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BURN BAN IN EFFECT, NO GROUND FIRES

by order of Presidio County

Presidio ISD candidate profiles: Jaime Sanchez and Carlos Reyna

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — On March 9, Presidio ISD announced a list of candidates who will be running for school board in the upcoming elections. The terms of current board members Yvonne Spencer, Ethel Barriga, Hugo Ramos and Fidel Baeza expire in May — the board will be holding a joint election with the City of Presidio in the upcoming general election.

Board candidates are Brenda Witty, Jaime Sanchez, Steve "Nicky" Alvarez, Jeremy Velasquez, Carlos Reyna, Jessica Acevedo Nunez, Perla Natividad and Marco Lujan. None of the outgoing board members have opted to run for re-election.

Questionnaires below have been edited for length and clarity.

JAIME SANCHEZ

Jaime Sanchez has lived in Presidio for 17 years with his wife, Maria Elena Villalobos. His eldest son Carlos is attending university at Texas Tech, and both his son Luis and his daughter Sarah are currently enrolled at Presidio ISD. He currently works as a deputy for the Presidio County Sheriff's Office, owns a cattle ranch and a family business called Relax Place.

What experience do you bring to the table?

I am very enthusiastic about being able to contribute my experience, my knowledge and my energy to the Presidio school. I have been working in law enforcement for a long time now. I will dedicate my time and knowledge to Presidio ISD. We as law enforcement officers always work closely with the Presidio City Police Department and federal and state agencies.

I will dedicate time and effort to the security of our schools as we are going through unfortunate times. I have participated in multiple training courses throughout the years, including active shooter preparedness training with the Presidio ISD School Police officers and other local and federal agencies. I also attended training in other cities to be updated and active in case an incident may occur here at Presidio ISD.

I also have developmental skills as an administrator and entrepreneur, therefore I will be able to contribute my knowledge of personnel management, budgets and any other type of accounting and administrative duties. I will encourage and support all entrepreneurs and leaders.

What are some issues you expect to address during your term?

My mission is to have all Presidio ISD students attend school comfortably and feel safe, allowing them to achieve their best

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Photo by Hannah Gentiles / Foto por Hannah Gentiles

Presidio ISD School Board Member Tino Martinez motors down O'Reilly Street in observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month.
READ MORE ON PAGE 6.
Tino Martínez, miembro de la Junta Escolar de Presidio ISD, conduce por la calle O'Reilly en celebración del Mes de Prevención del Abuso Infantil.. LEER MÁS EN LA PÁGINA 6.

Presidio mourns loss of two sisters killed on Highway 67

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — At around 6 p.m. on April 10, two Presidio women — sisters Irma Rodriguez Dominguez and Carolina Rodriguez Leyva — were driving back from Marfa when they were struck by a northbound vehicle that had veered into their lane. The sisters were pronounced dead on the scene, and the driver of the other vehicle was transported to El Paso for treatment.

In the week since, the families of the deceased have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from their community. So many people showed up to last weekend's funeral at Santa Teresa church that some mourners were turned away at the door. "I'm so grateful to live here in Presidio," said sister Letty Tharp. "There was too much love around us."

Tharp, Leyva and Dominguez grew up as three of four Rodriguez girls. "We were a team of four — they were my angels," Tharp remembered.

As the sisters grew older, they stayed in Presidio and had families of their own. They also dedicated more and more time to taking care of their father, Francisco.

At the time of the crash, Irma had already retired, and Carolina was looking forward to celebrating the end of a long career at Presidio ISD by spending even more time with family. "We liked to spend time together

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Presidio lamenta la pérdida de dos hermanas muertas en la autopista 67

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — Alrededor de las 6 p.m. el 10 de abril, dos mujeres de Presidio, las hermanas Irma Rodríguez Domínguez y Carolina Rodríguez Leyva, regresaban de Marfa cuando fueron atropelladas por un vehículo en dirección norte que se había desviado hacia su carril. Las hermanas fueron declaradas muertas en el lugar y el conductor del otro vehículo fue transportado a El Paso para recibir tratamiento.

En la semana posterior, las familias de los fallecidos se han sentido abrumadas por la gran cantidad de apoyo de su comunidad. Tanta gente se presentó al funeral del fin de semana pasado en la iglesia de Santa Teresa que algunos dolientes fueron rechazados en la puerta. "Estoy muy agradecida de vivir aquí en Presidio", dijo la hermana Letty Tharp. "Había demasiado amor a nuestro alrededor".

Tharp, Leyva y Domínguez crecieron como tres de cuatro niñas Rodríguez. "Éramos un equipo de cuatro, eran mis ángeles", recordó Tharp.

A medida que las hermanas crecieron, se quedaron en Presidio y tuvieron sus propias familias. También dedicaron cada vez más tiempo al cuidado de su padre, Francisco.

En el momento del accidente, Irma ya se había jubilado y Carolina esperaba celebrar el final de una larga carrera en Presidio ISD pasando aún

(Continúa en la página 3)

Game room lobbyist organization offers to write Presidio's game room ordinance

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — At Tuesday night's meeting, council members were slated to hear a second reading of the city's new game room ordinance — but were left with more questions than answers after hearing a presentation from Robert Flores of the Texas Game Room Owners Association (TGROA), a nonprofit organization specializing in the issue.

Game rooms are a form of legal gambling in Texas — a state where gambling is illegal. Game rooms skirt the law by offering low or no cash prizes, commonly referred to as the "fuzzy animal exception" after the practice of offering small stuffed animals to winners. Its proponents say that game rooms simulate the fun of gambling without violating the law; detractors say they're a magnet for violent crime, money laundering and other unsavory activity.

Presidians may be more familiar with game rooms elsewhere in the region — there are currently only two in town clustered along Highway 67. The establishments are popular in the Permian Basin, so much so that the City of Odessa recently voted to decline any game room permit renewal after December 2022 — essentially banning the businesses altogether.

Presidio city officials have been slow and deliberate in the drafting of their ordinance. City officials have stressed that they aren't seeking to limit legal business — but aren't currently collecting any revenue from game rooms

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La organización de cabilderos de la sala de juegos se ofrece a redactar la ordenanza de la sala de juegos de Presidio

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — En la reunión del martes por la noche, los miembros del consejo estaban programados para escuchar una segunda lectura de la nueva ordenanza de salas de juegos de la ciudad, pero quedaron con más preguntas que respuestas después de escuchar una presentación de Robert Flores de la Asociación de Propietarios de Salas de Juegos de Texas (TGROA), una organización sin fines de lucro especializada en el tema.

Las salas de juegos son una forma de juego legal en Texas, un estado donde el juego es ilegal. Las salas de juegos eluden la ley al ofrecer premios en efectivo bajos o nulos, lo que comúnmente se conoce como la "excepción de animales peludos" después de la práctica de ofrecer pequeños animales de peluche a los ganadores. Sus defensores dicen que las salas de juego simulan la diversión del juego sin infringir la ley; los detractores dicen que son un imán para los delitos violentos, el lavado de dinero y otras actividades desagradables.

Los presidentes pueden estar más familiarizados con las salas de juegos en otras partes de la región: actualmente solo hay dos en la ciudad agrupadas a lo largo de la autopista 67. Los establecimientos son populares en la

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Perfiles de candidatos de Presidio ISD: Jaime Sánchez y Carlos Reyna

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — El 9 de marzo, Presidio ISD anunció una lista de candidatos que se postularán para la junta escolar en las próximas elecciones. Los mandatos de los miembros actuales de la junta, Yvonne Spencer, Ethel Barriga, Hugo Ramos y Fidel Baeza, vencen en mayo; la junta realizará una elección conjunta con la Ciudad de Presidio en las próximas elecciones generales.

Los candidatos a la junta son Brenda Witty, Jaime Sanchez, Steve "Nicky" Alvarez, Jeremy Velasquez, Carlos Reyna, Jessica Acevedo Nunez, Perla Natividad y Marco Lujan. Ninguno de los consejeros salientes ha optado por presentarse a la reelección.

Los cuestionarios a continuación han sido editados por su extensión y claridad.

JAIME SÁNCHEZ

Jaime Sánchez vive en Presidio desde hace 17 años con su esposa, María Elena Villalobos. Su hijo mayor, Carlos, asiste a la universidad en Texas Tech, y tanto su hijo Luis como su hija Sarah están actualmente inscritos en Presidio ISD. Actualmente trabaja como ayudante de la Oficina del Sheriff del Condado de Presidio, es dueño de un rancho de ganado y de un negocio familiar llamado Relax Place.

¿Qué experiencia traes a la mesa?

Estoy muy entusiasmado de poder aportar mi experiencia, mis conocimientos y mi energía a la escuela Presidio. He estado trabajando en la aplicación de la ley durante mucho tiempo. Dedicaré mi tiempo y conocimiento a Presidio ISD. Nosotros, como agentes del orden público, siempre trabajamos en estrecha colaboración con el Departamento de Policía de la Ciudad de Presidio y las agencias federales y estatales.

Dedicaré tiempo y esfuerzo a la seguridad de nuestras escuelas mientras atravesamos tiempos desafortunados. He participado en múltiples cursos de capacitación a lo largo de los años, incluida la capacitación de preparación para tiradores activos con los oficiales de policía escolar de Presidio ISD y otras agencias locales y federales. También asistí a capacitaciones en otras ciudades para estar actualizado y activo en caso de que ocurra un incidente aquí en Presidio ISD.

También tengo habilidades de desarrollo como administrador y empresario, por lo que podré aportar mis conocimientos de manejo de personal, presupuestos y cualquier otro tipo de funciones contables y administrativas. Alentaré y apoyaré a todos los empresarios y líderes.

¿Cuáles son algunos de los problemas que espera abordar durante su mandato?

Mi misión es que todos los estudiantes de Presidio ISD asistan a la escuela cómodamente y se sientan seguros, permitiéndoles lograr lo mejor en su educación. Será un placer poder participar y ser un apoyo en todas las áreas de la escuela, incluso mejorar la seguridad escolar y promover y apoyar la capacitación para tener policías altamente calificados y capacitados que cumplan con todos

(Continúa en la página 3)

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ENGLISH NEWS

Presidio mourns

(Continued from page 1)

here at the house, to eat and talk about our dreams," Tharp said.

Earlier in the day on April 10, Irma and Carolina invited Letty to come with them for a sweet tradition — driving to Marfa to take their aunt out for a meal at Dairy Queen. When Letty turned down their invite, they told their sister not to make anything for supper because they'd return with everyone's favorites. "I said, 'Ok, I'm waiting for you girls,'" Letty remembered. "They never came back."

The Rodriguez sisters are just the latest in a series of tragic accidents on Highway 67, which connects Presidio and Marfa. The route sees far more traffic than just two small border towns — it's one of a few highways that connect northern Mexico with the Permian Basin, and sees lots of traffic traveling long distances with heavy loads, especially over holiday weekends.

County Judge Joe Portillo has known all his life just how dangerous the road can be, but said this accident spurred him to take formal action — just four months into his first term as judge. "To see two sisters in coffins laying side by side — there was not a dry eye," he said.

As a former state trooper himself, he's been studying traffic patterns on the road. "We have a lot of blind curves and a lot of odd traffic — Solitaire homes, alfalfa trucks, transmigrantes," he said. "We also have people coming from Midland-Odessa and from Chihuahua, and the driving habits of those communities are very, very different from ours."

He cited the Texas Department of Transportation's 67 Corridor Study, an exhaustive document compiled by the state agency over the years 2010 to 2018. The study revealed a higher crash rate in the 67 corridor than statewide averages. Crashes were clustered about 20 miles south of Marfa to 20 miles north of Presidio, where the road is windy and steep.

Portillo has since enlisted an informal focus group of representatives from local law enforcement, DPS, and TxDOT. He's hoping to get the attention of state lawmakers to help initiate projects that will make the road safer.

Presidio Mayor John Ferguson was on board, hoping to get the message out to visiting drivers that it's important to drive the road carefully. He remembered a fatal crash about a year ago, where a driver from Chihuahua was killed on the highway on the way back from WalMart with mother's day presents.

He's hoping that Presidio can remain a welcoming place — while also ensuring the safety of everyone on the road. "You can't blame people for wanting to go visit and come back and forth [across the border]," he said. "But everyone gets in a huge hurry and they take huge chances."

Candidate profiles

(Continued from page 1)

in their education. It will be a pleasure to be able to participate and be supportive in all areas of the school, including enhancing school security and promoting and supporting training to have highly-qualified and trained police officers who meet all the standards that the school requires.

I will also review and advocate for the salaries of each of the employees based on the annual budget. I will also support all students with the equipment they need to be successful to include certified and trained staff who can promote the development and growth of our students.

In addition, I will take all required measures to make Presidio ISD be successful in all areas.I want the students of Presidio to develop professionally. I would like these students to establish and develop morally, socially and intellectually through education and science.

What are some great things about Presidio ISD that you would like to celebrate or preserve during your term?

I will support all school programs that are beneficial to our staff and students that will allow them to develop and excel. I will also work together with the other members of the board of directors to make the best decisions for Presidio ISD.

CARLOS REYNA

What experience do you bring to the table?

I graduated from Midland High School in 1996. I then joined the Army and served in various leadership positions and was promoted to staff sergeant. My total length of service was about 8 years — 6 1/2 of those years I was in a leadership position.

I then continued to serve as a Texas state trooper and was stationed in Marfa. I was then transferred to Presidio. While working as a state trooper I earned my bachelor's in business management through Sul Ross State University. I have resided in Presidio County since 2004.

I believe that my life and work experience has given me the experience to be able help lead and guide PISD to a better future.

What are some issues you're hoping to address during your term?

There is not one specific issue that I want to focus on at this time. I want to get familiar with our current members and administrators and listen to what issues are important to them.

I am not seeking election on a biased agenda. My heart is with the people that work and trust PISD to educate their children. I want to help PISD be a better place by making informed decisions. I will vote based on what is important to the educators, parents and faculty. We need to hear the voices of the teachers, coaches, and administrators and make decisions based on their recommendations.

What are some great things about Presidio ISD that you would like to celebrate or preserve during your term?

I want to celebrate those educators that have dedicated their entire career to the children of Presidio. Those are our heroes that need to be recognized for their years of service. I am grateful to them. They educated my oldest daughter, who is now a teacher in Odessa, Texas, and my son, who is currently seeking a degree in finance through UTEP. I still have two children going through the PISD school system.

I would also like to preserve early college courses and extra curriculum such as the athletic department. As I mentioned above, I'm going in with an open mind, and I want to listen to those I want to celebrate. They have the experience and the knowledge of what needs to be changed and what should be preserved.

I feel this term being sought has several qualified people, and we are fortunate to have such strong interest in this election.

I am thankful for the opportunity to represent the people of Presidio County. I look forward to serving the people of Presidio whether it be in this capacity or any other.

Early voting for May 6 local elections starts Monday, April 24

By MARY CANTRELL
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TRI-COUNTY — Early voting for the May 6 General Election — in which locals elect city council and school board candidates as well as decide on any ballot propositions — begins Monday, April 24.

Early voting runs through Tuesday, May 2. The voter registration deadline has passed. To see if you are registered to vote, visit the secretary of state's website, votetexas.gov.

The Big Bend Sentinel has compiled voting times and locations for races taking place in Presidio and Brewster counties. There are no contested elections in Jeff Davis County.

Presidio County

Proposition 1 — Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District

Early voting for the county election will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 24 through April 28 and May 1-2 at Marfa City Hall, in the Casner Room, and at the Presidio Activity Center. Voting will take place from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on May 6.

Both polling locations will serve residents in precincts 1-7 for early voting, but on Election Day, May 6, precincts 1 and 7 are required to vote in Marfa and precincts 2-6 are required to vote in Presidio. While located in the same building, the county and cities will hold separate elections, appearing on separate ballots.

For Proposition 1, voters will decide whether or not to allow the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District to become a taxing entity. The district, made up of a board and general manager, currently oversees well-drilling permits and operating permits for commercial entities, and is increasing water-level monitoring efforts to ensure the future of the area's water supply.

The district has operated from a budget from the county commissioners since its inception in 1999 and has entered into an agreement with the county to offset a potential new tax by lowering their tax rate so that citizens would not be impacted. The district may levy a property tax not to exceed $0.05 per $100 of assessed property valuation and will work with the county tax assessor-collector to determine what the tax rate would need to be in order to get their required budget — currently around $51,000.

The PCUWCD has released a series of educational videos on various groundwater topics in the lead up to the election, which can be found on their website, pcuwcd.org.

Marfa

Early voting for the City of Marfa election will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 24 through April 29 and May 1-2 at City Hall in the Casner Room. Polling hours will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on May 6.

Marfa City Council is made up of a mayor, who serves a two-year term, and five council members, which serve two-year staggered terms. In the upcoming election, the seat of Mayor Manny Baeza will be up for election, as will the seats of council members Irma Salgado and Raul Lara.

Incumbent Baeza is running for the role of the mayor of Marfa, which if elected would be his third term. According to the city secretary, the other mayoral candidate, Stephen Salgado Boelter, withdrew from the race on April 19, citing family matters.

However, according to state law, it is too late for Boelter's name to be removed from the ballot. If he wins the election, he will have to decline the office of mayor, leaving the city with a vacancy which council would fill via appointment.

"Unfortunately I will be withdrawing as a candidate for mayor due to family matters I have been dealing with," Salgado wrote in a statement to The Big Bend Sentinel. "I would like citizens to know about my circumstance so they will vote accordingly since I will still be on the ballot."

"It has been a tough decision to make. I hope the citizens will understand," he added.

For the two available council member seats, current Councilmember Lara is running for reelection, along with new candidates Travis Acreman and Christa Marquez. Voters will be instructed to select up to two out of the three council member candidates. Mark Morrison, who is running unopposed, is declared elected for a one-year term.

After May 6, newly-elected council members take office in late May or early June. There were no contested Marfa ISD School Board positions, so the district will not participate in the election with the city.

Candidate Questionnaires for Marfa City Council can be found in this week's edition of **The Big Bend Sentinel.**

Presidio

The City of Presidio and Presidio ISD will hold a joint election. Voting will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 24 through May 2 at the Activity Center, 1200 E. O'Reilly Street. Polling hours will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on May 6.

The role of the mayor of Presidio is up for election, with incumbent John Ferguson and Angel Miguel Campos vying for the position. Two council member seats will be up for election, with voters choosing up to two out of three candidates: incumbent Arian Velazquez-Ornelas, incumbent Nancy Arevalo, and Todd Beckett.

Presidio ISD School Board candidates are Brenda Witty, Jaime Sanchez, Steve "Nicky" Alvarez, Carlos Reyna, Jessica Acevedo Nunez, Marco Lujan, Jeremy Velasquez and Perla Natividad.

Trustees are at-large and do not represent specific districts, meaning voters will choose four out of the eight candidates that appear on the ballot.

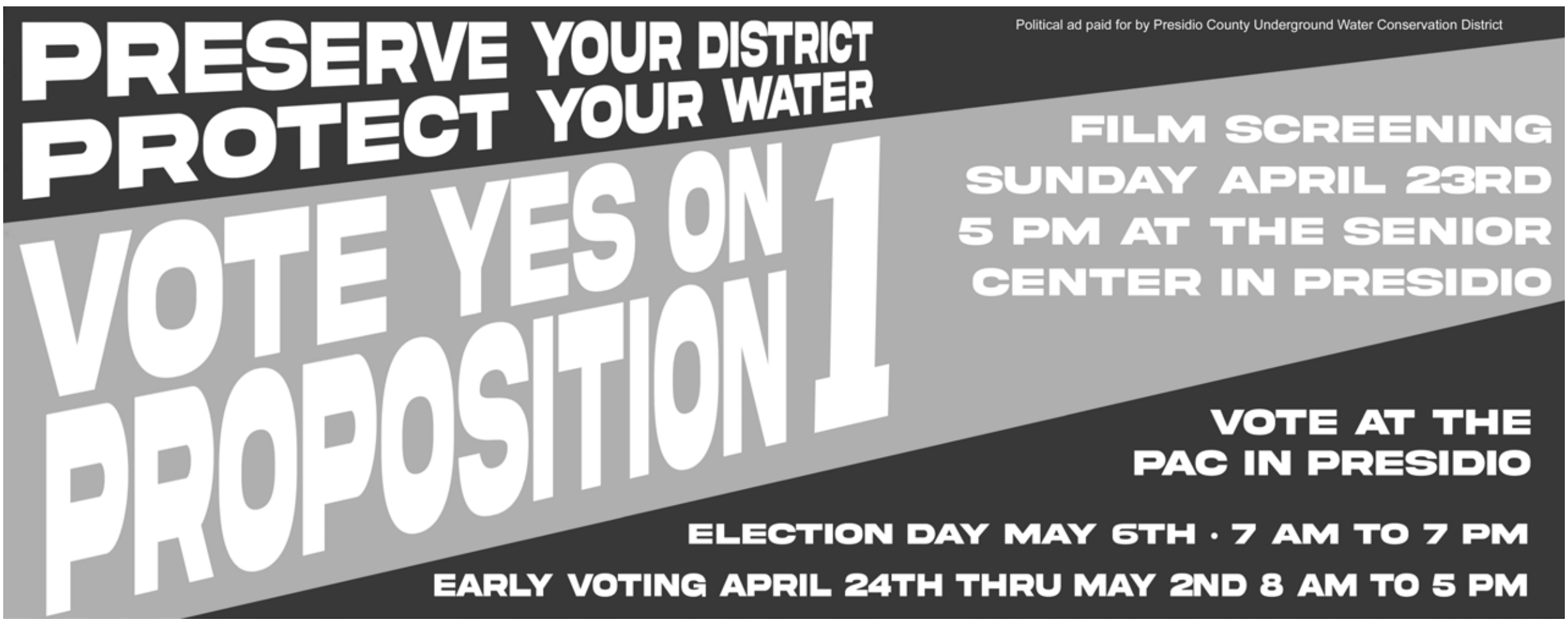
Brewster County

The City of Alpine and Alpine ISD will hold a joint election. Voting will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 24 through May 2 in the City Council Chambers, 803 W. Holland Ave. Polling hours will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on May 6.

The City of Alpine will have one race for the Ward 5 council member seat, for which incumbent Jerry Johnson, who passed away recently, and Rick Stephens both filed. The City of Alpine has stated that Johnson will remain on the ballot despite his passing, per state law — the Texas Election Code dictates that a candidate's name will appear on the ballot if they pass away on or after the second day before the filing deadline (in this case, February 17). If a deceased candidate is elected, a vacancy is created, and the council will appoint a successor.

Incumbent council members Judy Stokes, Ward 1, and Darin Nance, Ward 3, were unopposed candidates. They have already been declared elected and will not appear on the ballot.

The Alpine ISD School Board will have two seats up for election. Incumbent Joe Portillo, who represents District 2, filed for re-election and is unopposed, meaning he will be declared elected and will not appear on the ballot. The District 6 seat, currently held by Dr. Adrian Billings, will be a race between Billings, who filed for re-election, and new candidate Richard Portillo.



NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

Presidio lamente

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más tiempo con la familia. “Nos gustaba pasar tiempo juntos aquí en la casa, comer y hablar de nuestros sueños”, dijo Tharp.

Más temprano ese día, el 10 de abril, Irma y Carolina invitaron a Letty a acompañarlas en una dulce tradición: conducir a Marfa para llevar a su tía a comer a Dairy Queen. Cuando Letty rechazó su invitación, le dijeron a su hermana que no preparara nada para la cena porque regresarían con los favoritos de todos. “Dije, ‘Ok, las estoy esperando chicas’”, recordó Letty. “Nunca regresaron”.

Las hermanas Rodríguez son solo las últimas de una serie de trágicos accidentes en la autopista 67, que conecta Presidio y Marfa. La ruta ve mucho más tráfico que solo dos pequeños pueblos fronterizos: es una de las pocas carreteras que conectan el norte de México con la Cuenca Pérmica, y ve mucho tráfico que viaja largas distancias con cargas pesadas, especialmente durante los fines de semana festivos.

El juez del condado Joe Portillo ha sabido toda su vida lo peligroso que puede ser el camino, pero dijo que este accidente lo impulsó a tomar medidas formales, solo cuatro meses después de su primer mandato como juez. “Ver a dos hermanas en ataúdes acostadas una al lado de la otra, no había un ojo seco”, dijo.

Como ex policía estatal, ha estado estudiando los patrones de tráfico en la carretera. “Tenemos muchas curvas ciegas y mucho tráfico extraño: casas solitarias, camiones de alfalfa, transmigrantes”, dijo. “También tenemos personas que vienen de Midland-Odessa y de Chihuahua, y los hábitos de conducción de esas comunidades son muy, muy diferentes a los nuestros”.

Citó el Estudio del Corredor 67 del Departamento de Transporte de Texas, un documento exhaustivo compilado por la agencia estatal durante los años 2010 a 2018. El estudio reveló una tasa de choques más alta en el corredor 67 que los promedios estatales. Los choques se agruparon a unas 20 millas al sur de Marfa a 20 millas al norte de Presidio, donde el camino es ventoso y empinado.

Desde entonces, Portillo ha reclutado un grupo de enfoque informal de representantes de la policía local, DPS y TxDOT. Espera llamar la atención de los legisladores estatales para ayudar a iniciar proyectos que harán que el camino sea más seguro.

El alcalde de Presidio, John Ferguson, estaba a bordo, con la esperanza de transmitir el mensaje a los conductores visitantes de que es importante conducir con cuidado en la carretera. Recordó un accidente fatal hace aproximadamente un año, donde un conductor de Chihuahua murió en la carretera cuando regresaba de WalMart con regalos del día de la madre.

Espera que Presidio pueda seguir siendo un lugar acogedor, al mismo tiempo que garantiza la seguridad de todos en el camino. “No se puede culpar a la gente por querer ir de visita e ir y venir [a través de la frontera]”, dijo. “Pero todos tienen mucha prisa y corren grandes riesgos”.

Perfiles de candidatos

(Continuación de la página 1)

los estándares que requiere la escuela.

También revisaré y abogaré por los salarios de cada uno de los empleados en base al presupuesto anual. También apoyaré a todos los estudiantes con el equipo que necesitan para tener éxito para incluir personal certificado y capacitado que pueda promover el desarrollo y el crecimiento de nuestros estudiantes.

Además, tomaré todas las medidas necesarias para que Presidio ISD tenga éxito en todas las áreas. Quiero que los estudiantes de Presidio se desarrollen profesionalmente. Me gustaría que estos estudiantes se establezcan y desarrollen moral, social e intelectualmente a través de la educación y la ciencia.

¿Cuáles son algunas de las grandes cosas de Presidio ISD que le gustaría celebrar o preservar durante su mandato?

Apoyaré todos los programas escolares que sean beneficiosos para nuestro personal y estudiantes que les permitan desarrollarse y sobresalir. También trabajaré junto con los demás miembros de la junta directiva para tomar las mejores decisiones para Presidio ISD.

CARLOS REYNA

¿Qué experiencia traes a la mesa?

Me gradué de Midland High School en 1996. Luego me uní al ejército y presté servicio en varios puestos de liderazgo y fui ascendido a sargento de personal. La duración total de mi servicio fue de aproximadamente 8 años; 6 1/2 de esos años estuve en una posición de liderazgo.

Luego continué sirviendo como policía estatal de Texas y estuve estacionado en Marfa. Luego me transfirieron a Presidio. Mientras trabajaba como policía estatal, obtuve mi licenciatura en administración de empresas a través de la Universidad Estatal de Sul Ross. He residido en el condado de Presidio desde 2004.

Creo que mi experiencia de vida y trabajo me ha dado la experiencia para poder ayudar a liderar y guiar a PISD hacia un futuro mejor.

¿Cuáles son algunos problemas que espera abordar durante su mandato?

No hay un tema específico en el que quiera centrarme en este momento. Quiero familiarizarme con nuestros miembros y administradores actuales y escuchar qué temas son importantes para ellos.

No estoy buscando la elección en una agenda sesgada. Mi corazón está con las personas que trabajan y confían en PISD para educar a sus hijos. Quiero ayudar a que PISD sea un lugar mejor tomando decisiones informadas. Votaré según lo que sea importante para los educadores, padres y profesores. Necesitamos escuchar las voces de los maestros, entrenadores y administradores y tomar decisiones basadas en sus recomendaciones.

¿Cuáles son algunas de las grandes cosas de Presidio ISD que le gustaría celebrar o preservar durante su mandato?

Quiero celebrar a esos educadores que han dedicado toda su carrera a los niños de Presidio. Esos son nuestros héroes que necesitan ser reconocidos por sus años de servicio. Estoy agradecida a ellos. Educaron a mi hija mayor, que ahora es maestra en Odessa, Texas, ya mi hijo, que actualmente está buscando un título en finanzas a través de UTEP. Todavía tengo dos hijos que asisten al sistema escolar de PISD.

También me gustaría preservar los primeros cursos universitarios y el plan de estudios adicional, como el departamento de atletismo. Como mencioné anteriormente, voy con la mente abierta y quiero escuchar a aquellos a quienes quiero celebrar. Tienen la experiencia y el conocimiento de lo que debe cambiarse y lo que debe preservarse.

Siento que este término que se busca tiene varias personas calificadas, y somos afortunados de tener un gran interés en esta elección.

Estoy agradecido por la oportunidad de representar a la gente del condado de Presidio. Espero poder servir a la gente de Presidio ya sea en esta capacidad o en cualquier otra.

Ordenanza de la sala de juegos

(Continuación de la página 1)

cuenca del Pérmico, tanto que la ciudad de Odessa votó recientemente para rechazar cualquier permiso de sala de juegos. renovación después de diciembre de 2022, esencialmente prohibiendo las empresas por completo.

Los funcionarios de la ciudad de Presidio han sido lentos y deliberados en la redacción de su ordenanza. Los funcionarios de la ciudad han enfatizado que no buscan limitar los negocios legales, pero actualmente no están recaudando ningún ingreso de las salas de juegos que no sean los servicios públicos. “Somos pobres y necesitamos el dinero”, dijo la concejal Nancy Arévalo en la última lectura de la ordenanza propuesta.

Los requisitos de permisos entrarían en vigencia una vez que se apruebe oficialmente la ordenanza: las salas de juegos que actualmente operan en Presidio no tendrán que pagar los permisos de forma retroactiva.

El borrador actual de la ordenanza asigna tarifas de permisos anuales a los propietarios de salas de juegos en una escala escalonada según la cantidad de máquinas en su establecimiento.

En noviembre, cuando el tema surgió por primera vez en el consejo de la ciudad, el administrador de la ciudad, Pablo Rodríguez, se acercó a TGROA para pedirle consejo después de recibir una pista de otro pequeño pueblo fronterizo que había contratado sus servicios. No recibió una respuesta hasta la mañana de la reunión del martes, pero dijo que todavía esperaba con ansias su presentación.

TGROA redacta ordenanzas reglamentarias en nombre de las ciudades y ofrece a los operadores de salas de juegos asesoramiento legal contra las ciudades que los regulan, así como consejos para las personas “temerosas” acerca de invertir en salas de juegos de Texas. “Ayudamos a los condados y ciudades a establecer ordenanzas sostenibles de última generación que tienen un impacto positivo en la comunidad y nuestro [sic] beneficio mutuo [sic]”, se lee en el sitio web de la organización.

Flores comenzó su presentación explicando cómo podría ser la relación ideal de “beneficio mutuo” entre la ciudad y el propietario de la sala de juegos. Su grupo se especializa en “juegos benéficos” que alientan a los miembros a invertir en sus comunidades.

Le dijo al consejo que alentaría a las salas de juegos de Presidio a formar una “coalición” de operadores que unirían algunas de sus ganancias en una organización sin fines de lucro 501c3 colectiva para servir al bien común. “Podrían poner zapatos en los pies de los niños que nunca antes han usado zapatos”, dijo.

Si Presidio optara por participar, TGROA redactaría su ordenanza y luego asumiría la responsabilidad de las inspecciones de cumplimiento. En un pueblo pequeño donde es difícil encontrar agentes encargados de hacer cumplir los códigos, Flores pensó que sería un servicio útil. “Las ciudades se meten en problemas cuando no tienen oficiales de cumplimiento o de aplicación que entiendan cómo funcionan estas máquinas”, dijo.

La especialista en finanzas de la ciudad de Presidio, Malynda Richardson, tenía curiosidad por saber cómo, si todos los servicios de TGROA a la ciudad fueran gratuitos, cómo la organización se mantenía a flote. “¿Cómo te pagas a ti mismo?”

Flores explicó que cada propietario de una sala de juegos tendría que pagar $50 por máquina trimestralmente por una calcomanía de cumplimiento. TGROA sería responsable de inspeccionar el incumplimiento y cualquier sanción volvería a la ciudad.

Flores también explicó que a medida que crece la industria de las salas de juegos, los recursos y la influencia de TGROA podrían ser beneficiosos para la ciudad en la navegación de las relaciones entre los propietarios y la ciudad. “Nuestra base está en Austin, estamos justo al otro lado de la calle del Capitolio”, dijo. “Tenemos nuestro propio GPAC (comité de acción política general) para apoyar a los candidatos estatales y locales que apoyan nuestra visión de los juegos benéficos”.

En la práctica privada, el currículum de Flores cuenta con ocho años de especialización en “leyes de salas de juegos”, con $2.5 millones recuperados por operadores de salas de juegos en el transcurso de “redadas ilícitas”. Los materiales de presentación proporcionados al consejo de la ciudad dicen que “actualmente está demandando a tres condados por allanamientos indebidos”.

Flores aclaró a Radio Pública Marfa que la organización en sí no brinda asistencia legal a los operadores de salas de juego, aunque algunos de sus miembros individuales sí lo hacen. “La Asociación de Propietarios de Salas de Juegos de Texas no representa a los propietarios de salas de juegos en litigios”, dijo.

Los concejales finalmente no tomaron ninguna medida, pero estaban agradecidos por los elementos de reflexión. “Definitivamente quiero más educación sobre esto de parte de alguien que se especialice en esto”, dijo el alcalde pro tempore John Razo.

El concejal Joe Andy Mendoza estuvo de acuerdo. “La primera pregunta que surge cuando alguien menciona salas de juegos: ¿es legal?” él dijo. “Lo que queremos hacer es asegurarnos de tener un sistema y un proceso para que [los propietarios] puedan hacer lo que hacen y entretener para obtener ganancias”.

Flor Montoya, propietaria de la sala de juegos de Presidio, también agradeció la perspectiva de Flores: ha sido extremadamente activa en la discusión pública sobre las nuevas regulaciones, que siente que son un esfuerzo por sacarla de la ciudad. “Me duele pensar en dejar mi trabajo”, dijo. “Sería como si construyera mi casa y luego alguien más entrara y viviera en ella; para mí, es muy difícil”.





SENTINEL SATURDAYS

APRIL 22, 7PM - LATE

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ENGLISH NEWS

Game room ordinance

(Continued from page 1)

other than utilities. "We're poor and we need the money," Councilmember Nancy Arevalo said at the last reading of the proposed ordinance.

Permit requirements would go into effect once the ordinance is officially passed — Presidio's currently operating game rooms won't be required to pay for permits retroactively.

The current draft of the ordinance assigns annual permitting fees to game room owners on a tiered scale based on the number of machines in their establishment.

Back in November — when the topic first came up at city council — City Administrator Pablo Rodriguez reached out to TGROA for advice after a tip from another small border town who had enlisted their services. He did not receive a response until the morning of Tuesday's meeting but said he was still looking forward to their presentation.

TGROA drafts regulatory ordinances on the behalf of cities and offers game room operators legal counsel against the cities regulating them as well as advice for people "apprehensive" about investing in Texas game rooms. "We assist counties and cities with establishing sustainable state-of-the-art ordinances that have a positive community impact and our [sic] mutually beneficial [sic]," the organization's website reads.

Flores began his presentation by explaining what the ideal "mutually beneficial" relationship between city and game room owner could look like. His group specializes in "charitable gaming" that encourages members to invest back in their communities.

He told council that he would encourage Presidio's game rooms to form a "coalition" of operators who would pool some of their profits into a collective 501c3 nonprofit to serve the greater good. "They could put shoes on the feet of children who have never worn shoes before," he said.

If Presidio were to opt in, TGROA would draft their ordinance and then shoulder the responsibility of compliance inspections. In a small town where code enforcement officers are hard to come by, Flores felt that would be a helpful service. "Cities get into trouble when you don't have compliance or enforcement officers who understand how these machines work," he said.

City of Presidio Finance Specialist Malynda Richardson was curious to know how — if all of TGROA's services to the city were free — how the organization stayed afloat. "How do you pay yourself?"

Flores explained that each game room owner would have to pay $50 a machine quarterly for a compliance sticker. TGROA would be responsible for inspecting for noncompliance, and any penalties would go back to the city.

Flores also explained that as the game room industry grows, TGROA's resources and clout could be beneficial to the city in navigating relationships between owners and the city. "We're based out of Austin, we're right across the street from the Capitol," he said. "We have our own GPAC (general political action committee) to support state and local candidates who support our vision of charitable gaming."

In private practice, Flores' resume boasts eight years specializing in "game room law," with $2.5 million recovered by game room operators over the course of "wrongful raids." Presentation materials provided to the city council say that he is "currently suing three counties for wrongful raids."

Flores clarified to Marfa Public Radio that the organization itself does not provide legal assistance to game room operators, though some of its individual members do. "Texas Game Room Owners Association does not represent game room owners in litigation," he said.

Councilmembers ultimately took no action — but were grateful for the food for thought. "I definitely want more education on this from someone who specializes in it," said Mayor Pro Tempore John Razo.

Councilmember Joe Andy Mendoza agreed. "The first question that comes up when someone mentions game rooms — is it legal?" he said. "What we want to do is to ensure that we have a system and a process so that [owners] can do what they do and entertain for profit."

Flor Montoya, Presidio game room owner, was also grateful for Flores' perspective — she has been extremely active in public discussion about the new regulations, which she feels are an effort to push her out of town. "It hurts me to think about leaving my job," she said. "It'd be like if I built my house and then somebody else came in and lived in it — for me, it's really hard."

Village Farms applies for license to grow medical marijuana

By MARY CANTRELL
mkcantrell@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — Village Farms is applying for a license from the Texas Department of Public Safety to grow cannabis in a one-acre greenhouse at its Marfa location in addition to existing tomato crops. If the application is successful, the company also plans to add a dispensary to the property.

The move comes at a time when lawmakers are calling for the expansion of Texas' Compassionate Use Program (TCUP) — which allows for the cultivation and sale of medical marijuana in limited doses to patients with certain conditions — and the agribusiness is seeking to diversify its revenue streams.

At a Presidio County Commissioners Court meeting last week, Senior Vice President of Strategy for Village Farms Paul Furfaro and the company's lawyer, Susan Hays, sought, and ultimately won, a letter of support from local government officials for their license application.

The company representatives argued that the addition of cannabis crops would help keep the business alive — adding taxable value and creating new jobs — while opening up the potential for future expansion as marijuana laws in Texas evolve.

"This climate, this altitude and the days of sun, is extraordinary for growing both tomatoes and cannabis," said Hays. "Looking long term as the laws around cannabis change in the country and internationally, this region is really well positioned to have steady manufacturing or cultivation and bring dollars to the community."

As it stands, Texas has one of the most conservative medical marijuana programs in the nation, said Hays, and while current bipartisan legislation — which recently passed the House — seeks to broaden the conditions that qualify for the TCUP program to include chronic pain (accepted conditions now include epilepsy, post-traumatic stress disorder and more), there is still a long way to go to ensure enough medical marijuana supply to meet demand.

Gaining a foothold in the medical cannabis market could help the tri-county's Village Farms greenhouses avoid the fate of its Monahans greenhouse, Hays argued to commissioners, which the company recently chose to shut down and sell due to the fact that the operation was no longer profitable.

"We don't want that to happen in Marfa. We don't want that to happen in Fort Davis," said Hays. "This is a way to create jobs, but within a very, very restrictive conservative market right now, which is the medical market for cannabis here."

County Commissioner David Beebe voiced support for the initiative, stating that the county had little by way of industry. "Just any type of job where somebody can make a living and pay the bills is a big deal for us," he said.

Village Farms has been working for years to future-proof its business. In 2019 it announced it would begin growing hemp — a non-psychoactive form of the cannabis plant — in the area. "You can't make it in vegetables," CEO Mike De-Giglio told The Big Bend Sentinel at the time, citing an inability to compete with Mexico grower's low produce prices.

But, due to a volatile market and prohibitive state regulatory practices, according to Hays, the hemp initiative never came to fruition. Village Farms did, however, make a successful foray into cultivating cannabis in Canada, where it is currently one of the top growers, having entered into the market at the time of legalization in the country around 2017. If it were to be awarded the license through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to grow medical marijuana in Marfa, it would be the company's first cannabis operation in the U.S.

In an interview with *The Big Bend Sentinel* Furfaro explained the one-acre greenhouse — a small portion of the company's 60 acres worth of Marfa tomato crops — they intend to use for cannabis production, if awarded the license, was severely damaged in a 2012 hail storm and never rehabilitated. He said the company wanted to retrofit it and put it to good use using their know-how from growing cannabis in Canada and saw a need in the Texas market, where just three licenses have been awarded for medical marijuana cultivation, all of which are in the general Central Texas area.

"One of the biggest criticisms that we've been able to learn about from patients is not enough producers, way too expensive, not very easy to get depending on where you are in Texas," said Furfaro.

"We'll be able to serve a part of Texas which has been underserved right now, which is all of West Texas," he continued.

Hays said current regulations are not clear on how many plants or acres can be grown, but if the license is awarded Village Farms will not be limited to raising one acre of cannabis plants — though that greenhouse will serve as ample starting space.

"You can make a lot of cannabis medicine off an acre," said Hays. "In the long run, that facility is very well positioned if the laws in Texas get broader."

But with legalization up in the air on the federal and state levels as well as laws regarding interstate commerce, the future of the nation's marjuana market is unknown, said Furfaro, and Village Farms was poised to focus on what it could accomplish with the license and one-acre greenhouse for now.

"Right now, the only thing we can really focus on is that one little greenhouse, which is going to be able to supply Texans, if they want it, and to be able to do it at a competitive, good price," said Furfaro. "Our only ambition is to be able to get a license and then to evolve at the same pace that regulations evolve with the states and not anywhere faster."

Because the license through the state is a vertically-integrated license, Village Farms will be required to not only cultivate, but also process, test and distribute their own cannabis products. (In other states, third party independent testing is a basic safety regulation.) The creation of a lab will lead to more highly-skilled, higher-paying jobs in the area, said Furfaro, for people trained in quality assurance practices and governmental regulations.

"There's going to be new jobs that are going to be created, and there's going to be very specialized jobs that are going to be created to be able to run a medical cannabis facility within the state of Texas," said Furfaro.

From a cultivation standpoint, tomatoes and cannabis are fairly similar, said Furfaro, with marijuana plants being slightly more laborious, requiring careful handling. He claimed new cannabis plants would not require more water than the company was currently using to farm tomatoes. Village Farms is the largest user of water in Presidio County and utilizes a reverse osmosis to remove minerals from well water, as well as a water recycling system.

Heightened security would also be a feature of the one-acre medical cannabis greenhouse — in addition to the existing 24-7 security booth guarding the property, Village Farms would also install a security fence with motion detectors around the one-acre greenhouse as well as a multitude of security cameras, said Furfaro.

"There are going to be so many cameras that there is not an inch of the facility that is not going to be covered every moment in time by a video feed," said Furfaro.

Greenhouse walls would be opaque for further protection, and transparent ceilings would have shatterproof glass. Hays, who will submit architectural renderings of the entire operation as a part of Village Farms medical cannabis application, said they would also work to prevent light pollution if additional grow lights were needed at night.

A dispensary and sales location is also planned for the site, said Hays. A small public road would be built in order for patients to drive in and fill prescriptions. By law, Village Farms would be limited to distribution sites within a day's drive of the Marfa greenhouse.

"We would be able to, if the communities are interested, set up sales locations in each community and as far away as Odessa," said Hays.

In order for that supply chain to work, the area will need doctors registered with DPS's TCUP program to give out medical marijuana prescriptions. Hays said moving forward, underserved rural Texans deserve access to medical cannabis, which acts as an effective alternative to medications such as highly-addictive opioids.

"Rural Texas does not have the same access to healthcare as most of the state, and there is no access to medical cannabis here at all," said Hays. "That's not fair. It can have really great effects for some people."

Current legislation would also simplify the process of adding more conditions to the list of TCUP qualifiers by giving the authority to the Texas Department of State Health Services rather than requiring a change in the law. The majority of Texans, or 82%, are in favor of making marijuana legal for a wider range of medical purposes with a prescription, according to a February 2023 poll conducted by the Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston.

Hays, who operates a hop and hemp farm in Alpine and has been lobbying on cannabis issues at the state level since 2017, recently ran for agriculture commissioner on a platform of more sensible cannabis laws. She said the state's laws and conservative politics have led to the under-developed medical cannabis market that has resulted in a lack of access for patients and high prices.

"We have this leadership in the state, it's extremely conservative and likes to think of themselves as tough, but they really haven't engaged in what it means to regulate cannabis," said Hays. "They want to slow boat it, but you can't slow boat it when the world is changing so quickly around you."

Texas is the only state which regulates medical marijuana through law enforcement rather than a public health agency. In other states with more robust medical marijuana programs, around 4% of the population typically enrolls, said Hays, and Texas was way behind on serving that level of patients.

According to the DPS website, 50,000 patients have utilized TCUP since its inception in 2015. The Texas Tribune recently reported that the program actively serves around 10,000 to 12,000 participants.

"Texas ought to have a million patients, not 10,000 or 50,000," said Hays.

While there are currently only three licensed medical cannabis producers in the state of Texas, the 2015 Texas Compassionate Use Act states "issuance or renewal of the license is necessary to ensure reasonable statewide access," and a previous study conducted by DPS concluded that 12 providers were needed to adequately cover the state.

Since 2015, license applications have only opened up twice: once in 2017, when the existing three were awarded, and in January 2023.

Applications for the new second round are due in late April, and Village Farms expects to hear if they are awarded a license late this summer or early fall, according to Hays. It is not known how many licenses DPS intends to give out, and the application process is highly detailed and competitive, said Hays, requiring not only architectural plans, but a projected two-year budget, inventory tracking system, waste management plans and more.

"I think they're gonna get like 200 applications," said Hays. "Every major cannabis company in the country is applying."

Big Bend Conservation Alliance to host binational bike ride

By SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — This Sunday, April 23, Presidians are invited to strap on their helmets and join the Big Bend Conservation Alliance for the organization's first ever binational bike ride. The group will meet up at Presidio Pour Over Coffee and ride across the bridge to Ojinaga, with stops at the Museo Regional de Ojinaga and the Presidencia Municipal.

Community bike rides have become a new and fun tradition for sponsors Presidio Pour Over Coffee and Big Bend Conservation Alliance — on a cold and windy morning in January, Presidians gathered for a slow ride around town that brought people who came all the way from Marfa into the fold.

In March, the group got together again to ride from the Consulado de México — adding Mexican officials into the mix encouraged the organizers to start thinking about hosting a bike ride that spans both countries.

This weekend, everyone is invited to make that dream a reality. The group will meet up at Presidio Pour Over Coffee at 9 a.m. on Sunday and ride across the bridge around Ojinaga for around six miles with stops at culturally significant spots. For more information, contact the Big Bend Conservation Alliance on social media.

AW 1-13
Prescribed by Secretary of State
Sections 4.004, 4.009, 83.010, 85.004, 85.007, Texas Election Code
12/2021

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION FOR OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS
(AVISO DE ELECCIÓN ESPECIAL PARA OTRAS SUBDIVISIONES POLÍTICAS)

To the registered voters of the County of PRESIDIO, Texas:
(A los votantes registrados del Condado de PRESIDIO, Texas)

Notice is hereby given that the polling places listed below will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., 5/6/23 for voting in a special election to elect:
PROPOSITION 1 / PROPOSICIÓN 1
(Notifíquese por la presente, que los sitios de votación citadas abajo se abrirán desde las 7:00 a.m. hasta las 7:00 p.m. el 5/6/23 para votar en la elección especial para elegir:

List Offices/Propositions/Measures on the ballot *(Enumere los puestos/proposiciones/medidas oficiales en la boleta)*

PROPOSITION 1 / PROPOSICIÓN 1
SEE ANNEX

On Election Day, voters must vote in the precinct where registered to vote, unless the countywide polling place program is being used in the election.
(El Día de Elección, los votantes deberán votar en el precinto donde están inscritos para votar, a menos que el programa de sitios de votación del condado se está utilizando en la elección.)

Location of Election Day Polling Places Include Name of Building and Address *(Sitios de votación el Día de Elección) (Incluir Nombre del Edificio y Dirección)*	Precinct Number(s) *(Número de precinto)*
MARFA CITY HALL, CASNER ROOM 113 S. HIGHLAND, MARFA, TX	1, 7
PRESIDIO ACTIVITY CENTER 1400 E. O'REILLY, PRESIDIO, TX	2, 3, 4, 5, 6

During early voting, a voter may vote at any of the locations listed below:
(Durante Votación Adelantada, los votantes podrán votar en cualquiera de los sitios de votación nombradas abajo.)

Location of Main Early Voting Polling Place Include Name of Building and Address *(Sitio principal de votación adelantada) (Incluir Nombre del Edificio y Dirección)*	Days and Hours of Operation *Días y Horas Hábiles*
MARFA CITY HALL, CASNER ROOM 113 S. HIGHLANDS, MARFA, TX	APRIL 24 - MAY 2, 2023 8AM - 5PM

Locations for Early Voting Polling Places Include Name of Building and Address *(Sitios de votación adelantada) (Incluir Nombre del Edificio y Dirección)*	Days and Hours of Operation *Días y Horas Hábiles*
PRESIDIO ACTIVITY CENTER 1400 E. O'REILLY, PRESIDIO TX	APRIL 24 - MAY 2, 2023 8AM - 5PM

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán adelantada por correo deberán enviarse a:)
PRESIDIO COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK
Name of Early Voting Clerk *(Nombre del Secretario(a) de la Votación Adelantada)*
PO BOX 789
Address *(Dirección)*
MARFA 79843
City *(Ciudad)* Zip Code *(Código Postal)*
432-729-4812
Telephone Number *(Número de teléfono)*
FLOR.ZUBIA@CO.PRESIDIO.TX.US
Email Address *(Dirección de Correo Electrónico)*
N/A
Early Voting Clerk's Website *(Sitio web del Secretario(a) de Votación Adelantada)*

Applications for Ballots by Mail (ABBMs) must be received no later than the close of business on:
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán adelantada por correo deberán recibirse no más tardar de las horas de negocio el:)
4/25/23
(date)*(fecha)*

Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs) must be received no later than the close of business on:
(La Tarjeta Federal Postal de Solicitud deberán recibirse no más tardar de las horas de negocio el:)
4/25/23
(date)*(fecha)*

Issued this 12th (day) day of April (month), 20 23 (year).
(Emitida este día (día) de (mes), 20 (año).)

Signature of Presiding Officer *(Firma del Dirigente que Preside)*

ANNEX

PROPOSITION 1

Shall the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District instate its original jurisdiction to assess an ad valorem tax, as established in the district's enabling act, so as to secure the dedicated revenue stream necessary to maintain local control and protection of the groundwater resources vital to the prosperity of the citizens, economy, and environment of Presidio County?

PROPOSICIÓN 1

¿Debe el Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District instituir su jurisdicción original para fijar un impuesto ad valorem, según lo establecido en la ley habilitadora del distrito, a fin de asegurar el flujo de ingresos dedicado necesario para mantener el control local y la protección de los recursos de aguas subterráneas vitales para la prosperidad de los ciudadanos, la economía y el medio ambiente del condado de Presidio?

NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

La votación anticipada para las elecciones locales del 6 de mayo comienza el lunes 24 de abril

Por MARY CANTRELL
mkcantrell@bigbendsentinel.com

TRI-CONDADO: la votación anticipada para las elecciones generales del 6 de mayo, en la que los locales eligen candidatos para el concejo municipal y la junta escolar, y deciden sobre las propuestas de la boleta electoral, comienza el lunes 24 de abril.

La votación anticipada se extiende hasta el martes 2 de mayo. La fecha límite para el registro de votantes ya pasó. Para ver si está registrado para votar, visite el sitio web del secretario de estado, votetexas.gov.

El Big Bend Sentinel ha recopilado los horarios y lugares de votación para las carreras que se llevan a cabo en los condados de Presidio y Brewster. No hay elecciones impugnadas en el condado de Jeff Davis.

Condado de Presidio

Propuesta 1 — Distrito de Conservación de Aguas Subterráneas del Condado de Presidio

La votación anticipada para las elecciones del condado se llevará a cabo de 8 a. m. a 5 p. m. Del 24 al 28 de abril y del 1 al 2 de mayo en el Ayuntamiento de Marfa, en el Casner Room y en el Presidio Activity Center. La votación tendrá lugar de 7 a. m. a 7 p. m. el 6 de mayo

Ambos lugares de votación atenderán a los residentes en los precintos 1-7 para la votación anticipada, pero el día de las elecciones, 6 de mayo, los precintos 1 y 7 deben votar en Marfa y los precintos 2-6 deben votar en Presidio. Si bien se encuentran en el mismo edificio, el condado y las ciudades realizarán elecciones separadas y aparecerán en boletas separadas.

Para la Propuesta 1, los votantes decidirán si permiten o no que el Distrito de Conservación de Aguas Subterráneas del Condado de Presidio se convierta en una entidad tributaria. El distrito, compuesto por una junta y un gerente general, actualmente supervisa los permisos de perforación de pozos y los permisos de operación para entidades comerciales, y está incrementando los esfuerzos de monitoreo del nivel del agua para asegurar el futuro del suministro de agua del área.

El distrito ha operado con un presupuesto de los comisionados del condado desde su inicio en 1999 y ha llegado a un acuerdo con el condado para compensar un nuevo impuesto potencial al reducir su tasa impositiva para que los ciudadanos no se vean afectados. El distrito puede imponer un impuesto a la propiedad que no exceda $0.05 por cada $100 de la tasación de la propiedad y trabajará con el tasador-recaudador de impuestos del condado para determinar cuál debería ser la tasa impositiva para obtener el presupuesto requerido, actualmente alrededor de $51,000.

PCUWCD ha publicado una serie de videos educativos sobre varios temas relacionados con el agua subterránea antes de las elecciones, que se pueden encontrar en su sitio web, pcuwcd.org.

Marfa

La votación anticipada para las elecciones de la ciudad de Marfa se llevará a cabo de 8 a. m. a 5 p. m. Del 24 al 29 de abril y del 1 al 2 de mayo en el City Hall en Casner Room. El horario de votación será de 7 a. m. a 7 p. m. el 6 de mayo

El Ayuntamiento de Marfa está compuesto por un alcalde, que cumple un mandato de dos años, y cinco miembros del consejo, que cumplen mandatos escalonados de dos años. En las próximas elecciones, se elegirá el puesto del alcalde Manny Baeza, al igual que los puestos de los concejales Irma Salgado y Raúl Lara.

El titular Baeza se postula para el cargo de alcalde de Marfa, que de ser elegido sería su tercer mandato. Según el secretario de la ciudad, el otro candidato a la alcaldía, Stephen Salgado Boelter, se retiró de la carrera el 19 de abril, citando asuntos familiares.

Sin embargo, según la ley estatal, es demasiado tarde para eliminar el nombre de Salgado Boelter de la boleta electoral. Si gana las elecciones, tendrá que declinar el cargo de alcalde, dejando a la ciudad con una vacante que el concejo cubriría por nombramiento.

"Desafortunadamente, me retiraré como candidato a alcalde debido a asuntos familiares con los que he estado lidiando", escribió Salgado Boelter en un comunicado a The Big Bend Sentinel. "Me gustaría que los ciudadanos sepan sobre mi circunstancia para que voten en consecuencia, ya que todavía estaré en la boleta".

"Ha sido una decisión difícil de tomar. Espero que los ciudadanos entiendan", agregó.

Para los dos puestos disponibles para miembros del consejo, la actual miembro del consejo Lara se postula para la reelección, junto con los nuevos candidatos Travis Acreman y Christa Márquez. Se indicará a los votantes que seleccionen hasta dos de los tres candidatos a miembros del consejo. Mark Morrison, que se postula sin oposición, es declarado elegido por un período de un año.

Después del 6 de mayo, los miembros del consejo recién elegidos asumen sus funciones a fines de mayo o principios de junio. No hubo puestos en disputa en la Junta Escolar de Marfa ISD, por lo que el distrito no participará en la elección con la ciudad.

Los cuestionarios de candidatos para el Concejo Municipal de Marfa se pueden encontrar en la edición de esta semana de *The Big Bend Sentinel*.

Presidio

La ciudad de Presidio y Presidio ISD realizarán elecciones conjuntas. La votación tendrá lugar de 8 a. m. a 5 p. m. Del 24 de abril al 2 de mayo en el Activity Center, 1200 E. O'Reilly Street. El horario de votación será de 7 a. m. a 7 p. m. el 6 de mayo

El cargo de alcalde de Presidio está sujeto a elección, con el titular John Ferguson y Angel Miguel Campos compitiendo por el puesto. Se elegirán dos puestos de miembros del consejo, y los votantes elegirán hasta dos de tres candidatos: el titular Arian Velázquez-Ornelas, la titular Nancy Arévalo y Todd Beckett.

Los candidatos a la Junta Escolar de Presidio ISD son Brenda Witty, Jaime Sanchez, Steve "Nicky" Alvarez, Carlos Reyna, Jessica Acevedo Nunez, Marco Lujan, Jeremy Velasquez y Perla Natividad.

Los fideicomisarios son generales y no representan distritos específicos, lo que significa que los votantes elegirán cuatro de los ocho candidatos que aparecen en la boleta electoral.

Condado de Brewster

La Ciudad de Alpine y Alpine ISD llevarán a cabo una elección conjunta. La votación tendrá lugar de 8 a. m. a 5 p. m. Del 24 de abril al 2 de mayo en las Cámaras del Concejo Municipal, 803 W. Holland Ave. El horario de votación será de 7 a. m. a 7 p. m. el 6 de mayo

La Ciudad de Alpine tendrá una carrera por el puesto de miembro del consejo del Distrito 5, para la cual se presentaron el titular Jerry Johnson, quien falleció recientemente, y Rick Stephens. La ciudad de Alpine ha declarado que Johnson permanecerá en la boleta a pesar de su fallecimiento, según la ley estatal: el Código Electoral de Texas dicta que el nombre de un candidato aparecerá en la boleta si fallece el segundo día antes de la fecha límite de presentación o después (en este caso, el 17 de febrero). Si se elige a un candidato fallecido, se crea una vacante y el consejo nombrará un sucesor.

Los miembros titulares del consejo Judy Stokes, Distrito 1, y Darin Nance, Distrito 3, fueron candidatos sin oposición. Ya han sido declarados electos y no aparecerán en la papeleta.

La Junta Escolar de Alpine ISD tendrá dos puestos disponibles para elección. El titular Joe Portillo, que representa al Distrito 2, se presentó para la reelección y no tiene oposición, lo que significa que será declarado electo y no aparecerá en la boleta electoral. El escaño del Distrito 6, actualmente ocupado por el Dr. Adrian Billings, será una carrera entre Billings, quien solicitó la reelección, y el nuevo candidato Richard Portillo.

Big Bend Conservation Alliance organizará un paseo binacional en bicicleta

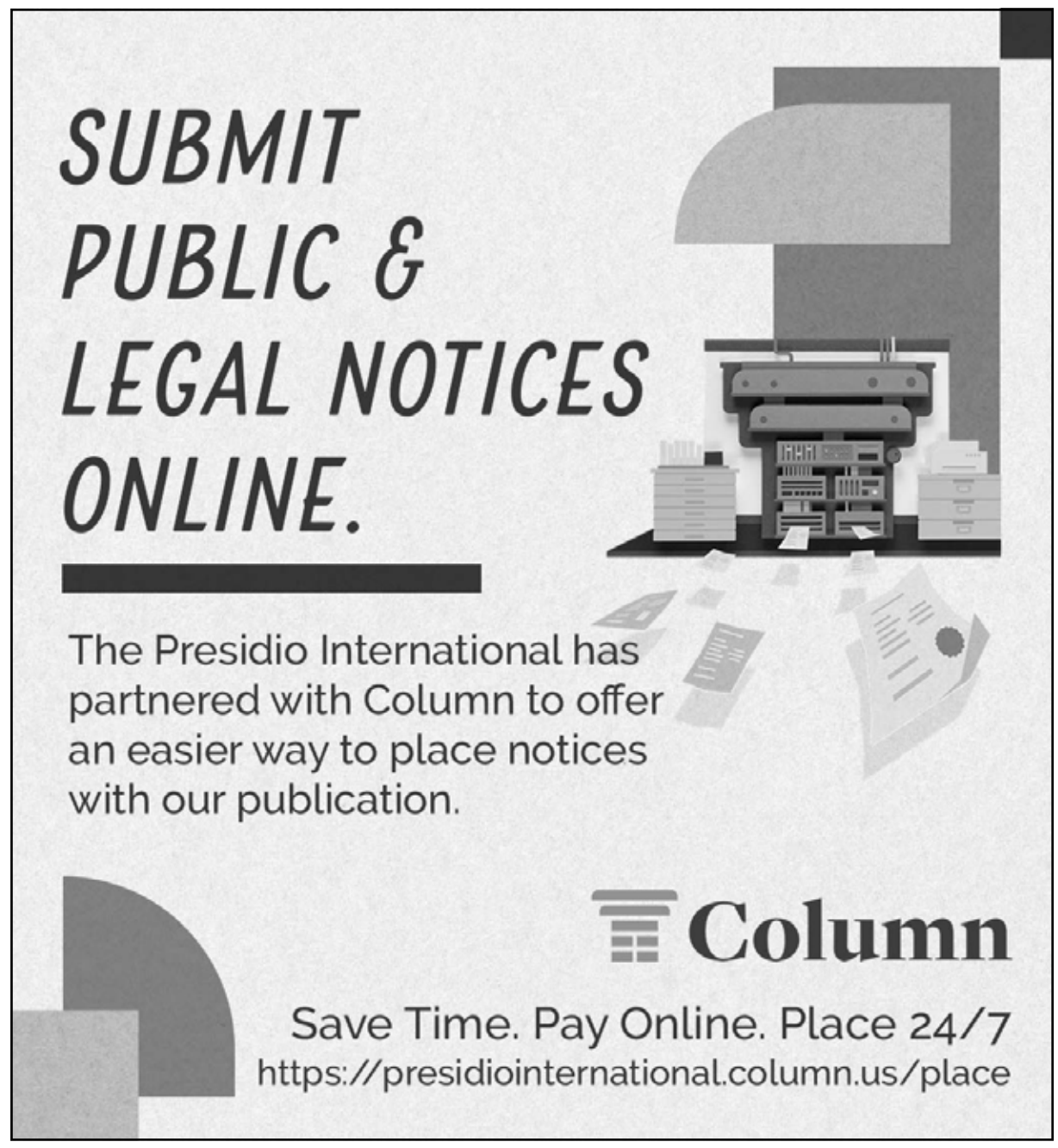
Por SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — Este domingo 23 de abril, los presidentes están invitados a ponerse los cascos y unirse a Big Bend Conservation Alliance para el primer paseo en bicicleta binacional de la organización. El grupo se reunirá en Presidio Pour Over Coffee y cruzará el puente a Ojinaga, con paradas en el Museo Regional de Ojinaga y la Presidencia Municipal.

Los paseos comunitarios en bicicleta se han convertido en una tradición nueva y divertida para los patrocinadores Presidio Pour Over Coffee y Big Bend Conservation Alliance: en una mañana fría y ventosa de enero, los presidentes se reunieron para un paseo lento por la ciudad que atrajo a personas que llegaron desde Marfa hasta el pliegue.

En marzo, el grupo se reunió nuevamente para viajar desde el Consulado de México; agregar funcionarios mexicanos a la mezcla animó a los organizadores a comenzar a pensar en organizar un viaje en bicicleta que abarque ambos países.

Este fin de semana, todos están invitados a hacer realidad ese sueño. El grupo se reunirá en Presidio Pour Over Coffee a las 9 a.m. del domingo y cruzará el puente alrededor de Ojinaga durante unas seis millas con paradas en lugares de importancia cultural. Para obtener más información, comuníquese con Big Bend Conservation Alliance en las redes sociales.



AWI-6
Prescribed by Secretary of State
Sections 3.004, 3.006, 4.008, 85.004, 85.007, Texas Election Code
9/2009

ORDER OF GENERAL/JOINT ELECTION FOR MUNICIPALITIES
(ORDEN DE ELECCION ESPECIAL PARA MUNICIPIOS)

An election is hereby ordered to be held on May 6th, 2023 (date) for the purpose of:

(Por la presente se ordena que se llevará a cabo una elección el 6 de mayo, 2023 (fecha) con el propósito de:)

Early voting by personal appearance will be conducted each weekday at
(La votación adelantada en persona se llevará a cabo de lunes a viernes e:)

City of Presidio Activity Center, 1200 E. O'Reilly St., Presidio, Texas. (location) *(sitio)*

Recommended but not required

between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. beginning on April 24th, 2023 (date)
(entre las 8:00 de la mañana y las 5:00 de la tarde empezando el 24 de abril, 2023 (fecha))
and ending on May 2nd, 2023 (date). *(y terminando el 2 de mayo, 2023 (fecha).)*

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán en ausencia por correo deberán enviarse a:)

Brenda Ornelas-Acuña
(Name of Early Voting Clerk)
(Nombre del Secretario(a) de la Votación Adelantada)

P.O. Box 1899
(Address) *(Dirección)*

Presidio, Texas 79845
(City) *(Ciudad)* (Zip Code) *(Zona Postal)*

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán en ausencia por correo deberán recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocio el)

April 18, 2023 /18 de abril, 23 .
(date) *(fecha)*

Issued this the 16th day of January, 20 23.

(Emitida este dia 16 de febrero, 20 23.)

Alderman *(Concejal)* — Signature of Mayor *(Firma del Alcalde)*
Alderman *(Concejal)* — Alderman *(Concejal)*
Alderman *(Concejal)* — Alderman *(Concejal)*

City of Presidio, Texas PRESIDIO TEXAS Junta de los Rios 1883

Instruction Note: A copy of this election order must be delivered to the county Clerk/Elections Administrator and Voter Registrar immediately after ordering the election.

(Nota de instrucción: Se deberá entregar una copia de esta orden de elección al/a la Secretario(a) del Condado/Administrador(a) de Elecciones y el/la Registrador(a) de Votantes inmediatamente después de ordenar la elección.)

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CLASSIFIED

Presidio hosts successful Child Abuse Prevention parade

By SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — Last week, sirens rang out across town as Presidians showed their support for the mission of the Big Bend Children's Advocacy Center. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month — the official color of the commemorative program is blue, which suited the wardrobes of local Blue Devils just fine.

Municipal Judge Vivi Cataño helped organize the event with the help of Shanna Spence Sullivan, executive director for all of the Big Bend regional offices. Cataño felt it was important to get the word out — so many crimes against children go unreported because people feel afraid to speak up.

Cataño wanted a bright future for all of Presidio's children. "We wanted to give the message to the families and to the community: stop the abuse," she said.

Presidio High School senior Ramon Rodriguez also attended the parade with members of PISD's chapter of the National Honor Society. He said members of his organization volunteered with children and felt it was important to protect younger members of the community. "Protecting the little ones is important, and we want to set an example of standing up for them," he said.

Presidio organiza un exitoso desfile de prevención del abuso infantil

Por SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — La semana pasada, las sirenas sonaron en toda la ciudad cuando los presidentes mostraron su apoyo a la misión del Centro de defensa de los niños de Big Bend. Abril es el Mes de la Prevención del Abuso Infantil: el color oficial del programa conmemorativo es el azul, que se adapta perfectamente a los guardarropas de los Blue Devils locales.

La jueza municipal Vivi Cataño ayudó a organizar el evento con la ayuda de Shanna Spence Sullivan, directora ejecutiva de todas las oficinas regionales de Big Bend. Cataño sintió que era importante correr la voz: tantos delitos contra los niños no se denuncian porque la gente tiene miedo de hablar.

Cataño quería un futuro brillante para todos los niños de Presidio. "Queríamos dar el mensaje a las familias ya la comunidad: paren el abuso", dijo.

El estudiante de último año de Presidio High School, Ramón Rodríguez, también asistió al desfile con miembros del capítulo de PISD de la Sociedad Nacional de Honor. Dijo que los miembros de su organización se ofrecieron como voluntarios con niños y sintieron que era importante proteger a los miembros más jóvenes de la comunidad. "Proteger a los más pequeños es importante y queremos dar un ejemplo de cómo defenderlos", dijo.

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TEXTURE PRESIDIO

Charlie Cecil

Photo 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 the surrounding desert landscape both beautifully ordinary and unique.

While Charlie Cecil's youth lacked many of the quintessential aspects one might equate with a "happy childhood," he always found refuge in Presidio, Texas. At an early age, Charlie entered a dance between being raised by his maternal grandmother in Coleman, Texas, a small town outside of Abilene, and his paternal grandparents along the border in Presidio.

Charlie's father, a young oil field driller, was killed by a drunk driver when Charlie was merely two years old. In the aftermath, Charlie's mom, Carolene, never recovered, resulting in years of substance dependency and a lifelong struggle to find her footing. This resulted in Charlie being placed in the legal care of his collective grandparents. Except for a first-grade year in Presidio, he would spend his remaining school years in Coleman. Come summertime, he'd head south to the CC Ranch, his grandparents' home outside of Presidio — a season Charlie would look forward to every year.

While life in Coleman was brimming with physical and emotional toil, his summers in Presidio involved a hearty dose of care. His grandparents in Presidio, Charlie and Carol, while by no means affluent, provided Charlie with a wealth of experiences and richness in freedom, adventure, good food and space to evolve. As an only child, he spent much time alone exploring the property, fishing on the Rio, or hunting with Grandpa Charlie. He has fond memories of jumping in the back of the truck of Beto Marquez, a family friend and helpful ranch hand — heading with Beto's family to swim in Shafter or The Three Palms Inn or staying at the Marquez's ranch in Mexico just across the river. In those days, it wasn't uncommon to make the trip back and forth across the border several times a week. Charlie notes it was much easier then.

Charlie's grandparents bought the CC Ranch in 1979. They rented section 2, land along the river known as the Arenosa Campground in The Big Bend Ranch State Park. Grandpa Charlie would bring clients and friends down to the river from the Permian Basin, where he ran his business. They set up a self-sustainable camp with a garden. The heat would get so high they would often sleep on top of the trailer at night, with only the vibrant stars above them.

During Charlie's first-grade year in Presidio, another boy challenged him to a "rock fight." As he describes how he and the other boy squared off, he shares the irony that as an only child on the ranch, he spent many hours perfecting his rock-throwing skills. He bent down, running his fingers through the rocky dirt to select the best stone to throw down into the cottonwoods as a demonstration. While Charlie is fond of the view that looks out onto the Rio Grande, his favorite scene is on the opposite side of the property, looking down into a sea of cottonwood trees at the bottom of the ridge.

Charlie attributes his ability to think ahead and fully grasp that his actions have consequences to the many times he got himself into sticky situations on the ranch and the sheer amount of time he had with his thoughts. The skills and lessons learned at the farm would stay with him well into adulthood.

That said, Charlie did not follow in the footsteps of his father or grandfathers, who all worked various jobs in the oil field Industry. Unexpectedly, Charlie found himself in medical school. His journey to becoming a urology specialist was a complex one.

Charlie spent his early twenties being "a bit rudderless," as he describes it. He struggled to get through school and found himself unsure of what path to take, trying on a few different hats for size along the way and not without success. During this time, Charlie's mom sent him this advice in the form of a letter: "Stop with these get-rich-quick schemes and finish your degree," adding her desire to have done so in her own life. These words were hard to hear from her, given her life choices and the many ways those choices had affected Charlie. However, he got more serious about his studies with the encouragement of his grandfather, who, though he often did not agree with Charlie's mom, urged him to heed her advice. This was a first for Charlie.

Charlie excelled in medical school, motivated by a desire to help people and a way to break the cycle of struggle in his family. After an impactful encounter with a doctor comforting a friend hospitalized after a series of seizures, Charlie knew instantly and finally that was the path he wanted to take. It is evident in talking to Charlie that while he carries with him much gratitude for parts of his childhood, he is deeply motivated not to let the individual challenging pieces of his story define him or determine his family's future. His efforts to do so come from a place of understanding and respect for the individual characters of his personal story — which is no easy task.

Charlie's greatest delight is sharing the ranch with his wife, Lauren, and their three girls — Channing, Reagan and Holland. Despite working very hard in his professional life in Abilene, Presidio will forever be where Charlie and his family return; it is simply his favorite place.

Charlie renamed the ranch after his grandparents passed from the CC Ranch to the Rio Bravo Ranch. Since buying his first car after high school, Charlie has visited the Rio Bravo Ranch at least once every six weeks.

Charlie proposed to Lauren on one of the hills overlooking the Rio Grande. With a ring placed on the fence post, he declared, "I want you to be my wife." Charlie tells me, "Lauren jokes that the way I phrased it, she didn't think she had a choice!" He confesses he might need some assistance in the charm department, similar to his Grandpa Charlie and his father.

The support that exists between Charlie and Lauren is worth envying. Asking Charlie what Lauren thought about his many career switches early on, he answered with certainty, "That's how I knew I was gonna marry her; Lauren has had my back since I worked at Pizza Hut."



Charlie Cecil

Charlie continues his grandfather's passion and love for the area and his excitement for sharing the region with others. Over the years, he has introduced Presidio and the Big Bend region to countless others, including by offering stays at La Centinela, the gorgeous adobe home on a more recently acquired part of the Rio Bravo Ranch.

Spending an evening on the back porch of La Centinela as the vibrant West Texas sun sets, looking across into Mexico, is simply magical. While the Cecils enjoy their time at La Centinela, they aim to use the vacation rental to draw more people to their beloved Presidio. Despite the true luxury of the home — a two-bed/two-bath cozy space complete with all the amenities your heart could desire — most of the Cecil clan's time on the ranch is spent outside. When the house is rented (often) during their visits down south, they stay in the tiny one-room building down the hill, sleeping on cots or out under the stars. Before enclosing Charlie's grandma's former canning shed, the Cecil family would camp out there. This crew is not afraid of getting dirty and sleeping under the stars. Most trips back to the ranch involve much of both.

La Centinela and the land it was on joined Team Cecil in 2021. As they began much-needed renovations, turning the home into a vacation rental and continuing to develop their existing campground and jeep rental business, they became exposed to the dismissive attitude towards Presidio as simply a "pass through" on the way to the Big Bend parks. Charlie notes how even as a boy, he idolized the stunning adobe structure sitting on the hill adjacent to his grandparents' land.

"The irony has been that Presidio has excellent services, great restaurants and a burgeoning entrepreneurial flair … we are firm believers in the 'rising tides lift all ships' philosophy," said Charlie. "We are bringing events to the ranch that directly benefit the city, from increased traffic in hotels, local vacation rentals and restaurants and service providers. We hope to continue expanding our partnerships with local and regional businesses, outfitters and community stakeholders in efforts consistent with the mission to make Presidio more than just a pass-through. This is also personal; I want to expose people to the town and region that helped make me. Presidio is a living, breathing metaphor for resilience, and I love it."

Up on the hill, with the sun setting across the Rio Grande and the sound of Charlie's daughters playing in the background at La Centinela, Charlie points out the final resting place for his mother and both of his paternal grandparents. Charlie's connection to this land reverberates into every corner of the property. Each and every new venture and planned event are just tools to better share his favorite place with all of us.

"I believe Presidio is an amazing place with an amazing history that remains mostly undiscovered," he said "It is the gateway to the wildest parts of Texas, and more than an art gallery and hotel, it is a living, breathing frontera Far West Texas experience. Presidio is unbelievably safe and welcoming. Presidio is the ying to Marfa's yang, a known birthplace of West Texas/Northern Mexico civilization. It is frankly underappreciated for what it offers from both a cultural experience and a present-day throwback experience for what Far West Texas used to be."

The last thing I ask Charlie is to share with me a favorite memory of his involving the ranch and watching his girls get to experience the same land that helped shape him.

"We have had many adventurous times at the ranch, but my favorite moments are when we can allow the girls to feel that wild freedom that comes from similarly roaming the property to what I experienced as a kid," he responded. "Their experience is different, but there is no imitable analog for developing the feelings/skills of independent thought, self-reliance and discretion than being on one's own decision-maker, left to make mistakes (some quite painful), fall, scrape your knee, cry with no one around enough to realize the futility in feeling sorry for yourself. We want them to be tough in a throwback way, self-reliant in my family's way, and compassionate in the way of their mother, learning to see the world in a tint that we are so fortunate to expose them to — they have seen poverty and great human beings of little means that would split their last apple with them. And to see color, race and socioeconomic disparity in the context of humanity in those conditions. When I was a kid, my mom was disabled with lupus; we lived on a workers' comp check that totaled $6,188 per year, yet she made sure we adopted a 'less fortunate' family from our church at Christmas time. It was beautifully ironic, given our lack of financial means. We can never exactly replicate that for my children, but we want to give them every opportunity to have their souls scrubbed by the dusty roads of South Presidio County and Rio Bravo Ranch."

Find out how to book your own experience at the Rio Bravo Ranch and La Centinela on their website: www.riobravoranchtx.com

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 www.hannahgentiles.com/texturepresidio or ig:texturepresidio

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PRESIDIO SPORTS CALENDAR

THURSDAY, APRIL 20:
PHS Track Boys & Girls Varsity @ Denver City Area Meet

FRIDAY, APRIL 21:
PHS Softball Var/Jv vs Crane @ Presidio (Senior Night)
PHS Baseball JV/Var vs Crane @ Presidio (Senior Night)

MONDAY, APRIL 24:
PHS Softball Varsity vs Alpine @ Van Horn
LRFMS Softball @ Ft. Stockton
LRFMS Baseball vs Van Horn @ Presidio

TUESDAY, APRIL 25:
PHS Baseball JV/Var @ Alpine

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