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'A hub for everyone': Border Network for Human Rights office opens in Presidio

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — Last Friday, the Border Network for Human Rights (BNHR) celebrated a ribbon cutting for its new satellite office in Presidio. The organization has been hosting smaller local events since May, most notably a roundtable discussion and a pop-up event in solidarity with marches protesting Operation Lone Star, Governor Abbott's infusion of funding for law enforcement in Texas border communities. Locals turned out to Friday's event to celebrate BNHR's permanent place in the community.

BNHR — an El Paso-based organization — hopes to spread its message by connecting border communities with educational resources as controversy over state and national border policy reaches a fever pitch. "The BNHR is opening Human Rights Centers in the Texas border region to further develop community capacity and community engagement to address a systemic violation of rights created, mostly, by unaccountable border strategies and immigration law enforcement institutions," Executive Director Fernando Garcia wrote in a press release.

Presidio was not the only community to celebrate a new BNHR outreach location this past week — Del Rio had its own-ribbon cutting on Tuesday. The organization hopes to expand to employ locals in both cities full time and provide everyone in the community with information that will help protect and empower them as political tides change. In addition to the day-to-day operations of their local offices, BNHR hosts actions large and small, from parades in the borderlands' larger cities to distributing pamphlets about how to advocate for yourself in a traffic stop.

Lizette Rohana — who has deep roots in Presidio and Ojinaga — helped bring BNHR to town after years of serving the regional community through volunteer work. "We have activist friends in common," she explained. "I did not want to let go of this opportunity. We're so isolated here, it's important for not only Presidio but the whole Big Bend area. We want to make it a community center, a hub for everyone."

Rohana has played an important role in helping BNHR adapt its message for a local audience. One major difference she advised from the organization's big-city messaging was to try to work with law enforcement, rather than protesting their existence — Customs and Border Protection employees represent a significant chunk of the town's population. "We want to build a network where we can work with law enforcement, but also people feel like they can come in and ask questions," she said. "We want to be mediators and bridge that gap."

Presidio high school senior

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Photo courtesy of Alonzo Sananmiego

Itzel Galindo, Violeta Hinojos and Melanie Martinez of the girls' cross-country team at Lucy Rede Franco Middle School lead the pack at last weekend's hometown Bo Coffman meet.

Historical markers, commemorating Presidio history, will finally be moved from Marfa to Presidio

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO COUNTY — After nearly 20 years of negotiation, a pair of historical markers commemorating Presidio history are set to be uprooted from a roadside pull-off just outside Marfa. One marker explains the origin of Presidio County's name, and another proclaims Presidio "the oldest town in America."

The two small monuments will be relocated to Presidio, one to a future downtown visitor center and the other to a satellite visitor kiosk across from the Presidio Municipal Pool. At last Tuesday's meeting of the Presidio Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB), $200 was allocated from the organization's budget to finance the transport of the markers, which they hope will take place in the next few months.

Board President Arian Velázquez-Ornelas has been working to move the markers since she was a member of the Presidio Chamber of Commerce in 2003. Shifts in city leadership delayed her efforts, but she was able to get the ball rolling again a few years ago. Numerous entities — including the Texas Historical Commission, Presidio County Historical Commission, City of Presidio and Presidio County Commissioners Court — all had to sign off on the project. "This has been a labor of love," she said.

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Presidio ISD School Board approves updates to safety procedures

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — At last Wednesday's meeting, the Presidio ISD School Board approved this year's update to the Presidio ISD Police Emergency Operations Plan and the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Both measures consider student safety and preparedness from different angles — the former on the campus and district level, and the latter with help from the city's police department, county sheriff's office, Border Patrol and other interconnected agencies.

PISD Police Chief Joel Nuñez attended last week's meeting to give presentations on both initiatives. First he tackled the district's Emergency Operations Plan, which is revised and approved by the district every year. He brought a hefty binder with the full plan to demonstrate just how detailed his department's protocols are. "It's a living document — it's always growing and getting thicker," he said.

This year's changes were much more dramatic and detailed than last year's. Superintendent Ray Vasquez explained that the extra focus on safety this year was in part due to the school shooting in Uvalde earlier this year. "The tragedy in Uvalde has really brought this all up to the surface in Texas," he said.

Nuñez reassured everyone that his department had been working hard on these procedures even before the Robb Elementary shooting made headlines. "We've always been above and beyond," he said. The approval of the updates by the district was just a matter of procedure. "We never want to change anything in a document without informing everyone about

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Los marcadores históricos, que conmemoran la historia de Presidio, finalmente se trasladarán de Marfa a Presidio

Por SAM KARAS
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CONDADO DE PRESIDIO — Después de casi 20 años de negociación, un par de marcadores históricos que conmemoran la historia de Presidio están listos para ser desarraigados de una parada al borde de la carretera en las afueras de Marfa. Un marcador explica el origen del nombre del condado de Presidio y otro proclama a Presidio como "la ciudad más antigua de Estados Unidos".

Los dos pequeños monumentos se reubicarán en Presidio, uno en un futuro centro de visitantes en el centro y el otro en un quiosco de visitantes satélite frente a la piscina municipal de Presidio. En la reunión del martes pasado de la Oficina de Convenciones y Visitantes (CVB) de Presidio, se asignaron $200 del presupuesto de la organización para financiar el transporte de los marcadores, que esperan se realice en los próximos meses.

La presidenta de la junta, Arian Velázquez-Ornelas, ha estado trabajando para mover los marcadores desde que era miembro de la Cámara de Comercio de Presidio en 2003. Los cambios en el liderazgo de la ciudad retrasaron sus esfuerzos, pero pudo poner la pelota en marcha nuevamente

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La Junta Escolar de Presidio ISD aprueba actualizaciones a los procedimientos de seguridad

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — En la reunión del miércoles pasado, la Junta Escolar de Presidio ISD aprobó la actualización de este año del Plan de Operaciones de Emergencia de la Policía de Presidio ISD y el Plan de Mitigación de Riesgos Multijurisdiccionales. Ambas medidas consideran la seguridad y la preparación de los estudiantes desde diferentes ángulos: el primero a nivel del campus y del distrito, y el segundo con la ayuda del departamento de policía de la ciudad, la oficina del alguacil del condado, la Patrulla Fronteriza y otras agencias interconectadas.

El jefe de policía de PISD, Joel Nuñez, asistió a la reunión de la semana pasada para hacer presentaciones sobre ambas iniciativas. Primero abordó el Plan de Operaciones de Emergencia del distrito, que es revisado y aprobado por el distrito cada año. Trajo una carpeta grande con el plan completo para demostrar cuán detallados son los protocolos de su departamento. "Es un documento vivo, siempre crece y se vuelve más grueso", dijo.

Los cambios de este año fueron mucho más dramáticos y detallados que los del año pasado. El superintendente Ray Vásquez explicó que el enfoque adicional en la seguridad este año se debió en parte al tiroteo en la escuela de Uvalde a principios de este año. "La tragedia en Uvalde realmente ha traído todo esto a la superficie en Texas", dijo.

Núñez aseguró a todos que su departamento había estado trabajando arduamente en estos procedimientos incluso antes de que el tiroteo

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POR ORDEN DEL CONDADO DE PRESIDIO ENTRA EN VIGOR UNA PROHIBICIÓN SOBRE EL USO DEL FUEGO, NO SE PUEDE HACER FUEGO SOBRE LOS TERRENOS

'Un centro para todos': Se abre la oficina de la Red Fronteriza por los Derechos Humanos en Presidio

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — El viernes pasado, la Red Fronteriza por los Derechos Humanos (BNHR, por sus siglas en inglés) celebró el corte de cinta de su nueva oficina satélite en Presidio. La organización ha estado organizando eventos locales más pequeños desde mayo, más notablemente una mesa redonda y un evento emergente en solidaridad con las marchas que protestan por la Operación Lone Star, la infusión de fondos del gobernador Abbott para la aplicación de la ley en las comunidades fronterizas de Texas. Los lugareños asistieron al evento del viernes para celebrar el lugar permanente de BNHR en la comunidad.

BNHR, una organización con sede en El Paso, espera difundir su mensaje conectando a las comunidades fronterizas con recursos educativos a medida que la controversia sobre la política fronteriza estatal y nacional alcanza un punto álgido. "El BNHR está abriendo Centros de Derechos Humanos en la región fronteriza de Texas para desarrollar aún más la capacidad de la comunidad y el compromiso de la comunidad para abordar una violación sistémica de los derechos creada, principalmente, por estrategias fronterizas que no rinden cuentas e instituciones de aplicación de la ley de inmigración", escribió el Director Ejecutivo Fernando García en un presione soltar.

Presidio no fue la única comunidad que celebró una nueva ubicación de divulgación de BNHR la semana pasada: Del Rio tuvo su propio corte de cinta el martes. La organización espera expandirse para emplear a los lugareños en ambas ciudades a tiempo completo y brindar a todos en la comunidad información que ayudará a protegerlos y empoderarlos a medida que cambien las mareas políticas. Además de las operaciones diarias de sus oficinas locales, BNHR organiza acciones grandes y pequeñas, desde desfiles en las ciudades más grandes de las zonas fronterizas hasta la distribución de folletos sobre cómo defenderse en una parada de tráfico.

Lizette Rohana, que tiene raíces profundas en Presidio y Ojinaga, ayudó a traer BNHR a la ciudad después de años de servir a la comunidad regional a través del trabajo voluntario. "Tenemos amigos activistas en común", explicó. "No quería dejar pasar esta oportunidad. Estamos tan aislados aquí que es importante no solo para Presidio sino para toda el área de Big Bend. Queremos convertirlo en un centro comunitario, un centro para todos".

Rohana ha jugado un papel importante ayudando a BNHR

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ENGLISH NEWS

Historical markers

(Continued from page 1)

Last year, the CVB and the Presidio Municipal Development District started planning a visitor center in the Slack building, home of the Presidio Farmers Market. Members of the two boards discussed setting up a historical exhibit detailing Presidio's past, from its prehistoric roots and Indigenous history to the Spanish colonial years and recent settler past.

Alongside the historical exhibit, there will be more general tourist information detailing fun things to do in the area and tips for visiting the neighboring state and national parks. Velázquez-Ornelas hopes transporting the markers off the highway and to busy parts of Presidio will encourage more people to check them out. "Hopefully when everything's set up, it'll be a focal point to share our community's history," she said.

Rod Ponton and Mona Garcia of the Presidio County Historical Commission weren't exactly sure why the markers were erected in Marfa in the first place, but speculated it had something to do with Marfa being the county seat. The earlier of the two markers, placed in 1936, was a part of the Texas Centennial Celebration — that year, $3 million in state funds were appropriated to commemorate the state's historical sites. "The Centennial caused a big push to get markers put up everywhere, and for some reason, these markers ended up here [in Marfa]," Ponton said.

The text of the 1936 Centennial Marker details the establishment of Presidio County, which was carved from Bexar County in 1850 and formally organized in 1875. The original county seat was Fort Leaton, located just south of Presidio. The text of the marker explains that the county's name comes from "the early fortress garrisoned by soldiers for the protection of the Big Bend missions."

Missions were a Spanish colonial institution that sought to convert Indigenous people to Christianity. In 1683 — a date immortalized throughout Presidio on its welcome signs and Catholic Church — Jumano leader Juan Sabeata petitioned the Spanish government for the establishment of a mission near present-day Presidio, in hopes that colonial powers might protect his people from the incursions of other local Native groups.

The actual presidio — the Spanish word for "prison," though that term doesn't fully capture how these sites functioned — wasn't completed until 1760. In the 77 years it took between the establishment of missions in the Big Bend and the construction of the presidio, the six missions in the Presidio area were cyclically raided, abandoned and rebuilt.

The county was named Presidio del Norte, which was intended to put a stop to all the chaos. It lasted only six years at its original site before shuttering and being moved downstream on the Río Conchos. Its own pink granite Texas Centennial marker is located at Fort Leaton.

The history commemorated on the other marker that will be moved to Presidio is a little more slippery. That marker — erected in 1961 by the Texas branches of the Children of the American Colonists and Daughters of the American Colonists — proclaims Presidio "the oldest town in America" and "the site of the first recorded wagon train crossing into Texas."

In a paper published by the Center for Big Bend Studies in 1989, Russell Gardinier wrote skeptically of the roadside attraction. He agreed with the marker's claim that Presidio had been "a settlement for over 10,000 years," but couldn't verify that it was, in fact, the oldest town in America. "Whether this claim is a bona fide one or not, Presidio has been a [center] of human occupation for millennia," he wrote.

Luis Armendariz, former superintendent at Fort Leaton and Presidio history buff, explained that an exact timeline for the area's history is hard to pin down because local history wasn't written until the arrival of Spanish priests. "They were the only ones who knew how to read — whatever they did that day, they'd write it down," he explained.

It took Armendariz a long time to get the hang of poring through the priests' and monks' scrawling script. Those religious leaders started recording snippets of Indigenous history — albeit filtered through their perspective and language. "They had to have relations with the Indians and they had to communicate with each other," he said.

Their testimony was more nuanced than the sporadic Spanish expeditions that passed through the area in the 16th and 17th centuries — some of the heads of those entradas, Armendariz explained, were illiterate and had to enlist outside help to record their travels.

One such expedition is memorialized on the 1961 marker in Marfa as "the site of the first recorded wagon train crossing into Texas" by Antonio de Espejo in 1582. Espejo was the 16th century equivalent of a rancher in present-day Chihuahua, known back then as Nuevo Vizcaya. Sometime before his great journey up the Río Grande he was accused of assisting his brother in the murder of one of their hired hands.

The brothers were found guilty, and Espejo decided to duck the fine levied by the Spanish government by hiding in the northern reaches of Nuevo Vizcaya. "It was a customary practice to evade punishment for a crime by remaining on the frontiers," historian J. Lloyd Mecham wrote in a paper for the Texas State Historical Association.

While on the lam, Espejo took an interest in the fate of two friars who had disappeared from their missionary work among pueblos in modern-day New Mexico. He assembled a number of soldiers and their servants to set off for the north, ostensibly under the banner of Spanish King Phillip II, whom he owed money. "By what official authority the expedition was organized is not certain," Mecham wrote.

Espejo traveled up the Río Conchos until he reached the present day site of Ojinaga, where his party rested and resupplied for eight days. They then set off on a long and ultimately pointless journey up the Río Grande — not surprisingly, they found that the two missing friars had been murdered. The party split in two, and Espejo led the remaining men overland to the Pecos river.

About a month into their journey downriver, some helpful Jumanos informed the Espejo expedition that the Pecos emptied into the Río Grande hundreds of miles below Ojinaga, and that it was virtually impossible to follow the river upstream through the canyon country of present-day Big Bend National Park. The men journeyed southwest, becoming the first white people to see what's now Balmorhea, Fort Davis, Marfa and Shafter.

Of course, the full Espejo saga — and the larger 10,000 year story of Presidio — can't be written out on a roadside plaque. Still, Armendariz feels that any opportunity to teach locals and tourists about regional history is important. "I think as human beings we should know where we came from," he said. "To respect each other we have to know who we are — and who you are."

Presidio ISD

(Continued from page 1)

it."

One major change from previous years is that school doors need to remain locked while class is in session, prompting new procedures for when folks enter and exit buildings on each campus. The police department has been double-checking and upgrading locks around the district, as well as beefing up their security camera systems.

They also fine-tuned the chain of command in case of an emergency — the superintendent serves as incident commander first, but if for some reason the superintendent is not available, the school board president steps in. In the event that both the superintendent and school board president are out of the picture, Curriculum Director Dr. Laura Portillo will take charge.

Superintendent Ray Vasquez said that the updates were critical in preparation for a Texas School Safety Center "safety audit" that would take place the following week. State officials will tour the state attempting forced entry into a school building — to avoid misunderstandings, district administrations and police departments will be informed of the audit the day of, but individual campuses will not. On Tuesday, PISD announced on Facebook that Lucy Rede Franco Middle School had passed their audit with flying colors.

Next, Nuñez gave a presentation and fielded questions about the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, a document that has been circulating for approval by local governments in Presidio County over the past few months. Representatives from different local law enforcement agencies have been meeting over the course of the past year to discuss how to work together in an emergency.

Nuñez explained that the push for a multi-agency emergency plan emerged from the revelation of a proposed diesel transport operation that involved transporting hazmat in front of the elementary school multiple times a day. Though the operation seems to be suspended — for the moment — the controversy convinced local law enforcement that they needed to work more closely together. "No matter what was decided, a plan should be in place for all these participating entities," Nuñez said.

Both measures passed unanimously. Superintendent Vasquez told meeting attendees that he was happy to share the plans in the name of transparency, but that he wouldn't be posting the information online as a safety measure. "We are always available to talk to [parent-teacher organizations], and we can make the information available to parents here in the office by request," he said.

Human Rights office

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Ramon Rodriguez joined in on Friday's festivities. He's had plenty of organizing experience through Project Homeleaf, a youth-led group dedicated to environmental causes. "I decided to get into it because the youth needs to be represented here too — we have a say because we're all human beings," he said. "When I first heard about the program, I thought that it wasn't a luxury, it was a necessity — especially in a border town."

Rodriguez explained that he felt immigration and human rights causes were interconnected with environmental activism. His organization educates folks about climate change and fights against it — in a world where people are increasingly displaced from their homes by climate disasters. "When it comes to peoples' health and safety, especially refugees or people looking for somewhere to go, the environment plays a big role," he said.

Presidio is a town where it's not unusual for people with multiple immigration statuses — undocumented people, permanent residents, guest workers — to live in the same house. Rodriguez has seen that play out in his own family and in the families of his friends. "I told my grandparents about [BNHR], and they said, 'Imagine if we'd had that when we immigrated, if we knew we'd be protected and that there's someone behind us,'" he said.

Rodriguez is hoping his involvement will help start tough conversations about issues like border policy and racial profiling among Presidians his age. "As the youth, we can't forget where we came from," he said, noting that most of the older generations in his family were born in Mexico. "At the end of the day, we all have human rights, and we can really do something to improve things for the next generation."

Both Rodriguez and Rohana are looking forward to their next major action — Presidio's first official delegation to attend the annual Hugs Not Walls event in El Paso, where families separated by border policies spend five minutes reunited in the river together. Rohana is helping to bring the organizers of Voices from Both Sides, a similar event held in Lajitas, to the El Paso demonstration. "We're not leaving anybody out — we're trying to see how we can make it a bigger and more powerful event," she said.

Perfect attendance and A-B honor roll students celebrated at Presidio Elementary School

PRESIDIO — Students at Presidio Elementary School celebrated their perfect attendance and A-B honor roll students for the first six weeks of school in an assembly on Friday, September 23. Parents were invited to attend the ceremony where students honored with an

award had the opportunity to dress up for the occasion. At the assembly, which all students

were invited to attend with their teachers, Presidio Elementary School Principal Joe Andy

Mendoza presented them with a certificate and posed for a picture.

"We are excited to provide an opportunity for parents to visit our campus and celebrate our students' academic achievements and perfect attendance. Hard work pays off at Presidio Elementary," said Mendoza.

After the assembly, awarded students joined students who earned enough AR points for a dance party in the school cafeteria.

Full honor roll results available online at https://bigbendsentinel.com/2022/09/28/presidio-elementary-school-celebrates-a-b-honor-roll-and-perfect-attendance/

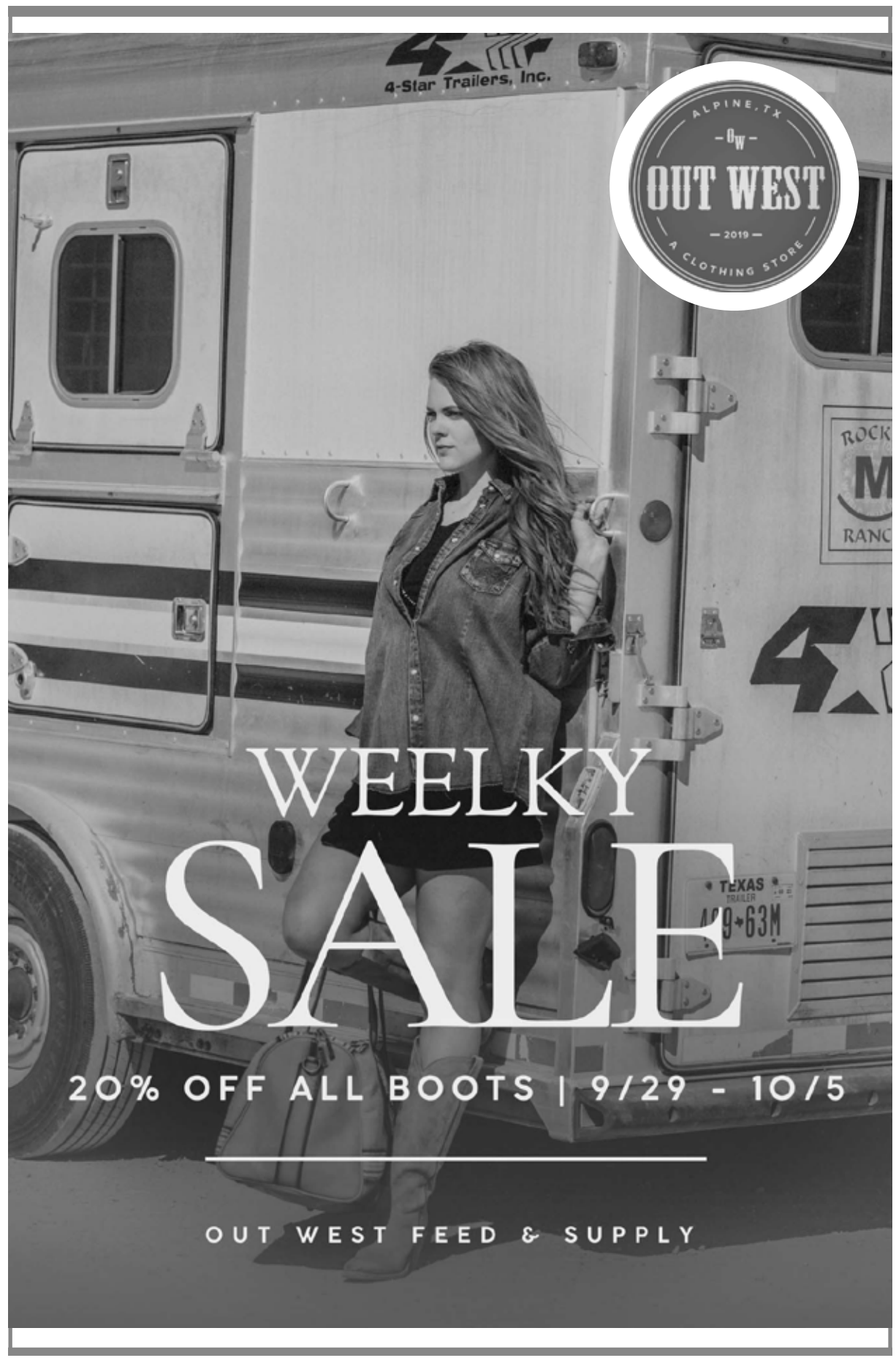
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NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

Los mercadores históricos

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hace unos años. Numerosas entidades, incluida la Comisión Histórica de Texas, la Comisión Histórica del Condado de Presidio, la Ciudad de Presidio y el Tribunal de Comisionados del Condado de Presidio, tuvieron que aprobar el proyecto. “Este ha sido un trabajo de amor”, dijo.

El año pasado, la CVB y el Distrito de Desarrollo Municipal de Presidio comenzaron a planificar un centro de visitantes en el edificio Slack, sede del Mercado de Agricultores de Presidio. Los miembros de las dos juntas discutieron la creación de una exhibición histórica que detalla el pasado de Presidio, desde sus raíces prehistóricas y la historia indígena hasta los años coloniales españoles y el pasado reciente de los colonos.

Junto a la exhibición histórica, habrá más información turística general que detalla cosas divertidas para hacer en el área y consejos para visitar los parques estatales y nacionales vecinos. Velázquez-Ornelas espera que transportar los marcadores fuera de la carretera y a partes concurridas de Presidio anime a más personas a revisarlos. “Con suerte, cuando todo esté configurado, será un punto focal para compartir la historia de nuestra comunidad”, dijo.

Rod Ponton y Mona García de la Comisión Histórica del Condado de Presidio no estaban exactamente seguros de por qué se erigieron los marcadores en Marfa en primer lugar, pero especularon que tenía algo que ver con que Marfa fuera la sede del condado. El primero de los dos marcadores, colocado en 1936, fue parte de la Celebración del Centenario de Texas; ese año, se asignaron $3 millones en fondos estatales para conmemorar los sitios históricos del estado. “El Centenario provocó un gran impulso para colocar marcadores en todas partes y, por alguna razón, estos marcadores terminaron aquí [en Marfa]”, dijo Ponton.

El texto del Centennial Marker de 1936 detalla el establecimiento del condado de Presidio, que se extrajo del condado de Bexar en 1850 y se organizó formalmente en 1875. La sede del condado original era Fort Leaton, ubicada justo al sur de Presidio. El texto del marcador explica que el nombre del condado proviene de “la antigua fortaleza guarnecida por soldados para la protección de las misiones de Big Bend”.

Las misiones eran una institución colonial española que buscaba convertir a los indígenas al cristianismo. En 1683, una fecha inmortalizada en todo Presidio en sus letreros de bienvenida y en la Iglesia Católica, el líder jumano Juan Sabeata solicitó al gobierno español el establecimiento de una misión cerca del actual Presidio, con la esperanza de que los poderes coloniales pudieran proteger a su pueblo de las incursiones de otros. grupos nativos locales.

El presidio real, la palabra española para “prisión”, aunque ese término no capta completamente cómo funcionaban estos sitios, no se completó hasta 1760. En los 77 años que transcurrieron entre el establecimiento de misiones en Big Bend y la construcción del presidio, las seis misiones en el área de Presidio fueron asaltadas, abandonadas y reconstruidas cíclicamente.

El condado se llamó Presidio del Norte, que tenía la intención de poner fin a todo el caos. Duró solo seis años en su sitio original antes de cerrarse y trasladarse río abajo sobre el río Conchos. Su propio marcador del Centenario de Texas de granito rosa se encuentra en Fort Leaton.

La historia conmemorada en el otro marcador que se trasladará a Presidio es un poco más resbaladiza. Ese marcador, erigido en 1961 por las sucursales de Texas de Children of the American Colonists e Daughters of the American Colonists, proclama a Presidio como “la ciudad más antigua de Estados Unidos” y “el sitio del primer tren de vagones registrado que cruza a Texas”.

En un artículo publicado por el Center for Big Bend Studies en 1989, Russell Gardinier escribió con escepticismo sobre la atracción al borde de la carretera. Estuvo de acuerdo con la afirmación del marcador de que Presidio había sido “un asentamiento durante más de 10 000 años”, pero no pudo verificar que fuera, de hecho, la ciudad más antigua de Estados Unidos. “Ya sea que esta afirmación sea de buena fe o no, Presidio ha sido un [centro] de ocupación humana durante milenios”, escribió.

Luis Armendáriz, ex superintendente de Fort Leaton y aficionado a la historia de Presidio, explicó que es difícil precisar una línea de tiempo exacta para la historia del área porque la historia local no se escribió hasta la llegada de los sacerdotes españoles. “Eran los únicos que sabían leer; hicieran lo que hicieran ese día, lo escribían”, explicó.

Armendáriz tardó mucho tiempo en acostumbrarse a estudiar minuciosamente la escritura garabateada de los sacerdotes y los monjes. Esos líderes religiosos comenzaron a registrar fragmentos de la historia indígena, aunque filtrados a través de su perspectiva e idioma. “Tenían que tener relaciones con los indios y tenían que comunicarse entre ellos”, dijo.

Su testimonio fue más matizado que el de las esporádicas expediciones españolas que pasaron por la zona en los siglos XVI y XVII: algunos de los jefes de esas entradas, explicó Armendáriz, eran analfabetos y tuvieron que buscar ayuda externa para registrar sus viajes.

Una de esas expediciones está conmemorada en el marcador de 1961 en Marfa como “el sitio del primer tren de vagones que cruzó a Texas” por Antonio de Espejo en 1582. Espejo era el equivalente del siglo XVI de un ranchero en el actual Chihuahua, conocido en ese entonces. como Nuevo Vizcaya. En algún momento antes de su gran viaje por el Río Grande, fue acusado de ayudar a su hermano en el asesinato de uno de sus jornaleros.

Los hermanos fueron declarados culpables y Espejo decidió eludir la multa impuesta por el gobierno español escondiéndose en el extremo norte de Nuevo Vizcaya. “Era una práctica habitual evadir el castigo por un delito permaneciendo en las fronteras”, escribió el historiador J. Lloyd Mecham en un artículo para la Asociación Histórica del Estado de Texas.

Mientras estaba prófugo, Espejo se interesó por el destino de dos frailes que habían desaparecido de su trabajo misionero entre los pueblos del actual Nuevo México. Reunió a varios soldados y sus sirvientes para partir hacia el norte, aparentemente bajo el estandarte del rey español Felipe II, a quien le debía dinero. “No se sabe con certeza qué autoridad oficial organizó la expedición”, escribió Mecham.

Espejo viajó por el río Conchos hasta llegar al sitio actual de Ojinaga, donde su grupo descansó y se reabasteció durante ocho días. Luego emprendieron un viaje largo y, en última instancia, sin sentido por el Río Grande; como era de esperar, descubrieron que los dos frailes desaparecidos habían sido asesinados. El grupo se dividió en dos y Espejo condujo a los hombres restantes por tierra hasta el río Pecos.

Aproximadamente un mes después de su viaje río abajo, algunos Jumanos útiles informaron a la expedición de Espejo que el Pecos desembocaba en el Río Grande a cientos de millas debajo de Ojinaga, y que era prácticamente imposible seguir el río río arriba a través de la zona de cañones del actual Big Bend. Parque Nacional. Los hombres viajaron al suroeste, convirtiéndose en los primeros blancos en ver lo que ahora es Balmorhea, Fort Davis, Marfa y Shafter.

Por supuesto, la saga completa de Espejo, y la historia más grande de 10,000 años de Presidio, no se puede escribir en una placa al borde de la carretera. Aún así, Armendáriz siente que cualquier oportunidad de enseñar a los lugareños y turistas sobre la historia regional es importante. “Creo que como seres humanos debemos saber de dónde venimos”, dijo. “Para respetarnos unos a otros tenemos que saber quiénes somos y quién eres tú”.

Presidio ISD

(Continuación de la página 1)

en la escuela primaria Robb llegara a los titulares. “Siempre hemos estado por encima y más allá”, dijo. La aprobación de las actualizaciones por parte del distrito era solo una cuestión de procedimiento. “Nunca queremos cambiar nada en un documento sin informar a todos al respecto”.

Un cambio importante con respecto a años anteriores es que las puertas de las escuelas deben permanecer cerradas mientras la clase está en sesión, lo que genera nuevos procedimientos para cuando las personas ingresan y salen de los edificios en cada campus. El departamento de policía ha estado revisando dos veces y mejorando las cerraduras en todo el distrito, además de reforzar sus sistemas de cámaras de seguridad.

También afinaron la cadena de mando en caso de emergencia: el superintendente actúa primero como comandante de incidentes, pero si por alguna razón el superintendente no está disponible, interviene el presidente de la junta escolar. En caso de que tanto el superintendente como la escuela presidente de la junta están fuera de escena, la directora de currículo, la Dra. Laura Portillo, se hará cargo.

El superintendente Ray Vásquez dijo que las actualizaciones eran críticas en la preparación para una “auditoría de seguridad” del Centro de Seguridad Escolar de Texas que se llevaría a cabo la semana siguiente. Los funcionarios estatales recorrerán el estado intentando ingresar a la fuerza a un edificio escolar; para evitar malentendidos, las administraciones del distrito y los departamentos de policía serán informados de la auditoría el día de la auditoría, pero no los campus individuales. El martes, PISD anunció en Facebook que la escuela secundaria Lucy Rede Franco había pasado su auditoría con gran éxito.

A continuación, Núñez hizo una presentación y respondió preguntas sobre el Plan de Mitigación de Riesgos Multijurisdiccionales, un documento que ha estado circulando para su aprobación por parte de los gobiernos locales en el condado de Presidio durante los últimos meses. Representantes de diferentes agencias policiales locales se han reunido durante el transcurso del año pasado para discutir cómo trabajar juntos en una emergencia.

Nuñez explicó que el impulso para un plan de emergencia de varias agencias surgió de la revelación de una operación de transporte de diesel propuesta que implicaba el transporte de materiales peligrosos frente a la escuela primaria varias veces al día. Aunque la operación parece estar suspendida, por el momento, la controversia convenció a la policía local de que necesitaban trabajar más de cerca. “No importa lo que se decida, debe existir un plan para todas estas entidades participantes”, dijo Núñez.

Ambas medidas fueron aprobadas por unanimidad. El superintendente Vásquez les dijo a los asistentes a la reunión que estaba feliz de compartir los planes en nombre de la transparencia, pero que no publicaría la información en línea como medida de seguridad. “Siempre estamos disponibles para hablar con [organizaciones de padres y maestros], y podemos hacer que la información esté disponible para los padres aquí en la oficina si lo solicitan”, dijo.

La oficina de la Red Fronteriza

(Continued from page 1)

a adaptar su mensaje para una audiencia local. Una diferencia importante que aconsejó de los mensajes de la gran ciudad de la organización fue tratar de trabajar con las fuerzas del orden, en lugar de protestar por su existencia: los empleados de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza representan una parte importante de la población de la ciudad. “Queremos construir una red en la que podamos trabajar con las fuerzas del orden público, pero también que las personas sientan que pueden entrar y hacer preguntas”, dijo. “Queremos ser mediadores y cerrar esa brecha”.

El estudiante de último año de la preparatoria Presidio, Ramón Rodríguez, se unió a las festividades del viernes. Ha tenido mucha experiencia organizando a través de Project Homeleaf, un grupo dirigido por jóvenes dedicado a causas ambientales. “Decidí involucrarme porque la juventud también necesita estar representada aquí, tenemos algo que decir porque todos somos seres humanos”, dijo. “Cuando escuché por primera vez sobre el programa, pensé que no era un lujo, era una necesidad, especialmente en una ciudad fronteriza”.

Rodríguez explicó que sentía que las causas de inmigración y derechos humanos estaban interconectadas con el activismo ambiental. Su organización educa a la gente sobre el cambio climático y lucha contra él, en un mundo en el que los desastres climáticos desplazan cada vez más a las personas de sus hogares. “Cuando se trata de la salud y la seguridad de las personas, especialmente de los refugiados o de las personas que buscan un lugar a donde ir, el medio ambiente juega un papel importante”, dijo.

Presidio es una ciudad donde no es inusual que personas con múltiples estados migratorios (indocumentados, residentes permanentes, trabajadores invitados) vivan en la misma casa. Rodríguez ha visto eso en su propia familia y en las familias de sus amigos. “Les conté a mis abuelos sobre [BNHR] y me dijeron: ‘Imagínese si hubiéramos tenido eso cuando inmigramos, si supiéramos que estaríamos protegidos y que hay alguien detrás de nosotros’”, dijo.

Rodríguez espera que su participación ayude a iniciar conversaciones difíciles sobre temas como la política fronteriza y la discriminación racial entre los presidentes de su edad. “Como jóvenes, no podemos olvidar de dónde venimos”, dijo, y señaló que la mayoría de las generaciones mayores de su familia nacieron en México. “Al final del día, todos tenemos derechos humanos y realmente podemos hacer algo para mejorar las cosas para la próxima generación”.

Tanto Rodríguez como Rohana esperan con ansias su próxima gran acción: la primera delegación oficial de Presidio que asistirá al evento anual Hugs Not Walls en El Paso, donde las familias separadas por las políticas fronterizas pasan cinco minutos juntas en el río. Rohana está ayudando a traer a los organizadores de Voices from Both Sides, un evento similar realizado en Lajitas, a la manifestación de El Paso. “No estamos dejando a nadie fuera, estamos tratando de ver cómo podemos convertirlo en un evento más grande y más poderoso”, dijo.

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PRESIDIO SPORTS CALENDAR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1:
PHS/LRFMS Cross Country Boys/Girls @ Alpine

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3:
LRFMS V-ball vs Crane @ Presidio

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4:
PHS V-ball vs Alpine @ Presidio
JV White @ 4:30 p.m., JV Blue @ 5:30 p.m., Varsity @ 6:30 p.m.

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Big Bend Reproductive Coalition does not give medical or legal advice. This information is an educational resource.

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POR FAVOR RECICLA ESTE PERIÓDICO

ENGLISH NEWS / NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

Presidio ISD hosts workshop to keep kids safe on the internet

By SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — This Thursday, Presidio parents and caregivers are invited to attend a workshop about keeping kids safe on the internet. Presidio ISD parent Lynette Brehm will lead the session through her program Padres Presentes, which helps parents learn warning signs of risky online behavior.

Padres Presentes is designed to be proactive, teaching kids to be "tech responsible" before they encounter serious danger. "Over 40% of kids are chatting with strangers online," she explained. "The purpose of the program is to teach parents about dangers online so they can better protect their kids before something bad happens."

Though a lot of the program focuses on keeping kids safe from grooming by online predators, Brenham will also teach the basics of social media so that parents fully understand the online world their kids inhabit. "Some parents allow their kids to do Snapchat or social media, but they're not on social media themselves," she said. "I think there's a big disconnect between what parents hope their kids are doing and what their kids are actually doing."

Brenham believes that disconnect stems from how quickly online technology has developed over the past 40 years. "Originally, the internet was not even made for kids — it was never designed like a carseat is designed for the safety of a child," she explained.

She thinks web safety is especially important after the pandemic — she saw in her own family how quarantine and online distance learning led her child to spend more time on the internet. An incident where innocent Googling led her son to inappropriate content sparked her interest in learning how to parent in a web-savvy way. "It just taught me that parents everywhere need to come together and learn how to keep our kids safe," she said.

The goal of the Padres Presentes program is to turn parents into "loving detectives," looking for warning signs of abuse or manipulation online and understanding as much as they can about the types of apps and content their kids are consuming. She hopes to strike a balance between educating others about the dangers of the internet while accepting that it's an intrinsic part of the modern world. "In this day and age you can't just say no technology at all," she explained. "It really just comes down to the relationship the parents have with their kids, and talking openly about these issues."

The hour-long, free sessions will take place after school on Friday, September 30, in the Blue Devil Gym at Presidio High School. The session at 5 p.m. will be held in English and the session at 6 p.m. will be held in Spanish. For more information, visit the Presidio ISD website or the Padres Presentes website at https://learntoprotectkids.com/.

Presidio ISD organiza un taller para mantener a los niños seguros en el Internet

Por SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — Este jueves, los padres y cuidadores de Presidio están invitados a asistir a un taller sobre cómo mantener a los niños seguros en Internet. Lynette Brehm, madre de Presidio ISD, dirigirá la sesión a través de su programa Padres Presentes, que ayuda a los padres a conocer las señales de advertencia de comportamientos riesgosos en línea.

Padres Presentes está diseñado para ser proactivo, enseñando a los niños a ser "responsables con la tecnología" antes de que se enfrenten a un peligro grave. "Más del 40 % de los niños chatean con extraños en línea", explicó. "El propósito del programa es enseñar a los padres sobre los peligros en línea para que puedan proteger mejor a sus hijos antes de que suceda algo malo".

Aunque gran parte del programa se enfoca en mantener a los niños a salvo de los depredadores en línea, Brenham también enseñará los conceptos básicos de las redes sociales para que los padres comprendan completamente el mundo en línea en el que viven sus hijos. "Algunos padres permiten que sus hijos usen Snapchat o las redes sociales, pero ellos mismos no están en las redes sociales", dijo. "Creo que hay una gran desconexión entre lo que los padres esperan que hagan sus hijos y lo que sus hijos realmente están haciendo".

Brenham cree que la desconexión proviene de la rapidez con que se ha desarrollado la tecnología en línea en los últimos 40 años. "Originalmente, el Internet ni siquiera se hizo para niños; nunca se diseñó como un asiento de automóvil para la seguridad de un niño", explicó.

Ella cree que la seguridad en la web es especialmente importante después de la pandemia: vio en su propia familia cómo la cuarentena y el aprendizaje a distancia en línea llevaron a su hijo a pasar más tiempo en Internet. Un incidente en el que una búsqueda inocente en Google llevó a su hijo a contenido inapropiado despertó su interés en aprender a ser padres de una manera inteligente en la web. "Simplemente me enseñó que los padres de todo el mundo deben unirse y aprender cómo mantener seguros a nuestros hijos", dijo.

El objetivo del programa Padres Presentes es convertir a los padres en "detectives amorosos", que busquen señales de advertencia de abuso o manipulación en línea y comprendan todo lo que puedan sobre los tipos de aplicaciones y contenido que consumen sus hijos. Ella espera lograr un equilibrio entre educar a otros sobre los peligros de Internet y aceptar que es una parte intrínseca del mundo moderno. "Hoy en día no se puede decir simplemente que no hay tecnología", explicó. "Realmente todo se reduce a la relación que los padres tienen con sus hijos y a hablar abiertamente sobre estos temas".

Las sesiones gratuitas de una hora se llevarán a cabo después de la escuela el viernes 30 de septiembre en el Blue Devil Gym en Presidio High School. La sesión a las 5 p.m. se llevará a cabo en inglés y la sesión a las 6 p.m. se llevará a cabo en español. Para obtener más información, visite el sitio web de Presidio ISD o el sitio web de Padres Presentes en https://learntoprotectkids.com/.

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In blue Presidio County, Republicans — aided by political action committee — aim to win in November

By ALLEGRA HOBBS
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PRESIDIO COUNTY — When Presidio County Judge Cinderela Guevara first decided to run for reelection as a Republican in 2022, she did not believe she had a chance at winning come November. She was a lifelong Democrat — most recently, she had been reelected to her current office as a Democrat in 2018. This was in keeping with the local political climate. In reliably blue Presidio County, common knowledge dictated, you must have a "D" next to your name if you want to win.

But as she came up against the filing deadline in December of last year, she found herself beset by a crisis of conscience — she no longer felt the Democratic Party reflected her values. But to run as a Republican, she believed, would be to accept defeat.

"If I run as a Republican, I know I won't win," she recalls thinking. "I told myself: you're not going to win."

Still, on the last possible day to file as a candidate, within minutes of the deadline, she opted to file with the Republican Party. A lot has changed since then. Nearly one year later, just shy of a month from Election Day, campaign signs bearing her name are scattered throughout the Democratic stronghold of Marfa — many of them containing the legally-required disclosure, in minute lettering, that they are paid for by a political action committee called Project Red Texas.

Guevara has become one of over 100 local Republican candidates bolstered by the PAC, which has the stated mission of getting Republicans elected to local office in "targeted counties." The judge learned about the group when they came to Presidio County in July, she said — she was parked near the Presidio County Courthouse when a truck loaded with campaign signs for another candidate — she didn't recall who — pulled up nearby. She cracked a joke that turned out to be fortuitous.

"I just said to the guy, 'Oh, I guess you're here to deliver my signs,'" she said. "He said, 'I am looking for Cinderela Guevara,' and I said, 'Hey, that's me!' He said, 'I was told to contact you.' He asked me if I was running as a Republican and he said, 'We can get you some signs.'"

That was a Thursday, she recalled — by Tuesday, she learned, the signs were ready, and they were delivered to her a week and a half later. They gave her 125 signs altogether — 100 small lawn signs, and 25 large ones. All but roughly 30 of the small signs now adorn the homes and businesses of supporters in town, she said — folks kept calling her and asking for them. If she ends up needing more, Project Red Texas has offered to supply them, she said. (Guevara said she will report the signs as campaign contributions, their monetary value adding up to over $1,000).

The judge has become symbolic of a phenomenon the state Republican Party is touting this election season — longtime Democrats defecting from their party, believing the one-time opposition is more aligned with their true values. In July, Guevara was showcased on Governor Greg Abbott's Twitter account in this capacity, with the governor calling her "a life long Democrat until the Democratic Party walked away from her."

In a video accompanying the tweet, Guevara — seated next to Abbott at a campaign event for the governor in Fort Stockton — explains that she had run as a Democrat since 1992, and this is her first year running as a Republican. "I'm very happy with Governor Abbott here, for all he has done for Texas and continues to do for Texas, especially with our border crisis," she beams. (Weeks earlier, Guevara had issued a controversial "declaration of local disaster" which declared Presidio County under "invasion" by migrants and drug trafficking, hoping to secure reimbursements for border security from the state).

Guevara, who is slated to face off against Democrat Jose Portillo in November, isn't the only Republican candidate running in Presidio County. Garey Willbanks is running as a Republican for county commissioner precinct 4 against Democrat David Beebe. Republican David Chavez is running for county treasurer against incumbent Frances Garcia.

Project Red Texas has paid for campaign signs for both Willbanks and Chavez. Neither candidate responded to interview requests from The Big Bend Sentinel.

Headed by political operative Wayne Hamilton, Project Red Texas was launched in 2017 with the singular mission of flipping counties like Presidio — "currently held Democrat counties" where "we think their values more traditionally should align with what the Republican Party stands for," explained Cat Parks, the former vice chair of the Texas Republican Party who now works in candidate recruitment for Project Red Texas on a volunteer basis. The PAC provides campaign and marketing materials like signs to candidates, but also serves as a resource for advice to candidates as they navigate their campaigns. (The group also offers to pay candidates' filing fees, but did not pay the fees for any Presidio County candidates, having made contact after the filing deadline, per Presidio County GOP Chair Dan Dunlap).

That first election cycle, they started with 54 counties and saw some results, said Parks — this time around, their reach has more than doubled.

"With that effort, [we] were successful in flipping four county commissioner courts from Democrat to Republican," she said. "And this cycle, we are supporting 135 candidates in 24 counties. So we've grown the effort and we really feel that there's a clear path forward here."

Parks noted the "red shift," typified by Guevara, of former Democrats switching to the Republican Party. It's a trend that has been observed in Sanderson, where the formerly Democratic county judge, county clerk and treasurer all opted to run as Republicans this year. It is a shift Parks believes is driven by an adherence to core values that the Republican Party claims to represent: "Economic freedom, certainly inflation right now, law and order, backing of police, strong borders, oil and natural gas independence."

Parks also repeated the theory Abbott had deployed in his tweet about Judge Guevara, that these defecters were not so much abandoning the Democratic Party so much as the party was abandoning them, alienating them with "increasingly leftist, progressive — I don't think you can even call them values, but the things that they're pushing, the transgender community … even things like the Biden administration saying there was 0% inflation in July."

Guevara, when asked why she chose to run as a Republican, said the main issue that prompted her own red shift was that of abortion. "I just can't put my name there," she said of running as a Democrat. "I feel like we're killing ourselves, we're killing the next generation, and I don't think it's right. It's very, very complex. It gets real sticky, but I won't back down. I'll never back down from saying that I believe in the sanctity of life from conception to now."

Guevara said that she saw the fall of Roe v. Wade — and with it, the end of the federally guaranteed right to abortion — as a good thing, though she had not yet researched the current state of abortion restrictions in Texas. When asked whether she supported the current ban, which makes no exceptions for rape or incest, she said that she does. "I just feel like there's already one wrong and another wrong isn't going to fix it," she said.

Despite her platform more closely aligning with the Republican Party, to affiliate herself with the party outright was a risky choice. In Presidio County, as Guevara herself acknowledged, to call oneself a Republican has long been a guarantee of loss. In the 2016 primary, the county's then GOP Chair Todd Beckett scrambled to set up a polling place for the county's few Republicans in time for early voting — of the county's 5,000 registered voters, about 80 Republicans voted early that year. He assumed no one would show up on Election Day. There were no local Republican races. "Nobody runs locally as a Republican," Beckett told The Texas Tribune at the time. "You can't get public office here if you're a Republican."

The current county GOP chair, Dan Dunlap, took on these efforts in 2020. "What got me into all of this was the fact that Presidio County was dominated by the Democrat Party," he said. "And there were no primaries. There was no [Republican] party that existed."

Parks argued that some rural, blue counties are blue simply due to lack of options. "Part of the thing to consider is, some of these counties that have had the appearance of being blue haven't had full slates of Republican candidates to choose from."

Dunlap has wanted to ensure that Republicans are able to vote — beyond that, he has wanted to ensure that candidates had the option to run as Republicans if they wished. "It just bothered me greatly that people were forced to run as Democrats in Presidio County if they were to compete — that's how strong the Democrat Party is and has been in Presidio County," he said. "There are a lot of very conservative candidates who have run Democrat."

Buddy Knight, who competed and lost against David Beebe in the Democratic primary for county commissioner precinct 4, is one of them. "I'm pretty conservative, I'd say," he acknowledged, though "not so far right that I can't listen to somebody else."

Knight identifies with neither party — preferring to call himself an Independent — but, despite his self-described conservative politics, he chooses to run as a Democrat. This is a matter of deep-seated tradition and familial loyalty, he explained.

"My grandfather came to Texas as a little boy at the end of the Civil War from Mississippi, and they were Democrats because all southerners were Democrats, and I was raised that way," he said. His grandfather had such a profound influence on him, he still feels tied to the party of his ancestors.

Dunlap had tried to convince Knight to run as a Republican, but he shot him down. It wasn't just the voice of his grandfather in his head, though — it was also a matter of practicality. "Frankly, I don't think a Republican can get elected in Presidio County, to tell you the truth," he said. "Very few. I just don't see it happening yet."

If any, Guevara's run might prove the exception, he predicted. "I believe she has a good chance," he said. "I think it will be a lot tighter race than anybody thought it would be a year ago."

And Guevara concurs — she has felt that support from local voters, who tell her they still plan to cast their ballots for her despite her new party affiliation.

Knight's stubborn party affiliation speaks to the as-of-yet intractable wrinkle in the battle for the soul of blue, rural West Texas — politicians who are Democrat by name are not necessarily Democrat by policy or belief. Republican operatives seem to be betting on more and more Democrats a la Knight and Guevara changing their affiliations as the state — and national — Democrat parties move farther afield of their grandfathers' Democrat Party. As Parks put it: "Your former Presidio Democrats are not your Austin Democrats. And the reality is, the Keep Austin Weird Democrats are what's controlling the Democrat narrative and the Democrat policies at this point in time."

Dunlap put it more succinctly: "The Democrat Party today is not your daddy's Democrat Party."

He believes, as Parks does, that the Democrat Party today is alienating more conservative and moderate voters and candidates with an "extremism" he observes on a state and national level, on matters of fiscal policy and border security.

"People don't want to go down that socialism road," he said. "And we've got borders that are wide open, people being bused all over the country … people see this stuff, and they're pushing back." (Amidst an increase in border crossings, Governor Abbott has had thousands of migrants sent by bus to the East Coast this year).

Dunlap became connected to Project Red Texas after Judge Guevara was courted by them, he said — they reached out and asked him if there were other Republican candidates in Presidio County. "They were looking for Hispanics that were interested in running Republican," he recalled. "So there was Dave [Chavez] … they were excited about that." It quickly became clear to him that the PAC could provide some tangible, on-the-ground assistance.

"They had already talked to the judge about providing signage. And so I just simply asked them if they would be interested in providing signage for our other candidates, and they were very happy to do so — and there's high quality stuff, very nice."

With campaign season heating up, candidates will soon be ramping up their efforts. Parks clarified that the Project Red Texas team is around to provide guidance, but won't be coming to Presidio County to knock on doors — their goal is to enable candidates to guide their campaigns themselves. "We're teaching them how to do it, because people need to learn how to fish, not be given fish," said Parks.

Increased efforts by Republican operatives have not gone unnoticed by the opposition. Jason Ballman, who handles communications for the Presidio County Democratic Party, chalked it up to fear. "What I see is a lot of attempts by the Republicans to flip this county red, and I think that's because they're scared," he said. "I think they know that Beto has a great chance of becoming our next governor and they're trying to do everything they possibly can to make it feel like they're going to win in all these border counties."

And the abundant campaign signs themselves have not gone unnoticed, either. "It should be really alarming to a lot of people that we're seeing outside Republican groups try to spend a lot of money here to influence our opinions," said Ballman.

Hilary Beebe, a Democratic organizer in Presidio County and wife of Democratic candidate David Beebe, said she has gotten some calls from people who "aren't happy about the signage, and aren't necessarily happy about these activities" — that is, "an outside organization to come in and try to influence our election with money raised on the outside, and purely partisan agenda."

Still, both Ballman and Beebe expressed confidence that Presidio County will continue to vote for Democratic candidates. "I think that many people in Presidio County will say their values are aligned with the Democratic Party, and I think this will continue to be a very blue part of the state," said Beebe.

It is an unassailable fact that registered Democratic voters far outnumber registered Republicans in Presidio County. In the primaries earlier this year, Guevara garnered 90 votes; her opponent, Joe Portillo, brought in 835. Willbanks, in the primary, got 34 votes. Chavez received 86 votes in the primary, while Garcia got 709.

But those were the primaries. On Election Day, Presidio County voters of all parties will have options. Guevara, for her part, wonders if party loyalty will fall to the wayside altogether.

"Maybe people are going to be more open now to voting for the person, instead of the party," she said.

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Rio Grande Council of Government Appointments

New Board Members

The Rio Grande Council of Governments is a voluntary association of local governments formed under Texas law. In January of 1967, local elected officials in El Paso County joined together to form the El Paso Coun cil of Governments. This organization was initiated to further intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in the planning, development and delivery of govern mental services within El Paso County, Texas.

In 1971, the counties of Hudspeth, Culberson, Jeff Davis, Presidio and Brewster were included in the organization to form a truly “Regional” body, and the organization was renamed West Texas Council of Governments. In 1987, by vote of the membership, Doña Ana County, New Mexico and the local governments within were included as full members and the name of the organization was changed to the Rio Grande Council of Governments.



President & Small Communities outside of El Paso County Director
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Mayor, Town of Valentine



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The Honorable Henry Rivera
City of El Paso, Representative for District 7



2nd Vice President
The Honorable Carlos Urias
Culberson County Judge



Special Districts Director
Dr. Kristina Mena, Chair
Public Service Board



Small Communities in El Paso County Director
The Honorable David Cantu Alderman,
City of San Elizario

CLASSIFIED

TEXTURE PRESIDIO

The Acosta Siblings

Photos and Text By HANNAH GENTILES

Texture Presidio uses the art of photography and storytelling to explore and highlight the textures and tales that make Presidio County and surrounding desert landscape both beautifully ordinary and unique. Each column will feature a new person, place or event.

As kids growing up in the 1950s and '60s in the small town of Marfa, Texas, the five Acosta siblings learned how to get creative. Amelia, Elida, Frances, Mario and Lisa, with an age difference spanning 12 years, grew up in the northeast neighborhood referred to as Sal Si Puedes. They attended school across town at the Blackwell School. The Blackwell School was a segregated school for Mexican American children that closed down in 1965 after the Marfa schools became integrated. While the older Acosta sisters finished their schooling at Blackwell, Mario and Lisa transferred to public school in their eighth and second grades. Last week the Blackwell School, restored as a museum, became America's newest historical site.

The Acosta siblings welcomed me in one afternoon in early September during the Marfa Lights Festival, indulging my curiosities about what their childhood in Marfa was like during that time. They shared magical tales of creating a backyard circus made from found objects in the neighborhood, performing shows for neighbors, and using cardboard boxes and cut-out images of dolls and furniture from the Sears catalog to create their own doll houses to play with. Elida added, "We were poor, but ohhhh we were happy!" All of the sisters agreed with the sentiment. Every day they could be found out in the street playing games and every sport you can think of with their neighbors, delaying having to come back inside until the very last drop of light was gone. Parents in the neighborhood were also often outdoors tending to their lush gardens and plethora of animals, doing laundry, working on their cars or playing a game of baseball with the kids.

During this time, most of the families made their own homes, usually using adobe bricks. Many of these adobe homes have become ruins or were torn down and replaced with a prefab trailer. However, the Acosta family has been able to keep their childhood home and rent it out to long-term renters. As prices in Marfa drastically increase it has become a true rarity to afford keeping your family home, furthermore offering it as a place for locals to rent. While all five siblings have moved away, with the exception of a cousin, Amalia Razo, who they all agree is more like a sibling, they often return to their hometown to collaborate on maintaining the house, treating it like a family reunion. This past Marfa Lights weekend they all returned along with several other handy family members to rebuild the backyard fence and do some other light repairs, taking turns welding and weeding and climbing on the roof to trim trees.

They shared stories of young love — using a technique of flashing the front porch light as Frances' boyfriend David (now her husband) waited in the old ruins across the street, signaling she'd be out soon. They wore handsewn suits in their Blackwell homecoming parades as Amelia, Elida and Frances were each selected as "class representatives" for their individual senior classes. They savored their once-a-week pieces of fruit from the grocery store so that they would last longer, and took extra care of their clothes as they knew they wouldn't be getting many. Their mother, Maria, would have the girls pick out a dress they liked from Christopher's department store in town, and she'd make patterns from newspaper and sew the dresses herself. They collected Coca-Cola bottles they found around town and recycled them for 5 cents each. With that money they'd buy sweets and go to the movies at The Palace Theater on Highland Avenue. The movie theater had Spanish movie nights on Wednesdays that their parents would hardly miss. During that time, the movie theater was still segregated. They'd be escorted to their seats and strictly shown which side of the theater they were allowed to sit in. There was lots of laughter and reminiscing as they took turns sharing their favorite memories and describing how wonderful their parents were and the varying ways the neighborhood doesn't look the same anymore.

Mario shared about the nervousness he felt walking across the bridge over Alamito Creek, especially at night because it doesn't have sidewalks. He recalled a fond memory of seeing lit candles left on the bridge as an ofrenda. He would see them all around town, in fact. The small driving bridge was built when Mario was a boy, but prior to that if it rained, those living in Sal Si Puedes would be stuck, hence the origin of its given name — "get out while you can."

The only time the siblings spoke with real reverence was when talking about the passing of their father Manuel. He suffered from a heart attack



Amalia Razo, Lisa Fuentes, Amelia Chavez, Mario Acosta, Frances Rodriguez and Elida Ontiveroz pose together in the backyard of their childhood home in Marfa, Texas.

in 1999. Their mother would pass many years later in 2013. Amelia, the oldest sibling, shared a moment between her and Manuel at the hospital. He held her hand and spoke to her directly, "I spanked you didn't I?" "I said, 'Yes, Dad.'" She paused as she was struggling to hold back tears. "He said, 'I'm really sorry,' and then squeezed my hand hard." She wept more as she added, "It had stuck with him his whole life." He had only spanked her one time, so she remembered it clearly. As a young girl, Amelia had refused to leave the car when being dropped off at her grandmother's house. Her parents were taking only her sister Elida to the movies — Elida was often a sick child and it took awhile for the family to afford the proper treatment and care. As the big sister, Amelia was afraid to leave Elida's side, which was the reason she wanted to go to the movies too. But her parents didn't understand that, they just thought she was being defiant, and it took years to rectify.

After our time together, they walked with me around the house showing me the very specific place Maria hung their exorbitant amount of socks to dry, where the garden was made, the clothesline they used as a volleyball net, the place where there had been a secret door to the house behind them as well as later on a secret door between their grandmother's house and the house next door where one of the sister's lived briefly, the bench the neighbor sat rolling his cigarettes every night, the place that lightning hit the street in front of the house, and where the goats did laps for practice, among many other special spots. After giving some suggestions for where to eat, and doing my best to explain the eclectic decor at Casita Bar, I asked how they felt about the changes in Marfa. Lisa answered quite simply "Really, I'm just glad this town still exists."

For more stories with The Acosta Siblings, visit the link below.

Hannah Gentiles is a photographer and trained social worker who has lived in Presidio County since 2015. She currently runs "Texture Presidio," a photo essay-based storytelling project, and splits her time between Marfa and Presidio. To find out more about Texture Presidio and her photography visit https://www.hannahgentiles.com/texturepresidio or ig:texturepresidio

Los hermanos Acosta

Fotos y Texto por HANNAH GENTILES

Texture Presidio utiliza el arte de la fotografía y la narración de historias para explorar y resaltar las texturas y las historias que hacen que el condado de Presidio y el paisaje desértico circundante sean hermosos, ordinarios y únicos. Cada columna contará con una nueva persona, lugar o evento.

Cuando eran niños que crecían en las décadas de 1950 y 1960 en el pequeño pueblo de Marfa, Texas, los cinco hermanos Acosta aprendieron a ser creativos. Amelia, Elida, Frances, Mario y Lisa, con una diferencia de edad de 12 años, crecieron en el barrio del noreste conocido como Sal Si Puedes. Asistieron a la escuela al otro lado de la ciudad en la Escuela Blackwell. La escuela Blackwell era una escuela segregada para niños mexicoamericanos que cerró en 1965 después de que las escuelas de Marfa se integraran. Mientras que las hermanas mayores Acosta terminaron sus estudios en Blackwell, Mario y Lisa se trasladaron a la escuela pública en su octavo y segundo grado. La semana pasada, la Escuela Blackwell, restaurada como museo, se convirtió en el sitio histórico más nuevo de Estados Unidos.

Los hermanos Acosta me recibieron una tarde de principios de septiembre durante el Festival de las Luces de Marfa, satisfaciendo mis curiosidades sobre cómo fue su infancia en Marfa durante ese tiempo. Compartieron cuentos mágicos sobre la creación de un circo de patio trasero hecho con objetos encontrados en el vecindario, presentaciones para los vecinos y uso de cajas de cartón e imágenes recortadas de muñecas y muebles del catálogo de Sears para crear sus propias casas de muñecas para jugar. Elida agregó: "Éramos pobres, pero ¡ohhhh, éramos felices!". Todas las hermanas estuvieron de acuerdo con el sentimiento. Todos los días se les podía encontrar en la calle practicando juegos y todos los deportes que se te ocurran con sus vecinos, retrasando el tener que volver a entrar hasta que se apagó la última gota de luz. Los padres del vecindario también solían estar al aire libre cuidando sus exuberantes jardines y la gran cantidad de animales, lavando la ropa, trabajando en sus autos o jugando un partido de béisbol con los niños.

Durante este tiempo, la mayoría de las familias construyeron sus propias casas, generalmente con ladrillos de adobe. Muchas de estas casas de adobe se han convertido en ruinas o fueron demolidas y reemplazadas por un remolque prefabricado. Sin embargo, la familia Acosta ha podido conservar la casa de su infancia y alquilarla a inquilinos a largo plazo. A medida que los precios en Marfa aumentan drásticamente, se ha convertido en una verdadera rareza permitirse mantener la casa de su familia, además de ofrecerla como lugar de alquiler para los lugareños. Si bien los cinco hermanos se han mudado, con la excepción de una prima, Amalia Razo, quien todos coinciden en que es más como un hermano, a menudo regresan a su ciudad natal para colaborar en el mantenimiento de la casa, tratándola como una reunión familiar. El pasado fin de semana de Marfa Lights todos regresaron junto con varios otros miembros útiles de la familia para reconstruir la cerca del patio trasero y hacer algunas otras reparaciones menores, turnándose para soldar y desmalezar y trepar al techo para podar árboles.

Compartieron historias de amor joven, usando una técnica de encender la luz del porche delantero mientras el novio de Frances, David (ahora su esposo), esperaba en las viejas ruinas al otro lado de la calle, indicando que pronto saldría. Llevaron trajes cosidos a mano en sus desfiles de bienvenida en Blackwell, ya que Amelia, Elida y Frances fueron seleccionadas como "representantes de clase" para sus clases individuales de último año. Saborearon las piezas de fruta que compraban una vez a la semana en el supermercado para que les duraran más, y cuidaron más su ropa porque sabían que no iban a comprar muchas. Su madre, María, les pedía a las niñas que eligieran un vestido que les gustara de los grandes almacenes de Christopher en la ciudad, y ella misma hacía patrones con periódicos y cosía los vestidos. Recolectaron botellas de Coca-Cola que encontraron en la ciudad y las reciclaron por 5 centavos cada una. Con ese dinero comprarían dulces e irían al cine en The Palace Theatre en Highland Avenue. El cine tenía noches de cine español los miércoles que sus padres no se perderían. Durante ese tiempo, la sala de cine todavía estaba segregada. Serían escoltados a sus asientos y se les mostraría estrictamente en qué lado del teatro se les permitía sentarse. Hubo muchas risas y recuerdos mientras se turnaban para compartir sus recuerdos favoritos y describir lo maravillosos que eran sus padres y las diversas formas en que los el barrio ya no parece el mismo.

Mario compartió sobre el nerviosismo que sintió al cruzar el puente sobre Alamito Creek, especialmente de noche porque no tiene aceras. Recordó un grato recuerdo de ver velas encendidas dejadas en el puente como una ofrenda. Las vería por toda la ciudad, de hecho. El pequeño puente de conducción se construyó cuando Mario era un niño, pero antes de eso, si llovía, los que vivían en Sal Si Puedes se quedaban atrapados, de ahí el origen de su nombre: "sal mientras puedas".

La única vez que los hermanos hablaron con verdadera reverencia fue cuando hablaron sobre el fallecimiento de su padre Manuel. Sufrió un infarto en 1999. Su madre fallecería muchos años después, en 2013. Amelia, la hermana mayor, compartió un momento entre ella y Manuel en el hospital. Él tomó su mano y le habló directamente: "Te azoté, ¿no?" "Dije: 'Sí, papá'". Hizo una pausa mientras luchaba por contener las lágrimas. "Dijo: 'Lo siento mucho', y luego apretó mi mano con fuerza". Ella lloró más y agregó: "Se había quedado con él toda su vida". Él solo la había azotado una vez, así que lo recordaba claramente. Cuando era niña, Amelia se había negado a dejar el automóvil cuando la dejaban en la casa de su abuela. Sus padres solo llevaban al cine a su hermana Elida. A menudo, Elida era una niña enferma y la familia tardó un tiempo en pagar el tratamiento y la atención adecuados. Como hermana mayor, Amelia tenía miedo de alejarse de Elida, razón por la cual ella también quería ir al cine. Pero sus padres no entendieron eso, solo pensaron que ella estaba siendo desafiante y les tomó años rectificar.

Después de nuestro tiempo juntos, caminaron conmigo por la casa mostrándome el lugar muy específico en el que María colgaba su exorbitante cantidad de calcetines para secar, donde se hizo el jardín, el tendedero que usaban como red de voleibol, el lugar donde había habido un puerta secreta a la casa detrás de ellos, así como más tarde en una puerta secreta entre la casa de su abuela y la casa de al lado donde una de las hermanas vivió brevemente, el banco en el que el vecino se sentaba a liar sus cigarrillos todas las noches, el lugar donde los rayos caían en la calle frente a la casa, y donde las cabras daban vueltas para practicar, entre muchos otros lugares especiales. Después de dar algunas sugerencias sobre dónde comer y hacer lo mejor que pude para explicar la decoración ecléctica en Casita Bar, les pregunté cómo se sentían acerca de los cambios en Marfa. Lisa respondió simplemente: "De verdad, me alegro de que esta ciudad todavía exista".

Para más historias con los hermanos Acosta, visite el siguiente enlace.

Hannah Gentiles es fotógrafa y trabajadora social capacitada que vive en el condado de Presidio desde 2015. Actualmente dirige "Texture Presidio", un proyecto de narración basado en ensayos fotográficos, y divide su tiempo entre Marfa y Presidio. Para obtener más información sobre Texture Presidio y su fotografía, visite https://www.hannahgentiles.com/texturepresidio o ig:texturepresidio

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The Children's Advocacy Center of the Big Bend is very grateful to the customers and employees of the Presidio Dollar Tree Store for donations of school supplies for our program.

The generous donation has helped us to provide basic materials to 28 students in low-income households, giving these children a great start for a year of learning.

The Children's Advocacy Center of the Big Bend is a nonprofit organization serving child victims of sexual abuse and severe physical abuse in the counties of Brewster, Fort Davis, Terrell and Presidio. The CACBB conducts activities that benefit the children in the community.

Our special thanks to the manager of the Dollar Tree Store, Iliana Armendariz, who is always a supporter of the Presidio community.

Sincerely,

Shanna Spence Sullivan
Executive Director and
Guadalupe Carrera
Program Manager

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Dear Editor,

At the Bo Coffman cross-country meet this past Saturday, there were well over 300 competitors.

The varsity girls were runner-up. The varsity boys and JV boys were team champions.

The middle school boys' and girls' teams were runner-ups.

On behalf of the cross-country teams and coaches, Coach Samaniego wants to thank all the volunteers that helped make this event a successful one.

JOBS

CDL Truck Driver Job

We are seeking a dependable and efficient CDL truck driver.

Must be comfortable working independently. A clean driving record and commercial driving experience is a plus.

Dedicated Monday thru Friday route, Terlingua to Fort Stockton.

Contact Mark 432-371-2808 or Keith 512-608-3038

THE CITY OF PRESIDIO IS ACCEPTING APPLICATION FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

THIS IS A TEMPORARY POSITION OF 6-8 WEEKS ONLY WITH THE PAY OF $18 HOUR.

THIS POSITION WORKS UNDER THE GENERAL SUPERVISION OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR. CITY OF PRESIDIO IS NEEDING TWO EXPERIENCED APPLICANTS WITH WATER METER INSTALLATION OR PLUMBING KNOWLEDGE.

CANDIDATES MUST HAVE THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:
- MUST BE LEGALLY AUTHORIZED TO WORK IN THE UNITED STATES
- MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE
- VALID DRIVER LICENSE WITH A PROVEN CLEAN DRIVING RECORD
- MUST HAVE A CLEAN BACKGROUND CHECK

APPLICATION AND COMPLETE JOB DESCRIPTION AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL. A CITY OF PRESIDIO EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION IS REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE POSITION.

PLEASE SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO CITY SECRETARY-BRENDA ACUÑA, 507 W OREILLY ST, PRESIDIO, TEXAS.

MAILING ADDRESS:
CITY SECRETARY
PO BOX 1899
PRESIDIO, TX 79845

EMAIL APPLICATION: bornelas@presidiotx.us

THESE POSITIONS ARE OPEN UNTIL FILLED

PUBLIC NOTICES

The City of Marfa Parks and Recreation Development Corporation is requesting proposals for construction services for the erection of a shade structure over the playground at Travis Self Park.

Kindly visit https://cityofmarfa.com/rfps to download the Request for Proposals.

The International El

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