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

State reps introduce bills to create new port authority

By SAM KARAS
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AUSTIN — Last Friday, Eddie Morales — the Big Bend region's state representative — filed a bill that could lead to the creation of an official Presidio International Port Authority (PIPA). State Senator César Blanco filed a mirror bill in the state senate, and now local officials are waiting for results.

As one of his first major projects as county judge, Joe Portillo petitioned both the Presidio City Council and Presidio County Commissioners Court to support the creation of a port authority. PIPA would be a self-governing taxing entity that could generate money to support the bridge — which is currently owned and administered by TxDOT, subjecting all improvement projects to state approval.

The ultimate goal of the project is to grow trade on the Presidio International Bridge. Ports in El Paso and Laredo make up the bulk of cross-border trade in Texas — but as trade booms, businesses are looking for alternate routes.

"Many ports are reaching saturation, so there has to be alternative ways," Portillo said. "We're a border community too — and one that has historically been underutilized."

The county had previously funded another organization called the Presidio International Port Authority, but cut off funding in 2022. Portillo stressed that the two organizations were the same in name only. "The other one was more of an interlocal agreement — they put money in it strictly for travel," he explained.

The hypothetical new PIPA would have a board of stakeholders including city and county officials, business owners and experts in cross-border trade. In creating a port authority, PIPA will be a government enterprise, but will not institute new taxes or pull from the tax pool. "This is another entity to generate funds — not through property taxes, not through a traditional sales tax — but through a toll," he explained.

The Mexican side of the bridge currently charges a modest toll of 27 pesos to cross the bridge into the United States, but Mexico-bound vehicles don't pay anything. The subject of a toll has been thrown around — and attracted controversy — over the past decade, but was officially scrapped in 2017 when the Trump administration signed a permit for construction to begin on the bridge. "The toll makes it so that those who pass through pay

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The West Texan Media Group, LLC



Staff photo by Mary Cantrell

Marfa's Blackwell School is now one of 420+ national parks located across the United States. The site is in the process of transferring hands from local organization the Blackwell School Alliance to the National Parks Service.

Blackwell School Alliance looks ahead to historic site establishment

By MARY CANTRELL
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MARFA — Alumni, elected officials and community members gathered last weekend at the Blackwell School for a festive community block party to celebrate the site's designation as a National Historic Site.

"The Blackwell School is joining the ranks of places like the Statue of Liberty, the National Mall, Big Bend and Yosemite," said incoming Blackwell School Alliance President Daniel Hernandez. "Today, the Blackwell School takes its rightful place as a fixture of American history."

The block party also represented the passing of the baton from the Blackwell School Alliance, a group originally formed in 2007 with the goal of preserving the building and creating a museum, to the National Park Service, which will soon take over management of the site. Hernandez said locals will soon become accustomed to seeing the NPS rangers, now members of the Marfa community.

"They're going to help us tell the story of Blackwell and help put together what this site should look like for those future generations that are going to be here long after we're all gone," said Hernandez.

To that end, the NPS has allocated $265,000 in funding to go towards the maintenance of the Blackwell School for fiscal year 2024. The funds will cover basic facility needs as well as initial costs towards establishing the park, said David Larson, superintendent of the nearby Fort Davis National Historic Site, who is one of four staff members taking the lead on the Blackwell project on behalf of NPS. The funds will cover the hiring of a site manager "to provide leadership and supervision of park operations," per the NPS budget, and a park guide "to be responsible for the day-to-day activities of the new park."

Larson said Blackwell is receiving start-up funds somewhat faster than other new NPS sites, partly due to its inclusion in an initiative to increase representation of underserved communities on public lands and "rapidly initiate unit start up" of those sites.

"The priority of getting funding for this park — there's been a lot of support for it. The support is seen right there in writing: $265,000," said Larson.

In addition to $265,00 in start-up funds, a key next step for the Blackwell School NHS will be

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After court ruling, Big Bend Reproductive Coalition looks to establish abortion fund

By ALLEGRA HOBBS
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BIG BEND REGION — The Big Bend Reproductive Coalition is moving towards establishing an abortion fund, which would provide financial support for Big Bend residents traveling across state lines for the procedure.

The coalition, primarily an information-sharing initiative, is making the pivot to funding in the wake of a federal judge's ruling that indicates abortion funds in Texas are likely safe from prosecution under state law. It's an enormous relief, said BBRC co-founder Lisa Kettyle, as the group has always hoped to establish a fund that could cover travel expenses as well as medical expenses for locals seeking an abortion.

"The goal is to fund procedures or medications, to fund travel, to fund if somebody has to miss work in order to travel — anything that they would need that would impede them being able to access services out of state," said Kettyle. "And that's not something we've been able to do because the laws have been so chaotic."

With the recent ruling, however, "it was pretty clear to us that the way is clear to be able to do that legally," said Kettyle.

The lawsuit in question had been brought by abortion advocacy groups against Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and several Texas prosecutors in an attempt to preserve their ability to fund out-of-state abortions, fearing prosecution amidst statewide bans. In February, U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman dismissed Paxton from the suit, stating he had no authority to enforce Texas' laws out of state, and filed a temporary injunction barring prosecutors in eight counties from pursuing charges against anyone who helps someone access abortion outside of Texas.

Following the ruling, as reported by *The Texas Tribune*, some abortion advocacy groups in Texas have resumed existing abortion funds they had put on hold.

For the Big Bend Reproductive Coalition, which just launched last summer in response to the anticipated reversal of Roe v. Wade, the ruling paves the way for the group's first foray into establishing such a fund. As it conferences with its legal counsel to finalize an organizational structure, the group will also seek to establish a legal defense fund that would exist to support anyone sued under the Texas "bounty" law, SB 8, which allows citizens to sue those who provide

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Presidio ISD leadership petitions City Council for exemption to dark sky ordinance

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — At last week's meeting, Presidio ISD leadership made the case to City Council that they should be exempt from the city's dark sky ordinance. Ruben Armendariz, the district's facilities and operations director, cited safety concerns as he respectfully pushed back against the call to replace outdoor lighting at the Presidio High School campus with lower-intensity bulbs.

Back in 2021, Presidio City Council approved an ordinance that would overhaul the city's municipal lighting — and offer incentives to homeowners to switch out their lighting — in order to preserve Presidio's pristine night skies. Experts and city leaders stressed that the change in lighting wouldn't sacrifice safety, but would instead have a multitude of benefits for local wildlife as well as their human counterparts.

The initiative came just a few months before the region was designated the largest International Dark Sky Reserve in the world. The local tourism industry is built, in part, on the Big Bend's spectacular stars. Even in the heart of the city, Presidians can still see the Milky Way — unlike 80% of Americans, whose night skies are polluted by light.

But Armendariz argued last week that the new lights simply weren't enough to keep kids safe at the high school. The school's outdoor lighting is currently running at 5000 Kelvins — a scale that measures the color, or temperature, of light — while the new dark sky-friendly municipal lights are 2200 Kelvins.

"We feel it won't be enough for our parking lot, where we have incidents with immigrants, animals and so forth," said Armendariz, who did not respond to inquiries from *The Big Bend Sentinel* about the alleged incidents.

PISD School Board President Ethel Barriga and Superintendent Ray Vasquez also attended the meeting to show their support, explaining that the high school campus is adjacent to a series of fields that run all the way to the river — prompting the concerns about human and animal traffic in the dark. PISD students involved in extracurriculars sometimes get back into town in the middle of the night, making it difficult to schedule lighting in advance. "We're not trying to be uncooperative, but our number one priority is the safety of our kids," Vasquez said.

Upgrading the Presidio High School parking lot

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Jeff Davis County appoints Glen Eisen as new attorney

By MARY CANTRELL
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FORT DAVIS — In a meeting on Monday, Jeff Davis County commissioners appointed Glen Eisen as the new county attorney.

Eisen is filling in for the unexpired term of Teresa Todd, who served as the county attorney since January 2013. Todd officially retired from the position on February 28, prompting a search for her replacement.

Todd exited the county attorney role in the middle of a four-year term, meaning Eisen will hold the role until December 31, 2024. The elected position will next be on the ballot in the March 2024 primaries, which have a November 11-December 11, 2023 filing deadline.

Eisen was appointed as the new county attorney Monday, with all commissioners with the exception of Royce Laskoskie voting in favor of the appointment. He was sworn in by Judge Curtis Evans on Tuesday.

Evans said after launching a local search for the position — applicants must live in Jeff Davis County — Eisen was the only applicant out of two who met the residency requirement.

Eisen, who grew up in Hamilton County, Texas, will be coming out of retirement to take on the county attorney role. He holds an undergraduate degree and master's degree in business administration from Texas Tech, as well as a law degree from the University of Houston Law Center.

Before Eisen moved full time to Jeff Davis County in March 2020, he worked primarily in Houston. His law practice focused on tax controversy, state taxation of interstate businesses, federal taxes, as well as working with business executives in an advisory capacity.

"The county attorney job is quite a bit different," said Eisen. "Although, legal work has a great deal in common. Legal concepts, they span pretty much all the specialties. The experience I've had, while it's not directly point to this job, it's certainly very helpful."

Judge Evans, having acted without a county attorney since Todd's retirement in February, said Eisen coming on board would help him and the county commissioners with vital legal council services, keeping up with general business, maintaining compliance and more.

"With everything going on in the county, we are in need of an attorney for our direction, in order to not spend so much time looking up what is legal to move forward," said Evans.

"Because of his expertise, he'll be looking out for us to make sure where we're following deadlines and guidelines," he added.

An impending federal audit, customary for counties that spend more than $750,000 in grant funds per fiscal year, was another reason Evans said it was important to have the role filled.

The county and the Fort Davis Water Supply Corporation also recently entered into settlement agreement discussions regarding a lawsuit brought against the entities by Fort Davis ISD regarding water storage facilities on the district's property.

The day after Eisen's appointment he was already in the process of getting "fed through a firehose of all of the things that are going on in the county," said Evans.

Eisen said he had a lot to learn,

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Blackwell School Alliance

(Continued from page 1)

the development of a foundation document, said Larson, a planning document which will outline the park's purpose, themes, interpretive and public messaging and more.

This past January, an architect and NPS maintenance management specialist visited the Blackwell School to assess the building for any structural emergencies, but found nothing that required immediate attention, said Larson. However, a five-year outline regarding infrastructure issues will be developed. He said there were a "spectrum of opportunities" relating to the visitor experience and accessibility of the site — including restrooms, lighting, sidewalks, and more — that will be assessed within the next year.

"There's a lot of brainstorming, a lot of scoping and planning, I should say, to do with respect to how people move through the building," said Larson. "What's the interpretive look inside the building? Is anything going to change at all?"

The three-room adobe schoolhouse was originally built in 1909, and a band hall was added on at some point before the school's closure in 1965. The over 100-year-old structure has been through several alterations in the past, and the NPS may work to bring the building back to its original form, rebuilding adobe walls or the belltowner that once topped the structure, for example, said Larson.

"How did the school look in the 19-teens or 1920s? What is the experience that we really want the visitor to have?" said Larson. "Do we want to be able to ring a bell at 8 a.m. to say, 'Hey, this is how the kids were told to come in from the playground'?"

"How do you replicate the bigger picture within the current footprint of Blackwell?" he continued.

Those questions will involve entities such as the Texas Historic Commission as well as Blackwell alumni, he said. Regarding the artifacts stored inside the school's walls, a document referred to by NPS as "scope of collections" will also be generated with the help of museum specialists, outlining a "period of significance" — or the time during which the site operated as a school — and artifact donations the Blackwell School NHS may accept in the future.

"Each model is different, each park is different. The experts will listen to the community and then come up with an approved plan for displaying items," said Larson. "Things that are [currently] in the Blackwell School — most of those, all of them, probably — will be accepted into the collection."

Before those questions can be resolved, the site, currently the property of the Marfa Independent School District, must be transferred to the National Park Service. But that transaction has hit a snag lately, said Superintendent Oscar Aguero. The way the school board's current policies and procedures for selling and acquiring property are written, the district will be required to put the property out for bid, said Aguero.

"It says that we have to put it on the open market, we have to advertise it and all that. Unfortunately, the fear is that someone comes in and puts a higher bid than the park's," said Aguero.

To avoid that scenario, the district is working to develop a points system, rather than award the property to the highest bidder, similar to how they evaluate construction projects, said Aguero, to ensure the Federal Parks Coalition — which will purchase the property on behalf of NPS, then donate it — gets the bid.

As the future of the schoolhouse comes into focus, transitioning from the hands of the Blackwell School Alliance to the purview of NPS, alliance members are left to reassess their role in the site's operations. The alliance worked for years to preserve the site and was instrumental in shepherding the historic site designation.

"The Blackwell School being established closes a really, really long chapter of advocacy and hard work by people from the Marfa community and our partners throughout the state and the country who have helped make this happen," said Hernandez.

Members distributed brochures at Saturday's block party addressing the issue. Moving forward, the alliance will likely shift towards more of a friends group model for the park as it works to preserve the Blackwell story, said Mario Rivera, acting president of the alliance. Friends groups typically engage in fundraising efforts, but the group will likely take part in community education and outreach as well. The alliance is currently deciding whether to rent an office, raise money in order to hire an executive director, and undergo a new website design.

The brochure also solicited new board members, as former alliance president and director Gretel Enck and longtime volunteers Kathleen and David Walstrom will no longer be participating.

Enck announced she would step down from her leadership role in February, citing a potential conflict of interest with her day job as an administrator for the Fort Davis National Historic Site. On Saturday, Enck was presented with an award by Rivera, who thanked her for her years of service as the organization's leader and for her work in making the historic site designation a reality.



Staff photo by Mary Cantrell

Blackwell School alumni gathered for a group photo at last Saturday's block party to commemorate the recent National Historic Site designation of the segregated three-room adobe schoolhouse which served Mexican American students from 1909 to 1965.

Amidst the much-anticipated change and looming questions, participants in Saturday's block party festivities were able to bask in food, music and community as the long-sought designation was celebrated.

Attendees sat protected from the afternoon sun underneath tents decorated with colorful papel picado, their lunch plates full of Mexican food from Angel's restaurant. Mariachi Santa Cruz and Hector Sanchez Band provided music, and Ballet Folklórico danced to "La Negra," "Las Alazanas," "El Jarabe Tapatío" and "El Huizache." Local organizations like the Friends of the Ruidosa Church and the Marfa and Presidio County Museum tabled alongside the U.S. National Park Service and the National Parks Conservation Association. Loteria and exhibits took place inside of the schoolhouse.

Rivera said he was pleased with the turnout for the special occasion and to see people from "all walks of life" in attendance. As a Blackwell alumni, the get together was particularly meaningful, he said.

"Seventy-three years ago I was in this room behind me in the first grade. Seventy-three years later, here I am again at the Blackwell School grounds celebrating this National Historic site designation," said Rivera. "I think it's quite an accomplishment. I'm proud of the members of the alliance. I'm proud of the people of the community that helped us do this, I can't see anything but a win-win situation."

Dark sky ordinance

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has been a hot topic among district officials for awhile — at a February school board meeting, Armendariz and Vasquez weighed several options for making the campus safer, including fencing around the back of the school and more extensive lighting and surveillance. "Lighting is — for me — a priority," Vasquez said.

McDonald Observatory Dark Skies Specialist Stephen Hummel attended the meeting alongside Big Bend Conservation Alliance Executive Director Shelley Bernstein. "We want to do what's right for the school and I hope we can find a compromise," Bernstein said.

Hummel gave a brief presentation from his work as a dark sky expert and educator to address some of the district's concerns. He explained that state health and safety standards surrounding security lighting are based on research by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES).

The IES uses a unit of measurement called a "lux" to quantify how to best illuminate outdoor spaces weighing both safety and light pollution. A "lux" is one lumen per square meter, measuring how intense the human eye perceives light on an illuminated surface.

IES recommendations cap parking lot illumination between 5 and 10 lux — up to 30 can be used in "high security" contexts. The Presidio High School parking lot is currently estimated to measure 100 lux, which is approximately the level of illumination outdoors on a cloudy day.

Those standards come down to biology — contrary to popular belief, brighter lights at night actually make it harder to see in the dark because our eyes automatically make up the difference. Bright lights cast a glare that makes it more difficult to see beyond an illuminated area. "Dimmer light than you would expect allows you to see in the shadows," Hummel explained.

The IES also recommends that the emphasis of lighting design be on the uniformity of light — in other words, consistent spacing around a particular lot or building — not necessarily on brightness or color. "Uniformity provides greater leverage in promoting the perception of safety," reads a 2020 report from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. "Designing for uniformity presents a strategy with great leverage for saving energy."

Hummel previously worked with Alpine ISD to design dark sky-friendly security lighting for their parking lot, which rings in at 10 lux and currently uses a third of the electricity that Presidio ISD's lighting does. Alpine ISD also reported no complaints from students, parents and staff. "Parking lot lighting is the kind of thing nobody notices when it is good — plenty complain when it is bad, so I view the lack of negative feedback as a good sign," he said.

Superintendent Vasquez, however, argued that Hummel's research does not apply to Presidio. "We're totally different communities, and deal with different safety concerns than folks up north," he said. "They're not apples to apples."

Councilmember Arian Velázquez-Ornelas also brought up the fact that the district's current lights not only violate the dark skies ordinance, but also violate the State Health and Safety Code. "The majority of [state-funded] entities have to abide by this legislation," she explained.

The Health and Safety Code statute she cited requires state-funded entities to balance "minimum illuminance adequate for the intended purpose" and to give "full consideration … to energy conservation, reducing glare, minimizing light pollution, and preserving the natural night environment."

Council ultimately decided to take no action. All parties involved in the discussion could agree that Presidio High School needs new parking lot lighting, but exactly what that will look like is yet to be determined. "Even if Council were to grant an exemption, we'd still have to do something about the lighting," Hummel said.

Abortion fund

(Continued from page 1)

or "aid and abet" an abortion and collect $10,000 if successful. (Notably, the law does not specify whether that aiding and abetting would have to take place within Texas state lines or not, leaving it open to interpretation).

"If somebody were to get arrested, if a law were to change, if the loose interpretations of the law lead to someone having legal issues, we want to make sure that there's financial support as best we can," said Kettyle.

Keeping tabs on the shifting legal landscape around abortion in Texas — and nationwide — will be instrumental as the organization decides how to move forward. Lawmakers in other red states are pursuing legislation aimed at prohibiting citizens from obtaining out-of-state abortion services. The matter, in Texas and in those other states, is not fully settled, legally.

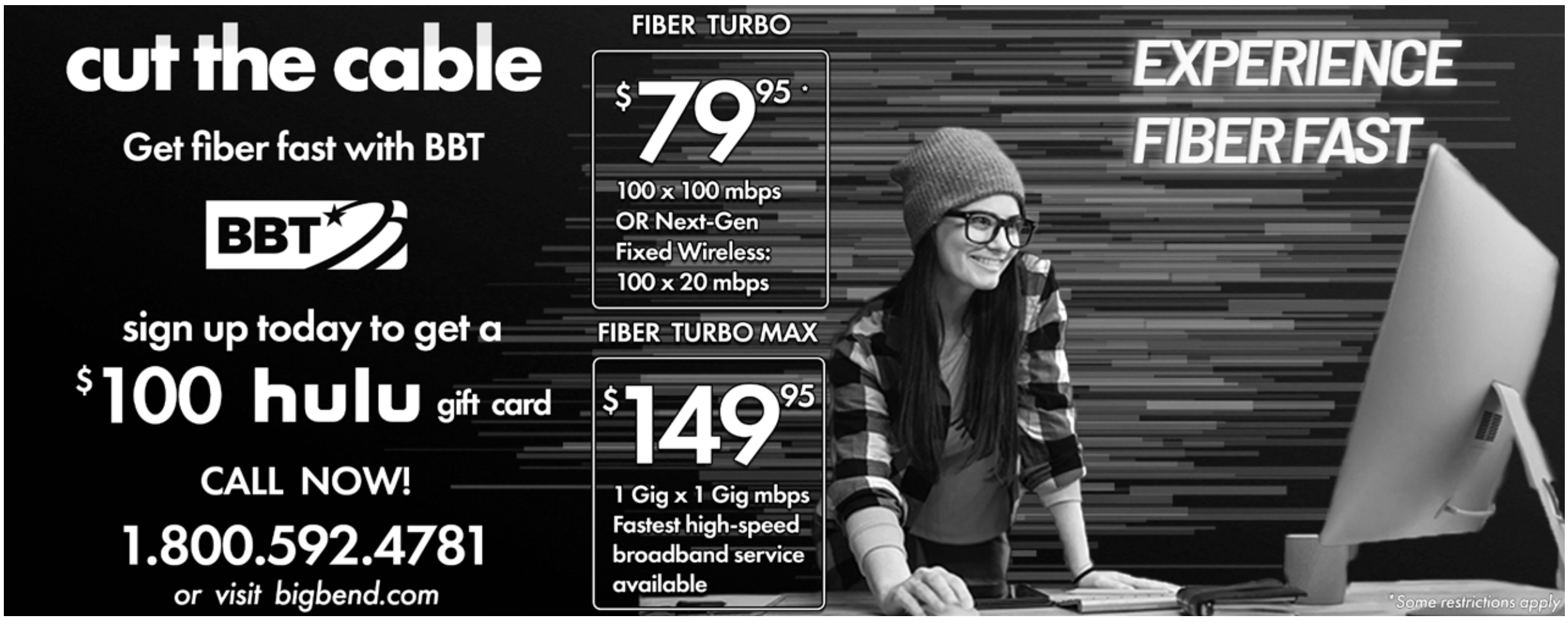
John Seago, head of the advocacy group Texas Right to Life, noted in an interview with Marfa Public Radio that the temporary injunction handed down in February's ruling applied only to prosecutors in eight counties. "You have several DAs out there that are not affected by that injunction," Seago told MPR.

Central to BBRC's mission is keeping citizens informed on abortion laws — on what exactly is and is not legal in the state amidst a confusing back-and-forth in the courts. Most recently, the group sent out a dispatch on the current legal battle around mifepristone, one of two drugs taken to end a pregnancy — while a Texas judge ruled that the FDA had improperly approved the drug two decades ago, the Department of Justice appealed the decision, and the Supreme Court stepped in and ruled that the medication should remain available while its fate is battled out in the courts.

It is already illegal to provide mifepristone in Texas, but Kettyle clarified that law is focused on providers, like doctors and pharmacists, not anyone taking the medication.

"It is not illegal to consume the medication," she said. "It's not illegal to have it in your medicine cabinet. It's not illegal to receive it through the mail — though Texas says it is, they can't control the federal mail — and it's not illegal to go to another state to receive it."

This Saturday, the coalition will host a community picnic in Alpine's Kokernot Park, where food, drinks and educational literature will be provided. The event will kick off at 6 p.m. and go until 8:30 p.m.



Port Authority

(Continued from page 1)

their fair share," Portillo explained.

Discussions in local meetings about the new port authority have quickly snowballed into action. Portillo met with both of Presidio's state reps shortly after statements of support were signed by the city and county governments, and both offices introduced their own bills on Friday.

Portillo said that the energy around the bills on the state level was positive — the senator, the representative and the county judge were all born and raised on the border, offering a unique perspective. "Senator Blanco is a border kid, I'm a border kid, Representative Gonzales is a border kid," he said. "We grew around entryways into Mexico and understand the importance of being able to manage that and help it grow."

The bills' official language designates the new PIPA as a "special district" and will be introduced as a local law. Despite the relatively small scope, Portillo anticipates that there will be support across the state — transport of goods by truck and rail could someday connect Presidio on a daily basis to San Antonio, Dallas and beyond. "I really see this as a positive from one end of Texas to the other," he said.

Despite movement in the Legislature, there's likely to be long stretches of sitting and waiting ahead for county officials. The bills have been forwarded to committee, and it will likely be a few weeks before they hit the floors of their respective chambers. The current legislative session ends in May — if the bill is passed, it will take effect in September.

Senator Blanco felt that because the bill was requested and submitted at the tail end of the session, there was a chance it might not become law — meaning that formal request for the designation of a port authority would have to wait two more years to be resubmitted.

His office stressed that — no matter how this session shakes out — it wouldn't be the end of negotiations about the future of the Presidio Port of Entry. "I look forward to continuing the conversation with local stakeholders and TxDOT to determine the need and feasibility of creating a new port authority and the impact it may have on the region and local economy," he wrote in a statement to *The Big Bend Sentinel*.

The rest of the details — who will sit on the board, how a toll will be implemented, if ownership of the bridge should be transferred — are still up in the air. "We're trying to be as patient as we can," Portillo said.

Glen Eisen

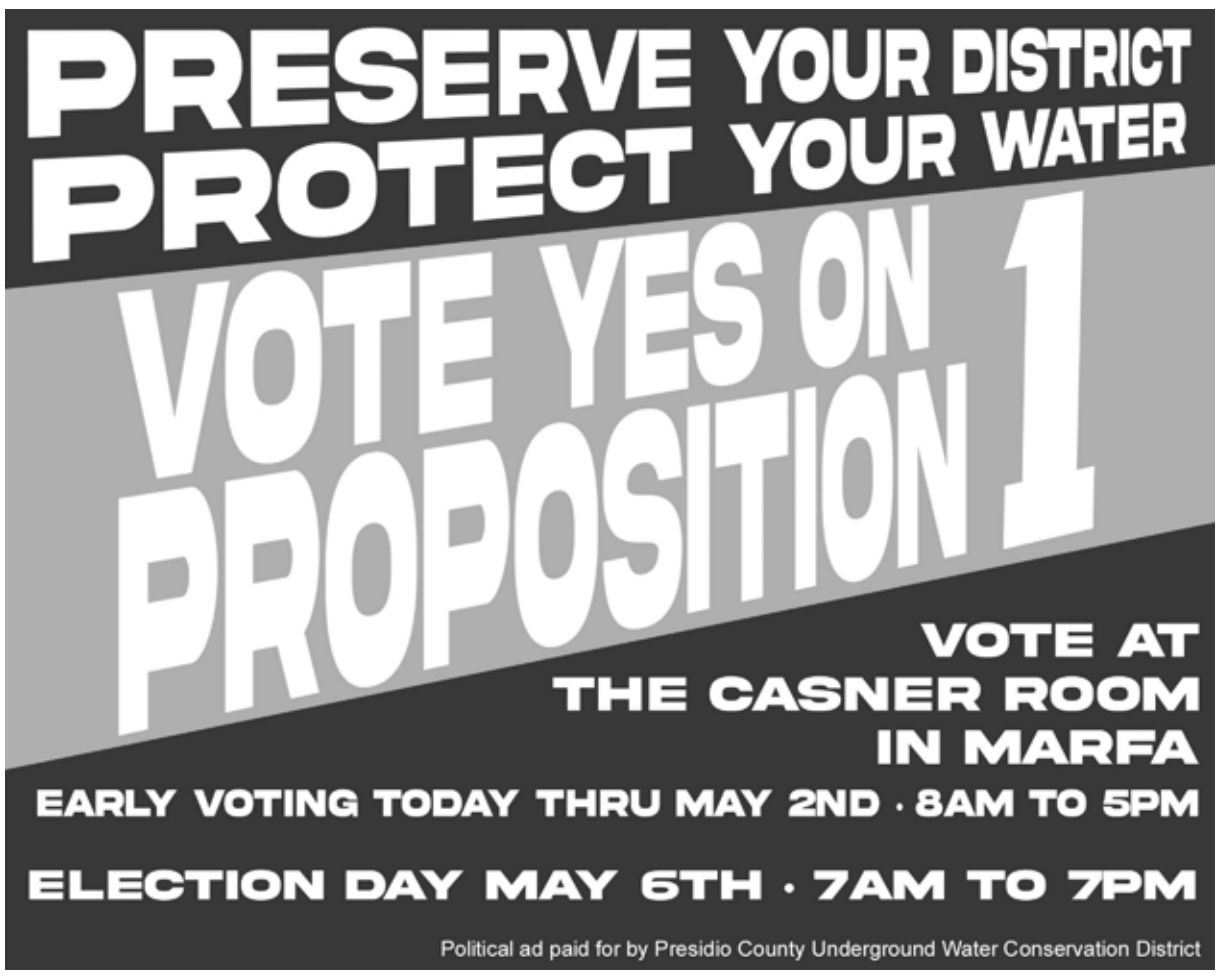
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but is looking forward to getting up to speed and learning from fellow county employees.

"It's exciting. Quite honestly, I'm having fun," said Eisen. "I'm approaching it all with an open mind. I'm interested in what everyone has to say."

When reached for comment, Todd said "it was a pleasure to serve" and she was enjoying semi-retirement, still living in the area and working in private practice in real estate and probate.

Todd also resigned from her long-held position as Marfa City Attorney in October of last year, citing her journey of recovery following an arrest for driving while intoxicated.











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ELECTION 2023

Rick Stephens for Alpine Ward 5 City Council Q&A



There are two contested races in Alpine for the general election on May 6th with early voting already underway. Because of the tragic and untimely passing of Jerry Johnson, there are some who felt that the position of the Alpine City Council Ward 5 position might no longer be contested. The fact is, there are two candidates on the ballot and based on the number of paid political ads it would be hard to say that the Ward 5 position is not contested. Those asking you to vote for Jerry want you to make that choice so that the City Council can decide who represents Ward 5. Below is the reason I chose to run for City Council and why I believe I'm the right candidate for the job.

Why am I running? The decision to become a candidate to represent Ward 5 this election cycle was not an easy one. Having served nearly 7 years, I "termed out" in 2021 and Elane and I had other plans. Between us, we have 5 children (1 passed) and 13 grandchildren. I continue to serve on two national not-for-profit foundation boards, one of which awarded $10 million in scholarships this year. Another supports over 4 million primary and secondary students with state of the art technology to improve their educational outcomes. As a Native American, I continue to be involved win supporting Native students at 220 colleges and universities. Elane and I also support parents with key information to help them raise successful children. And, last by not least, supporting Sul Ross raise funds for scholarships and capital improvements is important to us and the community.

While, we're busy and continue to do what we love, like you, I see how many communities across the country were impacted by the pandemic and most recently with the fiscal challenges created by inflation. Together we are all challenged where there are no easy solutions.

In the 7 years I served to represent Ward 5, the city debt was cut in half and $2.5 million was set aside to support water security and water-water treatment all while maintaining a balanced budget and no increase in the property tax rate. Roads were improved, yet have a long way to go. We opened the dialogue at council meetings and held executive sessions to the bare minimum.

Last year, the Council and City Manager put in place a series of strategic planning meetings aimed working with all of us to identify the key opportunities where the city should focus its critical resources in terms of money, people and focus. I participated in a number of those sessions and applaud the city for the actions. Not surprising, the issues of infrastructure (roads, water security, and wastewater treatment) and taking care of employees bubbled up as the most important items to work. There were many other areas that came from those meetings, including a focus on parks and recreation, the need for improved city business systems and processes, but the top two areas needing addition were not a surprise.

The strategic planning meetings will play nicely into the fiscal budget planning process which will begin soon.

In order for there to be a plan that we can all support and pay for, I believe two things need to happen.

First is a set of what most call key performance indicators about how we're doing as a city on a regular basis. As an example, knowing the simple facts about the number of roads we have and their status, the number of water wells and underground pipes that need to be replaced, the status of our water wells. We hear about the challenges in keeping employees in the city, so knowing the retention rates, why people come to work for the City and why they leave is important.

Second, I believe communities thrive when diverse opinions and perspectives are shared and discussed. We may not always agree, but the willingness to listen and share ideas is important. It's one of the reasons I have paid for the radio show on KVLF for nearly 8 years. It's great that the City is also now doing a show. That said, I would contend that Information needs to flow both ways so that as we interact in the community we can share ideas. I've been firmly committed to that concept throughout might life.

We have real opportunities and challenges in Alpine and we are so much better when we all know where we stand with key performance indicators and when we can openly share in the discussions about solutions to the problems that face us.

While it's been pointed out that I'm a transplant to Alpine, most of us would fall into that category. We chose Alpine as home because Elane's family has been here for over 7 decades and we like the rural environment and community. Like you, I want to help make Alpine a better place to live, work, learn and play.

I appreciate your consideration and your vote.

Rick Stephens

Paid for by Rick Stephens for Alpine Ward 5 City Council

Opinion

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Blackwell School Alliance, I would like to thank everyone who made our 2023 Blackwell Block Party such a success. After a COVID-19 hiatus, we're back with an annual celebration worthy of our heritage, our community, our elders and our future. As usual, our local community leaders and businesses rallied to help make our celebration extra special.

Thank you to our speakers: Mario Rivera, Blackwell School Alliance president; Jalen Falcon, Office of U.S. Representative Tony Gonzales; Presidio County Commissioner Brenda Silva Bentley; Marfa City Councilmember Raul Lara; Marfa ISD Superintendent Oscar Aguero; Fort Davis National Historic Site Superintendent David Larson; and National Parks Conservation Association Regional Director Cary Dupuy.

Thank you to our community partners: Friends of the Ruidosa Church, Marfa and Presidio County Museum, NPCA, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, and Fort Davis National Historic Site for enriching the day for our guests.

Thank you to the people who brought the fun: Mariachi Santa Cruz, Marfa ISD Ballet Folklorico, Grupo Ambición, Marfa Studio of Arts, Soccorito Mena, and Laura with Marfa Spirit Co. Yummy thanks to Angel and her crew from Angel's restaurant for feeding us well, and thanks to Jessi Silva for baking her delicious biscochos for us to share.

Thank you to our generous local and regional businesses for making loteria extra crazy fun with prizes: Aster, Big Bend Coffee Roasters, Bite Me Marfa, Bordo, Cactus Liquor, Communitie, Convenience West, Desert Air Motel - Sanderson, El Cosmico, Filth Marfa, Frama, Front Street Books, The Get Go, Marfa Brands, Marfa Coffee Co., Marfa Film Shop, Marfa Line, Marfa Meats, Marfa Museum and Thrift Store, McCoys, Moonlight Gemstones, Morrison True Value, Ocotillo Botanicals, Para Llevar, The Sentinel, Texas Rose, and Trans-Pecos Realty Management.

Thank you to everyone who helped with time and energy in so many ways to make this day possible and wonderful — especially Audrey Herrera, David Long, John Lujan, Trey Gerfers and planners Gretel Enck and Martha Stafford.

And as always, most of all, thank you to our alumni and families for keeping the stories alive and believing in the preservation of the Blackwell School. We are in your debt, and we hope to make you proud.

Muchísimas gracias,

Daniel O. Hernandez
Blackwell School Alliance Board of Directors

• • •

Editor:

My name is Kevin Urbanczyk. I would like to encourage Presidio County residents to vote "Yes" on Proposition 1. I am not a resident of Presidio County, but I have lived and worked in adjacent Brewster County for nearly four decades. I have spent much of that time studying and teaching about the fascinating geology and hydrology of the Big Bend region. One of my focal points has been the hydrogeology of the region including the primary water sources for Presidio county: the Igneous and the West Texas Bolson aquifers. One thing that I can confidently state is that we don't really understand the details of the Igneous Aquifer. We simply do not have enough data to understand this important water resource which is the source of water for the city of Marfa.

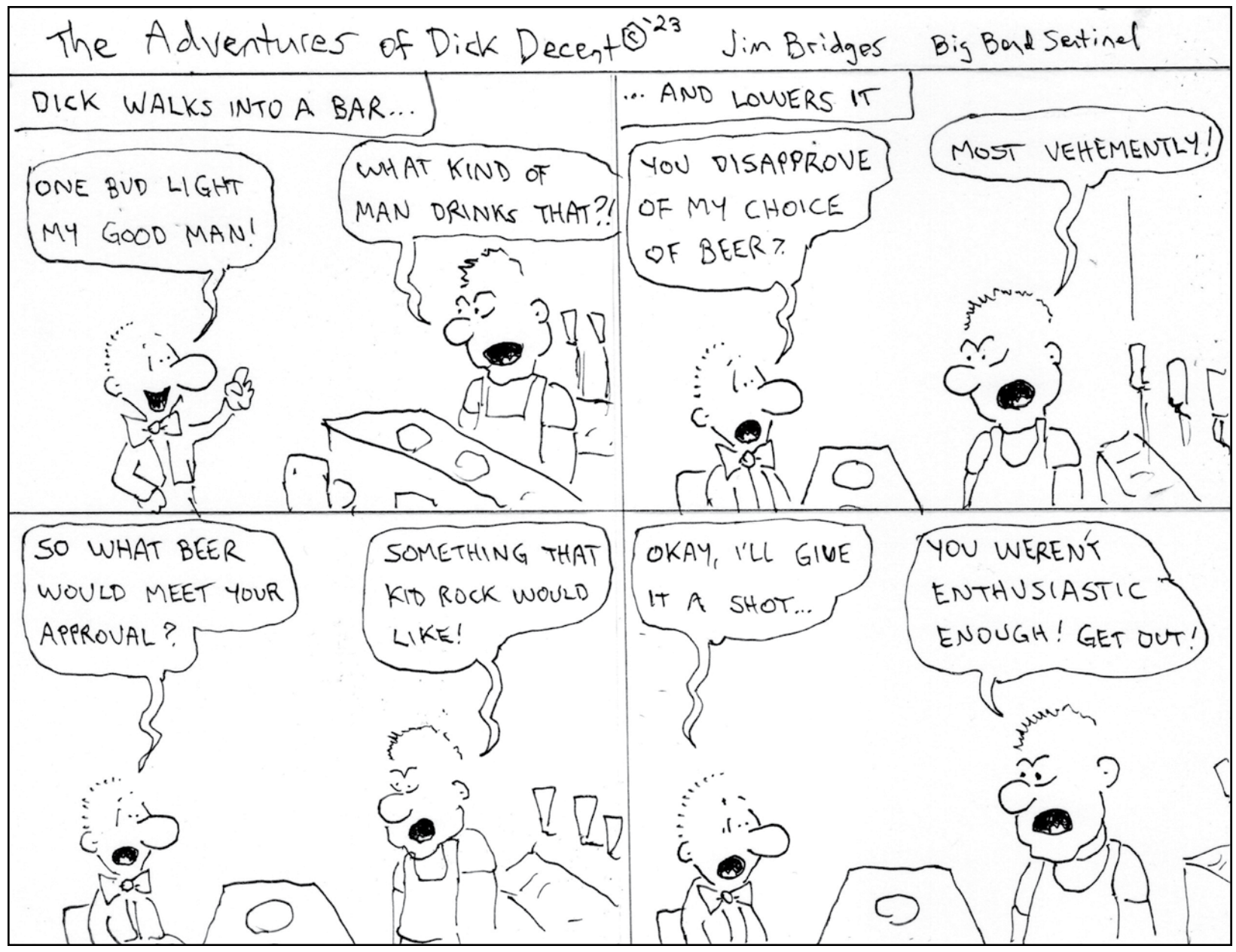
With projected increases in population and uncertainties regarding impacts of climate change on water resources, we need to improve our understanding of groundwater to assure that this important resource will last into the future. This is why I am interested in Proposition 1. The staff of the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District (PCUWCD) have done an incredible job in initiating some basic groundwater monitoring in the county. They have recently received upwards of $160,000 in grant funding from the United States Geological Survey National Groundwater Monitoring program and from private foundation sources. These funds are targeted to add to the groundwater monitoring network. To me, this indicates the desire of the PCUWCD staff to not just receive funding from the county but to actively pursue additional funds. Grant funding like this is difficult to obtain and is mostly targeted for monitoring related equipment. The day-to-day operation of the PCUWCD requires a separate funding source, and you can help guarantee that vital source by voting "Yes" on Proposition 1. I feel that it is important for the PCUWCD to continue keeping a careful watch on the groundwater resources of the county.

Kevin Urbanczyk
Brewster County resident

We want to hear from YOU!

- Letters to the editor 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

Standing up for Texas' farmers and ranchers

By SENATOR CÉSAR J. BLANCO

As the topics of immigration and border security continue to be contentious issues, the consequences of border crime go beyond politics. One group that has been particularly affected by border-related crimes is farmers and ranchers in Texas.

Across Far West Texas, I've listened to many stories from ranchers and farmers who have experienced significant and costly damage from trafficking and smuggling activity. Many times, the damage goes far beyond property damage. Some of the biggest problems relating to this issue are fence damage and the costs and time needed to repair them, livestock escaping caused by fence damage, crop damage, and rising insurance costs from landowners making claims for these events. These repairs cost upwards of $100,000, which is especially steep for many farmers and ranchers who are already in a pinch. Even those with insurance for their property find themselves at a loss as the damages caused by border crimes are oftentimes not covered.

For many farmers and ranchers, this leaves them with no other option but to turn to their hard-earned savings to cover repairs.

This issue has become a serious concern for many farmers and ranchers in Texas, posing a serious threat to their livelihoods and operations. Unfortunately, the situation is only worsening. According to the Senate Committee on Border Security Interim report, property damage caused by border-related crimes is a widespread issue affecting not only border communities but interior counties.

In response to the situation, I filed and passed SB1133 with bipartisan support to establish a program under the Office of the Attorney General to help farmers and ranchers who suffer property damage as a result of border-related trafficking and smuggling crimes.

Senate Bill 1133 is modeled after the Crime Victim's Compensation (CVC) program to help victims and their immediate families with the financial costs of crime. However, farmers and ranchers who have experienced property damage caused by border-related crimes are not eligible under the CVC program. We should acknowledge these farmers and ranchers as victims of crime, and they should be compensated as such.

While we need Congress to step up and address our broken immigration and border security system, Senate Bill 1133 is a great bipartisan demonstration by the state of Texas to support its citizens and victims. Farmers and ranchers work tirelessly day in and day out to put food on the table for families across America. I am proud to lead this fight to make sure our ranchers and farmers are supported and not left to fend for themselves!

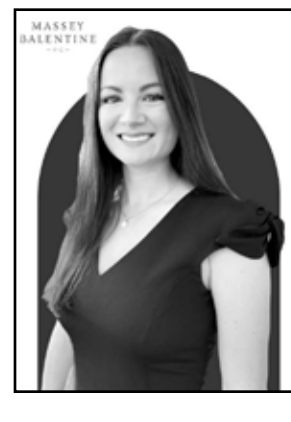
Senator César J. Blanco proudly represents the people of Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis and Presidio counties in the Texas Senate.

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Community

Marfa ISD Prom 2023



Photo by Adele Powers

This year's prom queen and king were seniors Aubrie Aguilar and Nathan Peña.



Photo by Adele Powers

The junior class, who organized this year's Golden Gala-themed prom, attends the annual event.



Photo by Adele Powers

Sophomores Memo Gaurdiola and Jessica Reyes attend last weekend's Golden Gala prom.

Moms vs. Lady Horns softball game promotes family, need for adult recreational sports

MARFA — Marfa's softball moms and supporters teamed up in full force Monday evening for a double header match up against the junior high and high school Shorthorn teams.

Enthusiastic community members came out for the event in large numbers, lining the outfield fence with vehicles and backing up their pickup trucks to catch a glimpse of their favorite sluggers.

The Moms vs. Lady Horns game came together after several players stated their moms felt they could give their kids "a run for their money" on the field. With an open date on the schedule, the timed, three-inning game was made possible.

The moms used powerful hits, trickery and a little bit of rule bending to pull off two one-run wins against the Lady Horns — although the loss was heavily disputed by the youthful teams.

"This was a great experience because it allowed us to have fun and bond with our daughters," said Rachel Gomez and Rosemary Martinez. "We had a great time making memories."

A total of 20 moms and supporters participated in the two games and sported vintage 19-year-old Marfa jerseys for the occasion.

"It felt good to be back on the field playing against my daughter, and this will be a great memory for both of us," said Tara Salgado, whose daughter Zoey is on the junior high team.

Mom's team catcher, Roxanne Lujan, joked that she had fun stealing bases against her daughter Alexis Gonzales.

"Playing against both my kids in a sport they love was an awesome experience," added Roxye Lara, who has a player on each team.

Plenty of laughs and memories were made at the game, and thanks to Coach Priscila Serrano, many pictures were taken for family members to keep and share.

Coach Linda Ojeda stated that due to the success and enthusiasm of the game, the athletics program hopes to make this a tradition for our players and community.

"I feel that the parents really enjoyed it, along with our players, but more importantly for me, it brings to light the need for recreational sports opportunities for adults in the Marfa community," said Ojeda. "Hopefully this will help us bring more occasions for adult sports to Marfa in the future to promote health and wellness in the area."



Photo by Priscila Serrano

A Moms vs. Lady Horns recreational softball game that took place this week highlights the need for more adult recreational sports in Marfa, said MISD Athletic Director Linda Ojeda.



Photo by Priscila Serrano

Mother daughter duos Elida Torres and Lesly Torres and Alexis Gonzales and Roxanne Lujan at the Moms versus Lady Horns softball game.



On behalf of the Leyva Rodriguez and Dominguez Rodriguez families, we want to thank the entire Presidio community that gave us support in some way during this difficult time. Thank you to everyone who texted, called, brought food and water, and was always there for the family.

En nombre de las familias Leyva Rodríguez y Domínguez Rodríguez, queremos agradecer a toda la comunidad de Presidio que nos brindó apoyo de alguna manera durante este momento difícil. Gracias a todos los que enviaron mensajes de texto, llamaron, trajeron comida y agua y siempre estuvieron ahí para la familia.

Judd Foundation

Judd Foundation offers direct engagement with Donald Judd's art and vision in the Chihuahuan Desert. These formerly private living and working spaces provide firsthand experience of his ideas of permanent installation.

Advance reservations are required.

The Studios
Visit Judd's Art Studio, Architecture Studio, Cobb House, and Whyte Building.

Guided visits are available every day except Wednesday and begin at the former Marfa National Bank at 101 North Highland Avenue.

Visit juddfoundation.org to book reservations. For more information please contact: marfa@juddfoundation.org or 432 729 4406.

JUDD

GREASEWOOD GALLERY
AT THE HISTORIC HOTEL PAISANO



Pauline Hernandez, ceramics
Closing Reception: Thursday, April 27, 5-7 pm



Kandice Pierce, paintings
Dreaming of West Texas
Opening Reception: Saturday, April 29, 5-7 pm

GREASEWOOD GALLERY AT THE HOTEL PAISANO · 207 NORTH HIGHLAND · MARFA

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The Chinati Foundation is a museum created by the artist Donald Judd.

Indoor Viewing by guided tour only.
Outdoor Viewing throughout the day.

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Visitor Center, Bookstore, and Outdoor Viewing: 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Full Collection Tour at 9:15 A.M.
lasts 4½ hours plus a 2-hour lunch break

Selections Tour at 9:45 A.M. and 1:45 P.M.
lasts 3 hours and covers 2 miles of walking

Open Viewing of the Artillery Sheds from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Dan Flavin's *untitled (Marfa project)* and the Special Exhibition Gallery with installations of work by John Chamberlain and Sarah Crowner from 2 to 5 P.M.

Tickets are required.
Reservations are encouraged and capacity is limited.

For tickets and tour information, visit chinati.org.



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Highland Avenue, Marfa



Photo by Tina Rivera

Winning Marfa High School playwrights Jack Marquez, Amber Hinojos, Janelly Pereira and Piper Donaldson take a curtain bow with actors Fatima Anaza, Raul Garza, Jerram Rojo, John Aguero, Caitlynn Almance, Sabine Blaese, Belen Garcia, Lily Aguero, Olivia Pertuso, Dillon Orr, Christie Alexander, Abby Boyd, Oscar Aguero and Rachel Tate at the Marfa Live Arts 12th Annual One Act Plays at the Crowley Theater last Thursday.



Photo by Tina Rivera

Lily Aguero, Christie Alexander and Caitlynn Almance stage Amber Hinojos' play "Ice Cold," based on a true story told to her by her grandmother, at the Marfa Live Arts 12th Annual One Act Plays at the Crowley Theater last Thursday.

Hotel Paisano's Greasewood Gallery to host closing and opening receptions for artist exhibitions

MARFA — Greasewood Gallery at the Hotel Paisano will be hosting two events this week — a closing reception for outgoing artist Pauline Hernandez, whose ceramics are currently on display at the gallery, and an opening reception for incoming artist Kandice Pierce.

The closing reception for Hernandez will take place on Thursday. Locals may be familiar with Hernandez's ceramics. Colorful brush strokes and studies of fractal-like designs decorate the surfaces of her utilitarian pieces. Hernandez's love of color and the play of spectrum hues working together first developed through her study of painting on canvas.

Hernandez and her ceramic work, currently on display in the gallery, was recently included in a project featuring artists from the Big Bend area for an Amazon Prime documentary. Off the Wheel Pottery, Hernandez's ceramic studio, is located in Alpine.

The reception will be from 5 until 7 p.m. on April 27. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome.

On Saturday, Greasewood Gallery will host an opening reception for Kandice Pierce, painter and creative educator from Austin.

Pierce is originally from Rome, Georgia, and earned her BFA in interior design from the Savannah College of Art and Design. Pierce relocated to Austin in 2010, working as a hospitality designer. After a 15-year career in interior design, Pierce founded Pierce & Paint to pursue her passion as a full-time artist offering original paintings, prints and workshops.

Pierce has aspirations to grow her studio and will soon offer retreats around the country and eventually abroad to foster creative growth with other art and travel.

"Whenever I travel, I yearn to experience as much of a place as possible. My paintings are inspired by this world's natural beauty that a camera simply can't capture."

A welcome reception for Pierce and the opening of *Dreaming of West Texas* will be hosted from 5 until 7 p.m. on April 29. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome. The exhibit will run through late July.

Greasewood Gallery at the Hotel Paisano is located on the corner of Highland and Texas Streets in Marfa. Gallery hours are 8-6 Sunday, 9-8 Monday-Thursday and 8-8 Friday and Saturday. For more information contact gallery director, Vicki Lynn Barge at 432-729-4134 or greasewood@hotelpaisano.com

Native plant sale to take place April 29 in Alpine

ALPINE — The Big Bend chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas will have its annual plant sale from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 29, behind Forever West Texas Realty at N. 8th St. and W. Ave. E in Alpine. The sale is cash or check only.

In addition to hundreds of native garden plants, the sale will also feature pottery by Jeff Kelsch. He will be selling original, moderately priced pots for plants and flowers.

Shoppers at the sale will also have an opportunity to purchase seed grown yucca rostrata from Hoven Riley, whose Big Bend Yucca Company outside Ft. Stockton sells agave and yucca grown from seed. He will be offering his plants at special prices. More information about his operation can be found at bigbendyuccacompany.com

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PAPER

DRAWING OF THE WEEK



Alex Luna
12th Grade
"No Shoulder Left Unturned"

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.

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

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution from last week's puzzle:

SOLUTION:

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

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Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg April 24, 2023

ACROSS
1 "The Waste Land" poet
8 Actor Hawke
13 Part-time paid athlete
14 Trimmed back
16 Company starter dressed as a horned fantasy creature?
18 It smells!
19 Looped in via email
20 Buck's mate
22 "___ Poetica"
23 Physician dressed as a sorceress?
27 Personal Nintendo character
28 Pop star Grande, to fans
29 Trims off
30 "Who am ___ argue?"
31 Blue Devils' North Carolina school
33 Sticky substance
35 Venture capitalist dressed as a heavenly being?
40 Exist
41 "___ even go there!"
42 Over-the-top actor
44 Cold War inits.
47 Recline
48 2017 Kendrick Lamar hit with a genetic title
49 Novelist dressed as a spirit?
54 Musical gift
55 Chinese dynasty of 206 B.C.-220 A.D.
56 "Ah, I see"
57 1908 election winner
58 October event for 16-, 23-, 35- and 49-Across
63 Anastasia in "Fifty Shades of Grey"
64 Comedian Amy who wrote "The Girl With the Lower Back Tattoo"
65 Chipped in?
66 People who plunder

DOWN
1 Wave that can be 1,720 feet high
2 Miss, in Mexico
3 Discharge of carbon dioxide, e.g.
4 Head parasites
5 NYSE debut
6 Bruins legend Bobby
7 Freight weight
8 Noteworthy period
9 Aligned
10 $100 bill, in slang
11 "Moreover ..."
12 Must
15 Sag
17 TV monitor?
21 Triage sites, for short
23 Crane or heron
24 Triumphant cry
25 ___ bar (mai tai seller)
26 Congeal
32 Wrap up
33 Granter of wishes
34 Big name in blenders
36 Fish with long snouts
37 V, in physics
38 "Heavens!"
39 Pursued rapidly
43 Joan of Arc and others
44 Cry of disgust
45 Palindromic Iranian rulers, once
46 Certain Beethoven piece
50 Vacant flat sign
51 2% alternative, in the dairy section
52 Propelled a boat
53 1950s prez
57 Without slack
59 Novelist Deighton
60 Night school subj.
61 Sgt., e.g.
62 Vietnamese noodle soup

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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

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☺ MARFA SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ☺

APR/MAY	Thu, Apr 27	Fri, Apr 28	Mon, May 1	Tue, May 2	Wed, May 3
BREAKFAST	BREAKFAST BREAD	BREAKFAST BURRITO, HASH BROWN	CINNAMON ROLL, BACON	CHEESE OMELET	POWER BREAKFAST
LUNCH Menu courtesy of PORTER'S SINCE 1945 Celebrating 70+ years of serving our customers. 432-729-4375 www.myporters.net	BURRITO, CORN, FRESH BROCCOLI FLORETS, FRESH APPLE SLICES, COOKIE	HOT DOG, BAKED FRIES, TINY TOMATO CUP, SNOWBALL SALAD	ENCHILADAS, BEANS, CORN, SALSA, ORANGE SMILE, PUDDING	CHICKEN-N-WAFFLES, HASH BROWN, FRESH VEGGIE CUP, STRAWBERRIES AND BANANAS	PIZZA POCKETS, CARROTS, GREEN BEANS, GRAPES

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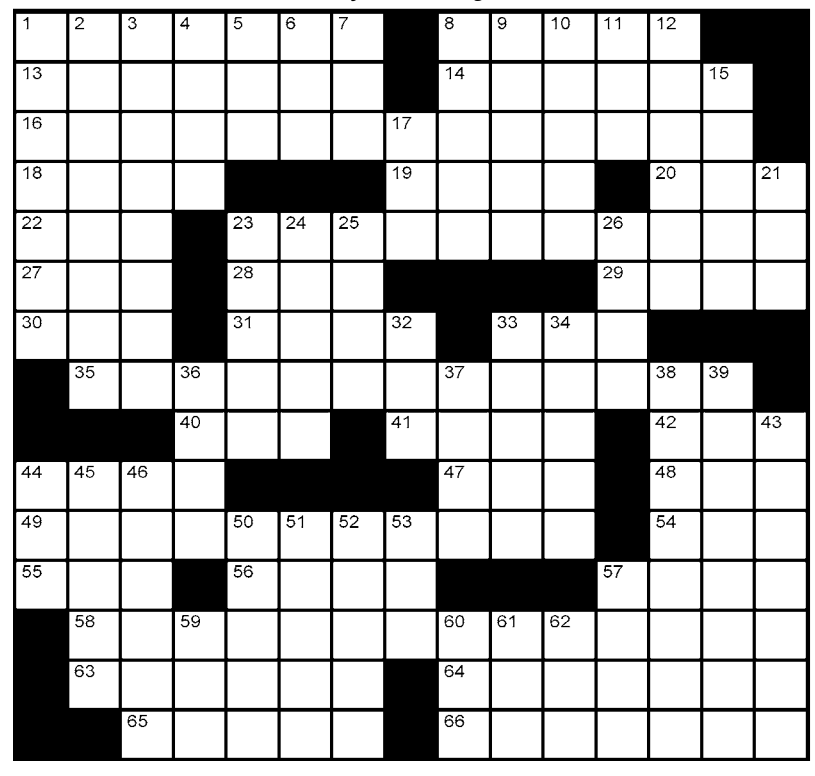
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MARFA SHORTHORNS SPORTS CALENDAR

THU, APR 27: HS Softball Playoffs vs Santa Anna in Ozona, 4:30pm - GO HORNS!
FRI, APR 28: Regional Track at San Angelo
SAT, APR 29: Regional Track at San Angelo

4/24 **Costume Ball** *by David Ding and Ross Trudeau*



After nearly 15 years as a Marfa mainstay, Frama will close this weekend

By ALLEGRA HOBBS
allegra@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — When Daniel and Jessie Browning took to social media last week to confirm in writing what had long been the talk about town — that Frama, the beloved coffee shop operated by the couple from its North Austin Street storefront since 2008, would be closing imminently — it soon became clear how much the spot would be missed.

Tributes poured in from mourners of all kinds. Several former workers chimed in that it was the best job they'd ever had; longtime locals shared memories of visiting the shop back when it was new; visitors joined in to share that it had been a favorite stop in Marfa.

Daniel Browning said he'd even heard from folks who had met the love of their life in his shop.

"We've had countless stories of people who met for the first time here and have gotten married — people who have had kids after meeting here," he said.

In their nearly 15 years in Marfa operating the joint coffee shop-laundromat venture, Daniel said he'd relished being a reliable presence for the community — a role he would miss fulfilling, even as it was time to move on.

"It's been the casual, low-key place to go — dependable, reliable," he said. "There's never a second guess of whether we're open or here for people. That kind of hurts, to not be doing that anymore."

Nevertheless, Frama will close its doors for good this Sunday, on April 30. The Brownings are selling off their businesses — they've already closed their Alpine location, Plaine, and plan to sell San Angelo cafe Buttercup as well — and moving to Portugal, where they plan to work remote jobs and enjoy spending time with their four daughters.

Daniel was happy to confirm that while the coffee shop portion of the business will close, the laundromat will remain open as the space seamlessly changes hands. He and the building's owner together found a local interested in buying the equipment and leasing the laundromat space so the much-needed local service could stay up and running without interruption.

"The original thing that got us to Marfa was the desire to help people, and the laundromat was always a service," said Daniel. "I told everybody I'll do everything we can do to keep the laundromat in Marfa, because I know how important it is."

The Brownings stepped in to fill that void when they first opened the business in December of 2008. They'd moved to Marfa from Austin two years prior, and were interested in launching their own business. When they asked around town what types of business were most needed, they overwhelmingly received two responses — a pharmacy and a laundromat (The Prescription Shop didn't open until 2016).

"We had no background in pharmacies at all, but I did, at least, have a background in fixing things," said Daniel. "So that got us close enough to a laundromat."



Photo courtesy of Daniel and Jessie Browning

Daniel and Jessie Browning will close coffee shop Frama on April 30 after nearly 15 years in the community.

At first, Frama was a laundromat only. The coffee shop hybrid model came later, when the Brownings realized the coffee shops in town were preparing to close — another void for them to potentially fill.

"It was just kind of how it happened," said Daniel of the hybrid design. "It wasn't part of a master plan."

The Brownings went on to replicate that model at their Alpine location, Plaine. They decided to move to San Angelo about four years ago, eager to grow their brand in a bigger town, and ended up opening Buttercup in 2021.

But now, after devoting so many years to running a slew of businesses across different cities, they're ready for a bigger change.

The family will be Portugal-bound once all the loose ends are tied up in Texas. Daniel explained they wanted to move to Europe driven partly by a desire to provide a safe upbringing for their children — he recalled breaking down while dropping his kids off at school after the latest school shooting, and deciding he wanted to feel secure in the knowledge that his daughters would be safe at school. Portugal was safe and beautiful and full of history, he said.

"We realized it's a lot of work, and we had put 17 years into being business owners and making things work," said Daniel. "We decided we were ready to take some time just for our family, to live for ourselves, and we were ready to shut down our businesses and just do something else."

AROUND THE BIG BEND

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Thu Apr 27

Ceramic Artist Pauline Hernandez Closing Reception at Greasewood Gallery
5:00pm - 7:00pm at the Hotel Paisano in Marfa
Hernandez and her ceramic work, currently on display in the gallery, was recently included in a project featuring artists from the Big Bend area for an Amazon Prime documentary. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome.

Sat Apr 29

Friends of the Ruidosa Church Adobe Making Day
10:00am - 2:00pm at Ruidosa Church in Presido
Restoring the church will require approximately 4-8K new adobe bricks. You can expect to learn about the adobe making process with our team of experts while working hard and getting dirty! Free lunch! All Welcome!

Indie Bookstore Day at Front Street Books
10:00am - 3:00pm at 121 E Holland Ave in Alpine
Come celebrate this special day with us! We'll have exclusive merchandise and giveaways!

"Dreaming of the West" Opening Reception at Greasewood Gallery
5:00pm - 7:00pm at the Hotel Paisano in Marfa
Opening reception for Kandice Pierce, painter and creative educator from Austin. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome. The exhibit will run through late July.

Big Bend Reproductive Coalition's Picnic in the Park
6:00pm - 8:30pm at Kokernot Park in Alpine
Free food & drinks. Reproductive health resources. All are welcome!

Monica Valli at the Gage Hotel
7:00pm - 9:00pm on the White Buffalo Patio at the Gage Hotel in Marathon
Come hear this Nashville/Austin guitarist!

Sun Apr 30

Chihuahuan Desert Nature Night
6:00pm - 9:00pm at the Granada Theatre, 207 E Holland Ave in Alpine
Experience the wonders of the Chihuahuan Desert while supporting conservation efforts!

Have an upcoming or weekly event?

Please submit a two sentence maximum description of your weekly event including who, what, when, and where by Tuesday at 10 am to ads@bigbendsentinel.com

Ongoing Weekly Events & Classes

Free Meditation Classes for Local Law Enforcement, City, County, and Healthcare Workers
Thursday at 5:30pm at Marfa Public Library

Big Sky Yoga
Monday: Vinyasa at 6:00pm
Tuesday: Hatha at 9:00am
Wednesday: Restorative at 3:00pm; Vinyasa at 6:00pm
Thursday: Yin Yoga at 6:00pm
Friday: Breathwork at 9:00am; Vinyasa & Core at 12:00pm
Saturday: Vinyasa at 10:00am
New location: 105 E Oak #4 (in the ally behind the Wrong Store)

Step it Up (Step Aerobics)
Tuesday at 6:00pm, Thursday at 9:00am & Saturday at 9:00am @ Big Sky Yoga
All fitness levels welcome. New location: 105 E Oak #4 (in the ally behind the Wrong Store)

Free Zumba Classes
Monday & Wednesday at 6:30pm at Marfa Public Library

Free Meditation Classes
Tuesday at 6:00pm at Marfa Public Library

Life Drawing with Model
Tuesday from 7:00pm - 9:00pm at Talent Studios in Alpine
Join this vibrant artist community, make new friends and hone your drawing skills. Reserve your easel by texting 206.619.4699

Baby & Toddler Storytime
Wednesday at 11:00am at Marfa Public Library

AA (online & sometimes in-person)
Saturday at 12:00pm at https://tinyurl.com/y686nnw2 & in-person at Marfa Public Library

Saturday Farmer's Market
Saturdays at 9:30am at the pavillion behind he Visitors Center in Marfa

The Alpine Farmers Market
Saturday at 9:00am on historic Murphy Street in Alpine

Note: Schedules are subject to change. Please call or visit business websites to confirm that event is happening.

BIG BEND REPRODUCTIVE COALITION
COALICIÓN REPRODUCTIVA DEL BIG BEND

picnic in the park
pícnic en el parque

ALL ARE WELCOME
TODOS SON BIENVENIDAS

KOKERNOT PARK
ALPINE, TEXAS

april 29 | 29 de abril
6pm - 8:30pm

free food & drinks | reproductive health resources
comida y bebida gratis | recursos de salud reproductiva

bbreproductivecoalition
COALICIÓN REPRODUCTIVA DEL BIG BEND REPRODUCTIVE COALITION
more info | más información
bigbendrc.org/events

Transcendental Meditation Class

Stress and anxiety making you sick? Learn how the Transcendental Meditation technique helps change the way you respond to stress and make choices that improve your life. Join us for an introductory meeting on the Transcendental Meditation Program (TM).

There are different types of meditation. Have you tried learning to meditate but gave up because it was complicated or difficult? The TM technique is not one of those, TM is simple to do, straining of any kind is not allowed. Learn how the TM technique helps you discover deeper understanding, peace of mind, and happiness.

Register for a free Introductory Meeting to the TM Technique with a certified Transcendental Meditation teacher. There are over six hundred (and growing) rigorous, scientific studies and years of proven success. People report this simple practice helps reduce stress and anxiety, improves focus, creativity, memory, and resilience.

Choose either Monday May 1, 2023, at 6:00PM OR Saturday May 6 at 10:00AM on Zoom everywhere. Email or call Instructor - Andrea Cowan, Teacher of Transcendental Meditation, 575-635-5046, acowan@tm.org. A link will be provided with registration. In-person instruction will be held by appointment in Alpine TX the weekend of Saturday May 13, 2023.

Maharishi International University is a non-profit organization, TM teachers are professional instructors. The University offers various fee scales. Charges for the full course can be found at https://www.tm.org/ and comes with a money-back guarantee. The introductory meeting is free.

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Classifieds & public notices

JOBS

PREVENTATIVE CARE HEALTH SERVICES JOB OPPORTUNITIES

LOOKING FOR A CNA, CMA, RN & LVN

Please call Sarah at 432-837-4812 for more information.

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

VILLAGE FARMS - EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY - FAST TRACK TO MANAGEMENT

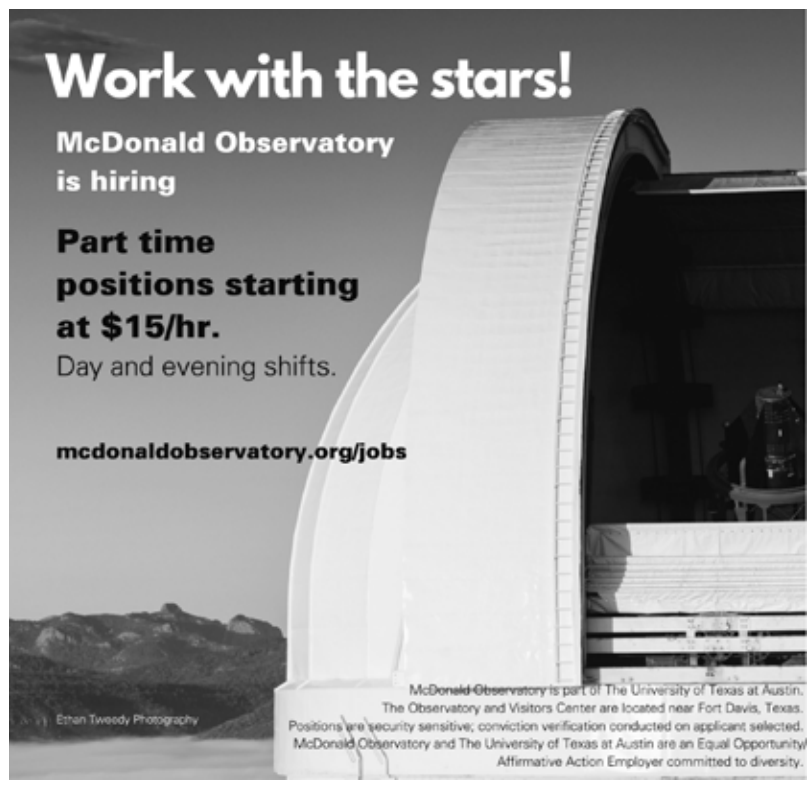
Village Farms is seeking a detailed oriented individual to join our team as Shipping/Receiving Clerk for our Marfa 2 location.

Responsibilities include loading and unloading, forklift operation, preparation of shipping documents, verify deliveries, maintain warehouse and other general duties.

Requirements: Must be willing to work flexible hours including evenings, weekends and holidays, ability to work independently, verbal and written communication skills, working knowledge of computers and forklift experience preferred.

Opportunity to move to Supervisor level and pay within the first 6 months of employment. Must be able to pass a pre-employment drug screen.

Interested candidates should call (432)729-3071 Ext. 607 or fax resume to (432)375-6241. Applications are also available at Village Farms Security Stations 3 Miles N. Hwy 17 Marfa, TX or 3 Miles S. Hwy 17 FT. Davis, TX.



NOW HIRING

Village Farms

Human Resources/Admin Assistant- performs a range of administrative and clerical tasks to support management and the HR department.

Key Skill & Competencies

- Organization & planning
- Work management & prioritizing
- Verbal/written communication skills
- Attention to detail
- Reliability & Flexibility
- Strong MS Office skills
- Teamwork
- Bilingual (Spanish) is a must
- 2 yrs. relevant experience required

Full-time position with great benefits package which includes; paid vacation, health, vision, dental, life and STD insurance & 401k retirement plan

Submit resumes to aanderson@villagefarms.com applications @ Village Farms Security Stations 3 miles N. Hwy 17, Marfa or 3 miles S. Hwy 17, Fort Davis or call 682.647.1214 ext. 469 for more information.

FOR SALE

ADOBE HOME FOR SALE BY OWNER

c. 1920 - One Lot
217 E TX St, Marfa, TX.
$250,000
Buyer pays closing costs and taxes.

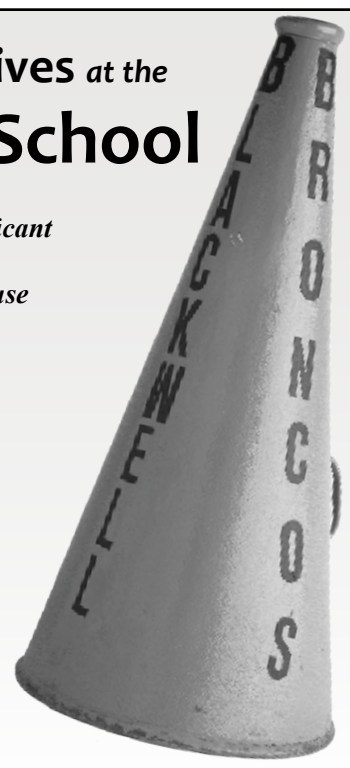
For more information call 432-295-2878

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Museum Open Saturdays & Sundays 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.

from the stop light, two blocks west and three blocks south Marfa, Texas
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INDIE BOOKSTORE DAY!
Saturday, April 29
Make plans to stop in for the 10th Anniversary!

FRONT STREET BOOKS

INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE DAY SATURDAY APRIL 29, 2023

Come celebrate this special day with us. We'll have exclusive merchandise AND giveaways! 10:00 - 3:00

121 E Holland Ave, Alpine -- 432-837-3360

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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.

PUBLIC NOTICE
FOR REAPPOINTMENT OF UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
ALPINE, TEXAS

The current term of the office of U.S. Magistrate Judge David B. Fannin is due to expire on November 9, 2023. The U.S. District Court is required by law to establish a panel of citizens to consider the reappointment of U.S. Magistrate Judge Fannin to a new eight-year term.

Comments are invited from members of the bar and the public as to whether U.S. Magistrate Judge Fannin should be recommended by the panel for reappointment by the Court.

A full public notice is posted on our web site at: https://www.txwd.uscourts.gov/

Comments must be received no later than May 5, 2023.

The City of Marfa Board of Adjustment has scheduled a Special Meeting for May 15, 2023, at 6:00 p. m. in the Casner Room, City Hall, 113 S. Highland Street, Marfa, Texas. This meeting is open to the public.

The Board members will discuss and render a decision regarding:

- A Variance Request No. 23-02, requested by Paul Hunt and Nina Martin from the requirements of Marfa's Zoning Ordinance, regarding a side yard setback at 306 E. Columbia Street.
- A Variance Request No. 23-03, requested by Chris McCray from the requirements of Marfa's Zoning Ordinance, regarding side yard setbacks at 409 E. Waco Street.
-
- A Variance Request No. 23-04, requested by Kathleen Loughlin from the requirements of Marfa's Zoning Ordinance, regarding front yard and side yard setbacks at 402 W. Washington St.

Additional information concerning the above Variance Requests is available by calling Ann Dunlap, Board of Adjustment Secretary at (432)729-4315.

A bill to create the Presidio International Port Authority District is being filed in the Texas Legislature. The District will work to upgrade, enhance, and improve the International Port of Presidio. Ad Paid for by Presidio County.

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GOVERNMENT CONTACTS

PRESIDIO COUNTY
Judge Jose Portillo:
(432) 729-4452

CITY OF MARFA
Manny Baeza, City of Marfa Mayor
mayor@cityofmarfa.com
(432) 295-0048
Irma Salgado, Mayor Pro Tem
councilmembersalgado@cityofmarfa.com
Mark Cash
councilmembercash@cityofmarfa.com
Raúl Lara
councilmemberlara@cityofmarfa.com
Eddie Pallarez
councilmemberpallarez@cityofmarfa.com

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

BREWSTER COUNTY
Judge Greg Henington:
(432) 837-2412

Alpine Mayor Catherine Eaves:
City Hall: (432) 837-3301
Email: mayor.eaves@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)

THE BIG BEND Sentinel

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