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by order of Presidio County

25 years on, the Jeff Davis County Food Pantry continues to nourish community

Open house set for Saturday

By MARY CANTRELL
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FORT DAVIS — Volunteers are moving quickly, unpacking palettes of fresh produce, loading vegetables into coolers, opening boxes of dried goods and stocking shelves while a warehouse garage door remains wide open, ready to welcome incoming delivery trucks.

It's one of the Jeff Davis County Food Pantry's busiest days of the week. It's chaotic, yet organized; the shuffling of people and supplies is like a game of Tetris. "We try to put everything on wheels," said Executive Director Vickie Gibson.

Gibson, armed with a clipboard, supervises deliveries that morning from the West Texas Food Bank and assists volunteers when they have questions, though they mostly work independently. The distribution center bears the name of the organization's founders, John and Brenda Bell, who started the Jeff Davis County Food Pantry 25 years ago.

The nonprofit currently serves 530 individuals representing 235 households, nearly a third of the county. Over half, 57%, of their clients are either under age 18 or over 60. Because Fort Davis schools were built without cafeterias and do not offer free and reduced lunch programs like most public schools, the food pantry also runs school lunch and snack programs, adding to the complexity and cost of its operations.

The food pantry provides one lunch and one snack to 118 school-aged children 365 days a year, and supplies free snacks at schools and the county library. "There's a lot of food insecurity in Jeff Davis County," Gibson said. "Among children, it is particularly high. Those are the people we're trying to help."

The food pantry is hosting an open house — to raise awareness of its mission, show off new building additions and celebrate its 25th anniversary — this Saturday, April 20, from 4 to 6 p.m. at 609 Compromise Street in Fort Davis. The event also acts as a fundraiser, as the food pantry is experiencing a \$50,000 budget deficit this year. Gibson said rather than cut

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Illustration courtesy of CrowCrumbs

The weight of the badge: Customs and Border Protection responds to rash of agent suicides

By SAM KARAS
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US-MEXICO BORDER — As journalists and politicians endlessly dissect the current situation on the southwest border, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is dealing with a crisis all its own: a spike in suicides among agency staff.

The issue was first widely publicized in December of 2022 when three Border Patrol agents died by suicide within a month. The agency has been keeping internal tabs since 2007: in that 17-year span, there have been 149 reported deaths, with a spike of 15 in 2008 and 14 in 2022 out of a workforce of around 20,000 Border Patrol Agents and 60,000 total employees. These higher suicide rates appear to be

correlated with higher numbers of apprehensions along the border — and their associated waves of violence, suffering and death. Widespread criticism of the Biden administration's border security policies has resulted in intense scrutiny from both ends of the political bell curve.

CBP families, agents and whistleblowers agree: the job is not easy. A study tracking deaths of law enforcement officers more generally found that life expectancy for those in the line of duty is age 66, 12 years lower than the general population. "Working long hours and responding to high-stress situations, our men and women in green and blue are being pushed to their breaking point every single day," Congressman Tony Gonzales wrote in a press release.

In 2022, Gonzales — who represents the Big

Bend — introduced the Taking Action to Prevent Suicide (TAPS) Act alongside fellow Texas Rep. Henry Cuellar, calling for an anti-suicide task force to identify strengths and weaknesses in the agency's response to the crisis. (The bill never made it out of committee.)

The two representatives wanted to boost what they perceived were positive first steps. "Recent appropriations have led to the hiring of additional mental health clinicians at CBP. However, there is still a shortage of mental health support, education, and destigmatization at the agency," he wrote.

In May of 2023, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) published a report, presented to the heads of CBP

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Gunshots lead to lock down of schools in Alpine, warrant for man's arrest

By ROB D'AMICO
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ALPINE — An arrest warrant has been issued for an Alpine man who allegedly opened fire on a man's pickup truck Tuesday afternoon, initiating a brief lockdown of Alpine ISD schools, according to police officials. The Tuesday shooting incident is one of several events impacting an Alpine family that has seen a tragic death and the arrest of family members in the past two months.

In a text and Instagram message to the community, Alpine ISD Superintendent Michelle Rinehart said the district put schools on a lockdown for about six minutes before a return

call from police gave her the "all clear" to remove it.

The Alpine Police Department issued a warrant for Juan Jose Tafoya, 30, of Alpine, after he allegedly fired at least two shots at a truck owned by Justin Vega Lara, 37, of Alpine, near the 1100 block of North 9th Street just after 1 p.m. Tuesday, according to Police Chief Darrell Losoya. Lara and other occupants were in the truck when it was fired upon, but no one was injured. The names of other occupants were not released because of an ongoing investigation into the incident, Losoya said.

Justin Lara is the brother of Ismael Javier "I.J." Vega, 23, of Alpine, who died of a suspected

fentanyl overdose on February 15. Authorities in Sierra Blanca then arrested Vega's other brother, Willie "Sapo" Lara III, and two others on March 4 for possession of narcotics (including fentanyl) with intent to distribute. According to a complaint filed in federal court, those arrested said the plan was to sell the fentanyl in Alpine.

Justin Lara — the target of Tuesday's assault — was then arrested on March 7 after officers found methamphetamine and marijuana in his vehicle, and he was jailed briefly in Brewster County before being released on bond. According to police officials, the arrest was not directly related to his brother's death or the other brother's arrest,

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Police chase mountain lion through streets of Presidio

By ROB D'AMICO
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While mountain lions are not uncommon visitors to remote ranches and parks of the Big Bend, it is rare to see them prowling the streets and alleyways of an area neighborhood — but that was the scene on April 9 as Presidio police officers chased after a "lioness," which eventually fled into the wild.

A Presidio resident spotted the mountain lion, and two Presidio Police Department officers and an animal control officer responded to the 400 block of Park Street and found it "hiding between a stretch of hallway between an apartment and

a wall fence," according to a Presidio Police Department Facebook post.

"It's uncommon for them to be found in areas where there are lots of people," said Rachael Connally, the Texas Parks and Wildlife biologist for Presidio County. "It could just be that the animal was passing through and may have gotten confused or lost in town and wasn't able to find its way out. Or it may have been that it found an easy source of food in town."

The police Facebook post noted the mountain lion "ran all the way through the city streets, crossing U.S. Highway 67 ... and finally running away into the wild." The post included a blurry photo of what appears to be the cat trying to

leap a fence, along with photos of paw prints found later. A subsequent post advises: "If you see a mountain lion, remain calm, pick up small children and pets, and back away slowly while maintaining eye contact with the lion. Do not turn and run. When given space to flee, the lion will most often leave human-dominated environments."

Connally urged residents to first report mountain lions to police if it is in an area with people, but also asked that all sightings be reported to a Texas Parks and wildlife biologist. Search the web for "TPWD find a Wildlife Biologist," which will take you to a page to search for the appropriate person to contact, she said.

As mediation stalls, Jeff Leach defamation case creeps forward

By SAM KARAS
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TERLINGUA — A defamation case brought by Terlingua-based hotelier Jeff Leach against former employee Katy Milam inched forward this week after stalling in mediation since 2023. Counsel for Milam filed a partial motion for summary judgment, asking for a judge to rule in advance of a tentative September trial date.

The complex legal battle between Leach and Milam — who goes by Schwartz in court filings — began in the summer of 2019 when Milam claims she was pinned down by her former employer, who told her he "always gets what he wants." Milam filed a report with the Brewster County Sheriff's Office but declined to press charges.

Leach filed a defamation lawsuit against Milam in September of that year, claiming that Milam's retelling of the incident to others had hurt his reputation and his business, short-term rental operation Basecamp Terlingua.

Milam's counsel then filed a motion under the Texas Citizens Participation Act (TCPA), which provides a few criteria that courts can use to drop defamation suits, including whether or not a defendant was exercising their First Amendment rights or whether a particular plaintiff could be considered "libel-proof."

That TCPA motion — filed on the grounds that Milam had the First Amendment right to talk about what had happened between her and Leach and that Leach's alleged bad reputation rendered him "libel-proof" — was granted by a court but quickly appealed by Leach. The appeals court reversed the lower court's decision, citing missed deadlines and other procedural issues.

While the civil suit was taking shape, three other women filed affidavits in support of Milam, alleging sexual violence and misconduct. One of them resulted in a grand jury indictment of Leach in February 2020 for sexual assault; the 83rd District Attorney's office dismissed the indictment in April 2022.

In July of that year, Milam filed her own countersuit and enjoined Leach's girlfriend, Anna Oakley. She alleged that the two had conspired to trash her reputation and cast doubt on her accusations, most notably by putting up stickers saying "Katy Lied" in bathrooms and bars across the tri-county.

The defense gathered hundreds of pages of testimony from others who accused Leach of predatory behavior and telling falsehoods, including articles in Texas Monthly alleging a long history of litigation and an article in the journal Science casting doubt on Leach's claim to be a PhD conducting research on the gut microbiome. (Leach's counsel refuted these allegations throughout the discovery process.)

The two parties lingered in mediation throughout the end of 2023, until an impasse was declared in March of 2024. Milam's attorney, Jodi Cole, filed a motion for summary judgment, in hopes that a judge will find the facts of the case undisputed and make a decision from there.

Cole's filing is a hybrid motion, applying only to Leach's case against Milam. If the judge rules in Milam's favor, her lawsuit against Leach will continue, seeking reimbursement of court costs and "maximum damages" of \$1 million. Leach's attorney, Rae Lafeste,

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New border lighting initiatives prompt concern over dark skies, environment

By MARY CANTRELL
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TRI-COUNTY — New Customs and Border Protection high-intensity lighting initiatives along the U.S.-Mexico border in El Paso and Starr counties are prompting local concerns over potential impacts to dark skies and the environment.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced on March 7 it is seeking public input on “potential impacts and project alternatives for the proposed construction, operation, and maintenance of border barrier lighting in El Paso and Starr counties.” Comments — which CBP will accept until April 22 — will help inform an environmental assessment.

In total, CBP is proposing a 44.75-mile non-continuous stretch of lights, light poles and associated infrastructure in areas along the border outside of ports of entry, some of which are remote and agricultural. A 19.6-mile portion of the lighting has already been installed but is not yet illuminated, with another 25.15 miles being proposed by CBP.

Other states along the U.S.-Mexico border, including New Mexico and Arizona, have also seen the installation and proposed additional installation of border lighting. “These are extremely high-powered lights, the types you would normally find in a football stadium, on high poles, relatively close together,” said Ruskin Hartley, CEO of Dark Sky International. “If they are energized their impact would be seen for miles and miles in some of the darkest and most remote parts of North America, some of our last great dark sky locations.”

The tri-county area and parts of Mexico make up the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve — the first and largest international dark sky reserve designated in 2022. The reserve is made possible due to grassroots efforts by the McDonald Observatory, Big Bend Conservation Alliance and more to encourage local residents, municipalities and counties to adopt better lighting techniques.

While none of the “border barrier lighting” is currently proposed for the tri-county area, it is located as close as the El Paso-Hudspeth county line, and will likely contribute to light pollution in the Big Bend region, according to McDonald Observatory Dark Skies Outreach Program Coordinator Stephen Hummel, who addressed Alpine City Council members on Tuesday.

Council members discussed whether or not to adopt a letter — written by city staffers — opposing CBP’s plans to install 25.15 miles of new lighting along the international border. The draft letter, read aloud by Mayor Catherine Eaves, stated one of the main concerns is that CBP would consider installing similar infrastructure in Presidio or other local border communities.

“If large sections of the Big Bend border were to be lit as they are elsewhere the impact would be immense,” the letter stated. “It could effectively end the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve and the binational effort. It would devastate wildlife, astrotourism and our local economy and it would significantly impact astronomical research.”

Hummel said CBP is not legally required to hold a public comment period for the project, and had not for previous lighting installations, making the current comment period notable. “You may not get another opportunity to speak up about it,” Hummel told council members.

He said the current review process will help inform whether or not already installed lights are illuminated. McDonald Observatory intends to submit a formal comment to CBP, he said.

Councilmember Rick Stephens said the letter would be more effective if, rather than outright opposing the new border lighting, it requested border lighting be dark-sky friendly and comply with existing city ordinances. Other council members agreed and they voted to pass the letter as amended.

Laura Gold, Alpine resident and board member of Dark Sky Texas, told The Big Bend Sentinel her concerns go beyond the ability to see the night sky, and include potential impacts to people living along the new lighting routes, as well as ecological concerns over bird migration, aquatic species and insects. “It’s the environmental impact on all the wildlife too, so it’s more than just an astrological concern,” Gold said.

Gold said she is glad CBP is now seeking public input about the border lighting initiatives, but she didn’t understand why that input was not solicited before the 19-mile stretch of lights was already installed. “My concern is they would attempt to bring the same thing out here, just start building it like they’ve done before,” Gold said. “They built this thing without telling anybody.”

CBP did not respond to a request for comment about why public input was delayed or if border lighting will be pursued in the tri-county area in the future.

CBP preliminary project plans, which are posted online, state that shielding to “control the possible spillage of light” may be considered. Its reasoning for the installation of the lights is to further “safeguard America’s borders.” “Operational lighting is envisioned as a tool to augment CBP’s situational awareness, detection, and response capabilities,” plans state.

Hartley said Dark Sky International is not opposed to lighting on the border if CBP can show a demonstrable need, but in his opinion that has not yet been expressed. He said he understands why CBP needs lights at points of entry, but he was struggling to understand why lights are needed in remote stretches of the border where the cost to install and maintain them is high.

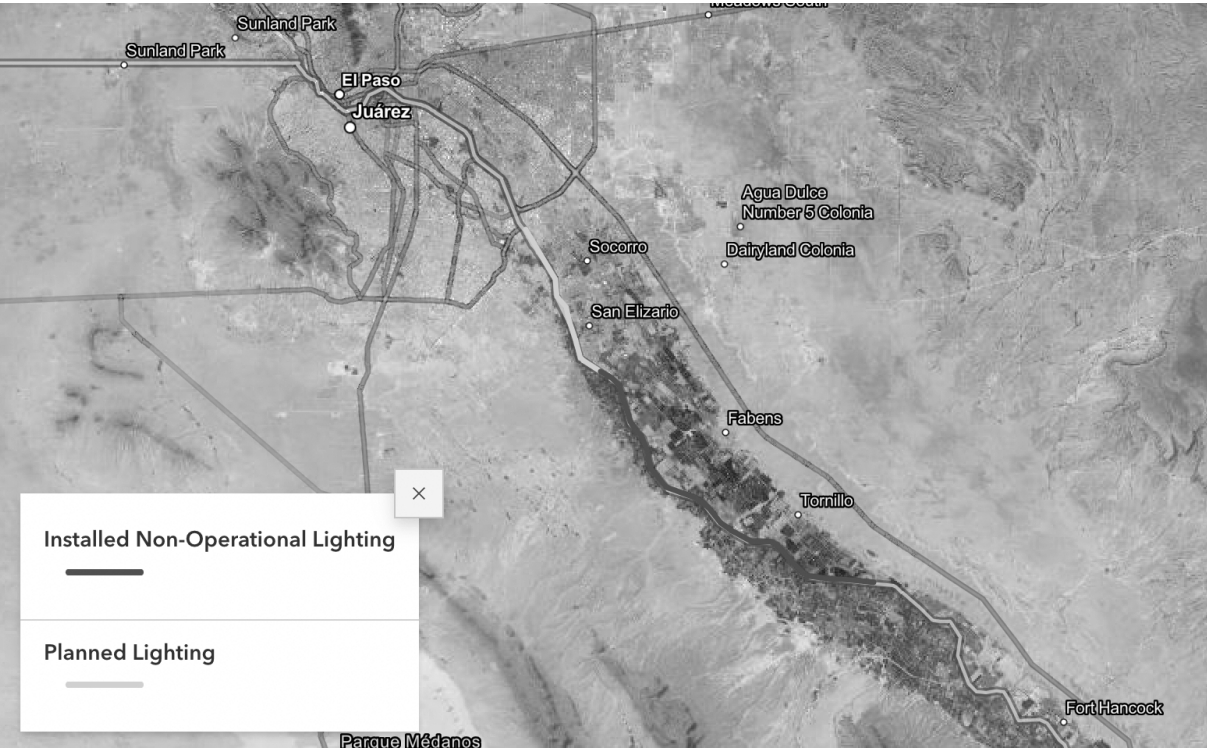
“We will not stand in the way of lighting that has a clear public benefit,” Harley said. “But we have yet to hear a clear articulation of what’s the public benefit that’s being served here?”

Hartley and Gold also expressed confusion over how existing surveillance technology employed by CBP would be impacted by border lighting. “We don’t understand why they even want to use lights when they have state-of-the-art technology for nighttime surveillance,” Gold said.

Gold is also concerned that the presence of new border lighting is going to make the job of local advocates, who work to explain to citizens and companies why dark skies deserve protection, even harder. “It makes it difficult to try to get big light polluters to get on board with preventing light pollution when you have a major source of light pollution just popping up willy-nilly along the border by the federal government,” Gold said.

The federal government, particularly the National Parks Service, is a key partner in ongoing dark skies efforts and has invested money in astronomical infrastructure. Hartley said border lighting initiatives lack a broader perspective among federal agencies. “There’s big public investments in dark sky infrastructure and protection and this is just one hand of government not talking to the other hand of government,” Hartley said.

To submit a comment about the CBP border lighting initiative, visit: cbp.gov/document/environmental-assessments/border-lighting-el-paso-and-starr-counties-tx-march-2024



Courtesy of Customs and Border Protection.

Locals are voicing concerns over new lighting initiatives along the border in El Paso and Starr counties, which they fear could threaten the Big Bend region’s binational dark sky reserve as well as riparian ecological environments.

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Marfa police warn of possible door-to-door solar sales scammers

MARFA — The Marfa Police Department is warning residents to be aware of potential scam artists seeking private information by knocking on doors to sell solar power services.

On at least one occasion, a resident informed police that a solar company was asking for their social security number, so the department put out a Facebook notice reminding residents not to give out personal information, said Marfa Police Department Lt. Nichole Fuentes.

The first report from a resident concerned about a

door knocker came last Friday. Officers made contact with a salesman who said he worked with Lumio, a power company that sells solar products and services, Fuentes said. Attempts to reach a representative for Lumio to comment were unsuccessful as the company has no published corporate phone numbers, and emails sent to two of its officers were blocked.

Posts on several forums for the social media platform Reddit show that Lumio is a legitimate company, but that it has faced accusations of aggressive tactics from some of its salespeople who do go door-to-door.

NOTICE OF SEALED BID FOR SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

The City of Presidio, Texas (the "City") is accepting sealed bids for the purchase of the following tract of real property (the "Property"), for commercial development as further described in this Notice of Bid Opening, including the City's special desired considerations:

800 Block of O'Reilly Tract:

Property located at 800 West O'Reilly Street being vacant land consisting of 3.21 acres, more or less, being all of lots 11 and 12, Block 2, Russell Addition; and Tracts 4 and 15, Out Block No. 7, City of Presidio, Presidio County, Texas.

On behalf of the City the property was appraised by Ms. Janna Stubbs, P.O. Box 2091, Alpine, Texas 79831. On November 7, 2023, Ms. Stubbs issued an appraisal wherein she found that the market value of the "land only" is \$460,000.00. A copy of the full appraisal is available at the Presidio City Hall. For the purposes of this Notice the appraised value meets the statutory requirements of "Fair Market Value" as set forth in the Texas Local Government Code.

The sale of the Property shall be awarded, at the discretion of the City Council, to the bidder submitting a bid in accordance with the terms outlined below and providing the best value to the City.

It is the intention of the City to sell the Property based on the best value bid that is submitted. If, in the judgment of the City Council, the bids submitted do not represent the fair market value of the Property, the Council reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Should any bid be accepted, within two weeks of an award to a Buyer, the Buyer and the City shall execute a purchase and sale agreement and select a mutually agreed upon title company. Upon execution of the purchase and sale agreement and selection of the title company, Buyer shall deposit \$5,000 of earnest money in escrow with the title company within three (3) days of execution of the purchase and sale agreement.

Part of the consideration of "Best Value Bid" will include a description of the intended use of the property along with a timeline for the planned development. In making any award, the City will weigh the bid price along with development plans. Greater weight will be given to any Bidder who is willing to enter into a Development Agreement with the City of Presidio covering the development of the property, including a performance agreement with employment metrics.

Provisions of the sale of the Property shall include:

- For the purchase of the real property in "as is" condition;
- For the conveyance of the Property by special warranty deed;
- For the Buyer to pay all fees, and costs associated with closing the sale of the Property;
- For the Buyer to assume all responsibility or liability for any environmental condition affecting the Property, or any clean-up or remediation that may be required by law;
- For the development of the Property for commercial, job producing development, or other project acceptable to the City;
- Execute, if applicable, a Development Agreement with the City;
- Execute Contract for Sale and Purchase of Real Property.

The Property will be sold "as is" with no warranties or representations as to suitability for any particular use. Conveyance of the Property will be by special warranty deed. By submitting a bid, each bidder agrees to waive and does hereby waive any claim the bidder has or may have against the City of Presidio, Texas, and the City's respective employees and representatives for the award of damages or attorney fees, arising out of or in connection with the administration, evaluation, or recommendation of any bid, waiver, deletion or amendment of any requirements under this Notice of Bid Opening, acceptance or rejection of any bids, and award of the bid.

By submitting a bid, the bidder specifically waives any right to recover or be paid attorney fees from the City of Presidio, Texas, or any of the City's employees and representatives under any of the provisions of the Texas Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act (Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Section 37.001, et. seq., as amended). The bidder acknowledges and agrees that this is the intentional relinquishment of a presently existing known right and that there is no disparity of bargaining power between the bidder and the City of Presidio, Texas.

By execution and submission of this bid, the bidder hereby represents and warrants to the City that the bidder has read and understands this Notice of Bid Opening and that the bid is made in accordance with the terms stated herein. Bidder acknowledges that it understands all terms herein, which include the waiver provisions, and that it had the right to consult with counsel regarding all applicable documents.

The City reserves the right to waive, delete or amend any of the requirements connected with this bid.

Bids shall be delivered in writing on the attached bid proposal form, signed by the bidder or an authorized representative, and enclosed in a sealed envelope to the City of Presidio, City Administrator, 507 W. O'Reilly Street, Presidio, Texas 79845, or can be delivered in person to City Hall, 507 W. O'Reilly Street, Presidio, Texas 79845. All bids shall be plainly marked "SEALED BID TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY." Bids must be received before 1:59 p.m. on May 9th, 2024, and any bid received after that time will not be considered.

City staff will publicly open, read and tabulate the bids at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 9th, 2024, at City Hall, City of Presidio, 507 W. O'Reilly Street, Presidio, Texas 79845. Those bids will then be considered at the May 21st, 2024, meeting of the City of Presidio City Council.

Bidders may contact the City of Presidio at 432-229-2200 for clarifications and questions.

BID PROPOSAL FORM

I hereby submit my proposal for the purchase of 3.21 acres, more or less, being all of lots 11 and 12, Block 2, Russell Addition; and Tracts 4 and 15, Out Block No. 7, City of Presidio, Presidio County, Texas, more commonly known as the 800 Block of W. O'Reilly Street.

Bid Amount: \$ _____

Summary of Development Plans, including willingness to enter into a development agreement (attached documents are accepted): _____

THE CITY OF PRESIDIO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND/OR WAIVE ANY INFORMALITIES.

I understand that the property is purchased "as is, where is, with all faults, and of 3.21 acres, more or less, being all of lots 11 and 12, Block 2, Russell Addition; and Tracts 4 and 15, Out Block No. 7, City of Presidio, Presidio County, Texas, more commonly known as the 800 Block of W. O'Reilly Street." I further understand that that if my bid is accepted by the Presidio City Council, that I will negotiate in good faith to execute a purchase and sale agreement, select a mutual agreement to title company, and deposit earnest money as specified above. I hereby certify that I have read and understand the terms of this agreement as specified in the notice of sealed bid for sale of real property. I hereby approve and accept all of the conditions of this agreement.

(Bidder's Signature)

(Date)

(Bidder's Name)

(Address)

(Telephone Number)

432.295.3301

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CPS mental health

(Continued from page 1)

and ICE, that pinned the blame on overwork — as well as “poor public image” and “violence or threats of violence.”

While the number of agents has remained relatively stable, migrant encounters along the border have ballooned 143% since 2019. 2022 saw a record 800 recorded migrant deaths; the agency also estimates a 303% increase in “gotaways,” or migrants that were detected but never caught.

The result is demoralizing. Half the respondents to the report’s survey said they had been asked to take on extra duties and nearly a quarter struggled with “work-life balance.” Twenty percent said they felt that they were unable to perform their “primary law enforcement duties” as a result of the extra work.

Thirteen percent confessed they were struggling with their mental health. “Officers are getting burned out,” one agent commented. “We need more staff and better shifts that allow for more time off with families. Divorce rates and suicides are rampant in the agency. We want to feel like we are respected and not a cog in the machine that can be easily replaced.”

The department pushed back on some of the report’s findings, stressing, above all, that only about 16% of total CBP and ICE employees had actually submitted responses. They also outlined in more detail the resources available to employees, including peer-to-peer counseling, chaplaincy programs, and a suite of “mindfulness” and anti-suicide apps. “Leadership is concerned that the OIG’s draft report does not fulsomely recognize the extent of initiatives DHS has implemented to support its personnel,” the response reads.

The Big Bend Sentinel spoke with Border Patrol agents past and present for more insight into how the agency is succeeding — and falling short — in its efforts to support its employees’ mental health.

Battle buddies

As part of its “Shine a Light” initiative, CBP hired renowned “suicidologist” Kent Corso — an Iraq War-veteran turned psychologist turned world-renowned mental health consultant — to help illuminate the path. One of Corso’s initiatives included recording a podcast that collects stories from within the agency that humanizes the internal struggles many agents face.

Corso’s work highlights an important truth: there have been exponentially more than 149 people impacted by suicides at CBP since 2007. “I find myself waking up to a reality I never asked for, that my kids never asked for,” the anonymous widow of a Rio Grande Valley agent told Corso in a podcast interview. “He’s in peace, but we were left in pieces.”

The widow — referred to only as “Jane Doe” — said that confusion was a part of her complicated grieving process. Why hadn’t her husband of more than two decades confided in her about his internal struggle?

Landon Hutchens, spokesperson for Big Bend Sector Border Patrol, explained that the stressors of the job are inconceivable to civilians, even those closest to the agency. “There’s a higher threat for danger — your average civilian doesn’t worry about getting shot at by cartels,” he said. “Agents have to keep their heads on a swivel at all times.”

Migration to the United States is constantly shifting, too, perhaps making it even more difficult for agents to relate to others, even those who have hung up their green uniforms. In the popular imagination, migrants moving across the border are solo young men undertaking epic journeys through the desert — but the reality has changed so much in the past few years that this narrative is due for a rewrite.

Both agency data and data collected by advocacy groups suggest that migrants are dying at unprecedented rates in urban areas like downtown El Paso or suburban Sunland Park, New Mexico. Agents who might previously have spent most of their time in an office are now faced with the same reality as their grizzled colleagues in the field. “Sometimes you encounter deceased individuals and some pretty

gruesome situations,” Hutchens said.

As a media liaison, Hutchens was also astutely aware of how outsiders’ perceptions could have on agents’ well being and self-esteem. “I think something that’s underreported on is the compassion of your average agent,” he said. “They’re enforcing our immigration laws, which is critical. But I see a tremendous amount of humanitarian compassion ... every agent I know carries a lunchbox with extra food and water they end up giving out to migrants.”

Women and unaccompanied children have also been crossing the border in higher numbers, tugging on the heartstrings of people in the agency with families of their own. “We spend a lot of time away from our families,” explained Assistant Chief Patrol Agent Jaime Castillo. “We’re passionate about our jobs. It can be consuming — you spend a lot of time thinking about work, even when you’re gone.”

While they don’t see the same volume of apprehensions as their colleagues up and downriver, Border Patrol agents in the Big Bend Sector perhaps understand isolation better than anyone else.

Agents clock in for at least 50 hours a week, often in remote areas where cell phone service is limited. Many live in agency housing, cut off from the convenience and comforts of home that transplants to the region sorely miss. To counteract the bad press, CBP has been experimenting with recruitment bonuses in its most remote locations — Presidio has been flagged as particularly “hard-to-fill” and now advertises a \$30,000 bonus for new agents.

Richard Barragan, acting special operations supervisor for Big Bend Sector Strategic Communications, said that he had been personally impacted by the agency’s mental health crisis.

During his time at the remote port town of Santa Teresa, New Mexico, the station was devastated by three deaths in the space of a year. One day, he came to the grisly realization that he had been routinely parking next to a patrol vehicle that had been the site of a colleague’s death by suicide.

Barragan said that he lived by a simple motto: “Be the One.” The term was popularized within the agency by a social media campaign including YouTube and Instagram posts that encourage agents to reach out to each other.

In one video, former agent Vincent Vargas asks agents to think back to their academy training in the “battle buddy” system, used to keep tabs on their colleagues in physically dangerous situations. “Look to the left and right of you,” he said. “If any of your brothers and sisters are struggling, please reach out to them — be a battle buddy for them.”

Barragan said that he’d taken the message to heart. “It was a call to action — basically to bring suicidal ideation to the forefront and to remove the stigma of talking about it,” he said. “We do internalize a lot of these feelings, and it does help to talk to someone.”

Both Barragan and Castillo said that they had both taken part in — and benefited from — the agency’s resiliency training which teaches agents the skills they need to perform in an intensely stressful job. “The training came at a critical point in my personal and professional career,” Castillo said. “It turned me around and flipped the switch.”

In the Big Bend Sector, support programs take a number of forms: peer-to-peer counseling, chaplain support, resources for the families of those who pass away in the line of duty. Local agents also have access to canine support animals, meditation and even yoga classes.

Numbers show that the programs are taking off. DHS reports that there are 12,278 supervisors trained in suicide prevention and awareness, with plans to grow these numbers and the scope of their education. In 2022, CBP chaplains sat for 66,000 sessions — 6,000 more sessions than the agency has employees.

Castillo says that every effort — whether it’s counseling for grieving family members or a few minutes with a furry friend — can make all the difference. “CBP has done a great job of letting us know that they truly care about us,” he said.

“I felt like I had been on the wrong side of history”

Despite the insistence by top brass that the agency’s suicide crisis is the result of external factors, former Senior Patrol Agent Jenn Budd says the organization itself shares the blame.

Budd — an outspoken critic of the agency and author of *Against the Wall*, which discusses her own suicide attempt — says that a culture of internal intimidation, corruption and fear has been causing rampant mental health issues for decades, long before the Border Patrol started tracking data or talking openly about these problems.

“The culture of the Border Patrol is that if you can’t handle it, then you’re not tough enough. You’re not BP material. You don’t bleed green,” she said. “In order to admit that they have a suicide problem, they have to admit that they have a cultural problem.”

She calls herself a part of the “old patrol,” referring to those who served as Border Patrol agents before 9/11, when the Department of Homeland Security was created and the agency was tucked under its umbrella.

For Budd, the difference between the “old patrol” and “new patrol” is cultural as much as it is financial — the “old patrol” embodied macho Western cowboy stereotypes and lack of funding, with agents sometimes having to walk their patrols after they ran out of gas.

The “new patrol,” on the other hand, has been deeply influenced by the Iraq War, both in mindset and billions of dollars in Homeland Security funding. “They see it as a combat zone — they see migrants as possible military threats,” she said, pointing to the popular use of the word “invasion” by conservative politicians and commentators.

Budd said that she felt all that money pumped into combat technology came at a moral cost. A great deal of her work was physical, hiking up to 16 hours a day. Outside of specially-trained details, she says that most of the “new patrol” does their work from behind a screen, steering drones and monitoring sensors. “They don’t develop any kind of sympathy from walking behind these people,” she said. “We sat with their bodies. We went through their pockets. We saw their tattoos.”

Despite the generation gap, she was there for what she thinks is the first fallen domino in today’s border crisis: the building of the wall.

As a new recruit, she worked out of Campo Station in the remote mountains of Southern California. The wall reached her sector in 1996, not long after she joined, transforming from a simple barbed wire fence to a massive barrier funneling people through treacherous terrain. Slowly, she started to realize how shifting government policy was making her daily working reality more difficult to stomach.

It was having an impact on her fellow agents, too. “As you spend time with the bodies you start to understand what’s really going on,” she said. “I would see guys falling apart, hardened guys falling apart. What they don’t realize is that the federal government is making them do the dirty work.”

Budd uses the wall as a metaphor for both the state of immigration and the state of her heart. She says that she’s been building internal walls of her own since she was a child trying to survive an abusive family life. Once she donned her Border Patrol uniform, she began taking on other people’s pain — male coworkers seemed more comfortable expressing their anguish to a female agent, fantasizing about suicide, confiding addictions to alcohol, sex, gambling. “What I’d do is just eat it all up and throw it over my wall,” she said.

One day, Budd was cruising alongside the wall in a patrol vehicle when someone from the other side launched a human head into the sky, landing on her windshield. She took it as the first of many signs that it might be time to leave.

She had long been suspicious of corruption in the agency — she was raped by a fellow agent during her time in the academy. He faced no consequences; leadership simply sent him to another station. Budd chuckled that shame and trauma over her wall too, not even confiding what had happened to her wife until years later.

Budd finally left after she started investigating a

higher-up she suspected of smuggling drugs and was harassed and threatened to the point that she hung up her uniform for good.

What she had seen and experienced in the agency stuck with her, particularly an encounter with a migrant with whom she shared water and cigarettes while they waited for transport. “You’re a good person,” the man said. “I want you to think about what you’re doing.”

She responded with anger at the time — anger that took years to unpack.

In 2015, Budd attempted suicide, having felt tortured by the experience for well over a decade. “I felt like I had been on the wrong side of history, and I didn’t know that I could overcome that,” she said. “I felt like I just needed to end my life and be done with it.”

After an extended hospital stay and years of therapy and medication, Budd has channeled her traumatic experiences in Border Patrol into advocacy work, challenging the agency and its union’s official narratives.

She says that — like her younger self — most people who join Border Patrol do so because they want to serve their country. More often than not, they aren’t aware of the reality of the border and its political history before they join.

With time, she’s come to fear that a percentage of agents join because the barriers to entry are low and predators face few consequences. Budd was featured in the Project on Government Oversight’s report on sexual misconduct and abuse, which revealed that just under half of people who reported sexual abuse in agencies within DHS say they faced professional retaliation as a result.

Crimes committed by CBP employees against migrants have made headlines in recent years, from an investigation into whether mounted agents whipped Haitian migrants to a serial killer who claimed the lives of four sex workers. Whether or not agents who commit crimes on a national stage are guilty as charged, Budd says it’s mentally devastating to try to enforce the law among people very publicly breaking it. “It’s a mindf—k,” she said.

With time, she’s been able to dismantle her own walls. “I mean, there’s a lot of things I loved about the Border Patrol, and I’m really proud of a lot of things I did — I’ve saved a lot of lives, but at the same time I’m ashamed of that organization,” she said. “Both things can be true at the same time.”

For a handful of local Border Patrol agents, Father Mike Wallens of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Marfa serves the function of a chaplain but is not a part of the official CBP chaplaincy program. He asked to take part in the agency’s resiliency training himself to better understand the resources — and potential gaps — that are offered to the rank and file.

Wallens did not share Budd’s overall pessimism about the agency, but did agree that CBP’s protocol and culture might prevent some in crisis from reaching out for fear that they might be ostracized or pushed out of their jobs.

He treats his sessions with agents like religious confessions, a sort of spiritual HIPAA agreement that ensures he is not required to disclose what agents share with him to their supervisors.

Wallens is a Dallas transplant but has made a niche for himself in the borderlands by fostering connections between the Border Patrol, the local faithful, and the migrants and asylum seekers passing through the Big Bend. He echoed sector leadership in saying that the extreme remoteness of the area carries a psychological weight and encourages agents to throw themselves into community volunteer work to combat feelings of isolation.

He says that the agents who come to him wrestle with the same moral dilemmas that pushed Budd to attempt to end her life: a gap between policy and morality. “The agents out here, I will say, are filled with compassion. They’re put in a position where they have to wrestle with what their heart says versus what the policy says,” he explained. “Because of those compassionate hearts, it’s easier to get wounded.”

This story is part of a series on mental health in the Big Bend funded by the Presidio Community Fund.

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Food Pantry

(Continued from page 1)

programs, the food pantry board opted to find the necessary funds.

In addition to helping feed local kids, the food pantry also runs a senior box program — a curated selection of pantry staples distributed to 50 seniors once a month. It allows its clients more options for receiving food than local grocery stores. Clients can customize their orders online ahead of time, pick up via drive-through, “shop the shelves” in person at the distribution center and receive at-home deliveries.

The food pantry also provides free pet food, one of its most popular items among clients. “Sometimes that’s their lifeline, they’re lonely and isolated and the pets are really important to them,” Gibson said.

The Jeff Davis County Food Pantry is primarily funded by the FMH and Yarborough Foundations in Midland as well as individual donors. It receives some federal help in the form of food deliveries from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Of its \$284,000 annual budget, \$44,500 goes towards purchasing fresh produce, which is distributed to clients

twice a month. Gibson said the Jeff Davis County Food Pantry is one of only a handful of food pantries across the state to purchase fresh produce for their clients, deemed a priority due to poor health outcomes in the county.

“Because we buy healthy food and fresh produce, we do spend more than most food pantries do,” Gibson said. “But I have never been of the opinion that people should be grateful for whatever they get if they’re living in poverty, there’s no reason why they shouldn’t have the most healthy ingredients and food.”

Gibson runs a lean operation. The pantry employs three part-time employees, relying heavily on the labor of 15 regular volunteers. “We could not do it without our volunteers,” Gibson said.

Its annual trash bill is under \$200 — volunteers recycle boxes and bags whenever possible, and take trash to the dump when needed, avoiding the cost of a dumpster.

The pantry partners with Mobile Comunidad, another local nonprofit, which delivers food to the

school district, county library and clients, some of whom are homebound, in Valentine and the Davis Mountains Resort.

Stephen Chavez, who acts as the transportation manager for Mobile Comunidad, said one of the most meaningful parts of his job is delivering food to the schools and library, knowing children in need are being provided for. “I was a deprived kid, my mom being a single mother working,” Chavez said. “To me, this is personal.”

“It’s very refreshing to see that we can do something for the community,” he added. “There’s not enough of this going around these days, and I wish it wasn’t that way.”

Regular food pantry volunteer Diana Wilkinson shares Chavez’s personal connection to the organization’s mission. She was first introduced to the food pantry as a client when she moved to Fort Davis in 2020 “on a wing and a prayer.” “They fixed me up with all kinds of stuff, I went home crying,” Wilkinson said. “I was so ecstatically happy.”

Wilkinson then started volunteering at the food pantry, where she found support and community. She said spending time at the distribution center with food pantry board members, other volunteers and clients has given her a “sense of feeling needed and wanted.”

“This is my exercise. This is a way for me to actually express myself to other people,” Wilkinson said. “I am so psyched to help people like I’ve been helped.”

Gibson, too, finds satisfaction in her job at the food pantry, which she said makes a real difference in the community, particularly for area youth. “Kids can’t learn if they’re hungry,” she said.

She is hopeful the push for more donations will help the food pantry cover its current \$50,000 budget deficit. “If we need more, we get more. It’s not like a pie and we only have so much pie,” Gibson said. “We just bake a bigger pie or make more pies.”

For more information or to donate, visit foodpantry-jdc.org/



Staff Photo by Mary Cantrell

Jeff Davis County Food Pantry volunteer Cruz Martinez loads celery into coolers at the distribution center.



Staff Photo by Mary Cantrell

Jeff Davis County Food Pantry volunteer Diana Wilkinson opens and unpacks boxes of dried goods for food pantry shelves.

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Jeff Leach defamation case

(Continued from page 1)

said that he didn’t see much of a difference between Cole’s most recent motion and the TCPA motion filed in 2020. Lafeiste will have 21 days to respond to the motion once set by the court and will have the opportunity to introduce additional discovery. “We’re all anxious to get this resolved,” he said.

Cole wanted to stress that the decision to add Oakley to the proceedings was not meant as a personal attack, but to provide a full picture of all her client claims she suffered. “Jeff Leach is like a wad of gum on your shoe — you have to use a stick to get it off.”

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Opinion

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I'm not sure where to begin. The arm wrestling championship organized by Christy Miller at Planet Marfa on April 14 was incredible. There's no single sentence that can capture it, but here are some words: excitement, gratitude, love, comradery, awe, pride, joy, fun. From Mia Valentini absolutely crushing the national anthem to the unsanctioned after-hours matches that took place once the event was over, I loved being with my fellow Marfans.

On behalf of Marfa Education Foundation, I would like to sincerely thank Christy Miller for conceiving of and orchestrating this event, the MEF Board for their work in support of all things Marfa students, Marfa ISD staff and students inspiring us all, Planet Marfa for being the most gracious hosts, Chris Dyer for being an amazing emcee and more, Mia Valentini for singing the hardest song on record (besides "Happy Birthday"), Kaki Aufdengarten for being a fair and impartial referee, Kevin Pippen for "coming home" and speaking on behalf of MEF, and volunteers Christie Alexander, Peggy O'Brien and Philip Boyd. Our heartfelt gratitude to all of the contestants who showed their personalities and strength in front of such an energetic and supportive audience, and the donors who contributed to MEF on behalf of all those listed above.

If you would like to know how much we raised, you'll have to read Mary Cantrell's article in this issue of The Big Bend Sentinel. Thank you, Marfa. We love you.

Sincerely,
Abby Boyd
Executive Director
Marfa Education Foundation

...

Dear Editor,

Marfa ISD would like to thank the Hotel Saint George for their kindness and generosity this year. Tim Crowley has gone above and beyond when it comes to supporting our students and accommodating opportunities for new experiences.

HSG has generously supported MISD by donating event space, time and money to our district. The junior class would especially like to thank Mr. Crowley for allowing Prom 2024 to be held at Saint George Hall. It was a beautiful night and one that will be remembered by our students for many years.

Thank you for all you do for our school and community!

Sincerely,
Class of 2025 and Class Sponsors Melissa Firmin and Benny Pineda

...

I met Gary Oliver in the 1990s as the movement against the Sierra Blanca nuclear waste dump was growing, thanks in part to Gary's political cartoons sending out the alarm across the state. I was one of the people in Austin who heeded the call and was welcomed to West Texas by the biggest-hearted hospitality a grassroots activist could ever ask for: homemade bread, a cozy (if cat fur-lined) couch to crash on, an introduction to the wonders of the Chihuahuan Desert, and of course Gary's charm, humor and endless energy for activism.

Even though I hadn't seen Gary for years, the news of his passing hit me hard. I had hoped to see him at the 25th anniversary of the Sierra Blanca victory last fall to tell him how much I appreciated him as a leader, mentor and friend, and how important his contributions to the success in Sierra Blanca were. I wanted him to know how much I learned from him about how to treat people and that I think about him often. Even though I can't tell him those things now, I wanted to share them with anyone who might read this, as we collectively celebrate his incredible legacy as a force for good in this world.

Erin Rogers
San Francisco, CA



OUR WATER MATTERS

Complexities and challenges of joint planning and large-scale groundwater production

By TREY GERFERS
tgerfers@pcuwcd.org

The latest issue of the Texas Water Journal includes a "Case Study of Groundwater Management Issues at the Forefront of Large-scale Production from a Confined Aquifer: The Vista Ridge Project" by Steven C. Young, Carlos Rubinstein and Russell Johnson. In laying out the greater context, the authors state that the "2022 Texas state water plan predicts that Texas's population will increase 73% between 2020 and 2070. During this 50-year period, the demand for municipal water will increase 66%, or approximately 3.3 million acre-feet per year (af/yr). The existing supply of water is projected to decline by 18% over the same period, primarily due to statewide aquifer depletion." The authors assert that "the complexity of moving water to where it is needed will be a key factor in meeting Texas's unprecedented economic and population growth."

The Vista Ridge Project is located in Bureson County within a few miles of the Lee County border (about 87 miles east of Austin) where it began producing some 50,000 to 55,000 af/yr from the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer back in 2020. This water is transported to San Antonio via a 142-mile pipeline to meet the needs of one of America's fastest growing cities. "Given that groundwater water supply projects like the Vista Ridge Project are being considered across Texas," the authors explain, the study is intended to familiarize "groundwater decision makers ... with the groundwater issues, science, modeling, and mitigating factors associated with the Vista Ridge Project."

Texas groundwater is a vested real property right of the surface owner under the Rule of Capture based on over a century of case law. Meanwhile, groundwater conservation districts (GCDs) are locally constituted entities with the authority to balance the many beneficial uses of an area's groundwater resources. The Texas Water Code states that GCDs have the responsibility "to protect property rights, balance the conservation and development of groundwater to meet the needs of this state, and use the best available science in the conservation and development of groundwater through rules."

It's a well-known fact that aquifers do not follow the borders of political subdivisions, such as GCDs. In order to better account for

this physical reality, groundwater conservation districts are clustered into groundwater management areas (GMAs), which roughly cover the underlying aquifers under their joint jurisdiction. Every five years, these GMAs undertake a joint planning process that results in the mandatory adoption of desired future conditions (DFCs), which the Texas Water Code defines as a "quantitative description ... of the desired condition of the groundwater resources in a management area at one or more specified future times." These DFCs "must provide a balance between the highest practicable level of groundwater production and the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging, and prevention of waste of groundwater."

Among the many complex issues identified in the Vista Ridge study, the authors highlight the fact that "a landowner's property right to preserve, protect, and produce groundwater is for all practical purposes determined by the rule of capture or the groundwater rules of a GCD." They go on to point out the potential conflicts that can arise due to differences in these rules among GCDs within a GMA based on two of the districts with jurisdiction over the Vista Ridge Project: Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District and the Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District within GMA 12.

The Post Oak Savannah GCD rules "recognize a correlative right of 2 af/yr per acre" assigned to a production permit as the maximum allowable annual production. Meanwhile, the Lost Pines GCD rules require the applicant "to prove the amount needed for the intended use."

"The comparison of the two sets of GCD rules illustrates the significant differences in how [these two GCDs] were managing and regulating groundwater resources ... The differences occurred despite the two GCDs overlying the same aquifers and the [Texas Water Code] requirements to use best available science in rulemaking and to protect property rights."

Defining "best available science" also presents challenges because of "the inconsistency in how GCDs in a GMA collect and evaluate water level data" and how these data are then communicated to landowners and used in defining DFCs. In looking at the Vista Ridge example, the authors argue that these challenges will have to be overcome because there could be "at least three additional well fields besides" the Vista Ridge well field within the next 5-10 years that are "exporting groundwater outside of GMA 12."

As imperfect as it is, the GMA joint planning process remains the best option available to bring stakeholders together to meaningfully consider all aspects of a region's desired water future, including the protection of private property rights. The involvement of all stakeholders is the only way to optimize joint-planning outcomes. Toward that end, the authors recommend providing "GMAs with funding to improve communication of the science [and] improve public participation," among many other far-sighted recommendations.

You can find the complete study on the Texas Water Journal website at twj-ojs-tdl.tdl.org.

Trey Gerfers is a San Antonio native and serves as general manager of the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District. He has lived in Marfa since 2013.

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Community

RJ Myers advances to regionals in Seguin

AUSTIN — RJ Myers — son of Bernice Vasquez of Marfa, grandson to Emma and Johnny Vasquez also of Marfa, and brother of Kedrian Myers — finished in the top 15 at the Clyde Littlefield Relays in Austin, Texas, on March 30. Myers competed in the shot put event against some of the best throwers in the nation. He finished 12th overall, with his last throw being his best throw and a personal record at a

meet of 53’ ¾”. On April 3, Myers was crowned district champ and advanced to the area meet held on April 11 where he won first place with a personal record best of 54’ 2 ¼”. He is advancing to regionals in Seguin on April 19. Last year Myers made it to the UIL state track meet and he is working towards that goal again this year. Myers is a junior at Rice CISD in Altair, Texas.



Photo courtesy of Bernice Vasquez

RJ Myers, son of Bernice Vasquez of Marfa, won first place with a personal record best of 54’2 1/4” in shot put at an area meet for Rice CISD. He is advancing to regionals in Seguin on April 19.



Staff Photo by Mary Cantrell

Ernesto Zubia and Stephen “Chick” Rabourn compete against each other in the arm wrestling fundraiser for the Marfa Education Foundation held at Planet Marfa last weekend. Photo by Mary Cantrell.



Photo courtesy of Abby Boyd

Linda Ojeda and Auggie Gonzalez placed first in the women’s and men’s categories at last weekend’s arm wrestling fundraiser for the Marfa Education Foundation. Photo courtesy of Abby Boyd.

Arm wrestling matchup raises \$6K for the Marfa Education Foundation

By MARY CANTRELL
mkcantrell@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — Planet Marfa played host to a rowdy crowd of arm wrestlers and spectators this past Sunday as the community gathered for “Armed and Generous,” an arm wrestling competition benefitting the Marfa Education Foundation that raised \$6,475 for the nonprofit. “The turnout was incredible,” said Marfa Education Foundation Executive Director Abby Boyd. “We were expecting it to be really well attended and super fun, but the reality of it was even more than what we dreamed of.” Over 70 locals were signed up to compete in the one-on-one matchups, but in the end, the sheer strength of Linda Ojeda and Auggie Gonzalez prevailed — earning them the first-place titles in the women’s and men’s categories, respectively. Wrestlers competed underneath “the octagon,” as emcee Chris Dyer referred to it, near the venue’s stage on a picnic table. Kaki Aufdengarten-Scott acted as the referee, dressing for the role in a black and white-striped top and

whistle. Attendees crowded around the arm wrestling arena, some even standing on tables in the back, to view the showcase of muscle and endurance. The top four competitors in the men’s category were Gonzalez, who beat Jesus Ortiz-Sanchez in the finals, as well as semi-finalists Parker Sanchez and Tim Guillen. Up against Ojeda in the women’s finals was Amanda Holstein, with Faith Gay — who attempted to bribe her opponents with Cactus Liquors gift cards — and Alex Gates as semifinalists. First-round match-ups were cleverly named for their competitors — curly-haired contestants Sam Schonzeit and Yoseff Ben-Yehuda in the “fro down showdown,” and Convenience West owner Mark Scott against Bordo owner Michael Sirva in the “nice to meat you, would you like a smoke?” round. This reporter was bested in the “media moguls” round by Marfa Public Radio Station Manager Yvonne Lujan. One of the most exciting moments of the competition occurred when Daire Kelly and

Gina Livingston locked arms, resulting in a nail-biting wrestling session where participants from the crowd, including Gina’s husband Mike, began to take bets on their champion, throwing cash down on the table to support the education foundation. Losers had the option to choose sentiments from two jars labeled “words of comfort” and “harsh truths,” which Dyer read over the microphone. Boyd said the event drew a diverse audience, from people who have lived in Marfa for generations to teachers and parents and visitors. “We had cowboys and people in crazy costumes,” Boyd said. “All of that made it so engaging and fun to participate in.” The event was conceived of and organized by Christy Miller, who was inspired by the memory of the late Jeffrey Hester. “She wanted to create a space that she knew he would have loved to be,” Boyd said. Boyd said the event acted as somewhat of a coming-out party for the Marfa Education Foundation (MEF), which started in 2011 and

has been “quietly raising money” without a lot of community engagement. MEF works to support and enhance the work of the Marfa Independent School District by “facilitating enrichment projects” and “augmenting the education of the District’s students.” “I think that as the school has more and more needs, we really have to make our community aware of what’s going on at the school, remind them how important the kids and the families who attend the school are to our community and get their buy-in for the benefit of the students there,” Boyd said. She said important infrastructural jobs, like at American Electric Power (AEP) and the county, for example, are often held by locals born and raised in Marfa who graduate from Marfa ISD. “The kids who are in the school are literally the future of the survival of this town,” Boyd said. “They benefit every single person who lives here, and they need our support.”

To learn more or to donate, visit marfaeducationfoundation.org

AROUND THE BIG BEND

Thu
Apr
18

Hike with a Homeless Dog
10:00am - 11:00am at Davis Mountains State Park in Fort Davis
Help a homeless dog have a great time on the trail! Join our pack at the Interpretive Center and give a rescue dog from Grand Companions of Fort Davis a fun morning on the trail. Maybe you’ll find your new forever friend! More info at <https://tpwd.texas.gov/calendar/davis-mountains/hike-with-a-homeless-dog/2024-01-18>

Diamond Painting
4:00pm - 6:00pm at Alpine Public Library
We will be making Mandala Coasters. Class is FREE. Materials are provided. Teens and Adults are welcome!

Fri
Apr
19

Alpine Gem and Mineral Show
9:00am-6:00pm at Alpine Civic Center
The Alpine Gem and Mineral Show returns April 19th-21st at the Alpine Civic Center. This FREE Annual three day gem and mineral show features rocks, rough & finished stones, beads and tools... PLUS Door Prizes!

Desert Skills Hike
10:00am-12:00pm at CCC Rock Lookout
Learn how early peoples survived in this “Sky Island” environment on an easy walk ‘n’ talk. The trail has one set of stairs and is rocky, but fairly flat.

Voices En La Frontera Women’s Speaker Series
2:00pm at Espino Conference Center at Sul Ross
Iris Lopez, Founder and Executive Director of “Mija, Yes You Can.” an El Paso non-profit organization that empowers women, will be speaking

8th Annual Earth Day Clothing Swap
8:00am-9pm at Sul Ross Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library.
The Library & Archives are hosting their 8th Annual Clothing Swap in the Bryan Wildenthal

Sat
Apr
20

Food Pantry of Jeff Davis County: Open House
4:00pm-6:00pm
Celebrate 25 years of Neighbors Feeding Neighbors! Kick off our 2024 Fundraising Campaign. Tour our remodeled building & new addition. Music, refreshments and door prizes!

Guided Hike Up Hancock Hill
9:00am-11:00am at Hancock Hill in Alpine
Join SRSU staff on a 1.8 mile guided hike, with the theme of “Birds of the Trans-Pecos” by David Tonnessen.

Sun
Apr
21

Alpine Gem and Mineral Show
9:00am-6:00pm at Alpine Civic Center
The Alpine Gem and Mineral Show returns April 19th-21st at the Alpine Civic Center. This FREE Annual three day gem and mineral show features rocks, rough & finished stones, beads and tools... PLUS Door Prizes!

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Wednesday at 11:00am at Marfa Public Library

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

AA (in-person)
Monday & Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church

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

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Judd Foundation is open Tuesday through Sunday and offers two distinct guided visits. For the current schedule and to book reservations please visit juddfoundation.org/marfa.

For more information please email our office at marfa@juddfoundation.org or call 432 729 4406.

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TASTES GOOD IN TEXAS

Tastes Good in Texas?
The London rocket

By SAM DWYER

It was mid-March in Marfa, and a number of young local gourmands assembled on an ominously windy evening for a birthday cookout. Drinking Modelos, fruity Lacroix and small cups of the host’s favorite raicilla, a radio engineer prepared the seasonally traditional fare of seared ground cow patties and generally managed the grill. The local esthetician brought her own vegan meat alternative. There was thick herbed bacon, imported from the capital city of Austin. An arts-rug embroiderer, new in town, made a notable potato salad dressed with celery vinegar from Brooklyn. I baked fresh rolls. Jocelyn Jerrils, formerly the sous chef of Cochineal and presently cuisinier of The Pool, made a cardamom olive oil cake topped with orange slices. After dinner conversation turned to the arts — exhibitions past and present, the churn of romantic and political alliances that so often shape these exhibitions — and to the backyard garden we found ourselves in, scraggly in the early spring but pointedly well-established with mature plants. This was no ordinary garden, we learned, but one that had been carefully tended for 20 years by the artist Martha Hughes, recently departed for New Mexico. An herbalist artist and I flipped through the 20-plus page garden booklet that Hughes had left behind for the new tenants, photographically enumerating the indigenous flora. “Did you know,” the herbalist told me, pointing to some fresh, leggy weeds topped with small yellow flowers that had pushed their way in around some vacant spots, “that these mustard greens are edible? They’re called London rocket, and they’re invasive.” How exciting. Ms. Jerrils and I immediately seized some small leaves — sacre bleu! They are little arugulas! — and tried them. Tender, spicy... not great but interesting. No one was inspired to begin eating them by the handful but ... maybe they could be processed into something else. Sisymbrium irio, of the Brassicaceae family, received its common name “London rocket” after the Great Fire of London in 1666, when the plant spread prolifically throughout the ashes of the burned city. Originating in the deserts of Arabia, it thrives in disrupted soil near transportation centers, is often fed to livestock, and has been used by the Bedouin of the Sinai and al-Naqab deserts to “treat coughs and chest congestion, relieve rheumatism, to detoxify the liver and spleen, and to reduce swelling and clean wounds.” London Rocket is also of interest to academics and humanitarian workers studying famines. The next day I uprooted several plants and brought them into my elementary school arts classes for the students to taste and illustrate. Warned that their leaf would be spicy, the responses of tasters were mixed, with the average being negative-neutral. Some bolder fourth-graders ate more than one leaf and claimed to like it. One second-grader spat a neon green glob out onto the table and glowered at me, almost tearfully, with a look of rage and betrayal. They did not get to try the potion I brewed up next.



Photo courtesy of Sam Dwyer.

Sisymbrium irio gets a grade school taste test.

Lactic acid fermented London rocket:

By early April, my formerly cleared yard was absolutely full of sisymbrium irio. Theoretically, it would be nice and of culinary interest to preserve at least some portion of this bumper crop into a spicy, fresh, green condiment. Of the few published recipes online, many suggest turning the plant into pesto and freezing it. In hindsight, this seems like a good option, with a reasonably predictable outcome. But when Jocelyn and I were brainstorming potential preservation methods, we both were excited by the prospect of pickling the green in a lactic acid fermentation. The procedure of lactic acid fermentation for pretty much anything is simple, and well-explored in The Noma Guide to Fermentation by René Redzepi and David Zilber, a book of extreme interest to people who like odder foods. Take a container, add whatever it is you want to pickle to this container, and cover it with water. Weigh the results, then add 2% of that weight in salt. Give this some time to ferment and then boom — pickles. I tried this with the London rocket from my yard, and after two weeks, the plastic quart container swole up ominously, bulging at its seals. Intrigued and a little afraid, I slowly opened the lid. With a terrible hiss, my entire house was filled with a ghastly smell reminiscent of an embarrassed dog that has eaten a large amount of aged roadkill. There is no reason so far as I can tell for anyone else to try this. Do not do this. It is not good. The only possible use I can imagine for this recipe is if you needed to leave Marfa directly for an ocean voyage and needed to pack a source of vitamin C to prevent scurvy. This recipe does not taste good in Texas. Do not do this. It is not good.

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NOTICE OF SALE		
THE STATE OF TEXAS OF SALE	\$ \$ \$	BY VIRTUE OF AN ORDER
COUNTY OF PRESIDIO	\$ \$	DATED: January 31, 2024
and issued pursuant to a judgment decree of the District Court, 394 th Judicial District, of Presidio County, Texas, by the District Clerk on said date, and to me directed and delivered as Sheriff of said County, I have on the 15 th of March, 2024, seized, levied upon, and will on the first Tuesday in May, 2024, the same being the 7 th day of said month, at the Courthouse door, of said County in the City of Marfa, beginning at 10:00 o'clock a.m., on said day, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder all the right, title and interest of the defendants in such suit to the following described real estate levied upon as the property of said defendants, the same lying and being situated in the County of Presidio and the State of Texas, to-wit:		
CAUSE NO. 5149-A; PRESIDIO COUNTY v. RICARDO O. GARCIA, ET AL		
TRACT 1: GEO: 1 10 132500000780001 Lots 1 and 2, Block 78, Millington Addition Town of Presidio, Presidio County, Texas; being that property more particularly described in a Executory Contract for Deed recorded in Volume 299, Page 454 in the Deed Records of Presidio County, Texas.		
CAUSE NO. 5167-A; PRESIDIO COUNTY v. RAMON VASQUEZ, ET UX		
TRACT 1: GEO: 1 10 074000010080012 Lot 12, Block 8, Gleim Addition No. 1, to the Town of Presidio, Presidio County, Texas; being that property more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 304, Page 215 in the Deed Records of Presidio County, Texas.		
CAUSE NO. 5215-A; PRESIDIO COUNTY v. PATSCHECK-VEIGA DEVELOPMENT, INC., ET AL		
TRACT 1: GEO: 1 11 242000010073014 A tract of land located in Section 73, Block 1, Abstract 2678, D&P RR Company Survey, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described by metes and bounds referred to in the Corporation Grant Deed recorded in Volume 286, Page 126 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas; such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
CAUSE NO. 5236-A; PRESIDIO COUNTY v. SAMUEL ROSE, DECEASED THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF, ET AL		
TRACT 1: GEO: 1 11 067500000130001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 2: GEO: 1 11 067500000140001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 3: GEO: 1 11 067500000150001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 4: GEO: 1 11 067500000160001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 5: GEO: 1 11 067500000210001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 6: GEO: 1 11 067500000220001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 7: GEO: 1 11 067500000230001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 8: GEO: 1 11 067500000240001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 9: GEO: 1 11 067500000260001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 10: GEO: 1 11 067500000120001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas. such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 11: GEO: 1 11 067500000170001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 12: GEO: 1 11 067500000250001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 13: GEO: 1 11 067500000270001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 14: GEO: 1 11 067500000280001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 15: GEO: 1 11 067500000200002 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Two (2), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly Described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 16: GEO: 1 11 067500000200004 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Four (4), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 17: GEO: 1 11 067500000200006 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Six (6), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 18: GEO: 1 11 067500000200008 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Eight (8), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 19: GEO: 1 11 067500000200001 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Ten (10), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 20: GEO: 1 11 067500000200014 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Fourteen (14), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 21: GEO: 1 11 067500000200016 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Sixteen (16), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 22: GEO: 1 11 067500000540001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four (54), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 23: GEO: 1 11 067500000590001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four (54), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 24: GEO: 1 11 067500000550001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four (54), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 25: GEO: 1 11 067500000560001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four (54), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 26: GEO: 1 11 067500000570001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four through Sixty (54-60), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 27: GEO: 1 11 067500000580001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four (54), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 28: GEO: 1 11 067500000600001 Lots One through Twelve (1-12), Block Twelve (12), Lots Thirteen through Fifty-Two (13-52), Lot Fifty- Four (54), Block Twenty-Eight (28), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division; Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Pages 277 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
TRACT 29: GEO: 1 11 067500000200012 A 1.0 acre tract of land out of lot Four (4), Block Twelve (12), Section Nine (9), Frontier Village Sub-Division, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 161 Page 272 & 282 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas, such description being incorporated herein by reference.		
CAUSE NO. 5268-A; PRESIDIO COUNTY TAX OFFICE v. ALAN ARREOLA		
TRACT 2: GEO: 1 10 033000000070002 Lots 2, 3 & 4, Block 7, City Addition to the Town of Presidio, Presidio County, Texas, as per plat of record. Surface Rights Only. Mineral Rights retained by Stella D. McKeel as per deed dated November 25, 1997, From Stella D. McKeel to Dora M. Arreola and Herminio Arreola, Grantors herein; being more particularly described in a Gift Deed recorded in Document #20110000663 of the Official Public Records in Presidio County, Texas.		
CAUSE NO. 5273-A; PRESIDIO COUNTY TAX OFFICE v. ANTHONY A. MINICO		
TRACT 1: GEO: 1 11 24200001014000007 NE/4 of the NW/4 of Section 140, Block 1, D & P Rwy Co Survey, 40 ac +/-, Survey #A11418 Cert #484, There is to 20' easement on the perimeter of above parcel for roadway and utility purposes, Presidio County, Texas; being more particularly described in a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 341, Page 601 of the Official Public Records of Presidio County, Texas.		
or upon the written request of said defendants or their attorney, a sufficient portion thereof to satisfy said judgment, interest, penalties, and costs; subject, however to the right of redemption by the defendants or any person having an interest therein, to redeem said property, or their interest therein, in the manner provided by law, and subject to any other and further rights to which the defendants or anyone interested therein may be entitled, under the provisions of law. Said sale to be made by me to satisfy the judgment rendered in the above styled and numbered cause, together with interest, penalties and costs of suit, and the proceeds of said sale to be applied to the satisfaction thereof, and the remainder, if any, to be applied as the law directs.		
I have appointed the following as agent to conduct the sale, to-wit:		
Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P. Attorneys at Law 2500 N. Big Spring St., Suite D Midland, Texas 79705 (432) 522-2427		
THIS SALE IS BEING CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO STATUTORY OR JUDICIAL REQUIREMENTS. BIDDERS WILL BID ON THE RIGHTS, TITLE, AND INTERESTS, IF ANY, IN THE REAL PROPERTY OFFERED.		
THE PROPERTY IS SOLD AS IS, WHERE IS, AND WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED. NEITHER THE COUNTY NOR THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WARRANTS OR MAKES ANY REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT THE PROPERTY'S TITLE, CONDITION, HABITABILITY, MERCHANTABILITY, OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. BUYERS ASSUME ALL RISKS.		
IN SOME SITUATIONS, A LOT OF FIVE ACRES OR LESS IS PRESUMED TO BE INTENDED FOR RESIDENTIAL USE. HOWEVER, IF THE PROPERTY LACKS WATER OR WASTEWATER SERVICE, THE PROPERTY MAY NOT QUALIFY FOR RESIDENTIAL USE. A POTENTIAL BUYER WHO WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION SHOULD MAKE ADDITIONAL INQUIRIES OR CONSULT WITH PRIVATE COUNSEL.		
ESTA VENTA SE LLEVARÁ A CABO DE CONFORMIDAD CON LOS REQUISITOS LEGALES O JUDICIALES. LOS POSTORES HARÁN UNA OFERTA POR EL TÍTULO, LOS DERECHOS E INTERESES, SI ALGUNO, EN LA PROPIEDAD OFRECIDA.		
LA PROPIEDAD SE VENDE COMO ESTÁ, EN EL LUGAR DONDE SE ENCUENTRA, Y SIN NINGUNA GARANTÍA, YA SEA EXPRESA O IMPLÍCITA. NI EL CONDADO, NI LA OFICINA DEL ALGUACIL GARANTIZAN O HACEN NINGUNA REPRESENTACIÓN SOBRE EL TÍTULO DE LA PROPIEDAD, CONDICIÓN, HABITABILIDAD, COMERCIABILIDAD, O IDONEIDAD PARA UN PROPÓSITO PARTICULAR. LOS COMPRADORES ASUMEN TODOS LOS RIESGOS.		
EN ALGUNAS SITUACIONES, UN LOTE DE CINCO HECTÁREAS O MENOS SE PRESUME QUE ES APTO PARA USO RESIDENCIAL. SIN EMBARGO, SI LA PROPIEDAD NO TIENE SERVICIOS DE AGUA POTABLE O AGUAS RESIDUALES, LA PROPIEDAD NO PUEDE CALIFICAR PARA EL USO RESIDENCIAL. UN COMPRADOR POTENCIAL QUE DESEE MÁS INFORMACIÓN, DEBERÁ HACER ESTUDIOS ADICIONALES O CONSULTAR CON UN ABOGADO PRIVADO.		
At the time the sale begins, all bidders at the sale must be registered with the above named agent conducting the sale and be eligible to bid according to the Property Tax Code.		
Dated at Marfa, Presidio County, Texas, this the 15 th day of March, 2024.		
/s/Danny C. Dominguez SHERIFF, PRESIDIO COUNTY		

Marfa Invitational announces dates for May sculpture park opening

By MARY CANTRELL
mkcantrell@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — The Marfa Invitational announced plans last week for a VIP gala and sculpture park opening in Marfa May 10-12.

The Marfa Invitational is an art fair founded in 2019 that traditionally takes place the first weekend of May, showcasing a variety of gallerists at Saint George Hall. It is unclear whether a full-on fair, complete with the gallerists booths, will take place this year; Marfa Invitational Founder and Director Michael Phelan did not respond to requests for comment.

In an email blast sent out last week, Phelan announced that a VIP gala focusing on the opening of Marfa Invitational’s sculpture park will be held in mid-May. The

invitational began showcasing outdoor sculpture on five acres just east of Marfa in 2022 and has since received a number of permanent gifts from artists, including Matt Johnson’s Sleeping Figure as well as works by artists Rana Begum and Sam Falls.

The VIP gala, for which tickets are \$500 and \$300 for tri-county residents, will include “cocktail soirées, artist talks, and dinners under the West Texas stars,” per Phelan’s announcement. Public open hours are also planned for the sculpture garden that weekend.

The announcement states that in addition to sculpture park viewing, two solo exhibitions by Jeremy Booth and Camilla Engström exploring the theme of the landscape will be held at the old mercantile building in Valentine — “a stone’s

throw from Elmgreen and Dragset’s Prada Marfa.”

Engström will also be the Marfa Invitational’s 2024 “billboard artist,” and her work is featured on a billboard on the sculpture park property facing the highway. Last week’s announcement states a performance by Noah Faulkner, a Texas teen known for pedal steel guitar, will be taking place.

The May event announcement comes on the heels of Marfa Invitational’s loss, then regaining, of its nonprofit status and allegations from a former Marfa Invitational board advisor that Phelan misused donated funds, intended for a foundation building on the sculpture park grounds, for personal expenses.

Spirits of the West Wine, Spirits, Brews and Beef Fest to take place in Alpine this weekend

ALPINE – The annual Spirits of the West Festival, a celebration of Texas winemakers, spirit distillers, brewmasters, beef producers and chefs from across Texas will take place this weekend April 19 and 20 at the Brewster County Courthouse.

The event is put on by the nonprofit Alpine Gallery Night, which also hosts the annual Artwalk. “We are excited to bring back Spirits bigger and better this year! Year over year, we’ve grown the festival in both participation and attendance,” said Alpine Gallery Night Executive Director Lance Johnson. “The courthouse lawn and surrounding

streets will give us more space for more vendors, food and fun.”

The two-day culinary festival, presented by Chateau Wright Winery and Rebecca Creek Distillery, kicks off at 4 p.m. Friday, April 19, with a street festival featuring dozens of vendors from Texas wineries, distilleries, and breweries, as well as restaurant chefs. Live musical acts Friday night include Alpine’s own The Swifts, Feline Fox and Texas original headliner Joe King Carrasco.

On Saturday, April 20, the event will run from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The day opens with a free Bloody Mary bar, presented by Alpine’s Gallery

Night and Tito's Vodka. Expect a full day of wine and spirits tastings, art vendors, food booths and grill chefs. Live music includes Angel and The Badmen, The Scott Walker Band, Dawn & Hawkes, Doug Moreland, Red Shahan, Anthony Ray Wright, and West Texas fan-favorite headliner Los Pinche Gringos.

Tickets for the event range in price from \$25-\$100, with several optional tastings and classes.

For more information, including the music lineup and to purchase tickets, visit spiritsfestwtx.com



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First United Methodist Church

Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Sundays 9 am
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Marfa 432-729-4534

DRAWING OF THE WEEK

Samantha Martinez
12th Grade
Screen Printed Self Portrait

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS PAPER

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.

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution from last week's puzzle:

SOLUTION:

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

Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg April 15, 2024

ACROSS

1 Actor Bruff of "Scrubs"

5 Small amounts of paint

9 Skier's setting

14 Croatia's currency

15 Guinness of "Star Wars"

16 Buzzing homes

17 Fiber source

18 Journalist Bash on CNN

19 Prevent from happening

20 Indy 500 entrant

23 Be inquisitive

24 Wheel edges

25 Like some breezes

28 "Deck the Halls" contraction

29 Trendy, '60s-style

30 Owns

31 Gown creator

36 Is the perfect size

37 Sportscast summary

38 Loudness, on a TV remote

39 Tropical ray

40 Love, in Lima

41 Player of recorded music

43 Game-ending cry in rumrny

44 Curtain holder

45 Anagram of "eon"

46 Like some bases

48 Voucher

50 Smartphone download

53 Have a measurable impact, or what 20-, 31- and 41-Across each do

56 Neutral shade

58 Checkmates an opponent, say

59 Dec. holiday

60 Stubble remover

61 Upscale hotel chain

62 Ice cream container size

63 "___ these flowers beautiful?"

64 Stretch of time

65 German name that's a palindrome

DOWN

1 Striped Serengeti sight

2 Radiant glows

3 Sidewalk flaw

4 Sharpen

5 Arp's art movement

6 Sleep spoiler

7 Shows flexibility

8 Lasting mark

9 Like some flavored ice

10 Perk up

11 Analyze excessively

12 ___ capita

13 Boston winter hrs.

21 Like fresh celery

22 Composer Stravinsky

26 Foamy coffee order

27 College application part, often

28 Bygone Russian leader

29 Another name for Sporty Spice

31 Moves with a mouse

32 Send in payment

33 Be thrifty

34 Very eager

35 Boxer's bout enders, briefly

36 Front part of a clock

39 ___ Carlo

41 Fully cooked

42 Becomes a part of

44 Change back

47 Start a workday, perhaps

48 Orangutan relative, casually

49 Reddish-brown dye

50 Allow entry

51 Garden growth

52 Basil-based sauce

54 Low pair in poker

55 Trade show

56 Supportive garment

57 Musician's gift

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	M	F	M		I	M	A	M	S		M	A	T	E	
P	A	R	E		T	A	H	O	E		A	B	E	D	
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© MARFA SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ©

APR	Thu, Apr 18	Fri, Apr 19	Mon, Apr 22	Tue, Apr 23	Wed, Apr 24
BREAKFAST	WAFFLES, BACON, JUICE, FRUIT, MILK	SHORTHORN SUCCESS DAY	BREAKFAST SANDWICH, FRUIT	BREAKFAST PIZZA, FRUIT	POWER BREAKFAST, FRUIT
LUNCH	BURGER CHOICE, POTATOES, CUCUMBERS, STRAWBERRIES	SHORTHORN SUCCESS DAY	ENCHILADAS, CORN, BEANS, SALSA, FRUIT, PUDDING	CHICKEN NUGGETS, MAC AND CHEESE, CARROTS, CUCUMBERS, FRUIT	PIZZA, TOMATO CUP, GARDEN SALAD, PEARS

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MARFA SHORTHORNS SPORTS CALENDAR

FRI, APR 19: HS Track Meet in San Angelo
SAT, APR 20: HS Track Meet in San Angelo
SUN, APR 21: HS Track Meet in San Angelo

4/15 See the Point by Susan Gelfand

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	
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FROM THE ARCHIVES

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CDRI donates cub to Illinois zoo

November 18, 1976

Leonita, a 5-month-old female mountain lion cub, was transported last week from the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute in Alpine to the Miller Park Zoo in Bloomington, Illinois. Leonita was about 6 weeks old when she was found orphaned in the wilds of West Texas. She has been raised with tender loving care by the staff at CDRI and now is a robust 35 pounds and a half-grown puma.

The Chihuahuan Desert Experience, CDRI's educational facility which will contain live animals in naturalistic enclosures, is still in the planning stages. Leonita's home at the current CDRI headquarters, provided by the Alpine Independent School District, was not adequate for the fast-growing mountain lion. Staff members at CDRI felt the facilities at the newly remodeled zoo in Bloomington would be the best place for Leonita.

Leonita will mature around 1 and 1/2 years and then, according to Randall Carney, zoo director, will join their male puma, Roger, to be one of the mated pairs of big cats on exhibit at the zoo. The CDRI has been promised a cub from Roger and Leonita's first litter to be placed in the Chihuahuan Desert Experience, which by then should be a reality in West Texas.

"We will get the kitten before her eyes are open," said Dr. Dwight Deal, CDRI general manager, "and her human handler will raise her from the beginning. This should greatly increase our chances of ending up with a relatively tame animal."

Leonita was delivered to the zoo personally by Dr. Granger Hunt, research director at the CDRI and other CDRI research associates on their way to the Raptor Research Foundation Meetings at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.



Leonita, CDRI's 5 month old female mountain lion, now at home in Bloomington Illinois. (Photo by Jack Burns)

Alpine shooting

(Continued from page 1)

but it was the result of a Department of Public Safety warrant for Justin Lara after he failed to appear as promised to give information to authorities about both of those cases.

Justin Lara was detained after the shooting but was not arrested, according to police. The Facebook account of his mother, Marta Vega of Alpine, posted Tuesday blaming Tafoya for the shooting. "I just want to say [to] Juan Tafoya you are very lucky the bullet hit my son's truck and not my son," the post stated. "You are a coward." Marta Vega also suffered a suspected fentanyl overdose at the same time her son I.J. died, but survived after treatment at the Big Bend Regional Medical Center, according to police and family friends.

Police did detain Justin Lara to question him, but he still is considered a victim of the shooting, Losoya said. Tuesday's shooting is believed to be part of a domestic dispute over a woman who has been involved with both Tafoya and Justin Lara, according to police and the Facebook post on Marta Lara's account.

Tafoya shot at Justin Lara from a vehicle, then fled, the police chief said. Police do not want to describe that vehicle because they believe Tafoya has switched to another vehicle.

Superintendent Rinehart said the police called her quickly after the shots were reported, and because of a relative proximity of the shooting to the elementary school — about half a mile — they advised a lockdown. When Rinehart posted her message to the community on enacting then lifting the lockdown, she noted that a suspect had been apprehended. Losoya said that initially police gave her that information because they had arrived at the scene of the shooting and thought that Justin Lara was the shooter; the 911 call from a neighbor noted his white pickup truck as the suspected vehicle used in the shooting. When they apprehended Justin Lara, they gave the "all clear" to Rinehart.

Rinehart said that while the incident was not an immediate danger to the elementary campus, it was clear that law enforcement needed to act on it as a precaution and advise the lockdown. "I'm proud of local law enforcement that were right on top of this and with the immediate notification to schools as a precautionary measure," Rinehart said. "Our staff did a great job of immediately implementing our emergency procedures. I'm just glad that everyone was safe throughout

OBITUARY



Casler

John McKinley Casler, known to many as Mack, passed away on April 2, 2024 after a tough battle with cancer. Born on October 25, 1950, in El Paso to John and Gladys Casler, Mack enjoyed his hometown days and graduated in 1969 from Burges High school. He worked for the upstart Office Coffee firm for ten years. In 1972, he married his high school sweetheart, Jodie Kuban, on August 6. In the early eighties the couple moved to Holland, Texas where Mack was a land surveyor as well as the superintendent of city utilities. The late eighties found

Mack and Jodie moving to Houston where both were employed by UT Health Science Center. Having purchased land in Limpia Crossing in 1987, the couple decided in 1999 to make their home in Fort Davis. Mack was employed by UT McDonald's Observatory until 2004 and then worked for Jeff Davis County as maintenance manager until retiring in 2009. Known for his generosity, storytelling, his daily trips to town, his love of grilling, chili Competitions, his nicknames assigned to many and his willingness to help others throughout the Davis Mountains, Mack will forever be remembered. Mack is preceded in death by his parents and older brother, Thom Casler. He is survived by his wife, Jodie, whom Mack lovingly called "Sport", his brother Joe and wife Mary from Houston and many nieces and nephews. A Celebration of life is planned in the near future. Memorials or donations may be made in Mack's name to Pre Born! @ preborn.com, Wounded Warriors @ woundedwarriorproject.org or the charity of your choice.

Oliver memorial set for Saturday

A memorial for Gary Oliver — long-time Sentinel cartoonist, environmental activist and community volunteer — will be held at the Marfa Public Library

Courtyard on Saturday, April 20, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in his memory to the Friends of the Marfa Public Library.

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Classifieds & public notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Marfa Parks and Recreation Board meets every third Thursday of the month at 6:00pm in the Casner Room at City Hall. The public is invited to attend.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF PRESIDIO

§
§

By virtue of Tax Warrant issued out of the 394th District Court of Presidio County, Texas in Cause # 5304-A on the 14th day of March, 2024, by the Clerk thereof, and to me as Sheriff, directed and delivered, I will proceed to sell at **10:00 a.m. on the 7th day of May, 2024** at the South Door of the Presidio County Courthouse, in Marfa, Texas, the properties described below:

CAUSE NO
5304-A
STYLING
Presidio County, et al vs. Owners of Various Properties Located Within Presidio County, Texas
LEGAL DESCRIPTION
Tract 1. Lot 7, Block 1, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5718
Tract 2. Lot 5, in Block 2, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5726
Tract 3. Lot 8, Block 3, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5742
Tract 4. Lots 3 through 6, Block 5, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5768
Tract 5. Lots 7 & 8, Block 6, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5781
Tract 6. Lots 5 through 8, Block 8, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5801
Tract 7. Lots 5 through 9, Block 11, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5821
Tract 8. Lot 7, Block 12, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5829
Tract 9. Lot 3, Block 13, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5840
Tract 10. Lots 7 & 8, Block 20, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5919
Tract 11. Lot 4, Block 22, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5945
Tract 12. Lot 7, Block 22, Orient Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R5948
Tract 13. Lots 8 through 11, Block 2, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6293
Tract 14. Lot 8, Block 3, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6314
Tract 15. Lot 43, Block 30, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6552
Tract 16. Lot 16), Block 2, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6297
Tract 17. Lot 26, Block 7, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6354
Tract 18. Lot 14, Block 11, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6388
Tract 19. Lots 3 through 5, Block 25, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6506
Tract 20. Lots 7 through 10, Block 25, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6508
Tract 21. Lots 3 through 5, Block 29, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6528
Tract 22. Lots 8 through 10, Block 29, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6530
Tract 23. Lot 40, Block 30, Rio Grande Addition, Presidio County, Texas. R6550

LEVIED ON the 15th day of March, 2024, as the property of those persons listed above to satisfy taxes, penalties, and interest and all costs of seizure and sale against those persons listed in said Warrant and any other unknown owners in favor of the Taxing Units listed in said Tax Warrants.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND THIS THE 15th DAY OF March, 2024.

Sheriff, Presidio County, Texas

Deputy

JOBS

VILLAGE FARMS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
SHIPPING / RECEIVING CLERK

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. 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.

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Applications may be picked up at 1605 N. FT. Davis Hwy Alpine, TX 79830 or call (432) 837-4555.

Please call first before arrival.

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Email: jferguson@presidiotx.us

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Email: mayor.eaves@ci.alpine.tx.us

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Judge Curtis Evans: (432) 426-3968

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HEALTH NEEDS
in the Big Bend Area

REGIONAL SURVEY

Big Bend Reproductive Coalition wants to know your opinion about reproductive health needs in the Big Bend Region. Participation in this anonymous digital survey will help to inform the services that we provide to our communities. Your voice matters, and your experience matters to us.

Use the QR Code to right or follow the link below to access the **BBRC Community Needs Assessment Survey**:

bit.ly/BBRC-Survey

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The Coordinator will be a part-time, on-site position based at the Blackwell School, with working hours primarily on weekends. Compensation is \$15 hourly.

For information on compensation, to review the job description, and to apply, visit www.theblackwellschool.org/jobs. Applications due by April 19 at 5 p.m.

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