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BURN BAN IN EFFECT, NO GROUND FIRES
by order of Presidio County

City of Marfa and Chinati Foundation work together to address aging sewer system

By SAM KARAS
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MARFA — For years, the three-and-a-half miles of century-old clay sewer pipes beneath the Chinati Foundation have fallen into a state of disrepair and have even begun to leak. There are few signs above ground other than a crown of weeds above the old lines, but neighbors worry that conditions could take a turn for the worse. Despite a protracted back-and-forth with the City of Marfa and the state agency responsible for environmental safety, a timeline for the necessary repairs is still inconclusive.

For the Chinati Foundation, the solution isn't as simple as calling the donors that flock to Marfa each October for the museum's major fundraiser. While the lines are located on private property — and the responsibility of sewer maintenance generally falls to property owners — the Chinati Foundation's miles of underground sewer pipes receive waste from around 40 city customers who live on South Yale Street, also known as Officer's Row.

Figuring out how to address the issue has summoned complicated questions about the relationship between the two entities and the future of development in Marfa. "Clearly, the cost to replace three and a half miles of lines for 40 customers isn't an economic option for any prudent utility," wrote Patty Akers, a lawyer retained by the City of Marfa, in an email to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) on October 22, 2020. "Combined with the legal inability to bring these lines into compliance makes it impossible for the city to respond in a conventional manner."

According to the TCEQ, the responsibility of repairing the pipes falls to the City of Marfa, which was handed a notice of violation by the agency on September 25, 2020. Since then, the city has been granted numerous extensions. The paper trail suggests the city has been treated with leniency by the state due to the uniqueness of the situation, but water quality violations of this kind can carry fines of up to $25,000 a day should the agency decide to crack down.

"Since wastewater is collected at South Yale Street and routed through the Chinati Foundation property,"

(Continued on page 2)



Photo courtesy of Dixon Water Foundation

Students gathering at the Mimms Ranch for their annual Sul Ross State University range inventory visit.

Dixon Water Foundation pushes back on proposed power line route, saying it jeopardizes their mission

By MARY CANTRELL
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MARFA — Mimms Ranch, a nonprofit research and demonstration rangeland operated by the Dixon Water Foundation, is joining a number of concerned local citizens in opposing proposed transmission lines that are part of an improvement project initiated by American Electric Power (AEP).

The mission of the 16,000 acre ranch, located on Marfa's northwest border, is to promote watershed health through land management. One of the potential power line routes AEP generated would run along their northern property line and cut through six miles of the Mimms Ranch. No lines currently exist in the area, and the construction would create new property easements on 50 feet of either side of the line. New steel poles would measure approximately 75 to 85 feet in height and eight feet in diameter.

"It would be not only an eyesore on a relatively pristine mixed prairie, which is few and far between these days, but it would also be a big physical scar directly through these research areas that hasn't existed before," said Philip Boyd, vice president of science and research at the Dixon Water Foundation.

AEP is in the process of putting together an application to submit to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to replace a 1929-built transmission line that runs through Marfa, beginning at the Alamito Creek substation in the Sal Si Puedes neighborhood, and extends to Fort Davis. After hosting public meetings last month, AEP will now analyze feedback and finalize route options. Construction for the project is expected to begin in 2023. AEP did not respond to requests for comment by press time.

While it is possible the replacement lines could take on a similar route to the existing infrastructure, for its application AEP will submit many route options to the PUC, who will arbitrate the replacement line. Since the 1929 transmission lines were erected, a natural gas pipeline has gone in along the route, a pairing engineers generally try to avoid, said Derek Green of Burns & McDonnell, a construction engineering company working with AEP on the proposal.

The Dixon Foundation has submitted feedback and letters of support from their partners to AEP opposing the construction of transmission lines on Mimms Unit, a protected high desert grassland which won a Leopold Conservation Award from Texas Parks and Wildlife in 2017. The foundation

(Continued on page 3)

Fort Stockton man and daughter missing in Big Bend

By ALLEGRA HOBBS
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BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK — A team of state and federal agencies have been searching Big Bend National Park for Fort Stockton residents Hector Flores, Jr., 49, and his daughter Luna Flores, 9, who entered the park on Jan. 28 and have since gone missing.

A vehicle belonging to Hector Flores, Jr. — a blue 2005 Dodge 1500 truck — was discovered near a campsite on the northern end of the park's remote Old Ore Road on the afternoon of Saturday, Feb. 6, by a park employee who was patrolling the area, according to National Parks Service (NPS) spokesman Tom VandenBerg. Though the father and daughter were nowhere to be seen, their gear had been left behind at the site, and many of their personal belongings were in the car. Investigators believe the pair may be traveling on foot, and may not be dressed properly or have the proper equipment to camp in the park.



Photo courtesy of National Park Service

Hector Flores, Jr., 49 and Luna Flores, 9.

The search for the missing father and daughter began that afternoon and has continued through the week, involving searchers from U.S. Border Patrol, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the Texas Department of Public Safety. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is also assisting in the search and is soliciting tips from anyone who may have knowledge of the Floreses' whereabouts. A crew of 10 has been on the ground searching the area, and both Border Patrol and DPS have deployed aircrafts to assist in the search.

When reached by phone on Tuesday, Hector Flores, Sr., father of Hector Flores, Jr. and grandfather of Luna, told The Big Bend Sentinel that he and his wife were on their way to the park from their home in San Antonio. They had received a call from NPS on Saturday when his son's truck was discovered, and were surprised to learn he had been in the park at a time when temperatures were dangerously plummeting.

"We were surprised he was out there," said Flores. "Especially that he was out there Friday — it was very cold out there and there was a lot of ice at the time." In the late night hours of Thursday, Feb. 3, and in the early morning hours that Friday, temperatures in the park dipped into

(Continued on page 3)

Brewster County officials brace for critical month ahead in establishing new EMS

By MARY CANTRELL
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BREWSTER COUNTY — Northern Brewster County was recently left without an emergency medical service provider after the longtime operator of West Texas Ambulance Service, Michael Scudder, died suddenly while responding to a 911 call. Terlingua Fire and EMS has stepped up to fill the service gap for 120 days, but county officials and an assembled task force are under the gun to establish new services as the April 30 deadline approaches.

"The clock is ticking as far as what [Terlingua Fire and EMS] is able to do," said Brewster County Judge Eleazar Cano in a commissioners court meeting on Tuesday. "I would hope by this time next month the transition would be started."

The county is currently deciding whether to implement a county-run, Big Bend Regional Medical Center-run, or private for-profit company-run EMS service. A service run by the Big Bend Regional Hospital District was previously under consideration, but the district has since bowed out, though its leadership expressed willingness to provide financial support for the new operation.

County commissioners and Judge Cano stressed the need for more information and better numbers at Tuesday's meeting in order to measure their options against one another. Most recently, the City of Alpine put out a request for qualifications for EMS. The EMS task force is set to meet this week to analyze budget and staffing models and assess the cost of a county-run EMS. They are also awaiting a proposal from Big Bend Regional Medical Center to see what an EMS solution out of their facility might entail.

The crux of the matter officials keep returning to is how much money it's all going to cost. Upon analyzing the numbers, officials were wondering exactly how Scudder managed to run Alpine EMS successfully for so many years.

"Honestly, a lot of what the Scudders were doing, so much of their time and effort was almost pro bono. I'm not sure how they were living," said Cano.

Commissioner Jim Westermann said Scudder's ambulance service was receiving $336,000 worth of subsidies a year from the county and city

(Continued on page 2)

Early voting kicks off February 14

By MARY CANTRELL
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TRI-COUNTY — Early voting for the March 1 primary election will take place from February 14-25, with polling places located throughout the tri-county area.

Voters will nominate candidates to represent the Democratic and Republican parties in local county elections, district-based congressional and legislative offices, the State Board of Education, and judicial seats. Candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, land commissioner, agriculture commissioner, comptroller, and one of three seats on the Railroad Commission will also be on the ballot.

The deadline to apply to vote by mail is February 18 — applications must be received, not postmarked, by that date, and applicants are being encouraged to send their applications early to ensure it is received in time. Applications may be submitted in person or via email to county tax assessor-collectors.

Voters will need to present a valid form of identification, including a state-issued driver's license, U.S. passport, Texas election identification certificate, Texas personal identification card, Texas license to carry a handgun, U.S. military ID card with a personal photo or a U.S. citizenship certificate with a personal photo.

Early voting polls will be open weekdays February 14-25, with the exception of President's Day, which falls on Monday, February 21.

In Presidio County, early voting will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. February 14-18 and February 22-25 at the Marfa Visitor Center (USO Building), 302 S Highland Ave., Marfa, TX 79843, and Presidio County Annex — Building C, 301 E. O'Reilly St., Presidio, TX 79845.

In Brewster County, early voting will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. February 14-18, February 22-23 and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. February 24-25 at the Judge Val Clark Beard Office Complex: Old Library, 203 N 7th St., Alpine, TX 79830.

Remote voting in Brewster County will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. February 22-23 at the Marathon Community Center, 2nd and Ave E, Marathon, TX 79842, and Red Pattillo Community Center, Hwy 118, Study Butte/Terlingua, TX 79852.

In Jeff Davis County, early voting will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. February 14-18 and February 22-25 at the District and County Clerk's Office through the double green doors at 111 N Front St., Fort Davis, TX 79734.

During early voting, voters may cast their ballots at any polling location in the county where they are registered to vote. On election day, voters must vote in the precinct in which they are registered to vote. Precincts are designated on voter cards. The Big Bend Sentinel will publish additional details on where to vote ahead of the March 1 primary election.

Residents of Presidio County with questions about early voting may contact Natalia Williams at (432) 729-4081. Brewster County residents should contact Lora Nussbaum at (432) 837-6230. In Jeff Davis County, residents can contact Sheriff William Kitts at (432) 837-6230.



INSIDE

NEWS P. 1 - 4
OPINIONS P. 5 - 6
COMMUNITY P. 7 - 9
CLASSIFIEDS P. 10

The West Texan Media Group, LLC

New EMS

(Continued from page 1)

combined. Westermann put forth the idea that the transfer money Scudder was making running the ambulance to and from the hospital to the airport was likely accounting for around $450,000 of the company's revenue and helping make the business viable.

"That was the missing piece, 'How did they make it work?' Well, they didn't make it on what the city was paying, or the county was paying, they were supplementing that with their own money," said Westermann.

County Commissioner Ruben Ortega said he wasn't impressed with previous EMS coverage of the Marathon area and reminded the court of the reality of emergency situations in rural areas, which often require a greater level of citizen intervention. As it stands, those who experience an emergency in Marathon are better off driving to Alpine for treatment rather than waiting for the arrival of an ambulance, he said.

"If you get a call in Marathon you better load 'em up in your car and head this way and then call the ambulance to meet you," said Ortega.

During the brief EMS update, the court reiterated previous concerns over personnel and how they would attract EMTs and paramedics to live and work in the area. Ortega insisted housing be a part of the compensation package assembled for the medical care workers.

In a phone interview, Big Bend Regional Hospital District Executive Director J.D. Newsom, who is also a part of the EMS task force, said staffing is one of the primary challenges. Brewster County will be competing with Reeves and Pecos counties, said Newsom, where EMTs and paramedics are well-paid.

But EMTs' schedules — 48 hours on, 96 hours off — allow them to pick up shifts in neighboring counties, which they often do, said Newsom.

The newly-established EMS provider will have a lot of hoops to jump through at the beginning, said Newsom, including obtaining proper licensing and supplies. While Terlingua Fire and EMS is currently leasing the old Alpine EMS ambulances from Scudder's estate, at some point the new operation will need to purchase their own ambulances due to the fact that the existing ones have a lot of mileage, said Newsom.

"It's important that they're reliable. The last thing you want is to break down on an emergency call. So it's critical that they're in perfect operating condition," said Newsom.

New ambulances can cost $250,000 to $300,000. The hospital district has provided grant money to the cities of Marfa and Presidio to purchase new ambulances in the past and would likely assist with start-up costs for Alpine's new operation. But getting ambulances quickly may be an issue, as it has been in Presidio, where the vehicle's chassis has been unavailable since funding was awarded last year due to supply chain issues.

According to Newsom, the decision to scrap the possibility of a service run by the hospital district is due to inadequate time to collaborate with all necessary parties.

"When the hospital district board met they were really hesitant to jump in and take over operations for Brewster County EMS — we hadn't been able to get all the regional partners together to even look at if a regional solution was something that we all wanted to move towards," said Newsom.

BBRHD serves Presidio and Brewster counties. A total of four individual EMS providers operate in the region — those run by the cities of Marfa and Presidio, Terlingua Fire and EMS, and what was Alpine EMS, previously run by Scudder. While they are working against the clock to get northern Brewster County stabilized, he said he suspects in the near future regional partners will have more time to dig into a deeper planning and detailed analysis of what a unified EMS provider would look like.

"It's going to get harder and harder for all of these EMS providers to run their operations," said Newsom. "I think there is a really good case for consolidation, but it's something that's going to take quite a bit of time to work through."

Major challenges facing individual providers of staffing, medical direction and the cost of ambulances could be alleviated by merging regional operations, said Newsom. There's also the possibility of creating a central supply depot for medications and supplies.

"You can get better deals, you can manage those medications better. There will definitely be cost savings on that front as well," said Newsom.

Each EMS service provider is required to have a medical doctor oversee their protocols and services. In many cases those individuals are experienced in emergency medicine but are often serving on a volunteer basis.

"Some of them are aging, some of them are overwhelmed and don't want to do it anymore. The challenge is that we need this medical direction but it's harder and harder to find doctors willing to do it," said Newsom.

Once operations are scaled up, it is also easier to attract local talent and provide more training, hopefully incentivizing locals to become EMTs and paramedics who continue to live in their community, said Newsom.

This fall, BBRHD applied for a $5 million USDA emergency rural healthcare grant which would establish community paramedicine programs in Presidio and Terlingua. The grant would allow the hospital district to hire paramedics to do house calls and assist those with chronic diseases. The grant, if awarded, would allocate funds for a new ambulance for the city of Presidio and a new rescue vehicle for Terlingua Fire and EMS.

Another initiative of the grant would fund a partnership with Texas Tech's Health Science Center in El Paso, who would help with medical direction, protocols and training. Newsom said they expect to receive news of their application this March, but such goals and programs could bode well for the future of a unified bi-county EMS provider.

"We'll establish an EMS Academy, where Texas Tech will be our training partner, to really elevate the skills of our first responders. Initiatives like that become a lot easier to do and implement on a consistent basis region-wide if we're looking at a regional approach," said Newsom.

Chinati sewer

(Continued from page 1)

the official violation reads, "the system of collection for wastewater located on Chinati Foundation's property is considered to be a part of the City of Marfa's wastewater collection system." At an October 13, 2020, council meeting, the city council contracted the Presidio-based engineering firm Kleinman Consultants to review their wastewater collection system and ensure it met state standards.

The foundation and the city have been in correspondence about fixing the problem for years. In 2018, Chinati's former director of planning and preservation, Peter Stanley, had a conversation with former City Manager Terry Brechtel and City Attorney Teresa Todd about the state of the wastewater system on the foundation's campus. The three decided to draft a "letter of understanding" that would be presented to the city council in hopes of gathering more information about granting easements for maintenance. "We started that process, but nothing happened after that," Stanley recalled.

In June 2020, with the signs of wear "substantially worse," Stanley contacted the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Investigator Joseph Miller began looking into the complaint. He reached out to Todd to ask if the system underneath Chinati was used as a conveyance for other City of Marfa customers. Todd consulted former public works directors Robert Silva and Jeff Boyd for more background.

Silva and Boyd confirmed that the City of Marfa had never used the Chinati Foundation's system for conveyance. "[It] was a separate self-contained water and sewer system that predated any city water or sewer infrastructure in that area," Todd wrote back to Miller in an email dated July 30, 2020. "Rather than conveying sewage through Chinati lines, the City actually receives sewage from Chinati and private landowners at Fort D.A. Russell."

Throughout her correspondence with the state, which The Big Bend Sentinel obtained through a public records request, Todd reminded officials of the unique history of the sewer lines beneath the Chinati Foundation, which was once a military installation. Fort D.A. Russell — and the hard-working sewer lines beneath it — date back to the Mexican Revolution, when fears of cross-border violence led the U.S. military to take an interest in the humble railroad town of Marfa.

According to Mona Garcia, who played a major role in getting Fort D.A. Russell registered as a National Historic Site, local ranchers pitched in to pull together land for a fort. Garcia currently owns and operates a museum out of Building 98, the former officer's club. She estimates that her sewer line, which was part of the original self-contained fort system, was constructed sometime between 1910 and 1920.

Neighborhood lore alleges that German prisoners of war held at Fort D.A. Russell built Chinati's sewer system, but Garcia doubts that rumor — the P.O.W.s didn't arrive until 1943. In its heyday, there were over 9,000 men stationed at the fort, necessitating 3.5 miles of clay pipe to deal with the wastewater of thousands of men living in close quarters. When the fort was decommissioned in 1946, there wasn't a need to keep the pipes up to serve that many people.

As a result, the sewer system didn't have its first major upgrade until the early 1990s. According to email correspondence between Todd and the TCEQ, at that time, the sewer system was discharging wastewater into Alamito Creek. The state intervened and required the city to construct a lift station to receive sewage from Chinati and customers inside the former military base and route it toward the sewage treatment plant. In October 1991, the city filed a permit to expand its wastewater treatment plant, and the lift station was constructed shortly thereafter with funding from the Rio Grande Council of Governments.

The Dia Foundation had sold the 340-acre property to Donald Judd just a few years prior, in 1987. Judd then began realizing his vision of "a concept of a museum in which art, buildings, and the natural environment form a unity," according to the Chinati Foundation's website. During the early '90s sewer system overhaul, the Chinati Foundation was up and running, but nowhere near as busy as it is today. A handful of its signature installations had yet to be built. In the days before the Airbnb boom, coming to Chinati was a much more solitary experience. "Since the art would never be exhibited in big-city museums, people wanting to see and experience it would have to make a pilgrimage to Marfa," Todd explained in an email to TCEQ dated July 17, 2020.

In a town where "What Would Donald Judd Do?" is a popular bumper sticker slogan, that question still looms for many — even so far as to guide city policy. "The simple truth is that Donald Judd did not want the city anywhere near his property or his sewer lines … Mr. Judd's foundation has now inherited the consequences of their founder's notoriously intransigent nature and decades of inaction," Todd wrote. "According to former Public Works Director Robert Silva, one time he couldn't get access to the property at all, so he climbed over a Chinati fence to unclog a line that was causing a sewer emergency for a neighbor. Mr. Judd came out, yelled at him, and kicked him off his property!"

Stanley questioned whether the now-deceased Judd's behavior 30 years ago should factor into the handling of the present-day problem. "In terms of trying to judge what Judd would have wanted, that's a tricky thing, and something we try not to do as a standard," said Stanley, who emphasized that he no longer can speak on behalf of the Chinati Foundation, but had spent years looking at the world through their operational lens. "I've heard this before, that the city reached out a number of decades ago, and Judd rebuffed those efforts. Knowing what I know about Judd, I'm not surprised by that. But again, that was decades ago."

Another former Chinati employee had a different recollection of the famed artist. "I don't think Don was that way, he always liked to help," remembered Eliseo Martinez, who worked for Judd for 16 years and for the Chinati Foundation for four. He's also owned a home on Officer's Row linked to the aging sewer lines since 1965. He wasn't present for Mr. Silva's hasty exit from Chinati Foundation grounds, but spent many years observing Judd and the city work together and navigate each other's red tape.

In Martinez's time working maintenance for Chinati alongside Stanley, roughly 2011-2015, the city and the Chinati Foundation came together numerous times to solve problems. "We had a big problem with a line that busted," he recalled. "The city had to help us. They fixed it — they were always there." Another time, the city came with sophisticated tools to help fix a blockage. "We told them, just send a bill to Chinati. And they said 'No, no, it's no problem. That's our job, [to make sure] the water and the sewer and everything is working good.'"

As the Chinati Foundation has grown — 49,000 people made the pilgrimage in 2019 — so have the problems for the neighbors. "We have more than once had our bathroom fill up with sewage," said Garcia. "This happens when hundreds of people come all at once for Chinati Weekend."

The problems don't end with fluctuations in tourists — the neighborhood is growing too, and that growth has been hindered by the aging sewer lines. With a row of condos recently constructed at the Presidio on FM 2810 and rumors of a new development swirling, figuring out how to better service new neighbors will be a top priority.

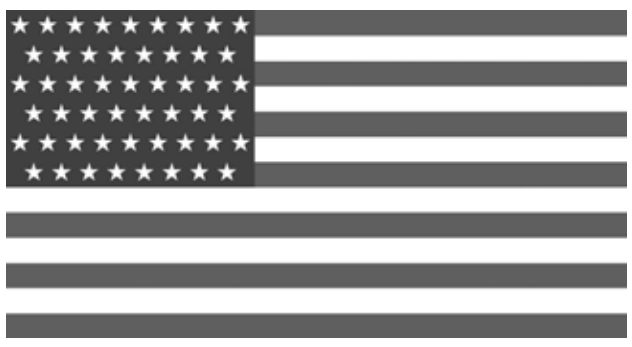
"I've never worked on anything like this — most violation issues are not this complicated," said Todd. "They don't involve this many moving parts or this kind of history. This is a very unique situation." Because the City of Marfa doesn't have the budget for the needed repairs, seeking grants will be an important part of the process.

Chinati Foundation Director Jenny Moore was optimistic about the ability of her organization to work with the City of Marfa to address the situation. "We appreciate the significant effort the City is currently making to address these concerns as development continues in the neighborhood, putting further strain on an outdated system. We look forward to partnering with the City in support of improvements to the municipal sewer system and a positive outcome for this essential community service."

For Martinez, who was born and raised in Marfa, any investment in the infrastructure of the Chinati Foundation is ultimately an investment in the future of Marfa. He took the time to praise the foundation's efforts to educate young Marfans about art and all the long-term residents Chinati has brought to town. He pointed toward the Robert Irwin installation, which he can see from his front porch. Before the Chinati Foundation rehabilitated the building, the former fort hospital was rotting and falling apart, its roof caved in.

"Everything they fix is good for the town. Other people say 'Well, it's just art.' But it looks clean. It looks nice. There's a lot of people that come and see it, a lot of people that rent a hotel or buy groceries. Everything helps. If it hadn't been for [the art], there would probably still be nothing there."

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Citizens of Presidio, I respectfully ask for your vote in this upcoming election.
***Thank you and God Bless**. " - Brenda Pando-Covos*

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Dixon Water Foundation

(Continued from page 1)

is conducting a number of ongoing research projects dedicated to range management and the health of grassland bird populations which have declined by 53% in the past several decades.

"Our ranches serve as one of the priority grassland areas in the Chihuahuan Desert and for grassland birds in general in the Central Great Plains here," said Boyd.

Power lines would create more perches for predatory raptor birds that use the lines to prey on vulnerable grassland birds, he said. Additionally, between eight and 57 million birds die annually as a result of electrocution and collision with electric utility lines, according to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Bird surveys that study species life cycles and habitat preferences are regularly conducted at Mimms. Sul Ross students also utilize the ranch to run range inventory projects, looking at grazing techniques and impacts on vegetation over extended periods of time.

"Putting a power line through would not only fragment our bird habitat but could also potentially disrupt these decade-long range inventory research projects that have been going on and these monitoring efforts," said Boyd.

The imposition of transmission lines would jeopardize the work of the Dixon Water Foundation and their partners, said Boyd, who come to Marfa from all over to learn about grassland ecology. The foundation partners with many entities including Texas Parks and Wildlife, The Borderlands Research Institute, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies as well as organizations in Mexico and Canada.

"We've involved a lot of external parties who are gaining a lot of information from [the Mimms Ranch] that they've been sharing on a broader scale," said Boyd. "We look at [the power lines] as disruptive of our long-term work as a foundation."

Impacts on carefully-managed native vegetation and potential use of herbicides by AEP to maintain access to transmission lines could also pose a threat to the foundation's ranching operations.

"The idea of having six miles of 100-feet-wide right of ways constructed would undo a lot of this work to protect these native species and native systems, and could have a cascading negative effect in terms of increased water and soil run-off, chemical impacts and spread of invasive species," said Boyd.

Utilizing the multi-pasture approach to cattle grazing, the foundation regularly rotates its herds around the ranch to promote even graze and pasture recovery. The proposed transmission line route would cross several of the subdivided pastures, creating significant complications for ranch managers, said Boyd.

"Construction of a right of way and subsequent maintenance would require constant coordination with our ranch managers to account for the presence of our herd," said Boyd. "Developing along this proposed route would also potentially complicate access to water points for our cattle herd and could intersect with the buried water lines that supply those points."

The land that makes up the Dixon Water Foundation's Mimms Unit was originally purchased 14 years ago, but has since expanded. AEP cannot build lines near the Marfa airport, so in the preliminary map power lines are proposed to go around it to the west. Boyd said it seemed as if AEP had outdated county assessment data based on the way they drew up the proposed routes. Part of the route that would affect the Mimms Unit ran along an old property boundary that no longer exists.

"In actuality it is the center of our property because we purchased that ranch and brought it into the Mimms ranch a few years ago," said Boyd.

Boyd attended AEP's virtual town hall earlier this fall, but said there was no mention of grassland birds or pronghorn in regards to the company's preliminary environmental assessment. He said AEP mentioned they would avoid wetlands, which are few and far between in the Chihuahuan Desert, although Alamito Creek does run through the Mimms Unit.



Photo courtesy of Dixon Water Foundation

Alejandro Chávez Treviño and Emily Card, master's students and researchers with the Borderlands Research Institute, on the Mimms Ranch conducting overwintering grassland bird research.

"I felt like there was some local knowledge that was being overlooked. There's a lot of nuances to where we live," said Boyd.

According to AEP's online project dashboard, they take into consideration various environmental factors when analyzing transmission line routes, including the presence of federally-listed endangered or threatened species and proximity to bodies of water. AEP lists Texas Parks and Wildlife and many other federal and state agencies as routinely being contacted regarding similar projects, but it is unclear whether that applies to this specific project or when that outreach occurs.

Boyd said the Dixon Water Foundation is prepared to do everything in their power to keep the lines from being built on their property. When AEP submits its application for the project to the PUC, which will likely be soon, landowners, including the foundation, will be notified. At that time they may choose to intervene in the project in order to oppose a specific route.

Missing in Big Bend

(Continued from page 1)

the single digits.

"Both of them liked to be outdoors, mostly fishing and camping," said Flores. "I just don't know why they went this time of year when it's pretty cold out there."

In fact, the elements faced by Flores, Jr. and Luna are of the utmost concern to the searchers, said VandenBerg. "The big concern I think on everybody's mind is: it was cold," he said. "Those are some cold, cold nights."

Old Ore Road is a fairly remote part of the park — one of Big Bend's designated primitive backcountry roads, which requires a high-clearance four-wheel-drive vehicle. There are nine campsites spread out along the 26-mile road, which takes about three-and-a-half hours to traverse from beginning to end. A backcountry permit is required to use the road's campsites. The northern end of the road, where Flores' vehicle was found, is "much rougher than the southern half," per a ranger tip on the NPS website.

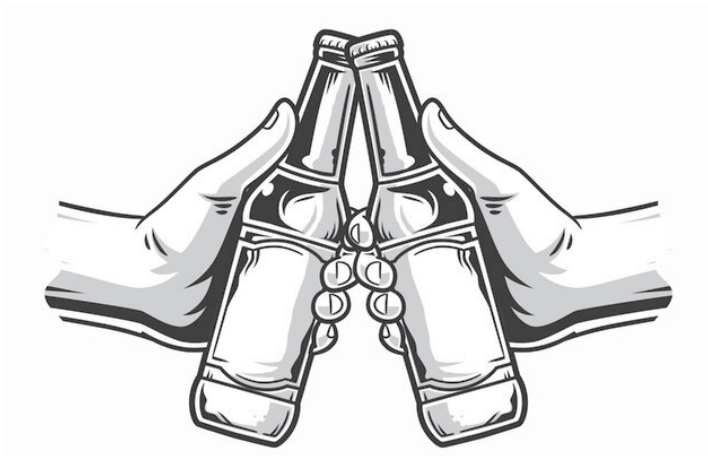
"We're hoping for the best, praying for the best," said Flores, Sr.

Anyone with information about the missing father and daughter are urged to call the FBI Tip Line at 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324). Tips can also be submitted online at tips.fbi.gov. Those submitting tips can remain anonymous.

This is a developing story. The Big Bend Sentinel *will provide updates online as more information becomes available.*

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HAVE A BEER WITH BUDDY!



February 11 • 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. • Planet Marfa
Come meet and chat with Frank "Buddy" Knight
Running for re-election for Commissioner Precinct 4
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POLITICAL AD PAID FOR BY FRANK KNIGHT, PO BOX 1324 MARFA, TX

City council, school board candidate filing deadline Feb. 18

By MARY CANTRELL
mkcantrell@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — The City of Marfa and the Marfa Independent School District are accepting applications for city council members and school board trustees until February 18. As of press time, neither the city nor school district reported any applicants.

The City of Marfa is seeking applications to fill three open city council seats as the two-year terms of council members Yoseff Ben-Yehuda, Eddie Pallarez and Buck Johnston come to an end.

The city council is composed of five Marfa citizens who create local policies, approve the final city budget and assist in strategic planning for the town's future. The legislative body is also responsible for appointing members to Marfa's boards and commission and advisory committees.

Meetings are typically held twice a month at City Hall, but extra meetings can be required at other times, especially during the budget season in the fall. Council members are paid $50 per meeting.

Candidates will appear on the May 7 general election ballot and will enter into office after a canvassing and swearing in process — historically late May or early June.

Applications are available in English and Spanish at City Hall and on the city's website: https://cityofmarfa.com/elections. The two-page application may be submitted from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at City Hall, 113 South Highland Ave. or mailed to PO Box 787, Marfa, TX 79843. Mailed applications must be received by 5 p.m. on February 18. It is free to apply.

Annual elections are held in the City of Marfa to elect the mayor, who serves a two-year term, and city council members, who serve two-year staggered terms.

In order to be eligible to run for city council, applicants must be a U.S. citizen and must be 18 years of age or older. Applicants must have resided within the state of Texas for at least 12 months, and have resided within the city of Marfa for at least six months (and continue to hold residence within Marfa city limits). Viable candidates cannot have been declared mentally incapacitated without the right to vote and cannot have been convicted of a felony.

School board

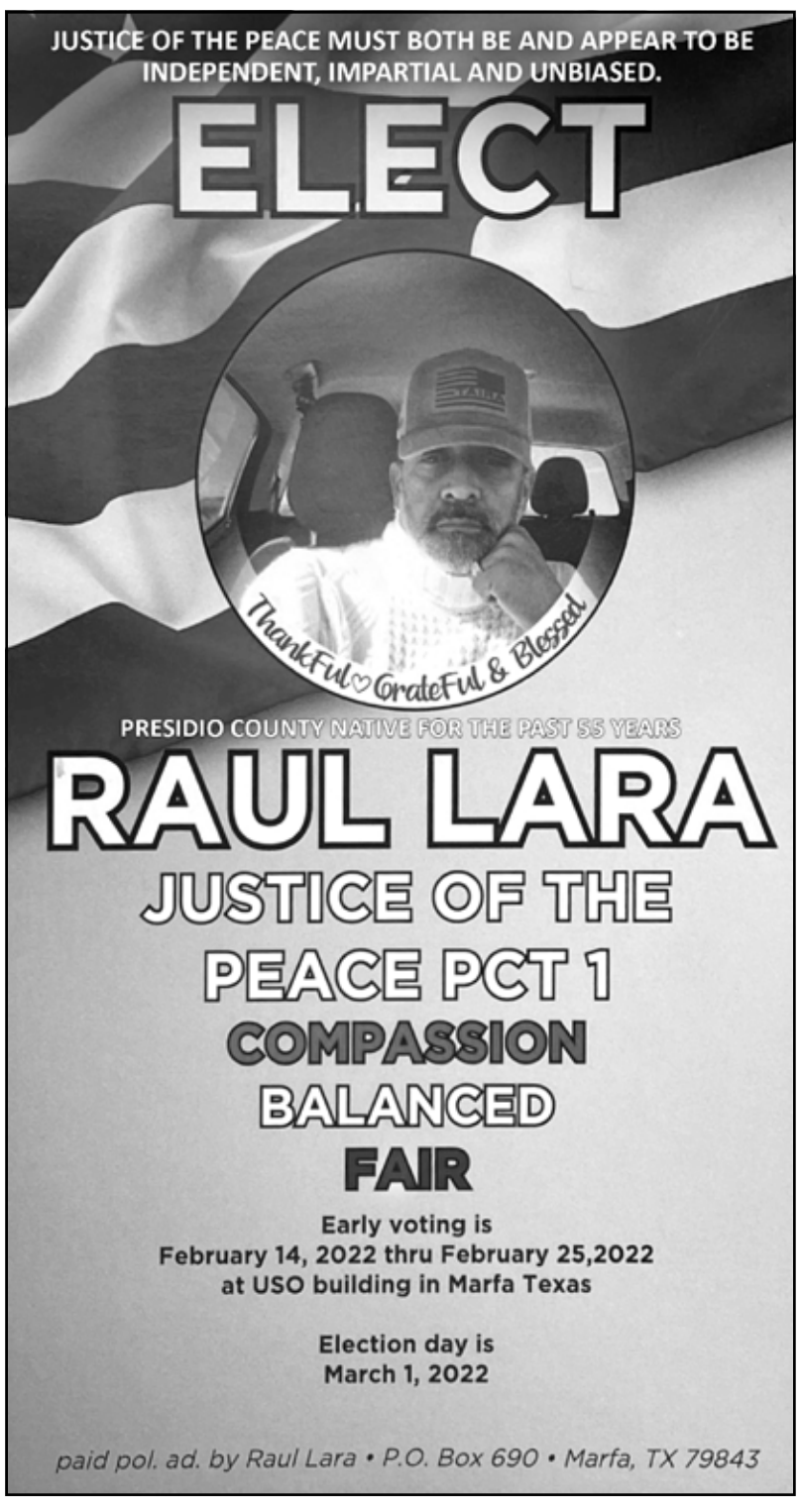
Open candidate filing for the Marfa ISD general election will extend through Friday, February 18, with four school board seats up for election. School board members serve three-year terms and meet around once a month at the high school. It is a volunteer position.

Seats 5, 6 and 7, held by Ernie Villarreal, Shawn Brugette and Teresa Nuñez, are up for election. Seat 2, which was previously held by Katie Price Fowlkes before she resigned from the board this month, will also need to be filled through 2023 until Fowlkes' term is up.

Nuñez and Villarreal intend to run for reelection, according to Superintendent Oscar Aguero, but no applications have been received at press time. When applying, candidates must state which seat or place they intend to run for. The election will take place May 7.

Interested candidates can pick up application packets at the Marfa ISD Administration Office.

To qualify to serve on the Marfa ISD School Board, candidates must not be a teacher or otherwise an employee of the school district. They must also be a United States citizen, be at least 18 years of age and have lived in Texas for at least 12 months and within the school district for at least six months. They must also be eligible and registered to vote in Marfa.







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Presidio County Commissioner Precinct 4 candidate questionnaires

Candidates for Presidio County Commissioner Precinct 4 weigh in ahead of early voting's start on March 1.

DAVID BEEBE (D)

1. Tell us about yourself. What experience will you bring to this role?

I bring my experience as a three-term Marfa City Council member (2008-2014), a small business owner, seven years working`in the courthouse and 10 years of regular attendance at county commissioners court meetings. I am aware of the county's financial structure and operations. I am experienced in the budget process.

2. What are some of the primary concerns of citizens in your precinct and how do you plan to address those concerns?

I believe people in my precinct feel that county leadership lacks discipline and direction. Often decisions are made from a purely reactive and, at times, defensive standpoint. I believe the citizens would like to see more effort on the part of commissioners to educate themselves on county operations and be proactive about taking better care of the facilities and employees of the county while serving the citizens more effectively and efficiently. I pledge to work hard to not only educate myself fully about issues affecting the county, but to also communicate more fully with constituents about county operations than has been done in the past.

3. The county has faced a number of natural disasters over the past few years — a pandemic, winter storms, wildfires and flooding. How can the county be better prepared for future emergency events?

The county has, at times, been good about training department heads and elected officials about disaster readiness thanks to the efforts of Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Mitschke. However, the county does not require leaders to take the training and, therefore, not everyone has. This can lead to communication issues, which can be devastatingly dangerous in a crisis situation. I have advocated to the county judge to appoint a PIO [Public Information Officer], which has not happened.

The county judge is also the statutory head of emergency management and currently that office has no web presence outside of the Presidio County website, which is rarely updated in a timely fashion. The county needs to prioritize the upkeep of the website and pay a person (who is always available) to work on it. Also, a person designated as the county's PIO is a must, and it should not be the county judge. During disasters the county judge is often either on the front lines or holding meetings with first responders and unable to immediately communicate with the public. This is a reality that the current county judge refuses to address. The Sheriff's Office does a better job through their Facebook page than anyone else within county leadership. The commissioners court should address this if the county judge will not.

4. What will you prioritize in terms of the county budget? How can the county's tax dollars be best utilized?

The purpose of the county budget process is to predict financial income and outflow and allocate funds accordingly. The county has not met its goal of "not dipping into reserve funds" in the last few years. The county auditor, Patty Roach, has the best grasp on the county's financial condition. She has some long-term goals for financial security that are actually coming fairly close to being met. The commissioners court doesn't currently seem to fully understand these goals, but does strive to embrace them. This is not currently a problem only because I believe the auditor truly does have the county's best interests at heart. If, however, the county lost Patty Roach it's possible that the next auditor may have different objectives and then there could be a serious issue. It's important for the full commissioners court to understand the short-term and long-term goals of the county. I would strive to bring more of that information into the conversation during the budget process. It's also imperative that the county come up with a written, modifiable but comprehensive, plan to address long-term maintenance of facilities the county owns and operates, e.g.— what to do about/with the Old Jail building and the "county archives" it contains? The courthouse itself has serious continuous issues with the HVAC system and the elevator. The list goes on, but with a model for regular care and replacement of assets, the county can be in a more predictable, reliable and inexpensive situation than the current one.

Back to the question: I would prioritize creating short-term and long-term models for the fiscal and infrastructure goals of the county. I would also prioritize trying to make the county the best place to work by having working equipment and systems that promote productive outcomes and safety.

FRANKY "BUDDY" KNIGHT (D)

1. Tell us about yourself. What experience will you bring to this role?

To the good people of Presidio County: I am Frank (Buddy) Knight and I am seeking reelection for Commissioner Pct. 4. I am a native of Marfa, grew up and was educated here, graduating from Marfa ISD. I received a Bachelor of Science from Sul Ross State University in industrial technology with a minor in education. For 19 years I taught metal trades, engineering drafting, and computer aided drafting. Since 1990 I have operated a successful part-time metal fabrication/welding business that later became full time. I understand the need for fiscal responsibility.

A few years ago, a gentleman asked me if I was a Democrat or Republican. My answer was: neither, I don't like any of them. To be honest, if I fall into a slot it would have to be Independent. Make no mistake: I can take a stand on an issue I believe is right. Having said that, I am willing to listen to all sides, an idea we seem to be rapidly losing in this country. This race, as with all political races, comes down to core beliefs. I believe the actions of the court should be honorable, with integrity and obviously within the law. This did not happen with Sanchez v. Presidio County. I will always work to stop things like this from ever happening again.

Most importantly, I am a Constitutionalist. I believe in Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness for all people. This is the bottom line that all governments should adhere to. Presidio County and Marfa are my lifelong home, and I will do anything I can to keep them in the best shape possible. I have served for two terms and have always tried to give my best.

2. What are some of the primary concerns of citizens in your precinct and how do you plan to address those concerns?

The concerns of my constituents are as varied as the people in the county. Anything from potholes in a county road to a gate not being locked at county park. Not to trivialize these concerns, most people care about keeping government costs down while the county provides the services it is required to. They care about the safety and health of them and their families. Are the roads maintained well enough to get goods to the market, to get a person to a doctor or hospital if necessary?

The question is what I am going to do to relieve these concerns. The answer is I will work to the best of my ability to maintain a balanced budget, working to keep money in the right department so it can do the most good.

3. The county has faced a number of natural disasters over the past few years — a pandemic, winter storms, wildfires and flooding. How can the county be better prepared for future emergency events?

I was in office during the Rock House Fire. It was a wakeup call. Since that time, the county has worked with the emergency management coordinator for financing for a better and larger fire station, putting $50,000.00 in its budget to help with the building this fiscal year. We provide an area at the airport for a firefight aviation operation and are working to provide better water sources and a system for firefighting from the airport. The emergency management coordinator and I have discussed getting a SEAT base operation at the airport and are hoping to move forward with the state. We have also set aside county property for a new emergency management center when we find the financing.

What I call the "Big Freeze" last year was a true eye opener. Since that time, the county now has two large generators to provide electricity if needed and an electrical connection with a building at the school. We can at least provide a place for people to stay warm and cook a meal if necessary. Most importantly, it is a location for people who need electricity for an oxygen machine, or any type of breathing apparatus, to go.

Moving forward I don't think it's enough, but we are on the right track. I believe the county should put more into emergency services. At least one more building that can be connected to for electricity would be a good start.

Dealing with COVID has been an ugly animal, as we all know, particularly hard on county judges with some of it falling to commissioners. Moving forward, counties need to continue to push the state and federal entities for more tests and more vaccines. Provide a place if necessary for testing or vaccine clinics. We also need to help our medical professionals and our first responders any way we can.

4. What will you prioritize in terms of the county budget? How can the county's tax dollars be best utilized?

The county is required by law to provide certain services and they are reflected in the budget. Most tax monies are already earmarked for certain operations. Unfunded mandates by the state also eat away at tax monies. It's that little bit that is not [earmarked] we can work with. Each year at the beginning of the budget process I think of all the things I would like to see done, and when we finally balance the budget there is little left.

Emergency services need to be better funded. I would like to see a road and bridge facility in the north end of the county so we could better maintain our equipment and make it last longer. We are going to have to find a way to maintain our buildings better. The courthouse roof needs repair, and the elevator needs to be updated. Record retention and storage needs to be dealt with.

The most critical thing we will deal with in the next few years is emergency medical services in the county. We are not the only county dealing with this. You hear it at every training session you attend. I have been talking to Judge Schuster in Pecos County and Judge Evans in Jeff Davis County about district-wide emergency medical care. There is always power in numbers. If the counties and cities in a geographic area can come together and pool their resources, I believe this would give us a much stronger base for emergency healthcare.

It is only in the talking stage, but the idea needs exploring. I certainly don't have all the answers, but I will work hard for Presidio County and its people to make it a better place to live and work.

GAREY WILLBANKS (R)

1. Tell us about yourself. What experience will you bring to this role?

I'm not a politician, so I don't have experience in that regard. I'm 61 years old with a business background that began in a family business and later with several entrepreneurial ventures. I also have board and committee experience with a few nonprofits. This is the experience that I will rely on as I administer the business of Presidio County. I believe in the concept of public service and believe that anyone either elected or employed by public entities has a single purpose: to "serve" the interest of those constituents who employ them.

2. What are some of the primary concerns of citizens in your precinct and how do you plan to address those concerns?

The people of our county mostly want and deserve a commissioner that will listen, a commissioner that brings integrity, wisdom and good judgment when making the decisions that affect them and the spending of their tax dollars. They are rightfully concerned that the county budget is used in a way that serves our community, the individuals and families who live and work here.

3. The county has faced a number of natural disasters over the past few years — a pandemic, winter storms, wildfires and flooding. How can the county be better prepared for future emergency events?

The county has for the most part done a reasonable job of dealing with difficult disasters of the past several years. The nature of a disaster is that no two are alike, which makes planning difficult. Preparing requires your leaders to develop a foundation of trust and collaboration among officials and relevant agencies as well as trust and connection with the community. The best answer to preparedness is to elect competent "leaders." Leaders who can engage a crisis with calm common sense, good judgment and transparency. Leaders who have or can earn the confidence of the stakeholders and the community before a crisis begins.

4. What will you prioritize in terms of the county budget? How can the county's tax dollars be best utilized?

The answer is: I don't know.

My commitment is: I will figure it out.

I believe that all too often our elected officials don't have the courage to say "I don't know," which often prevents them from taking the time and doing the hard work required to find the best answers to difficult issues. How the commissioners spend your money is a big deal and deserves a well-thought-out set of priorities.

For now, you should know that I believe that the major responsibilities of Presidio County government include: providing public safety and justice; holding fair elections at every level of government, maintaining county and state records; building and maintaining roads, bridges, and the county airport; providing emergency management services; providing health and safety services; collecting property taxes for the county and other taxing entities; issuing vehicle registration and transfers; registering voters; and may support or provide other public services such as libraries, parks, economic development and programs that add to the quality of life for local residents.

It is the commissioner's obligation to spend your money on these duties wisely, intelligently and with transparency.

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Opinions

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I was listening to Betse Esparza's podcast the other day when she was interviewing the GOP candidates for Brewster County judge. I listened as each candidate stated their positions, then at the end of the interview she asked this question: "Is Joe Biden the legitimate president of the United States?" I was embarrassed, saddened and irritated by the answer that each candidate gave. They hemmed and hawed and danced all around and then never said the correct answer. The correct answer is YES, Joe Biden is the legitimate president of the United States of America, but not one candidate would say that.

I'm pretty sure that I don't want someone like that to be the county judge. Cowardly, unable or afraid to voice their own opinion, they choose to go along to get along. Is that the kind of leadership that should represent Brewster County? I don't think so. The kind of judge I would want is someone who has the courage of his convictions and will speak truth to power. I believe that Brewster County needs a judge like that as well.

By the way, please get out and vote.

Thanks for listening.

Karen Cantrell
Alpine

• • •

Dear Editor,

With four seats up for election in May and the application deadline on Friday, February 18, I want to encourage folks to consider running for Marfa ISD School Board. It's a vitally important position in the community and plays a huge role in what happens to Marfa moving forward.

If you have school-aged children — run for school board.

If you have babies and toddlers that will all too soon be school-aged children, or are considering having kids someday — run for school board.

If you don't have kids and love this community — run for school board.

If you are interested in the Montessori program— run for school board.

If you love everything the school does — run for school board.

If you want to see accountability for the administration — run for school board.

If you live in this community and understand that the soul of Marfa lies not in niche boutiques or galleries or how many Instagram influencers we entertain for a weekend but in the magic of connection and whether this town can sustain families and future generations — run for school board.

Because families are leaving Marfa for myriad reasons, not the least of which is this: the school and kids in this town often do not receive the same attention that the art and services and landscapes do. Texas governance has not been kind to public schools. Will Marfa figure out a way to meet the needs of its children and families?

As we've seen recently in both state and national news, school boards can be the very epicenters of political, cultural and ethical debates, establishing a vision and goals for our public schools and community ethos. What and how we teach our kids has implications far beyond our own limited purview. Please consider engaging in the conversation.

Ariele Gentiles
Marfa

Ariele Gentiles is the copyeditor for The Big Bend Sentinel.

• • •

Dear Editor,

I was alarmed to read that Marfa city residents will be required to foot the $114,000 gas bill from last year's winter storm power-supply problems. We already pay an exorbitant amount for natural gas here in Marfa – something I don't understand given our proximity to the Permian Basin, one of the world's leading suppliers of natural gas.

As was proven last year, the fault for the power supply issues of last year's storm lay entirely with the energy companies, ERCOT (the energy regulatory commission) and the Texas Legislature, due to environmentally unfriendly and isolationist policies. Energy companies were warned their systems were compromised in the face of extreme weather. They did nothing to remedy the situation, nor did ERCOT require them to. Since then, our Texas Legislature has also done nothing, preferring to focus on banning books and denying women access to abortion. And indeed, why should they, if their solution is for the hapless consumer to pay for their egregiously expensive and preventable mistakes? Instead, our legislature has responded by assuring everyone that it won't happen again because there won't be any more extreme weather. Yet more extreme weather is in fact guaranteed, due to the increasing effects of climate change.

What this means is, for every future power distribution problem, we, the consumers will be footing the bill. Our already expensive natural gas will become even more expensive. Where does it end? I would like to hope that our local district attorneys recognize the injustice of this arrangement and get together to sue those who are to blame for the disaster. Specifically, the energy companies, ERCOT and the Texas Legislature. It is not for us, the consumers, to have to foot the bill for corporations' and politicians' mistakes.

Carolyn Macartney
Marfa

• • •

Dear Editor,

A million for a new school track, a half a million for new police cars (whatever happened to their $800/apiece bicycles?) ...

Does this city — like the federal government (30 trillion underwater) — have no sense of fiscal restraint?

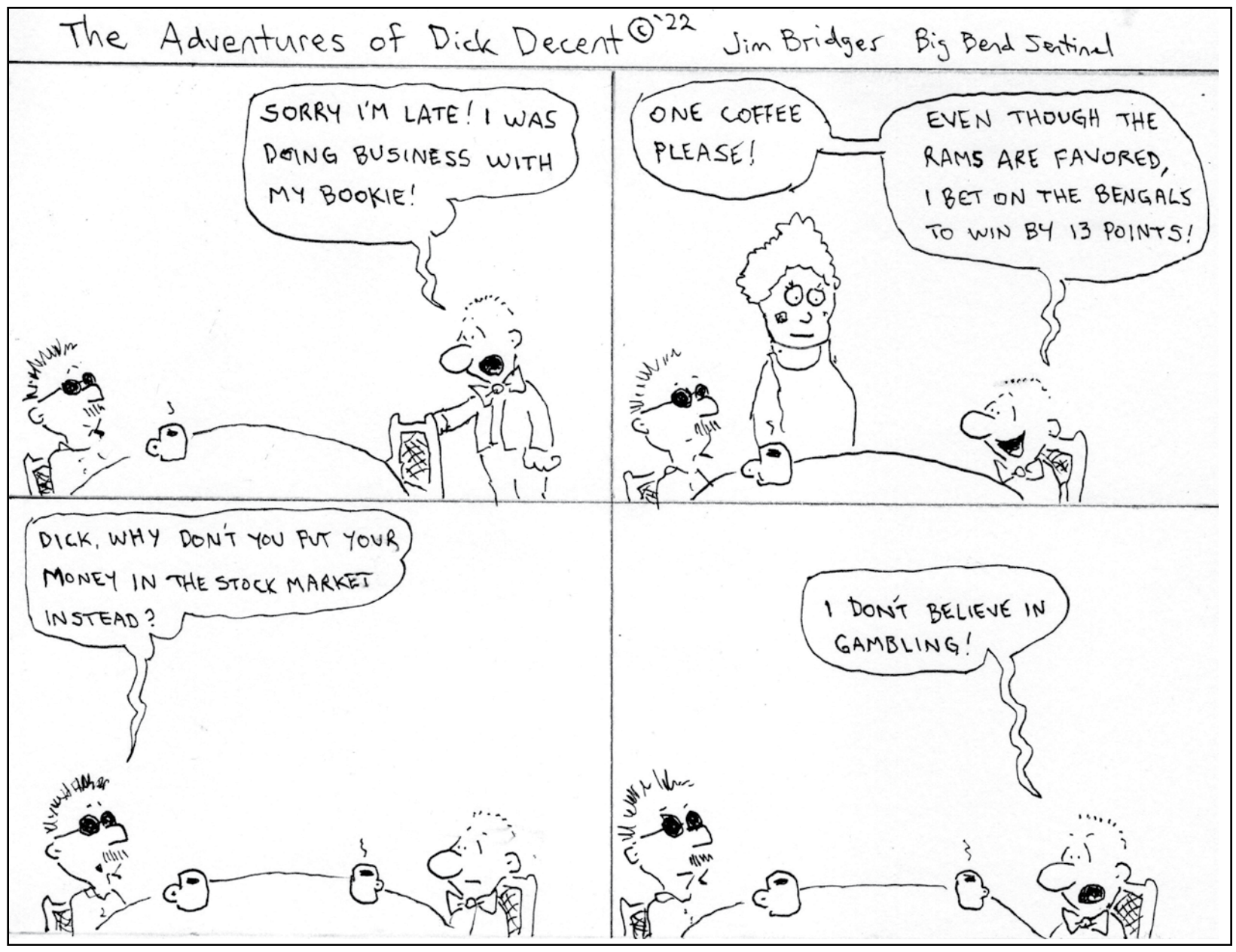
Perhaps the school board and city council are doing us a favor, spending our greenbacks while they still have some worth.

Steve Seegers, M.D.
Marfa

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



OP-ED

Texas Environmental News

By RICHARD MARK GLOVER

ConocoPhillips aims to drill in the Arctic

Houston-based ConocoPhillips is proposing to drill in the Arctic in a field known as Willow, inside the heavily guarded 23-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve on the Alaskan North Slope. Inside Climate News reports that climate advocates say the project is incompatible with President Joe Biden's goal of setting the nation on a path to net-zero carbon emissions. Jeremy Lieb, attorney at Earthjustice, said, "We've been clear from the beginning that it's an unacceptable project." Environmentalists who note the planet is rapidly warming are calling on Biden to reject the proposal. The Texas corporation worked diligently with the Trump administration to fast track the project, but an Alaskan federal judge vacated the project's approval in August, sending the Willow project back to the drawing board.

Environmental agency says "no" to monitoring air quality

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality issued a statement last Friday saying monitoring air quality in Texas during and after climate events such as hurricanes and Arctic blasts are "often unnecessary." Led by Toby Baker, Governor Greg Abbott's hand-picked man, the agency in charge of protecting Texans' safety wrote to The Guardian, "During the first few days of a natural disaster, collection of air monitoring samples may be physically impossible due to loss of power, flooding, impassable roadways." Past air quality sampling during and after natural disasters show a sharp rise in emissions, in what industry officials call upsets or flare and vent-offs of gasses under pressure. The Texas Gulf Coast, the biggest petrochemical complex in the world, is noted for emitting carcinogens like benzene and bronchial restrictors like sulfur dioxide even during calm weather periods. Exposure to these pollutants, especially for people living close by the refineries, increases the likelihood of respiratory diseases, heart disease and various types of cancer.

Biden Administration gives billions to clean up wells

Unplugged, leaking and abandoned oil and gas wells are getting the attention of the federal government. The Biden administration announced last week that it will send $1.15 billion to states to clean up thousands of orphaned wells. Texas leads the nation in the number of abandoned oil wells and the nation as a whole, according to the EPA, with over 3 million abandoned wells, most often abandoned due to their drop in production (i.e. economic non-viability). According to the Washington Post, the Biden administration will begin enforcing rules that are already in place for leaking pipelines, dairy and beef farms. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said in a statement the federal funds are "enabling us to confront the legacy pollution and long-standing environmental injustices … " The White House also announced they are forming an interagency group to better monitor the country's greenhouse gas emissions.

EPA considers rule that could reduce methane emissions

Environment America reports that a new rule now being considered at the EPA could keep 41 million tons of methane out of the environment. The proposed rule, similar to New Mexico's already instated methane leak rule, would significantly reduce methane emissions if enforced. Methane warms the planet 28 times faster than CO2. Environment America Executive Director Lisa Frank said, "Climate change is the challenge of our generation. These new rules could be a historic moment for climate action."

Richard Mark Glover lives in the Chama Valley of New Mexico with his wife Lorretta and two children after many years in West Texas. He is an award-winning journalist and author.

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IN THE ESTATE OF: JUANA MONTOYA PEREZ
CAUSE: 1991

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF Juana Montoya Perez, Deceased, Docket No. 1991, County Court, Presidio County, Texas. Application for Independent Administration and Letters of Administration Pursuant to Section 401.003 of the Texas Estates Code filed in the County Court of Presidio County, Texas, on the 10th day of January, 2022.

Said application may be heard and acted on by said Court at 10 o'clock A.M. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publishing this citation, at the County Courthouse in Marfa. Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

All interested persons are further advised that they have the right to employ an attorney and that if they or their attorney fail to file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 a.m. on the Monday next following the expiration of ten days after the publishing of this citation, the court may enter orders with binding effects upon said persons.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT at office in Marfa, Texas, this the 1st day of February, 2022

FLORCITA ZUBIA
Clerk of the County Court,
Presidio County, Texas
By: Carolina A. Catan
Deputy
Clerk's Address: P.O. Box 789
Marfa, Texas 79843

UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM

Analysis: "Nothing to see here" is good news for Texans and for incumbent politicians

By ROSS RAMSEY
The Texas Tribune

"It got cold and the lights stayed on" is weak sauce, as political slogans go. But for Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, the season's first ice storm couldn't have come out much better.

He didn't need a win on this one — the absence of a loss is quite enough.

The Texas electric grid failed a year ago during a polar vortex, putting millions of residents in the dark without heat for almost a week, resulting in hundreds of deaths and billions of dollars of economic damage to the state.

Like political leaders have always done in jams like that, Abbott fired or ran off the regulators and operators within his reach. With the help of state legislators who were also dodging blame, he ran off the public utility commissioners he had appointed, along with the board and top executive at the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which manages the grid day to day.

They told electric generators to get ready for this winter, to keep their plants from shutting down because of cold temperatures and ice. They had hearings, did a lot of public relations work, tried to get everyone toeing the company line: "It won't happen again."

Abbott himself got over-exuberant at one point, saying he could "guarantee" nobody's lights would go off this year. That's bonkers: Somewhere in Texas, fair weather or foul, someone's lights are off. Trees fall on electric lines. Winds blow. Lightning strikes. Bulldozers cut underground lines. Things happen.

So the governor reeled that pledge back in as this latest storm was forming. "No one can guarantee there won't be a 'load shed' event," he said, using the technical euphemism for a blackout caused by intentionally shutting off electric power to groups of customers to keep demand below supply. Last year's blackouts were the result of load shedding. What the governor said, in translation, is that no one can guarantee there won't be a blackout.

It's better for his politics, of course, if there are no blackouts caused by grid problems. And at this writing, on Friday, the grid was doing what it was supposed to be doing, with ample supply even under the high demands of Texans in wintry conditions. There were blackouts in the state — there always are — but they weren't caused by fundamental problems with the grid.

For one thing, this storm was nothing compared with the polar vortex a year ago. It didn't strain or test the grid in the same way — not by a mile.

Luck also played its part, siding, this time, with the energy folks. The governor and other state officials weren't as hard on natural gas companies as they were on electric companies after the 2021 blackouts. Many of the state's electric plants are powered by gas, and the failures of the natural gas infrastructure left the generators without their normal capacity last year.

Austin hasn't yet required the gas industry to winterize, and experts worry about that hole in the state's weather defenses. A recent cold snap caused a dip in gas production and a rise in grid anxieties last month. But the system held.

Abbott is up for reelection this year. Early voting in the primary elections starts on Feb. 14, which also happens to be the anniversary of 2021's storm. His challengers, Republican and otherwise, have spent a lot of time and money reminding voters about the blackouts and the grid failure in 2021. They didn't say so out loud, but a bad storm for Texas would have buttressed their arguments, and put Abbott on the defensive.

What happened in the latest cold snap was what is supposed to happen during a cold snap. The electricity stays on, people stay warm, the schools shut down for a couple of snow or ice days and then things warm back up.

It's only news when it doesn't work, and for a politician who might get blamed when things go badly, no news is good news.

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune *at https://www.texastribune.org/2022/02/07/texas-electric-winter-elections/.* The Texas Tribune *is a member-supported, nonpartisan newsroom informing and engaging Texans on state politics and policy. Learn more at texastribune.org.*



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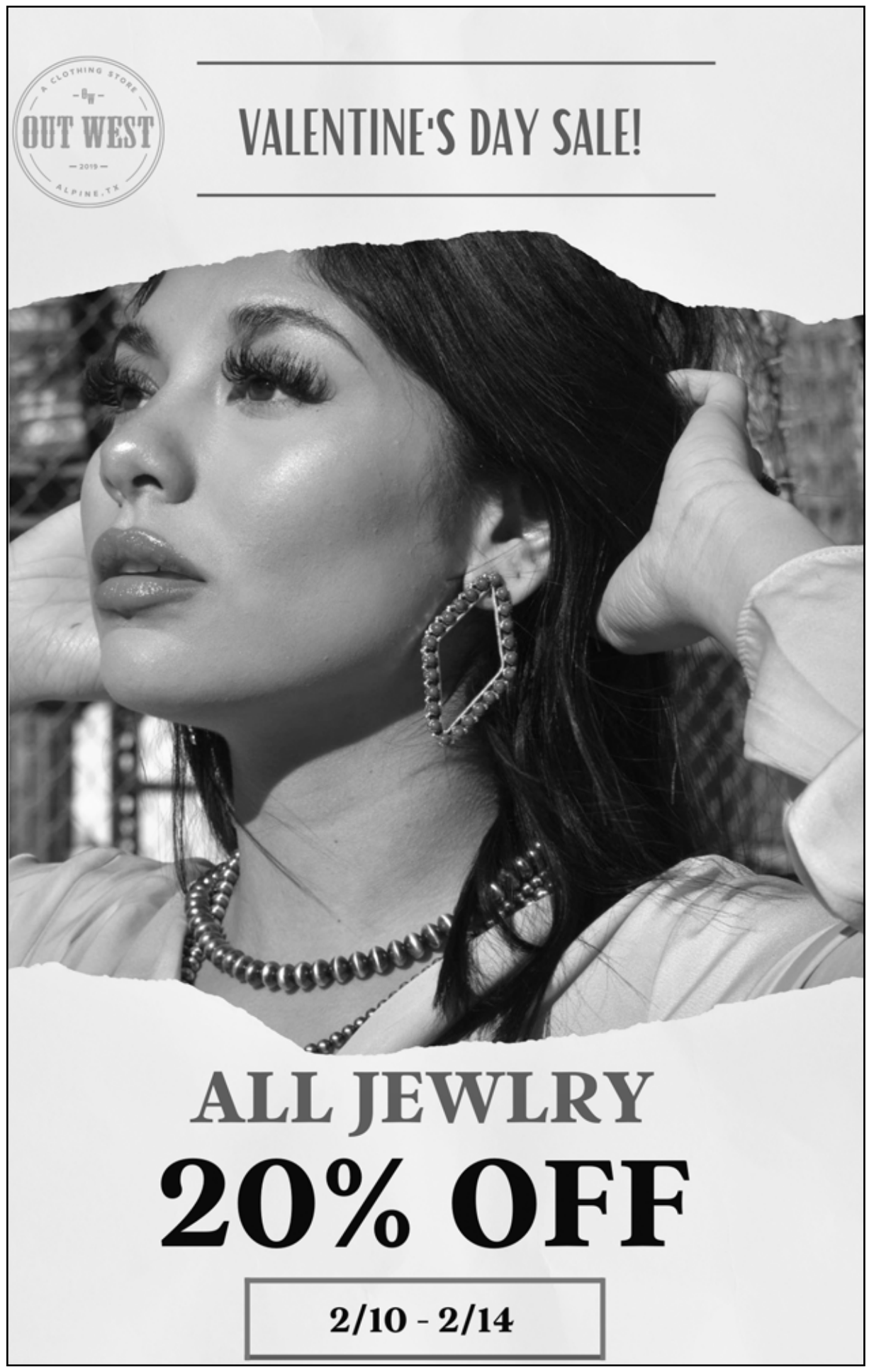
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Community

Bill Wren, tireless promoter of dark skies, retires from McDonald Observatory

FORT DAVIS — After more than three decades of sharing astronomy with the public and working to protect dark skies from light pollution, Bill Wren has retired from McDonald Observatory.

"Bill Wren has had a strong, positive impact on McDonald Observatory over his career, focused on dark skies preservation, but also including public outreach and new telescope development," said Taft Armandroff, director of McDonald Observatory. "The skies over McDonald Observatory are among the darkest of any professional observatory in the United States, in no small measure thanks to Bill Wren."

In recent years, Wren has worked as special assistant to the superintendent, focusing on preserving the dark skies over McDonald Observatory and surrounding areas. Dubbed the "Angel of Darkness" by the media, Wren has met with countless community groups and local officials to advocate for dark skies.

As fossil fuel exploration in the Permian Basin expanded significantly, Wren also has worked closely with oil and gas companies in West Texas to advocate for improved lighting practices at their facilities. He helped to promote the idea that better lighting fixtures not only protect dark skies, but provide improved safety and cost savings for these sites — a win-win scenario.

Self-taught in astronomy, in the 1970s and '80s Wren worked as a family counselor, helping to found a youth and family resource center in Austin that exists today. After becoming an astronomy tutor as well as auditing astronomy courses at UT Austin with the observatory's then-Director Frank Bash, Wren was hired as public affairs specialist to lead tours and work in other public programs at McDonald, including Star Parties, in 1990.

It was in his early years at the observatory that then-Superintendent Ed Barker asked Wren to attend the first meeting of a new organization called the International Dark Sky Association (IDA). Today IDA is the leading organization promoting the protection of dark skies worldwide. Wren and McDonald Observatory have been involved from the beginning.

According to current Superintendent Teznie Pugh, "As the 2020 global pandemic surged, Bill shifted his focus and provided the founding efforts towards establishing an IDA-certified Dark Sky Reserve in the region surrounding McDonald Observatory. He brought together support from state and national parks, conservation groups, government officials, private citizens, and industry leaders across the region in an effort to meet IDA criteria.

"While establishing the reserve is still an ongoing effort," she said, "it would not exist without Bill's vision, bridge building, and passion. These efforts will serve the observatory for many years to come."

Over his 32 years on staff, Wren has fulfilled many other roles at McDonald in addition to promoting dark skies. In particular, he has contributed significantly to building and commissioning telescopes on site —both for scientists and for the public.

Wren was deeply involved in the early days of the Hobby-Eberly Telescope (HET), one of the world's largest optical telescopes. Along with McDonald's Chief Astronomer Gary Hill and engineer Mike Marcario, Wren conducted the site survey that helped to determine where to build the HET. After it was built, Wren served as the commissioning telescope operator for two years, helping to get HET operations up and running smoothly.

Additionally, Wren and a team of collaborators designed and built the smaller Supernova Search Telescope, funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation. They used it to discover four exploding stars, or supernovae.

Most recently, Wren and others built the unique Wren-Marcario Accessible Telescope (WMAT) now in the public telescope park at the observatory's Frank N. Bash Visitors Center. Based on the innovative design of the Supernova Search Telescope, WMAT provides access to deep views of the night sky for observatory visitors in wheelchairs, allowing them to share fully in the wonders of the universe. The telescope is partially named for Wren's father, an engineer who also worked on the project.

After more than 30 years sharing and protecting the skies over West Texas, Wren looks back fondly on his time at the observatory. "I feel fortunate to have been affiliated with so many great astronomy educators," he said, "and with such a fine institution and such a fine group of people."

Currently in the process of relocating to Cloudcroft, New Mexico, Wren says he plans to stay active in astronomy during retirement.



Photo courtesy of Marfa Public Library

The Marfa Public Library's telescope lending program uses the Orion Starblast telescope.

Library launches telescope and space program this Friday

MARFA — This Friday, February 11, 2022, the Marfa Public Library will unveil two new programs engaging aspirational astronauts of all ages. They will debut a telescope lending program and transform the children's room into outer space.

Anyone curious about astronomy can check out a telescope from the library and take advantage of West Texas's dark skies. The library telescope lending program uses the Orion StarBlast 4.5-inch Astronomical Telescope, which requires no assembly and is easy to use while still being robust. The telescope can be checked out for four days at no charge. Stephen Hummel, the dark skies specialist from the McDonald Observatory, selected the telescope and donated his time to train the staff.

Funds for the new telescopes were made possible through a memorial fund in honor of Mike O'Conner, established by Liz Rogers in 2021. Rogers reflected, "Mike would be thrilled about Marfa Public Library getting telescopes! He was very knowledgeable about the constellations. And he always enjoyed living and working in this beautiful part of the world where he could see the stars."

Meanwhile, in the children's room, young patrons will be encouraged to look into the sky to find planets and stars (albeit made of construction paper). The latest incarnation of the library's popular children's program Make Believe Marfa will bring a NASA-style mission control, 8-foot 3D rocket, and space-themed activities to the library.

The library is open Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

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Photo by Alex Marks

Adobe-walled courtyard, John Chamberlain Building.

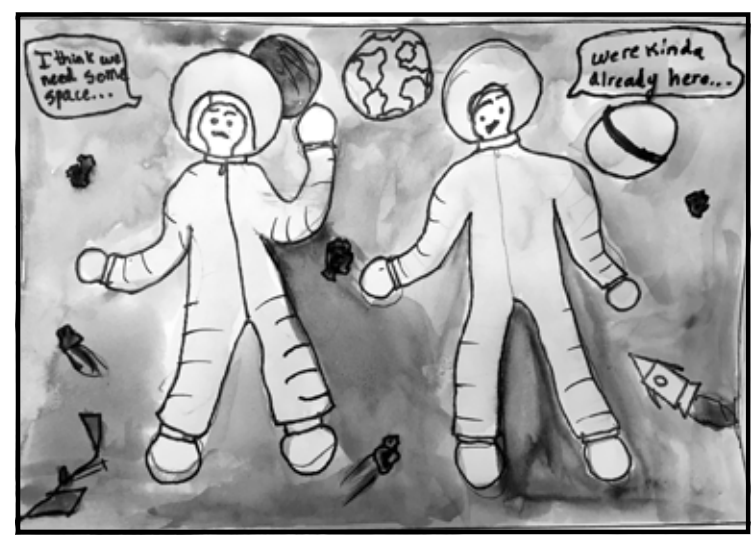
Chinati Foundation launches adobe apprenticeship program

MARFA — This March, an apprenticeship designed to recruit women in the region for job training in the field of adobe restoration begins at the Chinati Foundation. Participants from the tri-county area of Big Bend (Brewster, Jeff Davis and Presidio counties) will spend six weeks learning about earthen construction through a combination of workshop sessions and hands-on training. In the process, apprentices will help restore Donald Judd's distinctive adobe-walled courtyards as part of Chinati's major restoration of the John Chamberlain Building in downtown Marfa. The Central Marfa Historic District was recently nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for both its collection of adobe structures and for Judd's contributions to the district. The apprenticeships, which will teach valuable construction skills for the preservation and building of adobe structures in the region, are supported by a generous grant from #StartSmall.

Chinati's Adobe Apprenticeship program is being conducted in partnership with SILLA and MUDLAB, local firms of builders and designers that will introduce the key elements of basic adobe construction, including brickmaking, wall building, plastering, testing, assessment and simple repairs. Guest practitioners will lead workshops on specialized topics such as natural plasters, soil analysis and testing, and structural adobe design. On field trips to historic sites and vernacular structures, apprentices will explore the diversity and culture of adobe building in the region.

Learning will primarily take place on location, through two very different kinds of adobe construction sites at Chinati. The Young House is an early 20th-century, two-story adobe outside the museum's main gate; it currently stands empty and is slated for future restoration. The John Chamberlain Building in downtown Marfa is about to complete a major restoration, including the exterior walls of the courtyard Judd had built using an abode and concrete mortar construction.

DRAWING OF THE WEEK



Giselle Torres
7th grade

COMMUNITIE
MARFA



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Sudoku & Crossword puzzles:

UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

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

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

1/25

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution from last week's puzzle:

SOLUTION:

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

1/17

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Universal Crossword

Edited by Amanda Rafkin January 24, 2022

ACROSS
1 Fraudulent offer
5 "___ the Night Before Christmas"
9 Word before "Putty" or "String"
14 Like a couch potato
15 Scratchy voice
16 Forge an alliance
17 Have ___ in your pants
18 Understudies with scheduled appearances
20 *Artistic freedom (note the last word in each starred clue's answer)
22 Split from a country
23 Color, like Easter eggs
24 *Oxygen carrier
31 Awards for Naomi Osaka
34 Homophone and antonym of "raise"
35 Bambi's mother, e.g.
36 Water filtration brand
37 Yucatan natives
38 Therapy center?
39 "What I think ...," in a text
40 Word that becomes its own antonym when an "n" is added to the front
41 Extracted, like ore
43 *They're pressed when typing
47 DiFranco with the album "Revolutionary Love"
48 What might be curbed?
52 *Environmentalist's concern
56 Look inward
58 Perimeter
59 Off-limits
60 Grain in dolmas
61 Animal on Morocco's coat of arms
62 Strict
63 Subpar
64 Very small

DOWN
1 Is really good
2 Kayak alternative
3 Certain ancient Nahuatl speaker
4 Whodunit genre
5 Used a stencil
6 Picture-perfect spot?
7 Italian wine region
8 Design detail, for short
9 Tangy orange drink brand
10 "Be right there!"
11 Lo-cal
12 4G ___
13 Word that a nod might replace
19 Has another go at
21 The ___ of March
25 First Pixar film with a female protagonist
26 Lasagna section
27 Netflix crime drama set in Missouri
28 Garden with forbidden fruit
29 Handed-down tales
30 Pb on the periodic table
31 It's a long story
32 Japanese wrestling form
33 "The ___" (2016 musical centered around a high school dance)
37 Period to recharge alone
41 Bit of 29-Down
42 Tel Aviv resident
44 Unhealthy lack of color
45 In ___ (all together)
46 Graphic artist M.C.
49 Break up
50 Some frozen waffles
51 Very small
52 Shape of a sugar clump, maybe
53 Group for people 50 and up
54 Ben Folds Five, inaptly
55 Danish shoe brand
56 Ave. crossers
57 Acai bowl bit, maybe

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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

1/23

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☺ MARFA SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ☺

FEB	Thu, Feb 10	Fri, Feb 11	Mon, Feb 14	Tue, Feb 15	Wed, Feb 16
BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST BURRITO	BREAKFAST ROUND, YOGURT	CINNAMON ROLL, CHEESE CUBES	BREAKFAST POCKET	PANCAKE WRAP, YOGURT
LUNCH Menu courtesy of PORTER'S SINCE 1945 Celebrating 70+ years of serving our customers. 432-729-4375 www.myporters.net	POPCORN CHICKEN, ROLL, CORN, FRESH BROCCOLI FLORETS, PEARS, COOKIE	HOT DOG, TATER TOTS, TOMATO CUP, SNOWBALL SALAD	ENCHILADAS, BEANS, CORN, SALSA, ORANGE SMILES, PUDDING	HOT SANDWICH, FRESH VEGGIE CUP, FRIES, STRAWBERRIES & BANANAS	BREADED MOZZARELLA STICKS, MARINARA SAUCE, TOMATO CUP, GARDEN SALAD, PEARS

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MARFA SHORTHORNS SPORTS CALENDAR

THU, FEB 10: HS Girls Basketball & JH Basketball vs SB in Marfa
FRI, FEB 11: HS Boys Basketball vs Balmorhea in Balmorhea, 6:00 pm
SAT, FEB 12: Powerlifting in Fort Stockton, 8:00 am

In the Pocket *by Emet Ozar*

1/24

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					■	60			■	61				
62					■	63				64				



Photo courtesy of USPS

This year's winner of the Valentine postmark design contest, a 30-year tradition, is Valentine ISD 12th grader Meklya Siddiq, who was inspired by the West Texas landscape.

Valentine postmark contest celebrates 30 years of love in the Big Bend

VALENTINE — For over 30 years, the Valentine Post Office has offered customized postmarks for Valentine's Day love notes which get sent all over the world.

People from Texas, the U.S. and other countries have been sending valentines to the remote Valentine Post Office for decades. An average of 10,000 to 12,000 valentines are received annually. The Valentine postmaster, who is also the 2001 winner of the postmark design contest, hand-cancels every single one.

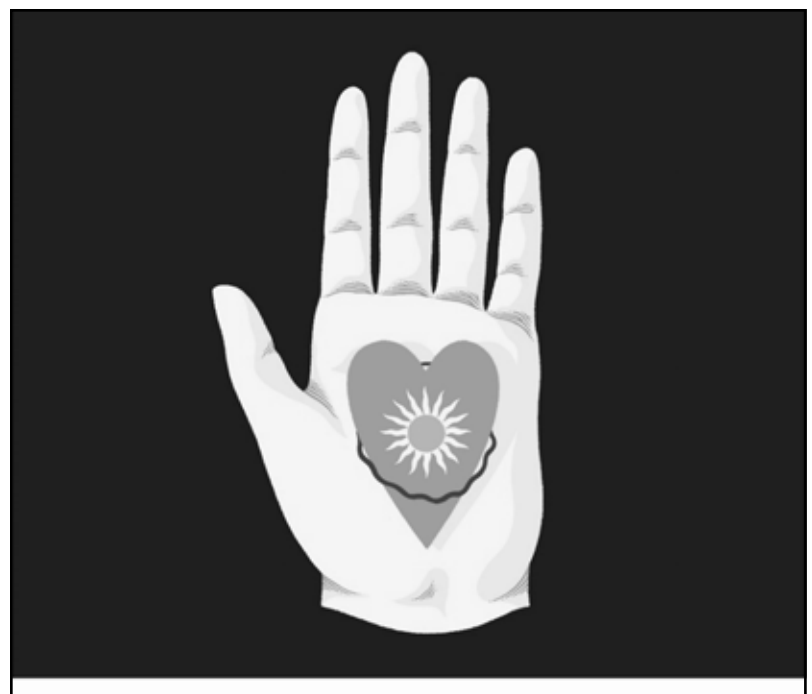
"I feel like Cupid's middle man, connecting valentines, one with the other, through the mail," said Postmaster Ismelda Ornelas.

A new postmark design is selected every year from a contest held among local 7th-12th grade students. This year's aspiring artist and contest winner is 12th grader Meklya Siddiq, who was inspired by the West Texas landscape. The design depicts a Texas Sotol, similar to the one outside of the Valentine Post Office, adorned with heart blooms.

To complete a mail-in request, address the greeting card to that special person, affix a First-Class Mail postage stamp and put it into a larger envelope, also with appropriate postage. Address the larger envelope to:

VALENTINE'S DAY POSTMARK
POSTMASTER
311 W CALIFORNIA AVE
VALENTINE, TX 79854-9998

The postmaster will hand-stamp valentines from February 1 up until March 14. But to ensure your valentine will arrive by February 14, the earlier the better. There is no charge for requests up to 50 Valentine, Texas cancellations. Requests for more than 50 cancellations will be charged five cents for each additional cancellation.



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Reservations are required and space is limited.
Tickets are timed.
Experience the connection between art, architecture, and the land unique to Chinati. The hour-long guided tour covers Judd's art and architecture, including the Artillery Sheds. The walking tour path follows along Judd's 15 untitled works in concrete, covers 1.6 miles, takes approximately 1½ hours to complete, and is best enjoyed wearing sturdy shoes.
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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Classifieds & public notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

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.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Marfa City Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at Marfa City Hall to take public comments on the proposed closure of 3,893 square feet of North Gonzales Street, located 19.23 feet to the east of a portion of Lot 1, Lots 2 and 3, and a portion of Lot 4, Block 5, Mahon Addition to the City of Marfa, Presidio County, Texas. The City proposes to exchange this property for 2,560 square feet of land containing a city natural gas line, located on the westernmost 12.65 feet of the same parcels.

The front yards of these lots are encroaching 19.23 feet onto the platted city street, and the City of Marfa is encroaching 12.65 feet into the back yards of these lots for the natural gas line. This street closure and land exchange is done for the public purposes of removing two sets of encroachments, avoiding litigation, ensuring city access to the natural gas line, and filing a proper replat of the affected properties. The flow of traffic on North Gonzales Street will not be affected.

The public is invited to attend and participate. After the Public Hearing, the Marfa City Council may vote to close the applicable portions of North Gonzales Street by Ordinance and to approve the exchange of the properties through the appropriate legal conveyances.

The Public Hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. on March 8, 2022 in the Casner Room at Marfa City Hall, located at 113 South Highland Avenue, Marfa, Texas.

The 588 Educational Cooperative
CROSSING THE ROAD... BRIDGING THE GAP

DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

In accordance with applicable state and federal regulations, the 588 Educational Cooperative does hereby notify you of its intent to destroy student special education records. All special education records, prior to July 1, 2015, will be destroyed. The 588 Educational Cooperative will destroy special education records for the following school districts:

- Alpine Independent School District
- Balmorhea Independent School District
- Culberson County-Allamoore Independent School District
- Fort Davis Independent School District
- Marathon Independent School District
- Marfa Independent School District
- Presidio Independent School District
- Terlingua Common School District
- Terrell County Independent School District
- San Vicente Independent School District
- Sierra Blanca Independent School District
- Valentine Independent School District

If you would like to be provided with a copy of the records to be destroyed, please contact the 588 Educational Cooperative by telephone at 432-837-3315, by fax at 432-837-3573, or via mail at 704 W. Sul Ross Ave, Alpine, Texas, 79830.

Records will be destroyed within 90 days of the date of this notice.

FOR SALE

CHIP COLE & ASSOCIATES RANCH BROKERS

PAISANO PASS RANCH

This pretty little mountain ranch contains 106± acres and is located about 14 miles east of Marfa and 10 miles west of Alpine on Hwy 90. All mountains and canyons with elevation to 5180'. Scenic rock outcroppings with mountain oak and juniper. Improvements include a solar-powered two story barndominium, equipment shed, and horse stalls. Game include elk, mule deer, and aoudad sheep.

$1,200,000

chipcoleranchbroker.com
(325) 655-3555
San Angelo, Texas

JOBS

LOOKING FOR A DENTIST, MEDICAL DOCTOR, FNP, DENTAL HYGIENIST, CALL CENTER OPERATOR, NURSE SUPERVISOR, FULL TIME BILLER/CODER, FULL TIME BOOKEEPER/ACCOUNTANT, AND FULL TIME FRONT DESK SUPERVISOR
FOR FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES OF ALPINE
Applications may be picked up at 1605 N. FT. Davis Hwy
Alpine, TX 79830 or call (432) 837-4555.
Please call first before arrival.
Family Health Service of Alpine • 1605 N. FT. Davis Hwy

JOB OPENINGS

Marfa Hardware Co • 313 E San Antonio St.
Marfa TX 79843 • 432-729-3161

ASSISTANT MANAGER / TRAINEE (FULL TIME)
Duties:
• Greet and assist customers with purchases
• General customer service and problem resolution
• Assist Manager in overseeing all store activities

Will Train:
Pay commensurate with experience

CASHIER (FULL OR PART TIME)
Duties:
• Greet and assist customers with purchases
• General customer service and problem resolution
• Operate cash register / Check out Customers

Will Train:
Hours Flexible - Part Time or Full Time
Pay commensurate with experience

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CITY OF MARFA IS CURRENTLY HIRING FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

• Bookkeeper (full-time)
• Public Utilities Operator (full-time)
• Animal Control Officer (part-time)

Applications and job descriptions are available at City Hall and online at **cityofmarfa.com/employment**

Application deadline is February 28, 2022

City of Marfa is an Equal Opportunity Employer

ALPINE WINE IS HIRING!

Alpine Wine is an exciting new wine bar and restaurant in downtown Alpine, and we'll be opening our doors in just a few weeks. We'll offer wine tastings and wine by the glass and bottle, charcuterie and cheese boards, and more.

Alpine Wine

•Wine knowledge isn't as necessary as a willingness to learn, a great attitude, and a friendly disposition.

•Fulltime benefits include PTO, 401K, vision and dental, TABC and Food Handler Certification reimbursement, and more.

Send us your information from our website - www.alpinewine.com – and we'll give you a call!

THE CHINATI FOUNDATION

Seeks applicants for paid adobe apprenticeships.
March 21–April 29, 2022
Earn $15 per hour while making and learning about all things adobe.

This apprenticeship opportunity is for women from the Tri-Counties.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND TO APPLY:
Contact Sandra Hinojos at 432-606-1918, workshop@chinati.org, or visit us at www.chinati.org/apprenticeships

LA FUNDACIÓN CHINATI

Busca candidatas para el aprendizaje remunerado de adobe.
21 marzo – 29 abril, 2022
Gane 15$ por hora mientras hace y aprende todo lo relacionado con el adobe.

Esta oportunidad de aprendizaje es para mujeres de la zona de los tres condados.

PARA MÁS INFORMACION Y PARA PRESENTARSE:
Póngase en contacto con Sandra Hinojos al 432-606-1918 workshop@chinati.org o visítenos en www.chinati.org/apprenticeships

AEP TEXAS
An AEP Company
BOUNDLESS ENERGY™

AEP-TEXAS JOB OPENINGS

AEP-Texas is actively seeking a **STATION SERVICER** position to be located in Alpine, Texas. Applicants must possess the following minimum requirements:

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Thorough working knowledge and understanding of the principles of electricity, and the construction, maintenance, operation and function of station equipment and related standards. Perform all types of work involved in the installation, maintenance, operation, inspection, repair and removal of station-related equipment. Respond to emergency call-outs on station trouble and coordinate prompt restoration of service to customers as required.

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS
Associate degree in electrical/mechanical/industrial maintenance technology or equivalent education and/or experience. Equivalent education and experience is limited to military training and work experience of technical/technician nature (such as aviation and nuclear instrumentation technician); or recent experience (within last 6 months) as a Station Electrician or equivalent job title with another utility or contractor. Experience: No previous work experience required for an entry level position.

AEP-Texas is actively seeking a **P&C (PROTECTION & CONTROL) TECHNICIAN** to be located in Alpine, McCamey or San Angelo Texas. Applicants must possess the following minimum requirements:

- Technical Associate Degree in Electrical/Electronics technology.
- Previous work experience in the installation and maintenance of electronic equipment and controls preferred.
- Computer training and/or experience.
- Must be able to complete P&C Technician and Station Electrician in-house certification training.
- Frequent travel with overnight trips and some 24-hour On-Call duties.
- Must live within 45 minutes of the job location.

AEP-Texas is actively seeking a **TECHNICIAN** position to be located in Alpine, Texas.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTION
Responsible for performing intermediate level technical work and related activities associated with the planning, engineering, design, analysis, research, development, testing, construction, maintenance, and operation of Company equipment and facilities.

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS
Associate Degree in Electrical/Electronic/Civil/ Mechanical Engineering Technology or related fields plus 2 years of related utility industry work experience; or a high school diploma or equivalent and 4 years of related utility industry work experience.

Qualified applicants must apply at www.aep.com/careers

AEP-TEXAS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER.

ELECTION WORKERS NEEDED
FOR MARCH 1, 2022 ELECTIONS
PAY = $12/HOUR
Email **presidiodemocrats@gmail.com** for more information

HELP WANTED
Construction help wanted for projects in the Tri-County area.
Please call Jimmy Counts at 325-340-0175

GOVERNMENT CONTACTS

PRESIDIO COUNTY
Judge Cinderela Guevara:
(432) 729-4452

Presidio Mayor John Ferguson:
City Hall: (432) 229-3517
Email: jferguson@presidiotx.us

CITY OF MARFA
Manny Baeza, City of Marfa Mayor
mayor@cityofmarfa.com
(432) 295-0048
Irma Salgado, Mayor Pro Tem
councilmembersalgado@cityofmarfa.com
Buck Johnston
councilmemberjohnston@cityofmarfa.com
Raúl Lara
councilmemberlara@cityofmarfa.com
Eddie Pallarez
councilmemberpallarez@cityofmarfa.com
Yoseff Ben-Yehuda
councilmemberbenyehuda@cityofmarfa.com

BREWSTER COUNTY
Judge Eleazar Cano:
(432) 837-6200 x 124
Alpine Mayor Andy Ramos:
City Hall: (432) 837-3301
Email: mayor.ramos@ci.alpine.tx.us

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY
Judge Curtis Evans: *(432) 426-3968*

FEDERAL:
U.S. Sen. John Cornyn:
(202) 224-2934 (D.C. office)
U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz:
(202) 224-5922 (D.C. office)

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