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by order of Presidio County

PISD to require masks on campus, MISD to decide today

By SACHI MCCLENDON
sachi@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO COUNTY — Late last week, the Texas Education Agency decided to temporarily stop enforcing Governor Greg Abbott’s executive order that bans school districts from implementing a mask mandate. Prior to the TEA’s aboutface, Texas school districts, in this most recent school year, could not mandate their staff and students wear masks, merely recommend they do so.

Shortly after TEA’s announcement last Thursday, Presidio Independent School District quickly jumped into action and announced that all staff, students and visitors will be required to wear masks while on district property. “Facial coverings will be part of our district dress code. We had this mask mandate in place all last year, and our students and staff did a great job of wearing masks. We hope that everyone understands the importance of wearing masks in indoor facilities,” Presidio ISD Superintendent Ray Vasquez said in an email. “We are following [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] recommendations, and just trying to keep our district as safe as possible.”

Even though PISD is less than three weeks into the new school year, there have already been eight positive cases on campus — with six still active — according to the PISD Police Department. “We do have some students that are currently quarantined as recommended by TEA Health Guidance,” Vasquez said.

In its updated guidance, TEA requires the school to report any COVID cases to the county’s local health authority, who is Rachel Sonne of the Texas Department of State Health Services, as well as all staff and parents of those who tested positive. “Parents who opt to send their children to school in the two weeks following exposure are encouraged to closely monitor their children for symptoms,” the guidance reads.

Vasquez said in addition to working with the local health authority, he’s also been consulting with Presidio County Judge Cinderela Guevara on how to move forward as the virus mounts its comeback. “We are working collaboratively together and taking all the precautionary measures to have a safe learning environment in our district,” Vasquez said.

In a statement last Friday, Guevara pushed for masks in schools, saying “CDC officials also called for universal masking of teachers, staff, students, and visitors in schools, regardless of vaccination status and

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Staff photo by Maisie Crow

Big Bend Conservation Alliance’s Marfa Community Connector Calletana Vargas works in the garden at La Mansana de Chinati/The Block. The Big Bend Conservation Alliance recently launched Marfa Harvest/Cosecha Marfa in partnership with the Judd Foundation and in collaboration with the food pantry to bring more fresh produce to Marfa residents.

Big Bend Conservation Alliance, Judd Foundation and local gardeners join forces to boost produce at Marfa Food Pantry

By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com
and
By URSULA MUÑOZ-SCHAEFER
ursula@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — At the end of July, clients of the Marfa Food Pantry received the inaugural text letting them know there was a bounty of fresh produce available for pickup, courtesy of the new Marfa Harvest/Cosecha Marfa program.

While canned and dry goods have long been a staple of the pantry, last year they added a

garden behind the property and started handing out produce when possible. Meanwhile, the pantry was seeing its clientele double in numbers as the pandemic struck those who were already struggling to keep food on the table.

This summer, the Big Bend Conservation Alliance began building upon the idea of delivering fresh, healthy foods to clients, launching Marfa Harvest/Cosecha Marfa in partnership with the Judd Foundation and in collaboration with the food pantry.

Inspired by La Junta de los Rios — an agricultural site that was continuously farmed

for thousands of years along what is today Presidio County’s southern border — the idea for Marfa Harvest was developed between BBFA’s Executive Director Shelley Bernstein and Judd Foundation President Rainer Judd this spring during a conversation about food security and the environmental benefits of growing food locally.

It turned into a conversation about how to lower the cost of living for Marfa residents, of which 20.6% live below the poverty line. This statistic has only increased in the wake of COVID, according to Marfa Food Pantry Executive
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Population decline in Presidio County met with resistance in Presidio, resignation in Marfa

By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO COUNTY — The Census Bureau reported population drops across Presidio County over the past ten years, and while Marfa’s mayor believed the declining numbers were accurate, chalking it up to gentrification in the area, city of Presidio officials are doubting the count, questioning whether the census missed hundreds of their residents.

The U.S. Census takes place every ten years, and in 2010, Presidio County had 7,818 residents counted. Just ten years later, in 2020, the number of Presidio County residents counted fell to 6,131, a 21.6% decline.

While Texas grew, gaining two new U.S. House representatives, based on state-level data released earlier this year, its rural areas did not keep up. The census has now delivered new data broken down on the levels of counties and census

tracts, giving more insight into how this region of Texas has shifted in the past ten years.

The trend of rural populations declining is common across the United States and Texas, but even among Texas’ 254 counties, Presidio County had the sixth steepest decline in population.

The census divided Presidio County into tracts in north and south county, and Census tract 9501, which includes Marfa, Ruidosa, Candelaria and other unincorporated parts of north county, was counted at 2,634 in 2010. It dropped by 13.1% in the following 10 years, leaving it with 2,289 residents counted in 2020.

Marfa Mayor Manny Baeza believed the count, saying, “I would think those numbers are accurate because of the number of Airbnbs we have in our town. In other words, residents aren’t moving to our community; it’s more Airbnbs going up.”

The mayor said he sees few avenues the city could take that could lead to growing the population of Marfa back in a meaningful way.

The city has previously considered putting a cap on the number of short-term rentals within city limits. That effort was put on hold while they waited to see if the state legislative session this year would address short-term rental regulations, but few results have come.

The Texas Legislature and courts have continually affirmed the rights of homeowners to use their properties as short-term rentals and halted restrictions on short-term rentals by local governments. “I think our hands are tied. You can’t really tell people what to do with personal property,” he said.

Baeza attributed the declining population of Marfa to a mixture of continually growing real estate prices and the sparse availability of jobs in the area that pay enough to afford housing and other costs of living in Marfa. “It’s too expensive in this town,” he said bluntly. “Honestly it just comes down to gentrification — that’s what it
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County judge calls for masks to come back

By SACHI MCCLENDON
sachi@bigbendsentinel.com

FAR WEST TEXAS — There are an estimated 16 active COVID cases in Presidio County as of print time this week. That number is up from 8 active cases on August 16 and quickly rose to just under 20 cases a few days later. However, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services, the total has since dropped back down to 16 active cases.

In a press release on Friday evening, County Judge Cinderela Guevara said she strongly recommends Presidio County residents start wearing masks again as the delta variant of the virus continues to spread throughout the state.

“NOW may be the moment for us as Presidio County residents to consider a process for preserving ‘lives and livelihoods.’ It is my hope

that having an understanding that we may still unknowingly carry the virus to people we love and want to protect will outweigh any political value we may esteem in the no mask mandate,” Guevara wrote.

Due to Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s executive order banning governmental entities from implementing a mask mandate, Guevara can only recommend the practice.

Things are a bit more complicated for the county’s school districts. In an about-face last week, the Texas Education Agency decided to temporarily stop enforcing Governor Greg Abbott’s executive order, opening the door for districts to set their own mask policy.

Shortly after TEA’s announcement, Presidio Independent School District jumped into action and announced that all staff, students and visitors will be required to wear masks while on district

property. “Facial coverings will be part of our district dress code. We had this mask mandate in place all last year, and our students and staff did a great job of wearing masks,” Superintendent Ray Vasquez said in an email.

Up in north county, the Marfa Independent School Board is voting at a school board meeting today on whether to require masks on campus. As *The Big Bend Sentinel* previously reported, MISD Superintendent Oscar Agüero was frustrated with the way TEA recently had not been in step with CDC guidelines. So far there hasn’t been a reported case on campus for this school year and no student is in quarantine.

At Sul Ross State University, there are currently eight active cases amongst students and faculty.

It is not known if or how many COVID patients are hospitalized at The Big Bend Regional

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Local law enforcement deals with the realities of enforcing the governor’s immigration crackdown

By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com

BREWSTER, PRESIDIO COUNTIES — The number of people apprehended for crossing into the United States from Mexico reached a 21-year high, with crossings in the Big Bend Sector rising 357% since last July. Federal prosecutors are bringing charges against some of the people involved in transporting those undocumented immigrants into the country, but starting September 1, Texas lawmakers are empowering state law enforcement to make more arrests for human smuggling and trespassing under new state statutes.

Governor Greg Abbott has called for crackdowns on undocumented immigrants and smugglers, sending state troopers to the border to enforce state and federal immigration law, and sending in the National Guard to “assist.”

In recent years, those apprehended for smuggling immigrants could be prosecuted under state law if law enforcement could prove the person had been paid to smuggle people, but beginning Wednesday, September 1, new provisions in the state laws say proving there’s a financial motive is no longer necessary for state law enforcement to arrest smugglers.

New language that amends the state penal code also says the person can be charged if they assist, guide or direct two or more people to enter agricultural land without consent from the owner. The third degree felony charge can now ramp up to a second degree felony if there was monetary gain involved, and is a first degree felony if a person they smuggled is sexually assaulted, suffers serious bodily injury or dies.

Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson has encountered smugglers bringing groups of immigrants through the Brewster County countryside countless times, but he’s not always able to arrest them. Those who were somewhat familiar with Texas law have successfully avoided state charges of human smuggling by claiming they did not receive any money in exchange for transporting immigrants.

He said the smugglers transporting undocumented immigrants are most often U.S. citizens. “I’ll get them saying they just found these people on the road. Most of them will say they saw people walking and they needed a ride. It’s B.S.,” he said.

Under the new law, Dodson said, “We’re going to get more people in jail for sure. We’ve had to let numerous people go if HSI [Homeland Security Investigations] doesn’t want them, and then we can’t prove financial gain so we basically have to let them go.” Beginning next week, they can be arrested for smuggling, whether financially motivated or not.

Jails have become a reliable revenue stream for counties in West Texas, receiving daily payments to house U.S. Marshal inmates in the local jails. In Brewster County, it amounts to around \$800,000 in revenue per year, with most beds being filled by federal arrestees that bring money to the county. With Abbott’s directive to up arrests on state charges, space in county jails may fill up with state inmates — who will stay at the cost of county taxpayers — and lower the available space for paid, U.S. Marshal inmates.

“We just don’t have the jail space to do what everybody wants us to do right now,” Dodson said. “If they’re

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Masks on campus

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community transmission of the virus.”

Even as the delta variant has swept through Texas leading to hospitalization numbers not seen since January, Governor Abbott has refused to drop his executive order banning mask mandates. As the first day of school was fast approaching, a number of school districts either defied Abbott’s order or tried to create workarounds, like making masks a part of the district’s dress code. Abbott, through Attorney General Ken Paxton, quickly fired back, taking the districts to court.

Then last Thursday, the Texas Supreme Court temporarily allowed districts to implement a mask mandate, saying that Abbott needed to take these matters before a lower appellate court before being heard again.

With these state level battles still being waged, Superintendent Vasquez said it’s been difficult to navigate the ever changing COVID protocols. “But we have a great staff here in PISD and we will make the necessary changes/adjustments needed to provide our students the best education possible, while maintaining a safe learning environment for all,” Vasquez said.

Up in north county, the Marfa Independent School Board is voting today on whether to require masks on campus. As *The Big Bend Sentinel* previously reported, MISD Superintendent Oscar Aguero was frustrated with the way the TEA recently had not been in step with the CDC guidelines. In a previous school board meeting, Aguero said that he weighed defying the governor’s orders like other school districts, but he didn’t want to leave his staff with the decision to either obey direction from their boss or their governor.

“It’s something the school board has to vote on, so a decision will be made Thursday evening,” Aguero said on Tuesday about the upcoming meeting tonight. “I can’t tell you which way it will go.” In the past, Aguero has said that if the state allowed it, he would push for a mask mandate.

“At the present moment, we do not have any active cases. The only case that I know of was my daughter and that was prior to school,” Aguero said, adding that the lower grades have generally been wearing their masks more than the upper grades.

Aguero said that if the board does go through with a mask requirement that he will recommend for the new policy to take effect on Monday. “That way if they don’t have masks, they have time to get masks,” he said.

Going forward, TEA said it would continue to not enforce the governor’s executive order until litigation between the districts and the state resolve.

Produce

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Director Genevieve Bassham and BBBCA staff, who said food lines doubled during the pandemic.

Meanwhile, summer gardens in Marfa were producing bounties of tomatoes, peppers, onions and more, and at La Mansana de Chinati/The Block, Donald Judd’s garden was burgeoning with leafy vegetables.

Since the 1980s, Judd, the artist and grandson of a farmer, maintained a garden at The Block, which his daughter believed kept him grounded in his familial roots. After his death, the Judd Foundation continued harvesting and planting in it, feeding the produce to their employees.

“He felt the area should be self-sufficient in its produce,” Rainer said. When she would talk with Bernstein during the pandemic, the pair would discuss how the availability of local produce has waned since the 1970s when Judd arrived. They mulled over the question of how to bring fresh, locally grown produce back to the people of Marfa.

From there, BBBCA and Judd Foundation connected with the food pantry, which was already growing produce to give to its clients along with their monthly distribution of goods. They devised Marfa Harvest/Cosecha Marfa as a way to grow vegetables at the Judd Foundation and channel them through the food pantry and into the hands of locals, quickly.

Permian Basin Area Foundation granted funds to the project this June, Bernstein said, and they agreed that 60% of labor for the project would be spent working at the Judd Foundation’s 50 x 50 ft. garden, 20% at the food pantry and another 20% on distribution and getting the word out to the community.

Instead of produce being limited to the once a month distributions from the food pantry, the new initiative provides fresh produce to food pantry clients every Thursday afternoon from April through October. “It’s too hard to harvest weekly and get it into that main distribution when it’s happening once a month, because things are ready when they’re ready,” said Bernstein.

“I think it’s great to give the Judd Foundation garden produce away,” said Rainer this week. Adding to the produce from Judd Foundation,



Staff photo by Maisie Crow

Big Bend Conservation Alliance’s Marfa Community Connector Calletana Vargas waters the garden at La Mansana de Chinati/The Block. The Marfa Harvest/Cosecha Marfa is a partnership between the BBBCA and the Judd Foundation to grow vegetables and channel them through the food pantry and into the hands of locals.

the pantry operates a garden all year round — under the skilled watch of volunteer Peggy O’Brien — and will continue to provide their produce to clients during their monthly pickup.

“Once the pandemic hit, it hit the people who were already struggling here in Marfa,” said BBBCA’s Marfa Community Connector Calletana Vargas, who was hired through the PBAF grant. “It was in my family too — people lost work, and they just need food.” Working on the project, she handles distribution, the Judd harvest, and along with O’Brien, much of the harvesting at the food pantry as well.

While putting together the project with Judd Foundation and the pantry, Bernstein realized that there were other prolific gardeners around town whose help they could also use. When locals’ backyard gardens overproduce, a few have taken to delivering their extra fruits and vegetables to the pantry on Wednesdays between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m., so that it can be distributed the next day.

“It takes a lot of harvest to feed a family. We’re surprised by how many vegetables you need, so the idea that we’re combining all of these gardens toward food insecurity is pretty powerful,” said Bernstein.

Earlier this month, local gardener Bob Schwab and his wife Leslie Wilkes dropped off 15 pounds of zucchinis and cucumbers. In addition to this, the BBBCA logged 25 to 30 pounds of produce coming out of Judd’s garden and 50 to 60 pounds coming out of the food pantry garden.

Join the Marfa Food Pantry and get Marfa Harvest: Apply online at www.marfafoodpantry.com, call 432-295-2921, or come to the office to fill out an application. You’ll receive a monthly distribution from the Marfa Food Pantry and a smaller fresh vegetable distribution from Marfa Harvest at least every two weeks during the harvest season, April through October.

Help Marfa Harvest by volunteering or contributing: Volunteer at the Marfa Food Pantry Garden on Wednesdays 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays 9 a.m. – noon to help harvest. If you are a community gardener who would like to contribute vegetables to Marfa Harvest, please bring them to the Food Pantry Garden on Wednesdays between 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., so they can be added to the Marfa Harvest distribution.

and their families.

“I have a grandson that’s a little bit on the heavy side, but he likes vegetables, and it’s just so much more important for me to make sure that it is fresh and organic and just good for him,” she explained. “As soon as I got home, he wanted the cucumbers — with ranch dressing, of course. They were very, very good.”

She also said she was “extremely appreciative” of the food pantry and Marfa Harvest’s efforts to provide the community with fresh food. “I tried to do a garden myself, but holding two jobs down and raising a grandson, and just trying to stay afloat has been challenging,” she said.

“There’s a strong connection to the soil for some gardeners,” said Bob Schwab, whose garden provided pounds of zucchini and cucumbers for that week’s harvest. “We eat to survive. And to contribute to that — knowing your part in helping people eat is just satisfying,” he said. “There’s just something fundamentally fulfilling about knowing that you’re meeting the human species’ most basic need.”

Anyone looking to receive fresh produce every two weeks during harvest season as well as the pantry’s monthly distribution of goods can fill out an application to become part of their client list by visiting their office at 1403 W. San Antonio Street or website (www.marfafoodpantry.com), or calling 432-295-2921. Those wanting to volunteer or drop off produce from their gardens can visit the food pantry to get involved.

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Immigration

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going to spend all these millions and trillions, I’d hope they’d give it to some of us counties to add jail space and then we’d be able to hold some of these folks.” Recounting an incident from the day prior, Dodson said state officers brought in 10 trespassers, but he only had room to hold three. “The other seven had to go somewhere else, and the county had to pay \$65 a day for wherever they go.”

“As far as I’m concerned, regardless of the cost, it’s got to happen,” said Presidio County Sheriff Danny Dominguez, who expressed frustration at the Biden administration’s handling of the increase in undocumented immigrants at the southern border. “We have to prosecute. These smugglers, these criminals, whatever they’re doing, it’s going to cost our taxpayers money.”

Investigations by HSI are turned over to the U.S. attorney’s office for prosecution, but some local law enforcement have said they have made arrests only for the USAO to not take the case. 83rd District Attorney Ori White said, “My office is prosecuting many of these cases where the U.S. attorney’s office is perhaps very short handed and cannot prosecute them. I don’t know why the U.S. attorney’s office is not prosecuting these cases.”

White said his office “will continue to take these human smuggling cases so long as we are requested to do so by federal border enforcement officials,” and that he’s happy to help where he can.

“Across the district, particularly in our border divisions, human smuggling prosecutions have increased in the last year,” a representative from the USAO office said in response, stating the office readily accepts cases for federal prosecution “when sufficient, admissible evidence is presented.” Federal prosecutors secured indictments against 89 defendants in July alone, ranging from human smuggling to illegal reentry into the U.S. and drug trafficking cases.

According to court records, human smuggling cases in the USAO have more than doubled from this same time last year. For the governor, state charges are another tool in the arsenal to try to stop southern border crossings.

Along with prosecuting the smugglers, Governor Abbott has encouraged criminal trespassing charges against undocumented immigrants who pass through the hundreds of miles of private land that make up Texas’ border with Mexico. In West Texas, Dodson said purple paint on ranch fence lines in accordance with state statutes — indicates private property.

To be charged with criminal trespassing, the person has to have credibly known they were on private property. In Del Rio, nine Venezuelans recently served 15 days in state jail for criminal trespassing in the wake of the state’s new crackdown, according to the *Texas Tribune*. Having served their time, they were handed over to federal Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, who could choose to deport, detain or release the group and ask them to return for a hearing at a later date.

The state Office of Court Administration is preparing for hundreds of arrests a day by state law enforcement in anticipation of the new smuggling and trespassing

arrests, which, realistically, would overwhelm the court and local jails.

“If one guy is driving and there are 10 people in the van, we can’t put many groups of 11 people in the jail before it’s overflowing,” Presidio County Attorney Rod Ponton said last month. Sheriff Dodson explained that if his jail fills, the judges start considering releasing arrestees on personal recognizance bonds, where instead of paying a bond that they can’t afford, they are released with the promise to return for a later hearing. At times, those released are never heard from again, and with no permanent address in the U.S., there is little means of recourse.

Dodson said that ultimately, they often have to dismiss those cases so that their disposition rate (a metric they have to maintain, where a certain percentage of cases have to be deposed) isn’t negatively impacted. Dodson wondered aloud, “Are we just spinning our wheels?”

Because of the limited resources, Ponton said it’s unlikely “here in these small counties that we’ll prosecute the illegal immigrants, as opposed to the smugglers. Our hope is that the federal authorities who have the responsibility for enforcing federal immigration law would deport the illegal crossers.”

Ponton, who also assists the district attorney upon request, said the crackdown on smuggling is an attempt to dissuade immigrants and smugglers from entering through the Big Bend region. “We want to substantially increase the prosecution of human smuggling in Presidio County under state law because we want to get the word out to the smuggling gangs that this is not a free ride in Presidio County, and hopefully they would go other places.”

Dodson reflected, “I’ve been sheriff for 21 years, and I’ve been in law enforcement for almost 40, and I’ve never seen someone spend 180 days in jail for a class B misdemeanor.” Under Abbott’s emergency declaration, an agricultural trespassing charge moves from a class C to class B misdemeanor, which can come with up to 180 days in jail.

Earlier this year, the American Civil Liberties Union warned Texas border counties that following Abbott’s version of immigration enforcement could be a Constitutional violation. “Those within the United States have a legal right to seek protection: a noncitizen ‘who is physically present in the United States ... irrespective of [their] status, may apply for asylum,’” the letter to county officials read. “Efforts to harshly enforce immigration laws against noncitizens to deter them from seeking asylum or other protection, or to deter others from coming to the United States and seeking protection, may therefore violate federal law.”

Dodson acknowledged that many who cross into the borderlands are fleeing worse conditions. Escaping natural disasters, violence or unrest in their home country, many are hoping to either claim asylum in the U.S. through a legal process or enter the country entirely unnoticed, which is illegal.

“The governor’s trying to punish them, but he’s actually doing them a favor. They eat, get air conditioning and a bed,” Dodson said. “They figure if we put them in jail for 180 days, that will teach them a lesson, but one thing they’re not understanding is that being in jail is sometimes better than where they are coming from.”

Population

(Continued from page 1)

boils down to.”

Population declines can impact city tax revenues and school enrollment and funding, and the census numbers can crucially shift the amount of federal funds the area can access over the next ten years.

Presidio City Manager Brad Newton has kept a keen eye on the census numbers in years past, believing that the threat of an undercount is higher in Presidio County for a wide variety of reasons.

Census tract 9502, which includes Presidio, Redford, Shafter and other unincorporated parts of south county, was counted at 5,184 in the 2010 Census. In 2020, that

“Population declines can impact city tax revenues and school enrollment and funding, and the census numbers can crucially shift the amount of federal funds the area can access over the next ten years.”

number was down to 3,842, a precipitous 25.9% drop.

Newton is skeptical, and he has reason to be. In 2010, the city of Presidio successfully petitioned the state demographer to adjust the population count upward within the Texas Demographic Center.

A key reason the state agreed to change population estimates in Presidio was the number of water utility connections the city had active. Currently, Presidio has 1,776 active meters. Newton said a conservative estimate that, on average, three people live in each household comes out to 5,328 residents just in Presidio limits, well off the census estimate of 3,842 in south county’s census tract. Those meter counts account for both residential and commercial properties, however, meaning not all meters have residents associated with them.

In Marfa, the utilities department said it had 1,500 active meters, but the mayor estimated that more than 150 are associated with short-term rentals, others are commercial properties, and still more are second homes whose owners do not claim Marfa as their primary

residence. Still, the 2,289 estimated residents of north county according to the census would be an undercount if meters were calculated at three residents per meter in Marfa.

In 2010, water meter data was used as evidence to change the population estimate of Presidio with the state demographer, whose office did not respond to requests for comment about the methodology used to change population estimates, or whether Presidio could be contested again this year. But Newton plans to approach the state entity again this year and ask that the population estimate for Presidio be moved upward again.

“Let’s face it, there’s no secret that the census can’t count,” Newton said, “but it’s not totally their fault because a lot of people don’t want to be counted.” There are a variety of reasons he believes the census missed out on counting people in Presidio.

The area has rural, remote pockets where residences are spaced out and hard to reach and a historical issue of discrepancies between official addresses and actual street addresses. Some were hesitant to answer the door to a stranger, especially during the pandemic. Others may have heard it was online and didn’t have access to reliable internet or a computer. Some working in Odessa and living in Presidio could have been counted up north, or nowhere at all.

Others, he believed, were afraid “especially with the noise from Washington of, ‘Are you a citizen?’” During the Trump administration’s running of the census, there was talk of adding a citizenship question, which may have deterred some from answering, even though the question was ultimately not included in the census survey.

Not only does Newton think the population didn’t shrink by 25.9%, he believes it has grown, and he’s not the only one. Presidio EMS Director Malynda Richardson pointed to a number of new buildings in town, staffing among Customs and Border Protection in the area and, within her experiences working EMS, she said, “I know our ambulance calls are not going in the same direction as a 25% decrease. We’re not seeing fewer calls. If we had a 25% decrease in population, our call volume would reflect that and it does not.” Richardson said residents in the area don’t understand the census numbers’ impact on financial assistance to the county.

“I’ve been through this once back in 2011 when we did this,” Newton said. “If you live here, you’re going to have water, so that’s a very accurate way to figure it out. It worked for us in 2010, so we’ll take a stab at correcting those numbers like we did back then by going through the state demographer with our water meter counts.” He added, “We’ve got time to challenge this.”

positive cases in the past two months.

“While I am proud to say that Presidio County leads the state with [the] most vaccinated populace, the path ahead for us will continue to have its ups and downs and will require resilience,” Judge Guevara said in her statement. “As lockdowns have been relaxed and all segments of the economy reopened, we are now hearing of a great number of viral resurgencies with the new Delta Variant and the rise of Covid hospitalizations.”

there are 25 active cases and Jeff Davis currently has zero. While positive cases haven’t swamped the tri-county, surrounding larger metropolitan areas have seen a huge uptick in COVID cases and hospitalizations. As Marfa Public Radio previously [reported](#), hospitals in the Permian Basin are seeing a sharp increase in the number of COVID patients, stretching medical personnel and resources thin. In El Paso County, an area where many hospitalized Big Bend residents are transferred to, the numbers have gone up 700 percent to 1,845

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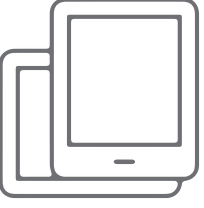
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Opinions

OP-ED

Our Water Matters

By TREY GERFERS

An introduction
In Marfa, it is often said that there’s an ocean of water under Presidio County. Unfortunately, this is just another Texas tall tale. The good news is: we’ve been lucky so far. The remoteness of our region, the extremely sparse population and the relative lack of industrial activity have shielded us from the aquifer depletion confronting our Permian Basin neighbors and our friends in the metropolis of El Paso. But if the stresses caused by the pandemic and recent extreme weather events have taught us anything, it is that we must expect the unexpected, and the “unexpected” may be closer than we think.

For example, the City of El Paso owns a large swath of land in the northwest corner of Presidio County that will eventually be used for water extraction and export to that growing city. A 43-mile easement intended for the export of natural gas to Mexico runs through the Big Bend and could easily be repurposed to export water out of the region. All of this is perfectly legal and readily foreseeable. Meanwhile, we face the potential for changes in rainfall patterns, hotter and longer summers, and increased periods of extreme drought. Based on the fulfillment of other prophecies by climate scientists, these changes in our regional weather are all but certain to occur. These are facts. And though they may make us fearful of the future, the sooner we face them, the better.

A basic understanding of water law is essential to solving the problems confronting us. Much of Texas’ legal framework around water stems from our state’s history and a series of laws and legal decisions that have been handed down over the years. These decisions have given rise to complex systems of management that can seem boring to some and overwhelming to most, but we ignore them at our peril. “Our Water Matters” will consult with various experts to explore this history and seek to explain these laws. The aim is to enable the average person to understand how our laws work and the tools available for groundwater protection and conservation.

Of course, natural systems don’t care about rules and tend to follow their own laws. As a result, “Our Water Matters” will also delve into the science of water to help you understand where our water comes from, how the hydrologic cycle works, and ways that we as humans can enhance and conserve this vital resource. This column will also provide insight into water issues in other parts of the world as they relate to the challenges we face in the Big Bend. The intention is to spur innovative thinking and problem-solving right here at home.

The stakeholder most affected by local water management decisions is you: the citizen. “Our Water Matters” is intended to illuminate the many issues surrounding water in the hope of creating an informed consensus. With any luck, we will succeed at not only safeguarding local control of our water but also as a role model for the rest of our state and other regions of the arid West.

Water is unique in that it is at once vital to sustaining life, but is also a commodity to be bought and sold. “Our Water Matters” is intended to deepen your understanding and acceptance of this reality without the need for unrealistic changes to our laws or drastic drops in our standard of living. With proper use of the tools at our disposal backed by a broad consensus across the region, there is every reason to believe that we can build on the Big Bend’s heritage of resilience, self-reliance and cooperation to secure a stable water future for generations to come.

Trey Gerfers is a San Antonio native and serves as Board Chairman of the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District. He earns his living as a translator of technical documents from German to English for the German and Swiss pharmaceutical and medical-science industries. Trey has lived in Marfa since 2013.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Poor Greg Abbott. Really, he has my condolences. Not because he tested positive for COVID and has to sit around the governor’s mansion for a few days of isolation, but because he hasn’t been able to out-stupid Florida’s governor, Ron DeSantis.

It seems that the strategy among Republican politicians who want to run for president in 2024 hinges on who can put the most people in their state in the hospital with COVID-19 and/or who can have the highest death stats due to the virus. Of course there are some senators like Ted “Cancun” Cruz and Marco Rubio who also want to be president but neither have, so far, been able to get the spotlight away from Abbott and DeSantis.

But Abbott’s problem is that Florida has about 8 million fewer people than Texas but has considerably higher COVID hospitalization rates. On a per capita basis, Texas ranks a paltry sixth in the country while Florida is firmly in the number one spot. Abbott still has a chance though, because in actual numbers, Texas is behind roughly 17,000 to 13,000 hospitalizations but is increasing faster than Florida. So we’ll see.

Most intelligent, reasonable people would be horrified that these negative statistics would dictate who the so called pro-life party would see as their savior from those pinko Democrats, given that the policies of Abbott and DeSantis are actually killing people. But with the politicalization of common sense preventive measures like mask wearing and vaccinations, reasonable and intelligent are words that don’t seem to be included in the conversations or policies.

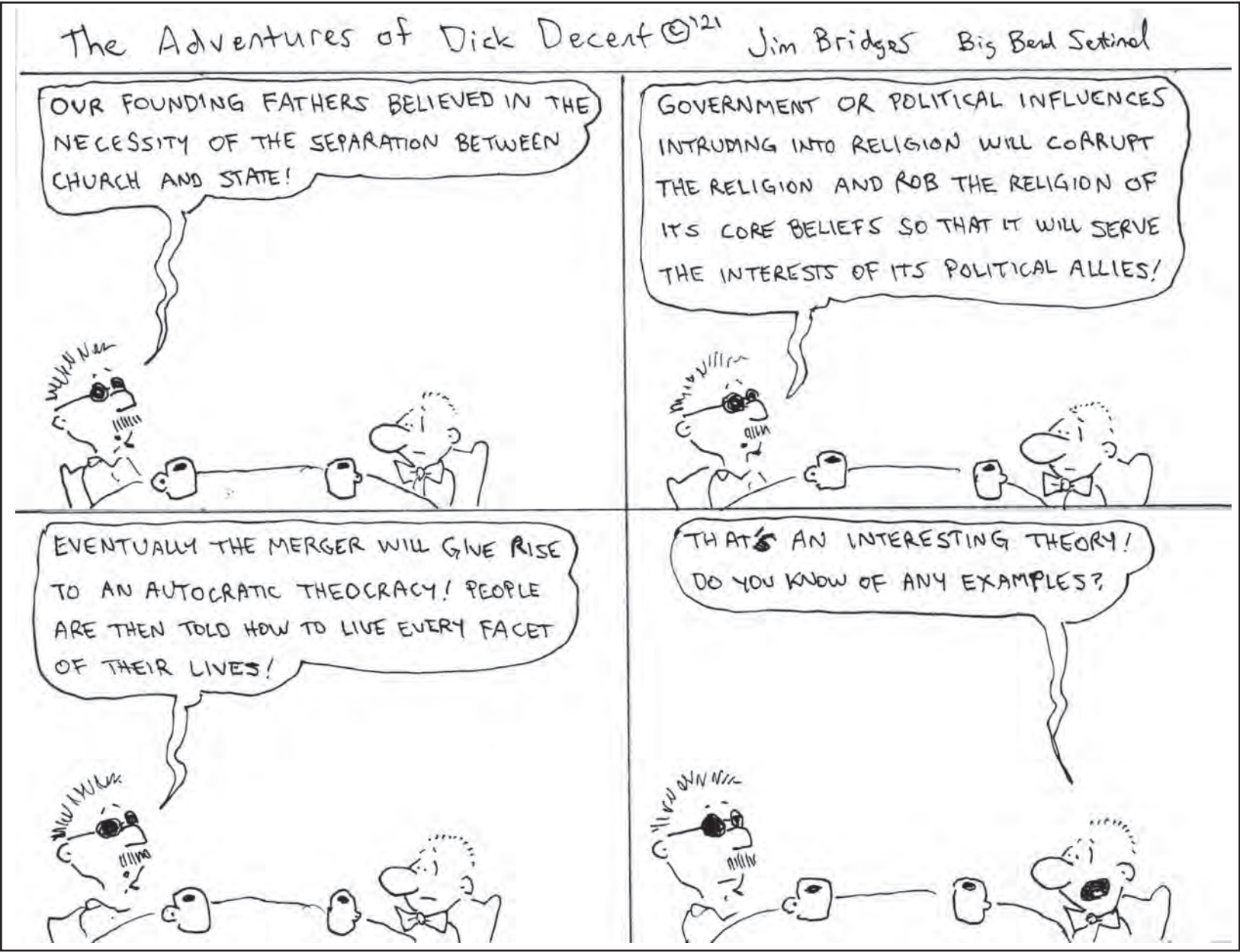
Regardless of Abbott and DeSantis, the solution to COVID hospitalizations and deaths remains with you and me. Will we follow the advice of doctors and scientists or be swayed by the political ambitions of those who don’t give a hoot whether we stay healthy or not? I’m curious though, those who don’t trust the doctors enough to get vaccinated, why would they go to those same doctors when they get sick with COVID-19?

Fred Gossien
Terlingua

...

We want to hear from YOU!

- Letters should be sent to editor@bigbendsentinel.com, and must provide the writer’s full name, city of residence and an email or phone number, so that we may follow up and verify information as needed.
 - Your letters may be edited for clarity and brevity. While opinions of all kinds are welcome, when it comes to claims of fact, we strive to only publish what is verifiable.
 - We have limited staff capacity to fact check unsubstantiated claims, so letters that include those may be held or remain unpublished if information is not easily verifiable.
 - We may reach out to ask questions and verify the identity of the sender. We do not run letters anonymously unless the sender is privately identified and has a reasonable claim to anonymity.
 - We reserve the right to hold or refrain from publishing a letter for any reason and we thank you for always sharing your letters with us.
- The Big Bend Sentinel Editorial Staff



Dear Editor,

History records

Subsequent to the February 2020 withdrawal agreement with the Taliban, while still president and before their August 15, 2021 victory, Trump and racist adviser Stephen Miller devised a means of stonewalling the exit visa process of Afghans assisting U.S. forces. Several years before they’d formulated “Zero Tolerance,” separating children from families.

A commonality was undercutting the means of escaping dire circumstances. The former, *not* wanting Muslims. The latter, communicating intentional cruelty, should brown-skinned people dare consider asylum.

For example, ICE/Border Patrol returned and/or pushed asylum-seekers back across international bridges. Matamoros, Mexico, tent camps held Brownsville, Texas, applicants awaiting immigration court hearings which Trump intentionally hobbled. Confronting hunger and disease, Gulf Coast summers and hurricanes, a humanitarian crisis exploded.

Consistent with a malignant narcissistic personality disorder, Trump’s pathology in operation. Mental health professionals, including his niece Mary, provided the diagnosis.

Trump’s “empathy” versus Afghan blood + four years defying “Rule of Law-Due Process” is the “chosen one” MAGA millions approve of. Condoning/endorsing such barbarism denies the sincerity of 40+ years “family values/pro-life” credentials.

History records a plea of “no contest.” Evil has been committed in the name of all Americans.

Rev. Barry Abraham Zavah
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...

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Dear Editor,

I just read an article on [NPR.org/Planet Money](https://www.npr.org/PlanetMoney) about a company called Pacaso. Although they take great offense at being labeled a timeshare company (we sell real estate, not time) they sure smell like a timeshare company.

It goes like this: they scope out fancy-pants real estate in what are considered desirable second home locations. They buy the property and turn it into an LLC, chop it up into eight separate “shares” and then sell the shares to anywhere from two to eight different people. Each share represents a chunk of time per year, meaning that each property-sharing/time-sharing/share-sharing owner can stay for a month and a half or so per year, per share.

They’re gobbling up communities in California (Napa Valley is not happy), Colorado, Utah and Florida. In defending their business model, they claim they only deal in luxury properties, which brings to mind three things:

- * Remember when Airbnb meant a spare bedroom in someone’s actual, owner-occupied house?
 - * A falling-down lean-to with a hotplate is considered by many to be the ultimate MarfaAuthentic luxury.
 - * Everybody and their bloated brother-in-law wants a chunk of Marfa
- I therefore suggest we do whatever the heck we gotta do to keep these clowns from colonizing our speck of dirt.

Lisa Copeland
Marfa

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Meet the Marfa Shorthorns!



Photo by Blanca Jennings

VARSITY FOOTBALL: *Top Row (L to R) Zach Wilson, Nathan Pena, Juan Avila, Ian Marquez, Christopher Conners, Ana Gallegos. Middle Row (L to R) Diego Jurado, Jaden Nunez, Cristian Ontiveros, Adrian Catano, Uriel Torres. Bottom Row (L to R) Luis Solis, Derrick Campos, Diego Estrada, Justice Ortiz, Dustin Martinez, Tristen Kelly.*



Photo by Blanca Jennings

VARSITY VOLLEYBALL: *Top Row (L to R) Janaya Villa, Lesly Torres, Charlize Martinez, Umimi Chanez, Annika Salcido, Annalise Marquez, Brianna Sanchez. Middle Row (L to R) Manager: Raven Martinez, Alexis Gonzalez, Emily Hernandez, Odalys Chacon, Desiree Campos. Bottom Row (L to R) Manager: Amaya Gomez, Aundrea Garcia, Loretta Rivera, Manager: Ava Flores, and Maryfer Martinez.*



Photo by Adele Powers

VARSITY CROSS COUNTRY BOYS: *(L to R) Kiko Rosas, Memo Guardiola, Derrick Campos, Zach Wilson, Marco Ruiz, Dustin Martinez.*



Photo by Adele Powers

VARSITY CROSS COUNTRY GIRLS: *(L to R) Kassandra Garcia, Soraya Vallez, Umimi Chanez, Lesly Torres, Liani Salcido, Aundrea Garcia, Emily Hernandez.*



Photo by Blanca Jennings

CHEERLEADING: *Group on left: Umimi Chanez, Charlize Martinez, Lesly Torres holding Sundress Garcia. Group on right: Alexis Gonzales, Zaley porter, Emily Hernandez holding Samantha Martinez Center: Juan bautista.*



Photo by Adele Powers

JUNIOR HIGH FOOTBALL: *Back Row (L to R) Darren Campos, Manny Dominguez, Asael Zubia, Alex Rodriguez. Middle Row (L to R) Ayden Alvarez, CJ Garcia, JV Kelly. Front Row (L to R) Terrence Resendiz, Austin McGary.*



Photo by Adele Powers

JUNIOR HIGH CROSS COUNTRY: *(L to R) Darren Campos, Ava Flores, Giselle Torres, Itzel Urrutia, Dani Fernandez, Alex Rodriguez.*



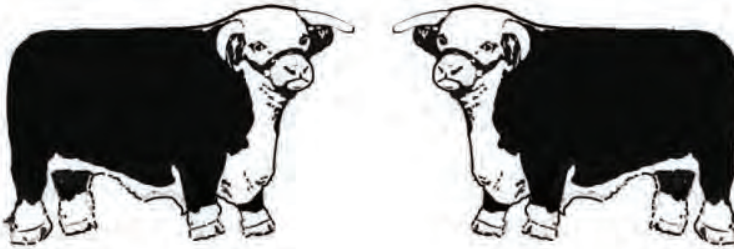
Photo by Adele Powers

JUNIOR HIGH VOLLEYBALL: *(L to R) Natasha Labrado, Dani Fernandez, Itzel Urrutia, Amaya Gomez, Giselle Torrez, Avalon Schroeder, Zoey Salgado, Raven Martinez, Ava Flores, Kayla Vasquez, Claudina Gonzales, Taryn Klockman, Madison Cash, Vanessa Diaz, Sarah Salgado.*

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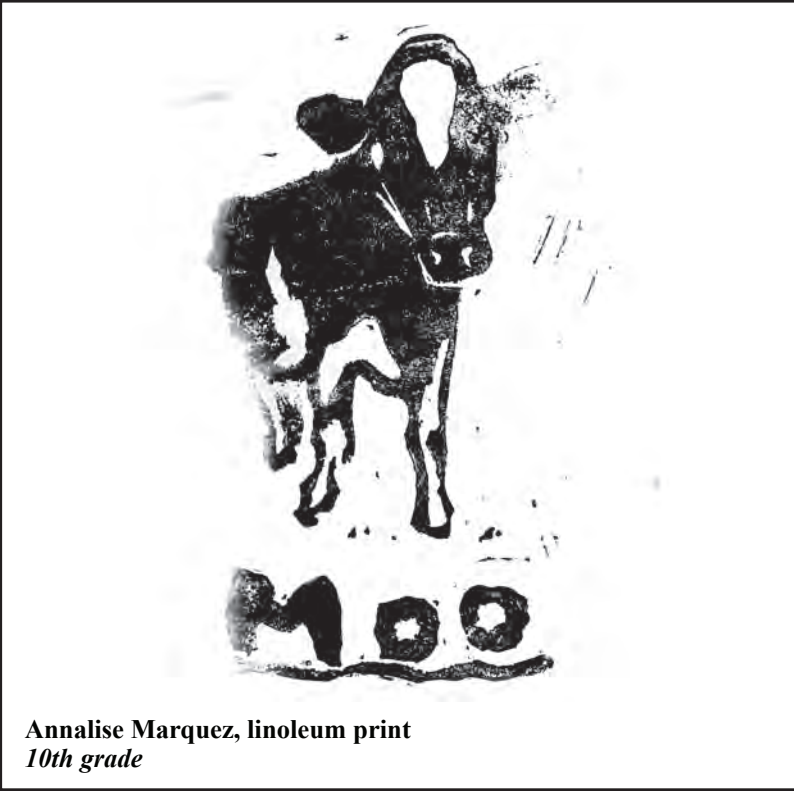


MARFA SHORTHORNS SPORTS CALENDAR

THU, AUG 26: Varsity Volleyball in Fort Stockton Tournament: Times TBD
SAT, AUG 28: Varsity Volleyball in Fort Stockton Tournament: Times TBD
SAT, AUG 28: HS Football 6 Man Shoot-out: Grandfalls at Sul Ross, Times TBD
MON, AUG 30: Junior High Volleyball in Presidio: 4:30 vs Presidio
TUE, AUG 31: Varsity Volleyball in Comstock: 4:00 vs Comstock

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DRAWING OF THE WEEK



Annalise Marquez, linoleum print
10th grade

DISPATCHES FROM JOURNALISM CLASS

The school year’s first “Dispatches” introduces you to MISD’s journalism class in their own words. Students interviewed each other, asking about likes and dislikes, favorite colors, best and worst experiences – whatever they thought would show you, the reader, who their interviewee really is. As the year continues, we’ll share more from journalism class. Students’ interests guide their reportage, and this year’s group is diverse in experience, age and ideas. Stay tuned!
- Ms. Powers

Carmen Cavaness (9th grade), by Tori Torres (11th grade)
Carmen is a teenager that just entered the ninth grade at Marfa ISD! She is a very bright and social person. She was eager to answer any of the questions I had to offer. “What’s your favorite TV show?” I asked, leaning into the table. “*Shameless!*” She shouted back in response. “It’s about a mom that abandoned her children at a very young age,” she began explaining. “And they were left to the oldest sibling to be raised. They started getting into some bad stuff, like drugs and alcohol. It’s messed up, really.” In order to bring up the mood, I decided to ask about her hobbies.
“Drawing and watching cartoons,” she said with a smile. This is something that we share an interest in. She began describing her art style as “manga-ish and cartoon-ish.” She also enjoys watching anime specifically.
To finish it off, Carmen told me she owns two dogs named Stewie and Ty. One is a corgi, and the other is an unknown mix. She really enjoys the color turquoise/cyan, and says it looks best on monsters.

Chailyn Melendez (12th grade), by Briar Phelan (9th grade)
Chailyn is a newly minted 12th grader who I interviewed a few days ago. Chailyn likes playing volleyball, which she does in her “free time.” During our interview, Chailyn said, “School is boring.” She doesn’t think her classes are interesting. Pizza is her favorite food since “you can’t go wrong.” Chailyn does not have a favorite movie, but she has three pets that entertain her plenty. Chailyn is a good student that enjoys playing sports. Chailyn carries herself with confidence yet talks in a soft tone; she’s easy to talk to and an enjoyable classmate to be around.
Febi Brimhall (12th grade), by Memo Guardiola (9th grade)
I interviewed Febi, a senior who is in my journalism class. It was awkward since I really don’t know her. I asked my first question to Febi, which was, “What’s your favorite hobby?” and she said, “Art and sports.” My second question to Febi was, “What’s your favorite color?” and she said, “Green.” I asked my third question, “What’s your favorite song?” She said she had too many. I asked Febi if she liked school and she said, “No.” My last question was, “What is your favorite animal?” and she said, “Panda.”

Brody Sturman (9th grade), by Cassandra Garcia (9th grade)
I interviewed an annoying loud kid named Brody. He is not the best person to interview because he talks a lot and he never listens. I kept trying to ask him questions, but all he wanted to do was talk and say, “Kassandra, be quiet!” After about five to 10 minutes, I just stopped trying to ask him questions because I was so annoyed, and he kept repeating everything he said. While our teacher, Ms. Powers, was trying to talk to the whole class he kept laughing and saying “Kassandra.” By the time Ms. Powers was finished talking to the class I was done talking to him and the interview was over.
Memo (9th grade) by Febi (12th grade)
Yesterday morning I interviewed Gillermo, an incoming high school student, who goes by “Memo.”
I asked the new freshman, “How do you like the new school year so far?” he replied, “I’m not excited for the new year, it’s just school.”
As the interview continued, I learned that Memo used to play sports. “I used to play football, run track, cross-country, and play a little bit of baseball. I don’t play football anymore though,” he said. In retrospect, Memo didn’t say much. That might just be because he was being interviewed by a senior. All and all, welcome Memo, student of Class of ‘25.

Amber Hinojos (9th grade) by Ms. Powers (grown-up)
Amber Hinojos is a ninth grader at Marfa ISD. As her teacher, I wanted to get to know her a little better, so in our interview, I asked about her summer. “Amber, what did you do last summer!?” I shouted at her across the classroom, trying to model to my students how to conduct an interview. She looked at me. “Nothing,” she said. I looked at her, begging with my

eyes. “I slept?” she said.
That gave me, at least, something to grab onto. “Did you grow?” I asked. “Maybe a few inches,” she replied.
“What gets you out of bed, Amber?” I pleaded.
“Music!”
Finally, we had found something that she was interested in talking about, and the conversation flowed. Amber loves Michael Jackson and Gym Class Heroes and knows all the lyrics to “WAP.” Her mom is her biggest musical influence, and the two are very close. Unlike most teens, Amber doesn’t hate her mom, in fact, it’s the opposite! She thinks her mom rules.

Ms. Powers (age 29) by Amber (9th grade)
I recently interviewed Miss Powers, a teacher at Marfa ISD. I asked her 9 questions. The first question was, “Have you ever almost died?” She responded with “I was hospitalized for a few weeks when I was 11.” The next question was, what is your zodiac sign? “Libra.” she said. She also said her favorite colors are yellow and blue. The next question I asked was about her favorite food. She said, “Well, my favorite food is probably sushi, but I don’t have it that often.” Then she said, “But my favorite comfort food is nachos.” She couldn’t decide on her favorite movie, but the one she’s watched the most is definitely Dirty Dancing. “I’ve probably watched it over 30 times,” she answered. I asked what her least favorite movie was and she replied with “Avatar” she said she just wasn’t interested in it. I like that movie but I always fall asleep halfway through.

Brianna Sanchez (12th grade) by Tenessa Hinojos (9th grade)
I interviewed Brianna, and it went better than I expected. Of course, I don’t mean that in a bad way, I just thought before the interview that it would be very awkward, stemming from the fact that I do not know her.
She’s a senior (lucky; I wish I could be a senior, but I still have 4 years until that happens.)
She was pretty shy but, what can I say, I am too. We started off with me asking questions like, “What is an animal you wish you could have, and money doesn’t matter?” But she replied with, “A dog because I don’t really like animals.”

I could understand because I only like dogs. Another question I asked was, “What is a place you wanna go?” Brianna replied, “Atlanta, Georgia.” Which, in my opinion, is very interesting. Because I feel like a lot of people would choose Hawaii or somewhere outside of America like Europe or Japan.
So, I did a little research on Atlanta and it’s not a bad choice for a vacation. I would like to go to Coca-Cola World and take pictures with the mascot. Even though I prefer juice over Coke, I would love to make my own flavor.

I feel like the next question is a very common question, but I still asked her what she would do with one billion dollars. She seemed to not be so sure, but she said, “Probably buy a lot of shoes because I love them.”
Overall I think the interview went well!

Tenessa (9th grade) by Brianna (12th grade)
I interviewed Tenessa Hinojos who is a freshman at Marfa ISD. I asked her a couple questions to get to know her better. I asked “What is your favorite thing to do?” She said, “Go out at night.” I asked “By yourself or with someone?” Tenessa said, “With my friends.” I asked another question, and I said “Do you own any pets?” She said, “I have a lot of dogs, fish, turtles and soon to get a gecko.” I remember thinking, “Wow, that is a lot of animals to look after. I could barely take care of one dog!”
Tenessa seemed shy, but once I began asking questions it didn’t seem like she was shy. She actually seems like a nice person. Her hair is straight to her shoulders and she has bangs. Tenessa was wearing a zip-up jacket, and I know that she likes animals because she has many of them.

Kassandra (9th grade) by Brody (9th grade)
The other day I gave my first interview, her name is Kassandra and she’s in ninth grade.
She started off being very difficult and unable to answer. The first question I asked was, “What is your favorite car?” She said, “A Lambo.” I asked why, she said, “Because they are very fast and have a beautifully designed body.” I then asked what she did over the summer, she repeated “Nothing.” I then asked Kassandra what her favourite scary movie is, and she said, “*Scream.*” I asked why, and she told me it’s very thrilling. Those were all the questions I asked Kassandra; she was a little shy but got comfortable.

Homecoming Spirit Week, August 29 - September 3, 2021
Remember to post photos of you dressed in the threme of the day!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
MARVEL Time to save the 	Color Wars PreK/K - Purple 1st-2nd - Yellow 3rd-4th - Red 5th-6th - White 7th-8th - Green 9th - Orange 10th - Black 11th - Blue 12th - Pink Staff - Grey/Silver Color Us Champions	Decades FRIENDS Throw 'em back to another time.	Outer Space Take me to your leader! (The HORNS!)	Purple Power! Show that Shorthorn Pride! Wear PURPLE and WHITE
	PURPLE		WHITE	

☺ MARFA SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ☺

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BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST BURRITO, HASH BROWNS	FRENCH TOAST, YOGURT	CINNAMON PULL APARTS, CHEESE CUBES	MUFFIN, YOGURT	MINI PANCAKES, YOGURT
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Community

Musical lineup, festivities and new COVID-19 precautions take shape for 2021 Trans-Pecos Festival

By URSULA MUÑOZ-SCHAEFER
ursula@bigbendsentinel.com
and
By ABBIE PERRAULT
abbie@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — Between the musical lineup, vendors, ticketing and safety measures, the 2021 iteration of Trans-Pecos Festival of Music + Love is incorporating local community members into its 15th annual festival, set to take place September 22 to 26. Last week, the festival announced that they will require guests to the remote desert fest to have proof of vaccination or a recent negative COVID test in order to attend.

The lineup covers a wide variety of musical genres, kicking off at the sprawling 21 acre campground south of town with performances from rockstar Rickie Lee Jones, funk singer Meshell Ndegeocello and Austin ensemble Balmorhea.

While several acts are still awaiting confirmation, coming from out of town are musical acts Paul Cautchen, Jade Bird, Ambar Lucid, Parquet Courts, Caroline Rose, Cate Le Bon, Alex Maas, The Tender Things, Sleater-Kinney, Ben Kweller, Courtney Barnett and El Cosmico Family Band.

Also making the lineup are a series of local acts including Ross Cashiola, Pat Keesey’s Loviband, local ensemble The Grand Tourists, Marfa DJ Jacqueline Del Olmo as Sweetheart of the Radio, Alpine-linked Marijuana Sweet Tooth and Rob Mazurek’s Exploding Star Orchestra.

Like previous years, the four-day event will include workshops, vendors and camping, as well as a breakfast to benefit Marfa Public Radio and the free annual Saturday sandlot baseball game where Marfa’s Los Yonke Gallos will face off against Austin’s Texas Playboys.

Hairdressers, reiki practitioners and spa services will all be available at a pop-up spa termed El Cosmetico for those seeking some relaxation — and for those looking for the opposite, a mechanical bull will make its first appearance at the



Photo by Sarah M. Vasquez
Colt Miller, Joe Cashiola, Ross Cashiola and Andy Stack perform at the Trans-Pecos Festival in 2014.

festival grounds this year. “It’s refreshing to get back to almost normal,” El Cosmico General Manager Monika Bernstein told *The Big Bend Sentinel*. The festival, like many others, took a year off in 2020, and will return this year in a modified form that accounts for the continued impacts of COVID-19 in the United States.

Last week the festival announced additional COVID-19 safety measures for the event in order to protect Marfa residents and festival attendees. Organizers are following all state and city COVID-19 guidelines, which is why an extra day has been added and capacity is being limited to 50 percent of the usual festival attendance. They will also be asking for proof of vaccine or a negative test result taken within 72 hours of the fest’s start date, and masks will be required in indoor spaces.

“We are putting in place every measure to safeguard the city of Marfa — following the lead of festivals ten to 100 times the size of the Trans-Pecos Festival,” said Liz Lambert, the owner of El Cosmico. “Capacity will be significantly reduced, rapid testing will be available, and vaccines will be highly encouraged,” Lambert said. “If I could have required 100% vaccinations with no option to provide a test I would have, but Texas law won’t allow it.” The first day of the festival is

free to all who can show ID that proves their local residency, along with their proof of vaccination or negative test. Passes for the entire festival or individual days can be bought at a reduced price for locals at the hotel’s front desk. Since tickets are running out, the event runners urged locals to come by as soon as possible to get a pass.

“It’s always a good time over there,” said Ross Cashiola, a Marfa resident who has been a part of the festival almost every year since 2007. “They always have a really great lineup of bands and musicians. Everyone who always gets booked in the festivals — it’s always a good mix.”

Cashiola moved to Marfa from Chicago in 2006, meeting and befriending El Cosmico’s owner, Lambert, over a decade ago while the hotel was still under construction. Since then, he’s always been part of the lineup, performing under his own name or making appearances with his brother Joe under the moniker Hotel Brotherhood.

The festival started as a relatively small gathering of 400 to 500 people — mostly friends of Lambert’s, as well as visitors who came from Austin and Los Angeles, Cashiola said. “I always liked the size of the festival,” he told *The Big Bend Sentinel*. “It was never one of these huge, 10,000-plus, 20,000-plus-people festivals that exist in other parts of the country. It’s for people

who get overwhelmed in large crowds.”

The size of the festival has grown over the last couple of years, however, with 70 or 80 bands having played there since its inception, according to Cashiola. And while relatively small, the event draws big names to the lineup, including St. Vincent, Sharon Van Etten and Fiona Apple in previous years.

Still, that sense of intimacy hasn’t been lost, according to Cashiola, who said it’s “always a good gathering of friends for a lot of people, including me.” With COVID-19 still active in the area, the festival runners have scaled the event back in 2021, reviving some of that intimacy the festival provided when it began 15 years ago.

Mainly, he said, it’s just good to be back onstage. Like many artists, the pandemic became a time of deep introspection for Cashiola, who said he barely played any music while confined to his home last year.

“It’s just strange to just have that part of you cut out completely, you know? To where you’re not doing anything in public, and that’s because you can’t,” he told *The Sentinel*. “I’m kind of just still now trying to figure out what these songs were before, how much they’ve changed during the last year and a half.”

Cashiola describes his songwriting as “simple” with “standard structure,” but says they take on a different form when performed onstage with friends. Through the different styles and techniques of improvisation from different musicians, no two performances of a song will ever end up sounding the same. In some ways, his collaborative effort exemplifies the community-driven focus of Trans-Pecos.

“I would say Ross is a very important, critical part of the festival,” Bernstein told *The Big Bend Sentinel*. “We wouldn’t have it any other way. He’s family.”

To see the full lineup and read the event’s health pledge visit <https://elcosmico.com/event/trans-pecos-festival-of-music-love-2021-2/>.

Come worship with us



First United Methodist Church

Do not fear, for I am with you,
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 Stephen White
110 W Washington Steet
Marfa 432-729-4534

UNIVERSAL
Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

9	2	4	8	1	7			
7	6		2					
				4	2			
	6			1		8		
5			8					4
	1		4		7			
		3		5				
				8		4	6	
			3	9	6	5	7	1

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution from last week's puzzle:

SOLUTION:

1	9	4	5	7	6	8	2	3
5	6	7	2	3	8	4	1	9
8	3	2	9	1	4	6	5	7
6	5	9	1	8	7	2	3	4
7	4	3	6	5	2	1	9	8
2	1	8	3	4	9	5	7	6
3	7	6	8	2	5	9	4	1
9	2	1	4	6	3	7	8	5
4	8	5	7	9	1	3	6	2

~ Thank you ~

We wish to thank all of our family and friends for your thoughts, prayers, and acts of kindness during our time of sorrow due to the loss of our wonderful Mother, Frances P. Jimenez.

We also want to thank all those who helped to make Mom’s funeral service so uplifting. Among those, Father Pablo Matta for leading the Mass and his heartfelt sermon; the Spanish Choir for providing the inspiring music; our dear Tia Olga for leading us in the Rosary; all who served as pallbearers; all who sent the beautiful flowers; and last, but not least we wish to thank our cousin Cecelia for hosting many of the out of town family members.

May God bless all of you. Each of you will always remain in our hearts and prayers.

The Family of Frances P. Jimenez



\$309,000

Carl Robinson Residence
701 N. Gonzales, Marfa, TX

We would like to thank the many people who came to the estate sale this past Saturday at the home of our parents, Carl and Ellen Robinson. We appreciate your support and more importantly the kind words you had for them. They lived in Marfa for over 60 years and dearly loved this town and its people.

Thank you again for the love and friendship that you have shown to our parents and family over the years.

Price Robinson	Class of 1976
Kathy Robinson Marugg	Class of 1979
Blake Robinson Andrews	Class of 1981



Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg August 9, 2021

ACROSS

1 Wood or metal fastener

6 Fluent in sign language, perhaps

10 Support in crime

14 Like some whiskey

15 Qatari ruler

16 2014-21 “NCIS” city, informally

17 Peyote and prickly pear

18 Dig, as for ore

19 Birthday candle counts

20 Words after a major misfortune (in this answer, notice letters 4 to 7)

23 Grudgingly accept, as a loss

24 Signal ____ (retweet, say)

25 Playing music you’ve never practiced (... 5 to 9)

31 “Yes, that makes sense”

32 Deceitful statement

33 Part of a pub’s array

36 “____ Fly Now” (“Rocky” theme)

37 Sunbeam

38 Cello opening

40 Org. with air quality data

41 Damage a bit

42 Not as relaxed

43 It might uncovers a problem with this clue (... 5 to 9)

46 Action figure based on a movie, e.g.

48 Performer’s signal

49 Walk for exercise, or a theme hint

55 Cats’ rests

56 Prefix for “mobile”

57 Luminous qualities

59 Small part of a big lot

60 Literary king played by Glenda Jackson

61 Andean camelid

62 Son of Odin

63 Key figures at the IRS?

64 Pondered

DOWN

1 (Someone else’s mistake)

2 Where something disagreeable sticks

3 Like the 1%

4 Spanish for “this”

5 Drink brewed from young leaves

6 Put in a worse position?

7 Issue forth

8 “____ No Sunshine” (Bill Withers hit)

9 Giveaway

10 Like a mechanical watch

11 Not legit

12 Word on campaign signs

13 Assignment

21 More cooked than raw

22 Rejection in Reims

25 Colorfully named herb

26 Flapjack chain

27 Commerce Secretary

28 Raimondo

28 TV channel for consumers

29 Heightened fear

30 Handyper-son’s letters

33 Typical swag bag

34 Baldwin or Guinness

35 Fringe benefit

37 Aries in astrology

38 (I can’t believe I did that!)

39 “What’s that?”

41 Trouble-shooting aids

42 T, on a test

43 Hot spot in Iceland

44 ____ de Janeiro

45 Baldwin and Guinness

46 Hold a class

47 SysOps admin, say

49 Insect in a cloud

50 Wishes undone

51 Obsessive fan

52 Takei’s “Star Trek” role

53 Certain nest eggs, briefly

54 Word after “given” or “trade”

58 Sorrowful

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	W	A	G		R	E	S	T		B	O	W	L	S		
O	H	I	O		I	K	E	A		A	P	R	I	L		
L	O	S	E	A	B	E	E	T		S	T	Y	L	E		
I	L	L	S	U	E		N	A	S	A		S	Y	D		
D	E	E		N	Y	T				A	L	U	M			
					S	T	E	E	P	O	U	T	S	I	D	E
	G	D	A	Y		M	A	N	N		E	L	A	N		
D	E	E	M		A	P	N	E	A		R	E	N	D		
O	R	E	O		L	E	I	A		R	I	S	K			
H	I	P	S	T	E	R	C	R	E	E	D					
	F	A	I	R		M	R	I		J	I	M				
B	A	R		S	T	U	B			U	N	D	O	N	E	
E	D	I	T	S		P	E	E	P	S		Q	U	A	D	
T	H	E	E	U		D	A	R	T		E	L	L	A		
A	D	D	L	E		O	U	R	S		D	E	L	L		

8/8 © 2021 Andrews McMeel Universal
www.upuzzles.com

8/9

Move Along by Leonard Williams

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15						16		
17							18					19		
	20					21					22			
						23				24				
25	26	27	28					29	30					
31								32				33	34	35
36							37				38	39		
40						41				42				
					43	44				45				
	46	47							48					
49							50	51				52	53	54
55						56				57				58
59										61				
62							63				64			

OBITUARIES



Bryte

Klementyna L. “Klemie” Bryte, March 27, 1947 – August 8, 2021. Klementyna Bryte passed from this life on Sunday, August 8, after a brief illness.

Klemie was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on March 27, 1947, to Philomena Bryte. She was adopted by Wayne Bryte when Philomena remarried. Klemie grew up in Essex and Westminster, Maryland. She graduated from St. John’s High School in Westminster and then attended the University of Maryland, College Park, graduating with a degree in English. She married her college sweetheart, Larry Dawson, in 1972; they divorced in 1982.

Having always had a desire to help people, Klemie spent several years as a social worker for the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. She then worked at various places, including the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Baltimore Gay Paper, before settling into a career as a journal proofreader at Waverly Press and a medical book copy editor at Williams & Wilkins. After leaving Williams & Wilkins, Klemie realized her lifelong dream of moving to the Southwest,

settling with her partner Tom Lehr in Marathon, Texas. There she continued editing for various publishers. She also worked at the Marathon Motel, Evans Gallery, Spring Creek Gallery, the Adobe Rose Inn and Front Street Books, and cleaned and managed vacation rental homes. If you stayed at a vacation rental in Marathon and discovered that the pillow cases had been freshly ironed, that was probably Klemie. She also loved feeding the neighbors’ dogs, cats, horses, burros, chickens and reptiles when people needed to leave town. She greeted everyone as a friend and started numerous long-term friendships while working in Marathon’s shops and lodgings.

Klemie was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her sister Leesa Zeiler of Marathon, Texas; brother W. Hollis Bryte of Blountville, Tennessee; brother Mark Bryte and his wife Michelle of Piney Flats, Tennessee; niece Cassandra Davis and her partner Gilbert Chavez of Marathon, Texas; nephew Mark Bryte and his partner Elissa Jacobson and three daughters of Hampstead, Maryland; nephew Michel Conaway of Piney Flats, Tennessee; nephew Matthew Bryte of Bristol, Virginia; niece Ariahna Bryte of Blountville, Tennessee; her longtime partner Tom Lehr of Marathon; and her beloved cats Pootie, Beautiful Carla, Bo Peep and Nina.

Memorial services will be held at a later time.

Remembrances may be shared at www.acreswestfuneral.com. In lieu of flowers the family suggests contributions be made in her name to animal rescue organizations or those assisting Native Americans.



Cash

Leon B. “Shorty” Cash passed away peacefully August 16, 2021, at the age of 75. We mourn the loss of a great man and encourage any and all who knew him to remember his kindness, cheerful smile and compassion.

He is preceded in death by parents Louisa Bullis Najar and Leon Parker Cash Sr., sisters Pauline and Yolanda Cash, and brother Manuel Najar Jr.



Cordero

Mary Salcido Cordero was born into this world on April 29, 1924, to Mario Cruz and Luz Salcido Cruz, and passed from it peacefully on August 17, 2021. Mary was kind, loving, caring, generous and sometimes mischievous with a sharp wit and genuine smile but fiercely independent and steadfast

without patience or tolerance for pretense, insincerity or hypocrisy. She was also a deeply spiritual person who believed in the power of prayer and God’s will. She carried a love for sports from her youth, especially baseball and the New York Yankees. Many chapters could be written from the full, interesting and active life she lived, and she had many stories to tell. Preceded in death by her son, Mario, whom she loved so dearly, Mary will be greatly missed by many who knew her and were fortunate enough to have had her in their lives. As per Mary’s wishes, there will not be a public memorial service.

Online condolences may be left at www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com

Funeral Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home.



Teague

In loving memory of **Ella Jean Teague**, January 10, 1934 – August 12, 2021. Ella Teague was born in Ft. Davis, Texas, to Barney William Teague and Maude Adele Cooksey Teague as child number eight. Her 50 years of teaching showed her love of education and was a gift that touched many lives over the years as coach, counselor and teacher. She was never satisfied with just one college degree, but worked to fulfill her education dreams with multiple, as is evidenced in her professional bio. Her most recent standing was that of professor emeritus of physical education with Central Texas College, having served on their faculty from 1968 and retiring in 2004.

Ella graduated high school in Alpine and then received her Bachelor of Science and Master of Education degrees from Sul Ross University in 1954. She then moved to Big Lake to serve as a coach, teacher and bus driver. From 1960 – 1969 she taught in Andrews, Texas. She did additional graduate studies at the University of Texas at Austin and Texas Tech University, as well as Tarleton State University, receiving bachelors and masters degrees in education, administration and counseling. She was a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) with the State of Texas. During her reign at Central Texas College

(1968 – 2004) she held positions as 1) teacher of health/physical education 2) supervisor of women’s physical education 3) manager of women’s physical education 4) department manager women’s athletic department, 5) women’s sport coordinator, and 6) department chair of physical education. She was instrumental in building the new athletic gym and aquatics buildings at CTC (planning and designing).

Upon moving to Lampasas, Texas, in 1968, she soon bought her dream ranch in Kempner and built a home. She lived there until 2016 when she sold it and moved to her family home in Alpine to live out retirement.

Ella was preceded in death by her parents, Barney and Maude, and seven siblings: Barney Teague (spouse Clydena Teague), Charles Teague, Alice “Sis” Rushing (spouse Al Rushing), Raymond Teague (spouse Ruth Teague), Dorothy Herrington (spouse Tom Herrington), Alvis Teague (spouse Marylu Teague) and Ernest Teague (spouses Mary Teague and Anna Teague); as well as brother-in-law Tommy Woodward; two nieces, Kathleen Teague Largent and Amy Teague Rainey; and a nephew Terry Woodward. She is survived by a sister, Katherine Woodward, in College Station, Texas.

Her final resting place will be in the Alpine Cemetery next to family. A memorial is pending COVID situations and next of kin will be notified as arrangements are made. The officiate is the Alpine Memorial Funeral Home. If anyone would like to honor Ella’s memory, please make a donation to St Jude Children’s Research Hospital in her name.

The family would like to acknowledge and thank her caregivers Nonie Huerta and Isabel Garcia for their loving and sincere devotion given during her final years.

Thank you

Thank you kindly to the people who have helped and supported us, especially the pallbearers, after the passing of my dear wife Socorro M. Chavez.

Sincerely Pedro Chavez and my family in Odessa



Obituaries presented in partnership with
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Our business operations have temporarily changed. Currently, we are not open to the public for in-office appointments, however we are available to assist you by phone.

Benefits Counselors of the Area Agency on Aging, are certified under the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) of Texas and offer unbiased information to help you make an informed decision.



Classifieds & public notices

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foundation

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Chinati follows COVID-19 precautions.
Masks and social distancing are required.

Visit chinati.org for more information and to book reservations.



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PUBLIC NOTICES

BRAND RENEWALS will begin September 1, 2021 thru February 28, 2022.
Please contact the Presidio County Clerk’s Office for more information.
FLORCITA ZUBIA, Presidio County County & District Clerk
(432) 729-4812

THE MARFA PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETS EVERY THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT 6:00PM IN THE CASNER ROOM AT CITY HALL. THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND.

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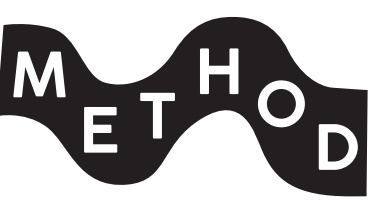
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Go to zoom.us or download the app:
• **AA - Mon 6 PM** <https://tinyurl.com/y25rsguo> (online only)
• **AA - Mon, Wed 6 PM** St. Paul's Episcopal Church (in person)
• **ACA - Thur 5:30 PM** <https://tinyurl.com/y7qyghga> (online)
• **Al-Anon, Thur 6 PM**, <https://tinyurl.com/kaef22a6>
• **AA - Sat 12 Noon** hybrid meeting: in person Marfa Public Library courtyard and online at <https://tinyurl.com/y686nnw2>
*Please note, you can find online meetings at any time at <https://aa-intergroup.org/oiaa/meetings/>

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code that James Cody Havens., dba Marfa Wine Co. has filed application for Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit. Said business to be conducted at 303 E. El Paso Street, Marfa, Presidio County, Texas 79843; James C. Havens, Ind. Owner

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a wine/beer retailer's permit (BG) by Margaret's in Marfa LLC dba Margaret's, to be located at 103 N. Highland Ave in Marfa, Presidio County, Texas. Officer of said corporation is Brandon Messer (managing member).



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Editor-in-Chief
Publisher
Managing Editor
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Office: 209 1/2 W. El Paso St., Marfa, Texas
Mail: Drawer P, Marfa, TX 79843
Telephone: 432.729.4342
Contact: editor@bigbendsentinel.com
Advertising Inquiries: ads@bigbendsentinel.com
www.bigbendsentinel.com

The Big Bend Sentinel (ISSN 1076-1004 USPS 055-800) is published weekly, on Thursdays, 50 times a year by West Texan Media Group LLC, Drawer P, Marfa, TX 79843. Annual subscription rates are \$50 in Presidio, Brewster & Jeff Davis counties, and \$60 elsewhere in Texas and the United States. Special rates apply abroad. Periodicals class postage paid at Marfa, Texas 79843.
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