

BURN BAN IN EFFECT, NO GROUND FIRES

by order of Presidio County

Sister of former Candelaria water manager steps in to keep the faucets flowing

By ROB D'AMICO
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CANDELARIA — When Rosaelva Madrid passed away last month, the small community of Candelaria mourned her loss as a friend and neighbor, but her death also raised a serious question: Who is going to take care of the town's water system?

Madrid ran the small water corporation there for more than 15 years, making sure the well was pumping water, checking meters, billing the 50 or so customers and collecting payments.

Madrid's sister, Lorraine Tellez, and niece, Bianca Tellez, live in Midland, but they have long histories in Candelaria and knew something had to be done to help the community keep the taps flowing. "It literally took my aunt passing away for us to realize how much she was doing on her own without the help of anybody else," Bianca Tellez said.

The well that serves the town needs repair and needs to be powered on manually every morning, the system is facing state fines of more than \$5,000 for not meeting water quality standards, and someone had to read meters and collect bills.

"I didn't know what to do," Lorraine Tellez said. "Somebody told me to contact the county judge, so I did. Well, when I talked to Judge [Joe] Portillo he told me if I could help out at least a couple of months or so until we could see where we could get things fixed ... So that's what I'm doing at the moment. We're just reading the meters, and then I do the bills, and the people just come and pay, and then someone flips the well pump's breaker on each day," Tellez said she wants to be in Candelaria temporarily to help settle things after her sister's death, but in the long term, there are a lot of unknowns, she said.

Lorraine and Bianca Tellez attended last week's Presidio County Commissioners Court meeting to be part of a discussion about Candelaria's predicament. No action was taken, but commissioners pledged to set a meeting of the county's new Utility System Board as soon as next week to address the issue. Commissioners and the county judge serve on that board, at least for now, which was formed as required means to administer \$4.6 million in grant money dedicated to improving county water systems. Portillo wants the board to eventually be composed of one person from each board of the county's water supply

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Photo by Sam Karas / Foto de Sam Karas

Javier Leyva celebrates earning a full ride scholarship to University of Texas at El Paso. Read more on page 2.
Javier Leyva celebra beca para la Universidad de Texas en El Paso. Leer más en la página 3.

‘Where dreamers go’: Binational crowd gathers for annual Voices from Both Sides festival

By SAM KARAS
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Note: The Mexican town of Manuel Benavides, Chihuahua, is often referred to as San Carlos.

LAJITAS — Last Saturday, over a hundred locals gathered by the river for Voices from Both Sides. Every year there are dueling bands, copious amounts of barbecue and well-stocked coolers — and few dry eyes as people from South Brewster County and the Mexican side of the Big Bend join hands across the river.

The Voices from Both Sides festival is also sometimes called the “fiesta protesta,” or “protest party.” Since the river became a border, there were numerous informal crossings along the Río Grande in the Big Bend that allowed people to go back and forth for work, school and basic supplies. After 9/11, the American government cracked down, closing every local crossing point except for the Presidio Port of Entry.

The policy was devastating for towns like Paso Lajitas, where locals found themselves suddenly unable to cross for groceries and fuel at the trading post within eyesight of the little village. People with jobs that were once a bumpy truck ride across the river had to hand in their notices, now faced with an eight-hour commute through Presidio. The Terlingua CSD baseball team — whose main rival was San Carlos — had to hang up

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New community-based therapy offers benefits for rural areas

By ROB D'AMICO
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TRI-COUNTY — A series of articles on mental health published by The Big Bend Sentinel the past two months has highlighted both a variety and lack of resources in the tri-county area to address mental health. Most options involve individuals taking steps to address their mental health needs by working with licensed professional counselors.

However, one movement, relatively new to the United States but practiced worldwide, could provide benefits to the rural, isolated communities of the Big Bend through a different approach based on groups of people working together called integrative community therapy (ICT).

ICT can take many different forms, but it typically involves a group of 15 or more people who meet — often with a facilitator — at no cost to talk about challenges in their lives.

"It's a beautiful and somewhat creative way of deliberately having discussion amongst a group of people that leads them through the ability to find these things that were going to be helpful to what we call the 'daily pebbles,'" said Brigit Hassig, co-CEO of the Visible Hands Collaborative, a nonprofit seeking to grow the ICT movement. "Because you and I know if you get a pebble in your shoe and if it doesn't get removed, it becomes constantly irritating, and so ICT is really meant to inspire the wisdom and power we have within ourselves to be able to find ways to manage the daily challenges of living."

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‘Adónde van los soñadores’: Multitud binacional se reúne para el festival anual Voces de Ambos Lados

Por SAM KARAS
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Nota: A la ciudad mexicana de Manuel Benavides, Chihuahua, a menudo se la conoce por su nombre prerrevolucionario, San Carlos.

LAJITAS — El sábado pasado, más de cien lugareños se reunieron junto al río debido al festival Voces de Ambos Lados. Cada año hay bandas en duelo, grandes cantidades de barbacoa y neveras portátiles bien surtidas, y pocos ojos secos mientras la gente del sur del condado de Brewster y del lado mexicano del Big Bend se dan la mano al otro lado del río.

Voces de Ambos Lados también se llama a veces “fiesta protesta”. Desde que el río se convirtió en frontera, hubo numerosos cruces informales a lo largo del Río Grande en Big Bend que permitieron a las personas ir y venir para ir al trabajo, la escuela y obtener suministros básicos. Después del 11 de septiembre, el gobierno estadounidense tomó medidas enérgicas y cerró todos los puntos de cruce locales excepto el puerto de entrada de Presidio.

La política fue devastadora para pueblos como Paso Lajitas, donde los lugareños de repente se vieron incapaces de cruzar para comprar alimentos y combustible en el puesto comercial que se encontraba a la vista del pequeño pueblo. Las personas con trabajos que alguna vez implicaron un

(Continúa en la página 3)

Nueva terapia comunitaria ofrece beneficios para las zonas rurales

Por ROB D'AMICO
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TRI-COUNTY — Una serie de artículos sobre salud mental publicados por The Big Bend Sentinel en los últimos dos meses ha destacado tanto la variedad como la falta de recursos en el área de los tres condados para abordar la salud mental. La mayoría de las opciones implican que las personas tomen medidas para abordar sus necesidades de salud mental trabajando con consejeros profesionales autorizados.

Sin embargo, un movimiento, relativamente nuevo en los Estados Unidos pero practicado en todo el mundo, podría brindar beneficios a las comunidades rurales y aisladas del Big Bend a través de un enfoque diferente basado en grupos de personas que trabajan juntas llamado terapia comunitaria integradora (TIC).

Las TIC pueden adoptar muchas formas diferentes, pero normalmente implican un grupo de 15 o más personas que se reúnen (a menudo con un facilitador) sin costo alguno para hablar sobre los desafíos de sus vidas.

"Es una manera hermosa y algo creativa de tener una discusión deliberada entre un grupo de personas que los lleva a través de la capacidad de encontrar estas cosas que serían útiles para lo que llamamos los 'guijarros diarios'", dijo Brigit Hassig, co- Director ejecutivo de Visible Hands Collaborative, una organización sin fines de lucro que busca hacer crecer el movimiento de las TIC. "Porque usted y yo sabemos que si se le mete una piedra en el zapato y no se la quita, se vuelve constantemente irritante, por lo que las

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Hermana de exgerente de agua de Candelaria interviene para mantener abiertos los grifos

Por ROB D'AMICO
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CANDELARIA — Cuando Rosaelva Madrid falleció el mes pasado, la pequeña comunidad de Candelaria lamentó su pérdida como amiga y vecina, pero su muerte también planteó una pregunta seria: ¿Quién se hará cargo del sistema de agua de la ciudad?

Madrid dirigió la pequeña corporación de agua allí durante más de 15 años, asegurándose de que el pozo bombea agua, revisando los medidores, facturando a los aproximadamente 50 clientes y cobrando pagos.

La hermana de Madrid, Lorraine Tellez, y su sobrina, Bianca Tellez, viven en Midland, pero tienen una larga trayectoria en Candelaria y sabían que había que hacer algo para ayudar a la comunidad a mantener los grifos funcionando. "Literalmente, fue necesario que mi tía falleciera para que nos diésemos cuenta de cuánto estaba haciendo ella sola sin la ayuda de nadie más", dijo Bianca Tellez.

El pozo que abastece a la ciudad necesita reparación y debe encenderse manualmente todas las mañanas, el sistema enfrenta multas estatales de más de \$5,000 por no cumplir con los estándares de calidad del agua y alguien tuvo que leer los medidores y cobrar las facturas.

"No sabía qué hacer", dijo Lorraine Téllez. "Alguien me dijo que me comunicara con el juez del condado, y así lo hice. Bueno, cuando hablé con el juez [Joe] Portillo, me dijo que si podía ayudar al menos durante un par de meses más o menos hasta que pudiéramos ver dónde podíamos arreglar las cosas... Así que eso es lo que estoy haciendo en este momento. Simplemente leemos los medidores, luego hago las facturas, la gente simplemente viene y paga, y luego alguien enciende el interruptor de la bomba del pozo todos los días". Téllez dijo que quiere estar en Candelaria temporalmente para ayudar a resolver las cosas después de la muerte de su hermana, pero a largo plazo, hay muchas incógnitas, dijo.

Lorraine y Bianca Tellez asistieron a la reunión del Tribunal de Comisionados del Condado de Presidio la semana pasada para ser parte de una discusión sobre la situación de Candelaria. No se tomó ninguna medida, pero los comisionados se comprometieron a programar una reunión de la nueva Junta del Sistema de Servicios Públicos del condado la próxima semana para abordar el problema. Los comisionados y el juez del condado forman parte de esa junta, al menos por ahora, que se formó como medio necesario para administrar \$4.6 millones en subvenciones dedicadas a mejorar los sistemas de agua del condado. Portillo quiere que la junta esté compuesta eventualmente por una persona de cada junta de las corporaciones de suministro de agua del condado: Redford, Ruidosa, Candelaria

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ENGLISH NEWS

Voices from both sides festival

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their uniforms.

Collie Ryan, one of the people who brought Voices to life, remembers the days before drones, game cameras and hefty criminal charges came to the border. She used to spend time with friends on a ranch south of Paso Lajitas, and found it difficult to keep connected after the crossing closed. “It was heartbreaking for everybody,” she said.

Around 14 years ago, Ryan brought beloved Terlingua musician Jeff Haislip to San Carlos, where they visited with then-presidente, or mayor, Ramon Garcia.

García had an idea. What about reuniting San Carlos, Paso Lajitas

and Terlingua to do what these communities do best — namely, making music and having fun?

Ryan, Haislip and a dedicated band of locals from both sides of the border joined forces to throw the first Voices festival, which followed roughly the format it does today: small stages on each side of the river traded musical performances while people hung out in the water, freely crossing back and forth for food, drinks and catching up with long-lost friends.

During Ryan’s latest Voices performance, she addressed the crowd in a mix of English and Spanish, capping off with a song that repeats its chorus in both languages.

The song follows her own experiences on the border. “All of my life I’ve been living a dream ... the movies don’t even come close,” the bilingual chorus goes. “There’s always one last frontier where dreamers go.”

Word of the dream spread, and the festival made headlines around the globe. Voices even got the Comedy Central treatment, with a correspondent from Full Frontal with Samantha Bee stopping by Lajitas to mock conservative hand-wringing over the state of the border.

Ryan said she understood why people were so taken aback by the spectacle: two communities coming

together peacefully, defusing popular media narratives of a tense and unruly border with laughter, song and prayer. “The world is starving for something real,” she said.

But all the publicity started to make the organizers worry. They wanted the celebration to remain small and local, with no space for either end of the political bell curve to take the message out of context — at its heart, the event was about reuniting South Brewster County families, not about flipping the metaphorical bird at U.S. border policy.

To this day, the festival does

relatively little advertising beyond Facebook posts and word of mouth. There were few tourists in Saturday’s crowd; most came from within the greater tri-county area and a small handful came from the village of Boquillas in Coahuila.

Presidio High School junior Mario Leyva joined the festival from the Mexican side of the river. He and his family were visiting a rancho outside of Paso Lajitas for Mother’s Day, and decided to stop by the party to see what it was all about.

The family had a leftover Mother’s Day cake that they decided to bring over to the American side to share.

Leyva was tasked with carrying the cake, and carefully maneuvered down the riverbank with a rope that had been put up to help people keep their footing in the mud. At the end of the rope, he fell. “But I saved the cake,” he said.

Getting a little wet and muddy didn’t spoil the fun. Leyva felt moved by the end of the celebration, where everyone in attendance joined hands in a giant circle linking the two countries. “It was a really nice experience,” he said. “People should go not just for the party, but because it feels good to reunite, to get along.”

Candelaria water manager

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corporations — Redford, Ruidosa, Candelaria, and eventually Shafter and Las Pampas.

Portillo also wants to hire or contract one person who can test all the systems wells and troubleshoot if something goes wrong and use

the revenue from each water system to pay for it. County officials have been discussing that idea for more than a year and a half with nothing concrete to show for a solution. The judge is hopeful that the dire situation in Candelaria

will spur action. Precinct 4 County Commissioner David Beebe has been resistant to any idea that involves county funds or the county becoming entangled in governing or maintaining the small water supply corporations. Beebe said he is ready

to have the Utility System Board meet, however, to hash out the issue and seek a solution for Candelaria.

Trey Gerfers, Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District general manager, also is assisting in finding a solution for

all the problems faced by the water districts — primarily well testing. Gerfers also told commissioners at their meeting last week that he would inquire with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to see if the fine to

Candelaria could be eliminated or mitigated.

“So this is where we are now, trying to find if we can get some assistance from anywhere or just at least point us in the right direction,” Bianca Tellez said.

Mental health

(Continued from page 1)

Hassig said the isolation of rural communities often creates situations that exacerbate a problem already prevalent in mental healthcare: our sense of individualism. “Most healthcare systems have been oriented around that sense that finding a solution is the burden for the individual, and even the field of psychology was set up on a one-on-one, confidential almost, type of setting.”

ICT, on the other hand, is not confidential and is oriented toward open communication in a group setting, she said.

Dr. Alan Tasman, an emeritus chair of the University of Louisville’s Department of Psychiatry and former president of the American Psychiatric Association, also is a proponent of ICT and serves on the board of Visible Hands Collective. “Mainly what they talk about are problems in daily living,” he said. “So, at the beginning of the meeting, they sort of go around, people say what they’d like to talk about. My husband won’t get a job, my kids are acting up, just the usual kinds of things that cause people problems in life.”

“One of the rules is you can’t give advice,” Tasman said. “You can’t say, ‘Well, you should do this about it.’ What people can do is say, ‘Well, I had that problem, and here’s what I did, and here’s what worked, and here’s what didn’t work.’ It’s to develop a cohesion

that cuts down on social isolation.”

Hassig said isolation becomes an encumbrance for someone if they think they are facing it alone, even with help from a counselor. “With ICT, it becomes a community responsibility and a community issue,” Hassig said. “Traditional systems are very vertical, meaning I go to a counselor, I go to a community health worker, I go to a doctor, I go to a psychiatrist, and it can go up that existing healthcare chain. ICT is a return to a horizontal solution and system that is equitable, is accessible. It is culturally representative of the people participating. It’s even geographically [representative], depending upon where it’s happening.”

That geographic element is important for communities that are spread out over large areas, she said. Representatives from several mental healthcare organizations in the Big Bend The Sentinel spoke to had never heard of ICT, but all said they find it highly interesting and pledged to look into it. Hassig said unfamiliarity with ITC was typical, since even after a decade of use in the United States, it is still ramping up here.

The practice began in Brazil, where it is known as terapia comunitária integrativa. It was created by psychiatrist and anthropologist Dr. Adalberto Barreto in response to the need for “community-based mental health

services in the extremely low-income neighborhoods.”

According to Visible Hands Collaborative, “Brazil now has over 42 training centers that have trained 37 thousand community therapists nation-wide, and TCI is offered across Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe as a first-line treatment for patients who present to their primary care physician with mild to moderate mental health complaints as a supplement to medical management. Research examined surveys from 12,000 participants and found 88.5% reported that they had successfully resolved their primary mental health complaint.”

Visible Hands Collaborative, based in Pittsburgh, is the “hub” of ICT in the United States, Hassig said. The nonprofit is currently training ICT facilitators — including remotely — and working with community organizations to expand the movement. It also hosts a remote ICT session every Tuesday evening, and anyone can sign up at www.visiblehandscollaborative.org to participate.

Facilitators are being recruited, with no professional mental health experience needed, although many of the current facilitators do have a background or sincere interest in the field. Hassig stressed that people struggling with acute and more serious mental health issues will still need to seek assistance from professionals, but that they



Illustration / Ilustración by crowcrumbs

can still benefit from attending ICT meetings.

She encouraged any organizations interested in ICT to contact her. “If we can find partners that have the ability to work with us, either

in finding a funding source or if there are community-based funds available, we can find a way to support and train them,” she said.

This is the final in a series of mental health articles — funded

by the Presidio County Community Fund — the entirety of which can be found at: www.bigbendsentinel.com/mental-health-series/.

PHS seniors win big at annual Scholarship Night celebration

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — On Tuesday night, Presidio High School seniors and their parents gathered for the district’s annual Scholarship Night. The seniors were dressed to the nines, cheering on their classmates as the recipients of local awards were announced. Throughout the night, a cast of guest speakers encouraged the seniors to follow their dreams — whether they were bound for a traditional four-year college or gearing up for technical school.

Jeremy Velasquez, a dentist at the Preventative Health Care Services clinic and a scholarship sponsor, commiserated with the crowd about how difficult applying for school and scholarships can be. He also advised the students to focus on their long-term dreams during their first few exciting years out of high school. “College is fun,” he said. “But keep that end goal in mind.”

Presidio ISD board members and district leadership also attended to show their support. School Board Secretary Perla Natividad felt a little emotional watching the Class of 2024 — the last class she taught during a stint as a teacher at PID — grow up. “It’s an honor to be here every year, I really look forward to this event,” she said. “I am just so full of gratitude for all of our sponsors.”

Ruben Armendariz, PID facilities

director and dad of soon-to-be graduate Valerie Armendariz, said that he had also enjoyed watching the Class of 2024 grow up and plan for their futures. Valerie will attend the University of Texas in the fall and plans to study computer science. The whole family crossed their fingers as they waited to hear if she won any awards. “We’re just trying to enjoy the evening,” Armendariz said.

On Thursday night, PIDSD athletes will celebrate the year’s achievements with their own special ceremony. Graduation will be held next Friday, May 24, at 6:30 p.m. in the Blue Devil Gym.

Mario Leyva contributed reporting to this story.

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Scholarships from universities: Anton Morales, Ayslin Hermosillo, Domingo Rios, Javier Leyva, Natalia Sanchez, Axel Montoya, Dafne Ortiz, Eduardo Flores, Gabriel Montemayor.

William and Susan Soza Scholarships: Valerie Armendariz, Daniela Camero, Ninel Catano, Eduardo Flores, Samantha Gaona, Javier Leyva, Anton Morales, Axel Montoya, Coral Ramos, Domingo Rios, Issabel Sanchez.

Legate Family Scholarships: Irvy Aranda, Adrian Armendariz, Roberto Baeza, Ashley Carrasco, Samantha Gaona, Maribella Guillen, Yosdi Hernandez, Marina Marquez,

Christopher Spencer.

Presidio Stockyards Scholarship: Natalia Sanchez, Alyha Vazquez.

Big Bend Regional Nursing Pipeline Program: Vanessa Lara, Gabriela Ornelas, Coral Ramos.

Class of 2009 Scholarship: Anton Morales, Christopher Spencer, Natalia Sanchez, Jose Tavarez.

Presidio Education Foundation Scholarships: Ninel Catano, Eduardo Flores, Vanessa Lara, Domingo Rios.

Dr. Velasquez and Dr. Avila Scholarship: Valerie Armendariz, Ayslin Hermosillo, Dafne Ortiz, Alyha Vazquez.

Wisdom Advisors Scholarship: Irvy Aranda, Saul Hernandez, Yosdi Hernandez, Gabriel Montemayor, Gabriela Ornelas, Dafne Ortiz, Issabel Sanchez.

Tom and Alex Davis Scholarship: Valerie Armendariz, Gabriel Montemayor, Axel Montoya.

Harper Hardware Scholarship: Valerie Armendariz, Javier Leyva, Christopher Spencer.

Dr. Carmelina Franco Holloway Memorial Scholarship: Natalia Sanchez.

Sanchez Family Relax Place Scholarship: Valerie Armendariz, Natalia Sanchez, Jose Tavarez, Alyha Vazquez.

John’s Creek Baptist Church: Valerie Armendariz, Christopher Spencer.

Baeza Spencer Scholarship: Daniela Camero, Sherlyn Herman,



Photo by Mario Leyva / Foto por Mario Leyva

Representatives from the Big Bend Regional Medical Center and Sul Ross State University present a new scholarship aimed at recruiting students from Alpine, Marfa and Presidio ISDs to study nursing and serve their home communities. Presidio’s winners are Vanessa Lara, Gabriela Ornelas and Coral Ramos. Photo by Mario Leyva.

Representantes del Centro Médico Regional Big Bend y la Universidad Estatal Sul Ross presentan una nueva beca destinada a reclutar estudiantes de los distritos escolares de Alpine, Marfa y Presidio para estudiar enfermería y servir a sus comunidades de origen. Las ganadoras de Presidio son Vanessa Lara, Gabriela Ornelas y Coral Ramos.

Christopher Spencer.

1st Presidio Bank Scholarship: Natalia Sanchez.

Richard C. Slack Memorial Scholarship: Valerie Armendariz. Joel Vazquez Memorial

Scholarship: Sherlyn Herman, Alyha Vazquez.

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NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

Festival Voces de ambos lados

(Continuación de la página 1)

accidentado viaje en camión a través del río tuvieron que entregar sus avisos, ahora enfrentan un viaje de ocho horas a través de Presidio. El equipo de béisbol Terlingua CSD, cuyo principal rival era San Carlos, tuvo que colgar sus uniformes.

Collie Ryan, una de las personas que dio vida a Voices, recuerda los días antes de que drones, cámaras de juegos y fuertes cargos criminales llegaran a la frontera. Solía pasar tiempo con amigos en un rancho al sur de Paso Lajitas y le resultaba difícil mantenerse conectada después del cierre del cruce. "Fue desgarrador para todos", dijo.

Hace unos 14 años, Ryan trajo al querido músico terlingua Jeff Haislip a San Carlos, donde visitaron al entonces presidente (similar a nuestros alcaldes) Ramón García.

García tuvo una idea. ¿Qué tal reunir a San Carlos, Paso Lajitas y Terlingua para hacer lo que estas comunidades hacen mejor: hacer música y divertirse?

Ryan, Haislip y un dedicado grupo de lugareños de ambos lados de la frontera unieron fuerzas para organizar el primer festival Voices, que siguió aproximadamente el formato actual: pequeños escenarios a cada lado del río intercambiaron actuaciones musicales mientras la gente pasaba el rato en el agua, cruzando libremente de un lado a otro para comer, beber y ponerse al día con amigos perdidos hace mucho tiempo.

Durante la última actuación de Ryan en Voices, se dirigió a la multitud en una mezcla de inglés

y español, culminando con una canción que repite su estribillo en ambos idiomas.

La canción sigue sus propias experiencias en la frontera. “Toda mi vida he estado viviendo un sueño... las películas ni siquiera se acercan”, dice el coro bilingüe. "Siempre hay una última frontera a la que van los soñadores".

Se corrió la voz del sueño y el festival fue noticia en todo el mundo. Voices incluso recibió el tratamiento de Comedy Central, con un corresponsal de Full Frontal con Samantha Bee pasando por Lajitas para burlarse de los lamentos conservadores sobre el estado de la frontera.

Ryan dijo que entendía por qué la gente estaba tan desconcertada por el espectáculo: dos comunidades uniéndose pacíficamente, desactivando las narrativas de los medios populares sobre una frontera tensa e ingobernable con risas, canciones y oraciones. "El mundo está hambriento de algo real", dijo.

Pero toda la publicidad empezó a preocupar a los organizadores. Querían que la celebración siguiera siendo pequeña y local, sin espacio para que ninguno de los extremos de la campana política sacara el mensaje de contexto; en esencia, el evento trataba de reunir a las familias del sur del condado de Brewster, no de darle la vuelta al pájaro metafórico. La política fronteriza de Estados Unidos.

Hasta el día de hoy, el festival hace relativamente poca publicidad más allá de las publicaciones en Facebook y el boca a boca. Había



Foto de Sam Karas.

Los vecinos de ambos lados de la frontera se ayudan mutuamente a subir por la resbaladiza orilla del río para comprar tacos, bebidas y artesanías durante el festival Voces de Ambos Lados el fin de semana pasado.

pocos turistas entre la multitud del sábado; la mayoría procedía del área metropolitana de los tres condados y un pequeño puñado procedía del pueblo de Boquillas en Coahuila.

El estudiante de tercer año de Presidio High School, Mario Leyva, se unió al festival desde el lado

mexicano del río. Él y su familia estaban de visita en un rancho entre Ojinaga y San Carlos para el Día de las Madres y decidieron pasar por la fiesta para ver de qué se trataba.

A la familia le sobró un pastel del Día de la Madre que decidieron llevar al lado estadounidense para compartir. A Leyva se le encomendó

la tarea de transportar el pastel y maniobró cuidadosamente por la orilla del río con una cuerda que habían colocado para ayudar a la gente a mantenerse en pie en el barro. Al final de la cuerda, cayó. “Pero salvé el pastel”, dijo.

Mojarse un poco y embarrarse no arruinó la diversión. Leyva se sintió

conmovida al final de la celebración, donde todos los asistentes se dieron la mano formando un círculo gigante que unía a los dos países. "Fue una experiencia realmente agradable", dijo. "La gente debería ir no sólo por la fiesta, sino porque se siente bien reunirse y llevarse bien".

Encargado del agua de candelaria

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y, eventualmente, Shafter y Las Pampas.

Portillo también quiere contratar a una persona que pueda probar todos los pozos del sistema y solucionar problemas si algo sale mal y utilizar los ingresos de cada sistema de agua para pagarlo.

Los funcionarios del condado han estado discutiendo esa idea durante más de un año y medio sin nada concreto que muestre una solución. El juez tiene la esperanza de que la terrible situación en Candelaria impulse la acción. El comisionado del condado del

Precinto 4, David Beebe, se ha resistido a cualquier idea que involucre fondos del condado o que el condado se enrede en el gobierno o mantenimiento de las pequeñas corporaciones de suministro de agua. Beebe dijo que está listo para que la Junta del

Sistema de Servicios Públicos se reúna, sin embargo, para discutir el tema y buscar una solución para Candelaria.

Trey Gerfers, gerente general del Distrito de Conservación de Agua Subterránea del Condado de Presidio, también está ayudando a

encontrar una solución para todos los problemas que enfrentan los distritos de agua, principalmente las pruebas de pozos. Gerfers también dijo a los comisionados en su reunión de la semana pasada que consultaría con la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental de Texas

para ver si la multa a Candelaria podría eliminarse o mitigarse.

“Así que aquí es donde estamos ahora, tratando de encontrar si podemos obtener ayuda de algún lugar o al menos indicarnos la dirección correcta”, dijo Bianca Tellez.

Salud mental

(Continuación de la página 1)

TIC en realidad están destinadas a inspirar la sabiduría y el poder que tenemos dentro de nosotros mismos para poder encontrar maneras de para gestionar los desafíos diarios de la vida”.

Hassig dijo que el aislamiento de las comunidades rurales a menudo crea situaciones que exacerban un problema que ya prevalece en la atención de salud mental: nuestro sentido de individualismo. "La mayoría de los sistemas de atención médica se han orientado en torno a esa sensación de que encontrar una solución es una carga para el individuo, e incluso el campo de la psicología se creó en un entorno de uno a uno, casi confidencial".

Las TIC, por otro lado, no son confidenciales y están orientadas a la comunicación abierta en un ambiente de grupo, afirmó.

El Dr. Alan Tasman, presidente emérito del Departamento de Psiquiatría de la Universidad de Louisville y ex presidente de la

Asociación Estadounidense de Psiquiatría, también es un defensor de las TIC y forma parte de la junta directiva de Visible Hands Collective. “Principalmente de lo que hablan son de problemas en la vida diaria”, dijo. “Entonces, al comienzo de la reunión, la gente dice de qué les gustaría hablar. Mi marido no consigue trabajo, mis hijos se están portando mal, son las cosas habituales que causan problemas a las personas en la vida”.

“Una de las reglas es que no se pueden dar consejos”, dijo Tasman, “no se puede decir: 'Bueno, deberías hacer esto al respecto'. Lo que la gente puede hacer es decir: 'Bueno, tuve ese problema', y esto es lo que hice, y esto es lo que funcionó, y esto es lo que no funcionó.' Es para desarrollar una cohesión que reduzca el aislamiento social”.

Hassig dijo que el aislamiento se convierte en un obstáculo para alguien si cree que lo enfrenta

solo, incluso con la ayuda de un consejero. “Con las TIC, se convierte en una responsabilidad y un asunto comunitario”, afirmó Hassig. “Los sistemas tradicionales son muy verticales, lo que significa que voy a un consejero, voy a un trabajador de salud comunitario, voy a un médico, voy a un psiquiatra, y eso puede ascender en la cadena de atención médica existente. Las TIC son un retorno a una solución horizontal y a un sistema que sea equitativo y accesible. Es culturalmente representativo de las personas participantes. Es incluso geográficamente [representativo], dependiendo de dónde esté sucediendo”.

Ese elemento geográfico es importante para las comunidades que se extienden por grandes áreas, dijo. Los representantes de varias organizaciones de atención de salud mental en Big Bend con los que habló The Sentinel nunca habían oído hablar de las

TIC, pero todos dijeron que las encontraban muy interesantes y se comprometieron a investigarlas. Hassig dijo que la falta de familiaridad con las TIC era típica, ya que incluso después de una década de uso en Estados Unidos, todavía está aumentando aquí.

La práctica comenzó en Brasil, donde se la conoce como terapia comunitaria integrativa. Fue creado por el psiquiatra y antropólogo Dr. Adalberto Barreto en respuesta a la necesidad de “servicios comunitarios de salud mental en los barrios de ingresos extremadamente bajos”.

Según Visible Hands Collaborative, “Brasil ahora cuenta con más de 42 centros de capacitación que han capacitado a 37 mil terapeutas comunitarios en todo el país, y TCI se ofrece en América Latina, África, Asia y Europa como tratamiento de primera línea para los pacientes que acuden a sus consultas. Médico de atención primaria con

problemas de salud mental de leves a moderados como complemento al tratamiento médico. La investigación examinó encuestas de 12.000 participantes y encontró que el 88,5% informó que había resuelto con éxito su principal problema de salud mental”.

Visible Hands Collaborative, con sede en Pittsburgh, es el “centro” de las TIC en Estados Unidos, dijo Hassig. Actualmente, la organización sin fines de lucro está capacitando a facilitadores de TIC, incluso de forma remota, y trabajando con organizaciones comunitarias para expandir el movimiento. También organiza una sesión remota de TIC todos los martes por la noche, y cualquiera puede registrarse en www.visiblehandscollaborative.org para participar.

Se están reclutando facilitadores, que no necesitan experiencia profesional en salud mental, aunque muchos de los facilitadores actuales tienen experiencia o

un interés sincero en el campo. Hassig enfatizó que las personas que luchan con problemas de salud mental agudos y más graves aún necesitarán buscar ayuda de profesionales, pero aún pueden beneficiarse de asistir a reuniones sobre TIC.

Animó a todas las organizaciones interesadas en las TIC a ponerse en contacto con ella. "Si podemos encontrar socios que tengan la capacidad de trabajar con nosotros, ya sea para encontrar una fuente de financiación o si hay fondos comunitarios disponibles, podemos encontrar una manera de apoyarlos y capacitarlos", dijo.

Este es el último de una serie de artículos sobre salud mental, financiados por el Fondo Comunitario del Condado de Presidio, que se pueden encontrar en su totalidad en: www.bigbendsentinel.com/mental-health-series/.

Los estudiantes del último año de PHS ganan a lo grande en la celebración anual de la Noche de Becas

Por SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PRESIDIO — El martes por la noche, los estudiantes del último año de la Escuela Secundaria Presidio y sus padres se reunieron para la Noche de Becas anual del distrito. Los estudiantes del último año estaban vestidos de punta en blanco, animando a sus compañeros de clase mientras se anunciaban los ganadores de los premios locales. A lo largo de la noche, un elenco de oradores invitados alentaron a los estudiantes del último año a seguir sus sueños, ya sea que estuvieran destinados a una universidad tradicional de cuatro años o preparándose para una escuela técnica.

Jeremy Velásquez, dentista de la clínica de Servicios de Atención

Médica Preventiva y patrocinador de becas, se compadeció de la multitud por lo difícil que puede ser solicitar admisión a la escuela y becas. También aconsejó a los estudiantes que se concentraran en sus sueños a largo plazo durante sus primeros y emocionantes años después de terminar la escuela secundaria. "La universidad es divertida", dijo. "Pero tenga en cuenta ese objetivo final".

Los miembros de la junta directiva de Presidio ISD y los líderes del distrito también asistieron para mostrar su apoyo. La secretaria de la Junta Escolar, Perla Natividad, se sintió un poco emocionada al ver crecer a la Promoción de 2024, la última clase que enseñó durante un período como maestra en PISD. "Es un honor estar aquí todos los años, tengo muchas ganas de que

llegue este evento", dijo. "Estoy muy agradecido por todos nuestros patrocinadores".

Rubén Armendáriz, director de instalaciones de PISD y padre de la futura graduada Valerie Armendáriz, dijo que también había disfrutado viendo crecer a la Generación de 2024 y planificar su futuro. Valerie asistirá a la Universidad de Texas en otoño y planea estudiar ciencias de la computación. Toda la familia cruzó los dedos mientras esperaban saber si ella ganó algún premio. “Sólo estamos tratando de disfrutar la noche”, dijo Armendáriz.

El jueves por la noche, los atletas de PISD celebrarán los logros del año con su propia ceremonia especial. La graduación se realizará el próximo viernes 24 de mayo a las 18:30 horas. en el Gimnasio Diablo Azul.

Mario Leyva contribuyó con el reportaje de esta historia.

— Becados de universidades: Antón Morales, Ayslin Hermosillo, Domingo Ríos, Javier Leyva, Natalia Sánchez, Axel Montoya, Dafne Ortiz, Eduardo Flores, Gabriel Montemayor. Becas William y Susan Soza: Valerie Armendáriz, Daniela Carnero, Ninel Catano, Eduardo Flores, Samantha Gaona, Javier Leyva, Anton Morales, Axel Montoya, Coral Ramos, Domingo Rios, Issabel Sanchez.

Becas Familiares Legate: Irvy Aranda, Adrián Armendáriz, Roberto Baeza, Ashley Carrasco, Samantha Gaona, Maribella Guillén, Yosdi Hernández, Marina Márquez, Christopher Spencer.

Beca Presidio Stockyards: Natalia Sanchez, Alyha Vazquez. Programa Regional de Enfermería de Big Bend: Vanessa Lara, Gabriela Ornelas, Coral Ramos.

Beca Promoción 2009: Antón Morales, Christopher Spencer, Natalia Sánchez, José Tavárez.

Becas Fundación Educación Presidio: Ninel Catano, Eduardo Flores, Vanessa Lara, Domingo Rios.

Beca Dr. Velásquez y Dra. Ávila: Valerie Armendáriz, Ayslin Hermosillo, Dafne Ortiz, Alyha Vazquez.

Beca Asesores de Sabiduría: Irvy Aranda, Saúl Hernández, Yosdi Hernández, Gabriel Montemayor, Gabriela Ornelas, Dafne Ortiz, Issabel Sánchez.

Beca Tom y Alex Davis: Valerie Armendáriz, Gabriel Montemayor,

Axel Montoya.

Beca Harper Hardware: Valerie Armendáriz, Javier Leyva, Christopher Spencer.

Beca en Memoria de la Dra. Carmelina Franco Holloway: Natalia Sánchez.

Beca Sanchez Family Relax Place: Valerie Armendariz, Natalia Sanchez, Jose Tavarez, Alyha Vazquez.

Iglesia Bautista John's Creek: Valerie Armendáriz, Christopher Spencer.

Beca Baeza Spencer: Daniela Carnero, Sherlyn Herman, Christopher Spencer.

Beca del banco 1st Presidio Bank: Natalia Sánchez.

Beca en memoria de Richard C. Slack: Valerie Armendáriz.

Beca en memoria de Joel Vázquez: Sherlyn Herman, Alyha Vázquez.

ENGLISH NEWS

OUR WATER MATTERS

Growing the state’s water supply

By **TREY GERFERS**
tgerfers@pcuwcd.org

As the reality of a drying climate becomes increasingly difficult to ignore across Texas — with reservoirs at record lows and beloved springs no longer flowing — many are wondering how the state can cope with a more arid future coupled with ongoing unprecedented growth. A new publication by Texas Water Trade (TWT) called the “Net Zero Water Toolkit — A guide to non-potable onsite water reuse for Texas developers and owner/operators” poses the question as follows: “How do we grow our water supply and ensure water security for Texas? The answer is in the problem — we have to look at growth as a source of water, not

just a source of demand.” According to TWT CEO Sharlene Leurig, “With around 1,000 new Texans arriving each day, there is no question that we need to grow our state’s water supplies. Texas Water Trade believes that water reuse is one of our biggest opportunities.” Since the vast majority of the water needed for municipal uses, such as toilets, irrigation and cooling towers, doesn’t have to be potable, the goal of Net Zero Water is to “help a development provide for its own water needs through the capture, storage, and treatment of compatible water sources found onsite.” These sources can include the accumulating moisture that drains from a structure’s foundation, condensate from air conditioners, and rainwater captured off

buildings and parking lots. According to the Toolkit, Net Zero Water systems “copy nature’s water cycle — after all, every drop of water we’ve ever consumed, cooked with, or bathed in has been used and recycled countless times through millennia.” Instead of relying on the old model of using water one time and sending it back to the central utility for treatment, Net Zero systems diversify the water portfolio by reusing the same water multiple times for a cascading range of uses. One of the most impressive aspects of the toolkit is that it doesn’t just wag an accusatory finger at the status quo, but instead highlights the cost efficiencies, available incentives and wide-ranging benefits of adopting a Net Zero Water approach to new buildings and developments. By speaking the language of developers, Leurig is hoping “that Net Zero designs can become the new normal for Texas ... making the Lone Star State’s water systems more independent and resilient.” The Net Zero Water Toolkit provides many examples of how non-potable reuse can actually

benefit a developer’s bottom line. “Development permits require evidence of sufficient water to support the number of planned units. Those calculations assume that all water demands will be met with potable water and then discharged as wastewater. Water reuse can be used to negotiate greater intensity of development by stretching water supplies further.” The toolkit authors also point out that “land application of wastewater and stormwater detention occupy valuable acreage. Water reuse can reduce the amount of land that must be dedicated to these purposes,” freeing up more land for development. And as “water and sewer rates have increased by 2.5 times the Consumer Price Index over the last 20 years,” Net Zero Water developments will become increasingly cost effective over time because they only use “10-30% of the potable water required by status quo developments.” Perhaps the most compelling argument for developers to adopt a Net Zero Water approach involves the very real prospect of construction moratoriums in extremely water-constrained regions. Dripping

Springs, Texas, enacted a year-long moratorium on new construction in 2021 largely due to the city’s limited wastewater capacity. And in 2023, Magnolia, Texas, extended its moratorium on new building permits for a third time as the city struggled to address a water supply shortage. By adopting Net Zero Water principles in all new construction, developers can ensure that their businesses will thrive in a drying, warming climate. The toolkit includes many inspiring descriptions of Net Zero Water in action, including the University of Texas at Austin, which “uses 50-60 million gallons of AC condensate water to fill its cooling towers all across campus ... On-site water reuse saves the university more than 100 million gallons of potable water each year.” The Credit Human Headquarters in San Antonio uses “captured water ... to flush all toilets, provide irrigation, and supply makeup water for the cooling towers, resulting in an estimated savings of 4 million gallons of water per year.” And the Austin Central Library reuses rainfall and air conditioner condensate, enabling “85% less potable water

use” and saving “1.5 million gallons of potable water a year.” “One barrier to the widespread implementation of these emerging Net Zero Water technologies ... is a lack of educational resources available to developers ... municipalities and school districts,” said Leurig. “That lack of resources leads to the belief that implementing these tools is too costly and slows down the development timeline. To overcome this knowledge gap and speed the adoption of on-site water reuse strategies, Texas Water Trade created the Net Zero Water Toolkit.” She and her team at TWT are confident that “on-site water reuse is not a fad but a much-needed supply resource ... With onsite water reuse, growth can actually help Texas grow its water supplies — a win for developers and for Texas.” Visit texaswatertrade.org/net-zero-water to learn more.

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.

Colorado man arrested for allegedly distributing fentanyl in Alpine overdose

ALPINE — A Colorado man was arrested Saturday in Denver on criminal charges related to his alleged possession with intent to distribute fentanyl. According to the indictment, Douglas Christopher Steele, 53, of Denver allegedly conspired with

others to possess with the intent to distribute a controlled substance, which contained a detectable amount of fentanyl. The indictment alleges that Steele’s alleged fentanyl distribution resulted in the death of Alpine resident Daniel Celaya in February.

Steele made his initial appearance Monday in a federal court in Denver. He is charged with one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute fentanyl and one count of possession with intent to distribute fentanyl. If convicted, he faces 20 years to life

in prison for each count. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors. U.S. Attorney Jaime Esparza of the Western District of Texas made the announcement Tuesday.

Homeland Security Investigations and the Texas Department of Public Safety Criminal Investigation Division are investigating the case with assistance from the Alpine Police Department, Brewster County Sheriff’s Office, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Amy Greenbaum is prosecuting the case.

From a U.S. Attorney’s Office news release.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Shafter moving forward with water corporation
SHAFTER — Shafter residents are moving forward with the creation of a water supply corporation by meeting on Saturday to establish a board and approve bylaws. The meeting of residents and property owners will take place at 2 p.m. at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church Community Room. There will also be a discussion on the role of the Water Supply Corporation Board of Directors and what the status is concerning a potable water supply to the Shafter community. The community has long been supplied with water from the adjacent silver mine that is not currently operational. That well water is tested but does not meet the state standards for testing and chlorination, and thus the community has been under a boil-water notice for more than a year and a half.

Presidio County received \$4.6 million of state grant money last year for water system improvements, which includes funding for planning a new water system for Shafter.

Event set to memorialize veterans
MARFA — All veterans and the public are invited to attend a service to memorialize veterans that have died in conjunction with the upcoming Memorial Day. The event will be held on the Presidio County Courthouse steps at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 23. Refreshments will be provided, and keynote speaker will be Presidio native and veteran Denise Estrada. Early voting begins Monday for area runoff

Early voting begins Monday for area runoff
Early voting kicks off Monday and runs through Friday, May 24, for

the May 28 party primary runoffs. In Presidio County, voters will decide who to elect for Precinct 1 Presidio County Commissioner between Deirdre Hisler and Samuel Sanchez and Precinct 3 Commissioner between Tiburcio “Butch” Acosta and Franky Ortiz. All are Democrats, and with no Republican challengers in November, the winners will assume office in January. Hisler, now retired, formerly was West Texas State Parks regional director, and Samuel Sanchez owns a cattle importing and trucking business and the Presidio Stockyards. Early voting will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in either location: Marfa Activity Center, 302 S. Highland, or at the Presidio County Annex, Building B, in Presidio.

51 parks in 14 days



Photo by of Andy Wilson / Foto de Andy Wilson

Andy Wilson and his father Mark Wilson kicked off their whirlwind tour of National Parks by starting at Big Bend National Park. The two intend to set a Guinness World Record by stepping into all 51 national parks in the contiguous United States in 14 days. Andy Wilson — who lives in College Station — is a pilot, and his plane will be the key to getting him to an average of 3.64 parks a day.



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