurines (many in duplicate or triplicate), dozens of political wood collages by Abby Levine, paintings by his mother Richey Lorette, countless masks by Patty Manning, and stacks of homoerotic art, prison art and priceless prints by Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada.

Between the three locations, Lorette's collection of art numbers in the thousands – and that's without the hundreds of lamps he owned.

Inde brought in Sam Watts to help comprehend the collection of items, and to begin sorting through what was inventory, what was personal, and, even trickier, what art should remain in the permanent collection for a potential eventual museum and what should be sold.

Through his work so far, Watts has determined that lamps are designated for resale – but determining the values for the hundreds of fixtures is another task of its own. Watts says that in trying to understand Lorette's habits and intentions for his collections, he's come to see the lamps as inventory to be sold, because that is how Lorette used that particular collection himself. For years, Lorette's Marfa property housed the Marfa Lights and Lamps store, at the New Star Grocery Art Gallery on 301 W. Dallas Street.

Part of the reason for the Inde/Jacobs exhibition is to pare down the overwhelming collection so that it isn't too heavily weighted towards a single artist, Watts explained. But reducing the collection isn't the only challenge. In working their way through the collection, the group has found that Lorette collected a sizable amount of forgeries, likely intentionally, leading the gallery to present a disclaimer that the items are sold "as is" and the estate does not guarantee their authenticity.

In the meantime, Watts is working to familiarize himself with the expansive collections, which includes researching Chinese operas, talking to local archivists and looking for experts familiar with the niche topics at hand.

This weekend, Watts was working in the New Star Art Gallery, taking stock of items and preparing for the art show. He pointed out how the space might be divided to create a permanent museum in the front half of the main room, and his hopes for an adjacent store to sell the rare, vintage and ordinary lamps. Details about the museum are still uncertain this early in the will's execution, but Watts is hopeful that a permanent space will remain to display Lorette's collections in Marfa.

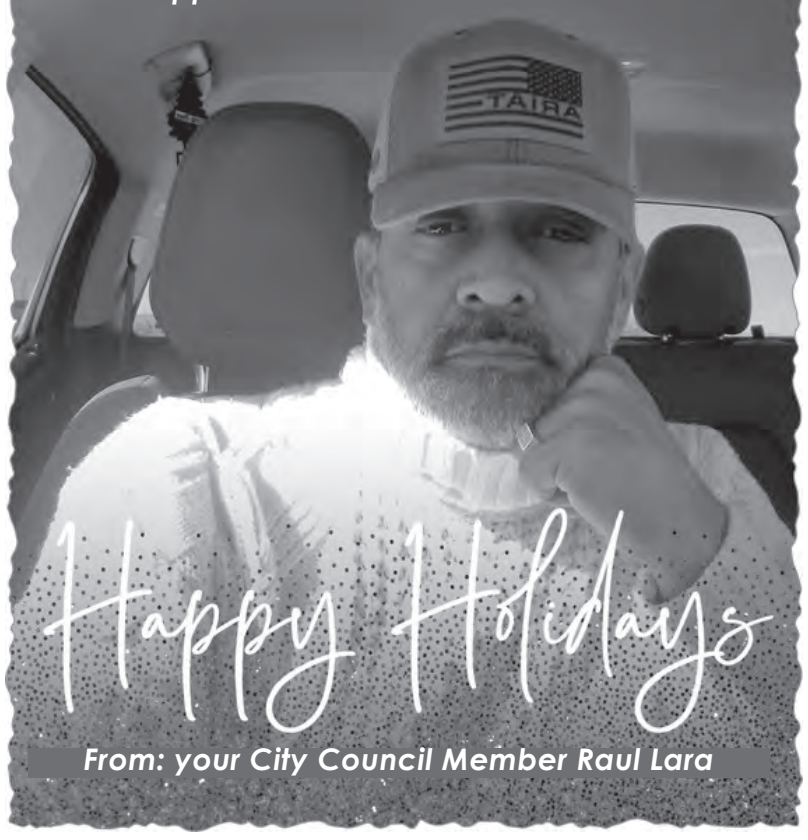
The exhibition at Inde/Jacobs runs from December 17, 2020, through January 3, 2021, and is open from 3 to 5:30 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays, and noon to 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. COVID precautions will be observed, according to the gallery, and items available for purchase will have proceeds go to arts organizations of El Paso.

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"Go to Lord Angelo
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue
Men give like gods;
But when they weep and kneel,
All their petitions are as freely theirs
As they themselves would owe them."

–Lucio to Isabella, urging her to use all methods to persuade Lord Angelo not to execute her brother. (Shakespeare's Measure for Measure, in rehearsal in Marfa)

"The holidays can seem especially draining this year with all that is going on. It is doubly difficult because we all miss our usual means of support, the comfort of gathering with friends and family, and worship services that are part of our traditions. I am here for you through it all. I wish you endurance, strength, health, and as much happiness as these times can allow!"



OBITUARIES

Brit Webb, a longtime Marfa resident and former city council member, passed away on Tuesday, December 15, at the age of 92. ***Full obituary to come.***



Covington

Candace Ann Covington was welcomed into the world on June 12, 1977, by her parents, Frank and Lana, and sister, Tallie Covington. The family lived in Austin, Texas, until they moved to Alpine, Texas, in 1986. After high school graduation, her adventurous spirit led her to many places, including Turtle Island, North Carolina, where she worked for 18 months at a pioneer farm, and to Georgia, California, Maine, Costa Rica, Hawaii, Colorado and the Gila Wilderness of New Mexico. She eagerly learned about the culture, the animals, and the native plants of all the places where she went. She always returned to the Big Bend region, where she enjoyed hiking and camping and felt at home. Along the way, she met many people who became lifelong friends and who tell stories of Candace's kindness, gentleness and generosity.

Candace developed sensitivities to many toxins found in manmade materials, making it impossible for her to remain inside most houses and buildings. It was for that reason that she left her studies in archeology at Sul Ross State University. She sought work outdoors and found it as a river guide along the Rio Grande and in the white waters of Colorado. She took part in many of the archeological surveys conducted by the Center for Big Bend Studies.

Candace developed a product using creosote as its main ingredient and started Creosote Bush Salve Company. She worked diligently to supply her customers with her various products, including creosote salve and oil and pinion salve. Her products were highlighted in *Texas Highways Magazine* in a feature about Texas-made products. She sold online through Etsy and had a 5 star rating.

Candace was an avid researcher and became knowledgeable about a wide variety of subjects. She was always eager to share her knowledge and took great pleasure in taking her nephew and niece camping and sharing her knowledge with them. She constantly sought information about toxins and potential remedies, and met in-person or online many people who suffer as she did with the hope that her experiences and expertise would help other people.

On December 4, 2020, Candace left this world for a better place, a place prepared for her in eternity. She will remain in the hearts of many who are grateful for her 43 and a half years. She is survived by her parents Frank and Lana Covington, sister and brother-in-law Tallie and Tate Altgelt, nephew TJ Raby and niece Codie Raby, numerous aunts, uncles and cousins, and scores of treasured friends.

An outdoor memorial service is planned for warmer weather. In the meantime, suggested memorial donations are the following:

First Christian Church in Alpine (PO Box 607, Alpine, TX 79830), where she professed Christ as her Lord and Savior and was baptized.

Center for Big Bend Studies (Sul Ross State University, Ferguson Hall, Suite 114, Box C-71, Alpine, TX 79832)

Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center (HC 70 Box 375 Terlingua, TX 79852).



Ebensberger

Phil W. Ebensberger of Temple was born July 4, 1937, in New Braunfels, Texas. He graduated from Burbank High School in San Antonio and received a music scholarship to attend Sul Ross State University in Alpine. He received his B.B.A. degree in 1960 and his Master of Arts degree in 1972.

In 1958, he was bit by a gopher outside of the Alpine radio station and was hospitalized where he met his future wife, Jenny Ruth Bechthold, a newly-employed registered nurse at Brewster County Memorial Hospital. The couple were married on June 6, 1959, and were the parents of two children, Penny Lynn, born in 1960, and Michael Wayne, born in 1961.

Phil Wayne began part-time employment at KVLF Radio while a student at Sul Ross in 1955 and remained in the field of broadcasting until 1978. He served as station manager of KVLF in Alpine and KVOU in Uvalde and was news director at KWBA in Baytown-Houston. He returned to Alpine in 1966 and accepted a position as manager of the Alpine Chamber of Commerce while also employed at KVLF.

In 1970, he became sports information director at Sul Ross State University, and a year later was named director of public information. The family moved to Commerce in 1974 where Phil became station manager of East Texas State University's new public radio station KETR which began operations in 1975. He moved from the radio station to the school relations office in 1979 and then became director of admissions in 1982.

In 1985, he became the first registrar and director of admissions at the newly created Northeast Texas Community College located between Mount Pleasant, Pittsburg and Daingerfield.

In broadcasting, Phil Wayne received awards for Best Newscast in Texas for small market stations from the Texas Association of Broadcasters when he was at both KVLF and KETR. He was honored as Citizen of the Year by the Baytown Police Association in 1965. He received an award from the Alpine Lions Club for Distinguished and Meritorious Service for 1959-1964, received an Honorary Chapter Farmer Award from the Alpine FFA in 1970 and was named Sportscaster of the Year in the Lone Star Conference in 1975-76. He served as the Voice of the Lone Star Conference Basketball Tournament and Spring Track Meet from 1978-1984.

Phil served as president of the Alpine Lions Club, was a member of the school board in Commerce, and was chairman of the city of Commerce's cable television committee, served as a board member of the Mount Pleasant-Titus County Chamber of Commerce and as Treasurer of the chamber board in 1988.

In 1996, Phil became the registrar at Odessa College and moved to Midland College in the same position in January 2001. He retired in May 2008.

Phil served as newsletter editor of the Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (TACRAO) from 1992-1995. He also received the organization's President's Award in 2007 and was named an honorary member in 2008.

After retiring, he moved back into broadcasting as station manager of KOCV FM, the Odessa College radio station for two years. He also worked part time for Midland College as a student advisor.

Jenny and Phil moved to Garden Estates of Temple, a senior lifestyle living community in September 2019.

Phil is survived by his wife Jenny of 61 years; his daughter Penny Lynn and her husband Tommy Escamilla of Monahans; granddaughter Treena Escamilla and her two children, Jaiden and Jordan Jackson all of Monahans.

Survivors also include sisters-in-laws Kathryn Bechthold Fleming of Stillwater, Oklahoma; Helen and husband Robert Escobar of Gatesville, Texas; Mable Gilmore of Hillsboro, Texas; Carol Bechthold of Temple, Texas; and Minnie Bechthold of Ft. Worth, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his son Michael Wayne on July 25, 1995, and his parents, Nina and Oscar Ebensberger of San Antonio.

Graveside services will be held at Monahans Cemetery December 19, 2020, at 2 p.m.

Granado

Rosa Minjares Granado passed away Thursday, December 10, 2020, in Midland, Texas, at the age of 75. She entered this world July 15, 1945, in Marfa, Texas, to Nicholas and Maria Minjares. She was a lifelong Catholic and a lifelong resident of Pecos, Texas.

Rosa devoted 46 years of service to the Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD. She served as an inspiration to many by obtaining her teaching degree later in life before officially retiring earlier this year. Many remember fondly that, for the last 10 years of her career, she planned to retire every year, only to decide to teach "just one more year." Motivating her students was her passion, and it showed in her students and the community's devotion to her. Rosa considered everyone to be her friend.

She was adventurous, loved to travel and loved to make people laugh. She loved to shop, especially when it came to buying gifts for her family and friends. She created a family Christmas tradition of attending Merry Market Place with her family every year, a tradition which will be dearly missed.

She is preceded in death by her father, Nicholas Minjares; her mother, Maria Minjares; her daughter, Marina Natividad; and her beloved, furry, 20-lb. companion, Baxter T. Prescott Granado.

She is survived by her loving husband of 56 years, Roger Granado; her sons Nicholas Granado of Glendale, California and Christopher Granado (Lupe) of Midland, Texas; her sister Mary Jane Hernandez (Willie) of Marfa; granddaughters Alexandra Espinoza (Chris) of Midland, Rowan Macias (Alex) of Odessa, Texas and Lauren Granado of Fayetteville, Arkansas; grandson Aaron Natividad of Denver City, Texas; great-grandchildren Jordan Espinoza and Evan Macias, as well as numerous nieces and nephews whom she dearly loved.

Graveside services are scheduled for Friday, December 18, at 1 p.m. at the Marfa Cemetery

Pallbearers: Chris Espinoza, Glenn Ontiveroz, Ronnie Ontiveroz, Wesley Hernandez, Javier Hernandez and Aaron Natividad.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, a rosary/mass service is being held for the immediate family only. Attendees to the graveside services are requested to follow appropriate COVID safety protocols, including maintaining social distancing and the use of face masks.

The family is forever grateful for the loving care and grace shown to Rosa by the Hope House in Midland. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in her name to the Gifts of Hope in Midland at:

Hope House
P.O. Box 1323
Midland, Texas 79701

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City Council Member
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councilmemberlara@cityofmarfa.com
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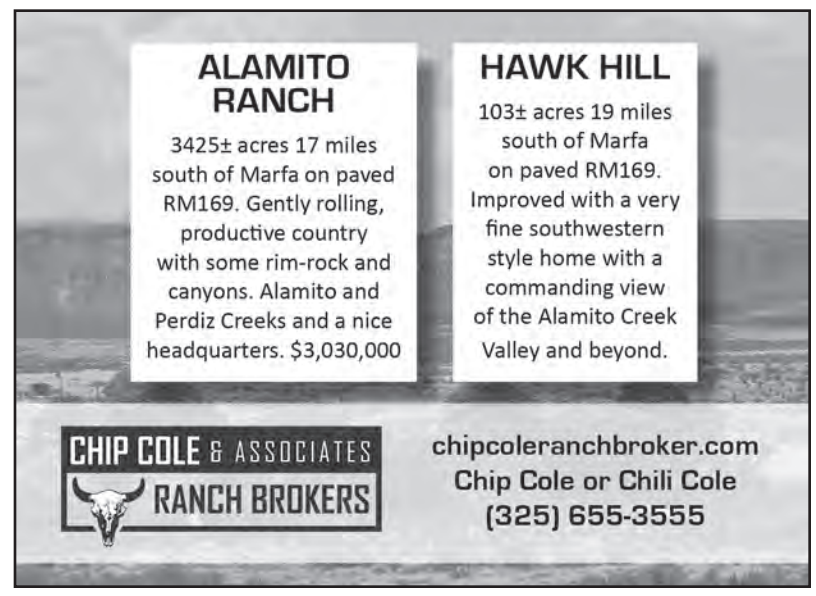
MARFA SHORTHORNS SPORTS CALENDAR

Please note that all games are subject to change due to positive COVID cases in the school districts.

Fri, Dec 18 HS BASKETBALL: *Varsity boys 5:00 vs Alpine, HOME*

☺ MARFA SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ☺

DECEMBER	Thurs, Dec 17	Fri, Dec 18
BREAKFAST	CINNAMON ROLL, SAUSAGE	MUFFIN TOP, CUBE CHEESE
LUNCH Menu courtesy of PORTER'S SINCE 1945 Celebrating 70+ years of serving our customers. 432-729-4375 www.myporters.net	CHICKEN SPAGHETTI, BREAD STICKS, GARDEN SALAD, BABY CARROTS, FRUIT	SLOPPY JOE ON A BUN, MULTIGRAIN CHIPS, COLESLAW, FRESH BROCCOLI FLORETS, FRUIT, COOKIE



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THANK YOU

During this festive season of giving, let us take time to enjoy the simple things! Presidio County would like to thank Eleazar (Junie) Villareal, Rob Crowley, AEP, and all those who assisted with the magnificent display of lights at our courthouse! Thank You for the Christmas Sparkle that warms our hearts. We wish you a season of blessings from above!

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do not be afraid,
for I am your God;
I will strengthen you,
I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.
Isaiah 41:10

Sundays 9 am
Pastor Young Hoon Kang
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Marfa 432-729-4534

Puzzle solutions for this issue:

B	A	G	S	■	E	R	E	■	T	H	U	D
L	U	R	E	■	M	I	X	■	R	I	F	E
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■	■	■	T	E	R	R	A	F	I	R	M	A
W	H	O	L	E	■	H	I	T	■	N	I	L
H	I	V	E	■	J	I	M	■	A	I	N	T
E	K	E	■	J	A	N	■	I	M	A	G	O
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4	8	3	5	7	6	1	2	9
2	9	6	3	5	4	7	1	8
8	5	1	6	9	7	2	3	4
7	3	4	8	2	1	9	5	6

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The ideal candidate will be experienced in a custodian role focused on building upkeep. They should have great physical endurance to cover a large space. A keen eye for detail and diligence are also imperative in custodial service jobs.
Responsibilities

- Ensure spaces are prepared for the next day by taking out trash, tidying furniture and
- dusting surfaces
- Sweep and mop floors and vacuum carpets
- Wash and sanitize toilets, sinks and restock disposables (e.g. soap, toilet paper, paper towels)
- Wipe mirrors and windows
- Report major damages
- Undertake other occasional custodial and janitorial tasks (lifting heavy items, moving chairs etc.)
- Requirements
- Proven experience as custodian, janitor or in a similar role
- Knowledge of use and maintenance of industrial cleaning equipment and appliances
- Knowledge of safe disposal of chemical liquids and other hazardous components
- Attention to detail and conscientiousness
- Good physical condition and strength
- High school diploma is preferred but not required

Part-time job would be 29 hours per week. Starting pay commensurate with experience. Please go online at http://www.co.presidio.tx.us and print an application that may be found under Forms. Applications may also be obtained and submitted at the Presidio County Judge's Office in the Presidio County Courthouse in Marfa.

Marfa Public Library is accepting applications for a part-time library assistant (20 hours per week). The position performs a variety of computer, clerical, and library duties, as well as provides assistance to patrons. Specific tasks include, but are not limited to: cataloging, historical research, customer service, and social media content. Must be Spanish bilingual. Knowledge of Biblionix Apollo software is preferred. Applications may be obtained online at cityofmarfa.com. *Submit resumes and applications to librarydirector@cityofmarfa.com.*

Home Health Agency seeking a Field RN in the Alpine/Marfa/Fort Davis and Presidio area.
RN to perform Oasis assessments for all types of certifications and discharges as needed for patient care. Experience preferred but train the right person if needed.

Call Myra Salazar
432-580-9393

THE BIG BEND Sentinel

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