

BURN BAN IN EFFECT, NO GROUND FIRES

by order of Presidio County

Chisos Basin to close completely for construction in May 2025

By SAM KARAS sam@bigbendsentinel.com

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK — Last Wednesday, Big Bend National Park announced that the Chisos Basin will be completely closed off to visitors in May 2025, when work is set to begin on the defunct Chisos Mountain Lodge and adjoining water system. Both projects are set to take about two years to complete.

In the spring of 2022, former Superintendent Bob Krumenaker announced that the lodge would be demolished and rebuilt. Originally, the park had hoped to rehabilitate the building, which features a restaurant with stunning views and 72 rooms that generate serious cash for the county's tourism budget via hotel occupancy taxes.

Further investigation revealed that the Lodge was built on unstable soils — a major liability. Over six decades of heavy visitation, the iconic gathering place had been loved to death.

The park's latest announcement was in stark contrast to a series of plans presented to locals and outfitters back in the spring. At a community meeting held in Terlingua in March, park leadership discussed the possibility of issuing day passes and setting up a booth at the top of the road to let folks with passes and commercial permits through — and even a series of shuttles with satellite parking lots.

While representatives for the park did not provide a specific reason for the change of heart, there's been a major shift in leadership at Panther Junction since March. In May, Anjna O'Connor was tapped as the new superintendent, after a string of interim and acting superintendents guided operations through a year-long transitional phase.

Chief of Interpretation Tom VandenBerg said that it was possible that the basin would not be completely closed for the full two years. Higher-ups would monitor the situation and perhaps reopen the campground or select trails when it was safe to do so. "Introducing visitors into the active work zone of the tiny Basin area is a big safety concern, that includes the road which will be heavily traveled by construction equipment and trucks," he said. "Top priority here is for the contractor to finish the work in a timely manner so that we can reopen."

While folks on social media expressed feeling blindsided by the news, outfitter Erin Little of Big Bend Boating and Hiking Company said that she and other guide services had received a heads up that plans had changed. "I think the idea is, 'Let's close it down and get it done faster,'" she said.

Around 60-70% of park visitors — up to a thousand a day during peak season — visit the Chisos Basin. With the winding road into the heart of the park closed, VandenBerg anticipated that visitation patterns would shift. He said plans were in the works to improve parking in other heavily congested areas.

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Photo by Hannah Gentiles / Foto por Hannah Gentiles

Kids run to grab candy thrown from the Santa Theresa de Jesús church parade in Presidio on Saturday. Los niños corren para agarrar dulces arrojados desde el desfile de la iglesia de Santa Teresa de Jesús en Presidio el sábado.

Sul Ross anthropology professor talks about the origins and misconceptions of hunting

By ALEXIS WOLFE For The Big Bend Sentinel

ALPINE— Devin Pettigrew, who recalls his childhood habit of stalking squirrels in the woods in Arkansas, is now a visiting assistant professor at the Center for Big Bend Studies' anthropology department at Sul Ross University. This fall, he teaches a course called Anthropology of Hunting, which investigates the origins of hunting and its impact on our evolutionary and cultural trajectories. Pettigrew's research is in experimental archaeology, focusing on the tools and weapons of early hunter-gatherers, such as the atlatl.

The Sentinel sat down with Pettigrew to talk about his latest fieldwork, ancient weapons and the misconceptions of modern hunting.

Can you tell me when you first remember becoming fascinated with hunting? How did you end up where you are today?

I distinctly remember trying to stalk squirrels in the woods with a pocket knife lashed to a stick and a pair of moccasins I made in scout camp. I was probably 11 or 12. It was around that same time I killed my first deer. But as far back as I can remember, I've been fascinated with this kind of thing.

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Geothermal Working Group consults with experts on the 'hottest rock east of the Rockies'

PRESIDIO — The Geothermal Working Group convened on October 16 at the Presidio Municipal Development District (PMDD) offices for an in-depth presentation on conventional and unconventional geothermal energy. Gene Suemnicht of EGS Geosystems and Ken Nichols of TetraTech offered valuable insights into possible approaches that Presidio County could take in developing its geothermal potential.

"The future of geothermal is considerably different than it was in the past, but it still remains a baseload, environmentally friendly alternative," Suemnicht noted. He stressed the potential for direct use applications, such as greenhouse heating and agricultural processing, which could be particularly relevant for Presidio's economic development plans. Suemnicht emphasized the importance of a comprehensive approach: "The most effective exploration tool is a very well experienced geoscientist with a very well constrained conceptual model. And the only way you develop that conceptual model is by getting more and more information before you ever put a bit to the ground."

Nichols emphasized the importance of a phased approach, gradually reducing risk and building a thorough understanding of the resource before significant investments are made. "The research phase is really valuable ... You can pace that at whatever makes sense for your project," he said. Nichols and Suemnicht also suggested involving university researchers in field studies to further characterize the geothermal resource at reduced cost.

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Un profesor de antropología de Sul Ross habla sobre los orígenes y los conceptos erróneos de la caza

Por ALEXIS WOLFE Para el Big Bend Sentinel

ALPINE— Devin Pettigrew, que recuerda su hábito de la infancia de acechar ardillas en los bosques de Arkansas, es ahora profesor asistente visitante en el departamento de antropología del Centro de Estudios de Big Bend en la Universidad Sul Ross. Este otoño, imparte un curso llamado Antropología de la caza, que investiga los orígenes de la caza y su impacto en nuestras trayectorias evolutivas y culturales. La investigación de Pettigrew se centra en la arqueología experimental, centrándose en las herramientas y armas de los primeros cazadores-recolectores, como el atlatl.

The Sentinel se sentó con Pettigrew para hablar sobre su último trabajo de campo, las armas antiguas y los conceptos erróneos de la caza moderna.

¿Puede decirme cuándo recuerda la primera vez que se sintió fascinado por la caza? ¿Cómo terminó donde está hoy?

Recuerdo claramente que intentaba acechar ardillas en el bosque con una navaja atada a un palo y un par de mocasines que hice en el campamento de

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El Grupo de Trabajo Geotérmico consulta con expertos sobre la "roca más caliente al este de las Montañas Rocosas"

PRESIDIO — El Grupo de Trabajo Geotérmico se reunió el 16 de octubre en las oficinas del Distrito de Desarrollo Municipal de Presidio (PMDD) para una presentación en profundidad sobre la energía geotérmica convencional y no convencional. Gene Suemnicht de EGS Geosystems y Ken Nichols de TetraTech ofrecieron valiosas perspectivas sobre los posibles enfoques que podría adoptar el condado de Presidio para desarrollar su potencial geotérmico.

"El futuro de la energía geotérmica es considerablemente diferente de lo que era en el pasado, pero sigue siendo una alternativa de carga base y respetuosa con el medio ambiente", señaló Suemnicht. Destacó el potencial de las aplicaciones de uso directo, como la calefacción de invernaderos y el procesamiento agrícola, que podrían ser particularmente relevantes para los planes de desarrollo económico de Presidio. Suemnicht destacó la importancia de un enfoque integral: "La herramienta de exploración más eficaz es un geocientífico con mucha experiencia y un modelo conceptual muy bien definido. Y la única forma de desarrollar ese modelo conceptual es obteniendo cada vez más información antes de poner un poco de tierra".

Nichols destacó la importancia de un enfoque por fases, reduciendo gradualmente el riesgo y creando un conocimiento profundo del recurso antes de realizar inversiones significativas. "La fase de investigación es realmente

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La cuenca de Chisos cerrará por completo para su construcción en mayo de 2025

Por SAM KARAS sam@bigbendsentinel.com

PARQUE NACIONAL BIG BEND — El miércoles pasado, el Parque Nacional Big Bend anunció que la cuenca de Chisos estará completamente cerrada a los visitantes en mayo de 2025, cuando está previsto que comiencen las obras en el desaparecido Chisos Mountain Lodge y el sistema de agua adyacente. Ambos proyectos tardarán unos dos años en completarse.

En la primavera de 2022, el ex superintendente Bob Krumenaker anunció que el albergue sería demolido y reconstruido. Originalmente, el parque esperaba rehabilitar el edificio, que cuenta con un restaurante con impresionantes vistas y 72 habitaciones que generan importantes ingresos para el presupuesto turístico del condado a través de los impuestos sobre la ocupación hotelera.

Una investigación más profunda reveló que el albergue se construyó sobre suelos inestables, lo que supone un gran riesgo. Durante más de seis décadas de intensas visitas, el emblemático lugar de reunión había sido amado hasta la muerte.

El último anuncio del parque contrasta marcadamente con una serie de planes presentados a los lugareños y a los proveedores de servicios en la primavera. En una reunión comunitaria celebrada en Terlingua en marzo, los líderes del parque discutieron la posibilidad de emitir pases diarios y colocar una cabina en la parte superior de la carretera para dejar pasar a las personas con pases y permisos comerciales, e incluso una serie de lanzaderas con estacionamientos satélite.

Si bien los representantes del parque no proporcionaron una razón específica para el cambio de opinión, ha habido un cambio importante en el liderazgo en Panther Junction desde marzo. En mayo, Anjna O'Connor fue elegida como nueva superintendente, después de que una serie de superintendentes interinos y en funciones guiaran las operaciones a través de una fase de transición de un año.

El jefe de interpretación Tom VandenBerg dijo que era posible que la cuenca no se cerrara por completo durante los dos años completos. Los superiores monitorearían la situación y tal vez reabrirían el campamento o seleccionarían senderos cuando fuera seguro hacerlo. "Introducir visitantes en la zona de trabajo activa de la pequeña área de Basin es una gran preocupación de seguridad, que incluye la carretera que será muy transitada por equipos de construcción y camiones", dijo. "La máxima prioridad aquí es que el contratista termine el trabajo de manera oportuna para que podamos reabrir".

Si bien las personas en las redes sociales expresaron sentirse sorprendidas por la noticia, la proveedora Erin Little de Big Bend Boating and Hiking Company dijo que ella y otros servicios de guía habían recibido un aviso de que los planes habían cambiado. "Creo que la idea es: 'Cerrémoslo y terminémoslo más rápido'", dijo.

Alrededor del 60-70% de los visitantes del parque, hasta mil por día durante la temporada alta, visitan

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Misconceptions of hunting

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I attribute a lot of it to my dad because he was also fascinated by it. He wasn’t an archeologist, but he collected arrowheads as a boy from his farm. He introduced us to hunting and took us around to museums on family vacations.

At one point I think my folks were a little worried about me, like, “What’s gonna to happen to our weird child?” I was a super nerd. I had to know about this stuff. I studied online on atlatl forums and would basically research and write these long things about them on the forums. I had done enough research that I knew what these archaic artifacts looked like, and I wanted to replicate them precisely. For me, the Indigenous makers of these tools who were following along thousands of years of traditions were the people I wanted to learn from.

Are you currently conducting any fieldwork in the Big Bend region?

Over the summer, [Sul Ross] had a field school and worked at a nearby rock shelter. One of the rock shelters has the remains of an early archaic hunting kit, so we’re digging for those. We didn’t find any this summer, but last summer we found a 7,000-year-old atlatl as well as part of a hunting boomerang.

I’m also working on a project with archeologists who work in Mongolia. They’re finding arrow points and argali sheep skeletons at alpine sites, and I’m working with stuff they find. Here at the university, we’re trying to put together an experimental archeology lab that will include a ballistics component. Right now we need funding.

Can you tell me about the bison carcass experiments you’ve conducted across Colorado and Montana?

They’re exploratory experiments. There’s a lot you can do with the data, but basically, we get a bison, the rancher puts it down for us and then we experiment on it with Stone Age weapons. We record all of the ballistics data and then butcher it with stone tools.

We clean the bones and look at broken points and broken bones as well as ballistic impact data to learn about weapon efficiency. Right now I’m applying that to think about megafauna [animals weighing more than 100 pounds] and hunting potential, for the debate about why megafauna went extinct. That’s what I’m interested in.

A lot of your work revolves around the ancient weapon the atlatl. What did this weapon symbolize for our ancestors?

I can’t tell what it symbolized for people, right? That’s cosmology and belief and stuff. That’s really, really hard for archeologists to put back together. But it was a really important hunting tool.

For instance, in the Americas, we suspect that the earliest people to come into the continent had this weapon and that’s what they were hunting with primarily. It didn’t really get outpaced by the bow and arrow until about 2,000 years ago, even though there’s evidence that the bow and arrow started showing up in the northern part of the continent potentially 12,000 years ago.

This is the primary weapon used for the duration of prehistory here, and

it definitely had symbolic and cosmological significance in Mesoamerican cultures.

Your work is imaginative in that it reaches tens of thousands of years into the past to tell us something about humans today. Do you think of hunting as an imaginative act?

Definitely. You have to be able to speculate and imagine and think about possibilities as a hominid hunter. There are theories that hunting, in part, is what creates modern cognition. Because you have to both store a bunch of information about things you’re hunting and also imagine possibilities.

So for instance, when the San [in Southern Africa] are hunting, they’re tracking animals, and when they lose tracks, they have to imagine themselves as the animal and think, “Where do I go now?” Before firearms, people would outfit themselves to look like the animals that they were hunting. They had to be very convincing at it, so they had to have all of the behaviors.

It goes so far that Native American hunters doing this had to go through all of the proper ritual channels before going on a hunt like that. When you’re putting on the deer outfit and going out and behaving like a deer, it’s so intense that you’re becoming a deer. You pass through this liminal period where you’re going from human to deer. And that’s the dangerous place to be, where you can get attacked spiritually, so you have to have protections in place.

So it was, in a way, an act of creativity?

Yeah. Another argument about hunting is that when you’re tracking, you’re storing knowledge about symbols, which creates the ability to recreate symbols in art. So, it’s part of what you show through rock art and stories, teaching people through an entertaining form of communication.

Do you believe that with the advancement of technology comes a loss in the intuitive connection to hunting our ancestors relied on in the past using simple weapons?

To some degree, yes. With pre-industrial hunting weapons, you have to be very close [to an animal]. Within 20 meters, preferably closer. That can require incredible skill and knowledge about how an animal is going to respond, to imagine where it’s going to be. How to act to convince them that you’re the animal, in the case that you’re using a disguise.

Nevertheless, modern hunters have to be knowledgeable about animal behavior. They aren’t always though, because a lot of times now it’s something that you do five days out of the year.

What do you think are the biggest misconceptions about hunting?

One is that it’s easy. There’s something called the Ecology of Fear, which is the study of anti-predator behaviors in prey animals. Prey animals aren’t stupid, and they can adapt to predation. So if you deploy a different type of weapon, they respond. The more predators there are, the bigger the response.

It’s not fair to say that we had these simple technologies and hunting



Photo by John Whittaker

Devin Pettigrew, right, conducting bison experiments at a ranch in North Park, Colorado.

was hard and it was fair for the animal, but now there are modern technologies and it’s not fair. That transition isn’t so simple, because these predator-prey relations change.

What are the ecological ramifications of hunting today?

Well, it’s used as a tool by wildlife managers to control wildlife populations. But the most dedicated hunters are conservation-minded. They want a healthy ecosystem because they want to be out experiencing it. [Modern hunting] faces a lot of negative public perception by people who, quite honestly, don’t fully understand it, because they haven’t done it, and they’re not willing to try.

The reality is that it’s used as a tool and it also creates a big impetus to keep wildlife on the landscape. The vast majority of hunters aren’t about the moment of killing something, because that’s not usually all that fun. But all the things surrounding it are.

Dr. Devin Pettigrew is giving a lecture on his latest bison experiment data — “Reconsidering Megafauna Hunting in the Pleistocene: State of the Debate and Insights from Experiments with the Atlatl and Dart” — on December 5 at the Warnock Science Building for the Science Seminar Series at Sul Ross University. All are welcome.

Pettigrew mentioned that he set his Anthropology of Hunting course to begin at 5 p.m. in anticipation of more auditors registering for the course. Non-students are permitted to audit up to two courses per semester at Sul Ross University. The cost to audit a course is \$50 per semester.

Geothermal Working Group

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The discussion touched as well on project timelines from inception to power generation. According to Suemnicht, "There have been projects in Nevada recently that have come online within four years, but that's a little bit unusual. The usual timeline is about five to seven years," with drilling often occurring in the third or fourth year. On the subject of financing, Suemnicht emphasized, "The economics of these projects has changed considerably because of the tax incentives and also the financing incentives that are related to the investment of the Economic Recovery Act and the Build Back Better Act." Presidio County is well positioned to take full advantage of these incentives.

Reflecting on the project's potential, Trey Gerfers, who has been working on the geothermal initiative in Presidio County for some time now, stated, "We have some of the hottest rock east of the Rockies that's closest to the surface. We have a port of entry that is only now being developed in a way that really takes advantage of that energy source. We qualify for lots and lots of aid and grants. And I think we have tremendous cachet as part of the Big Bend region."

John Kennedy, city planning consultant with the PMDD and City of Presidio, highlighted the international scope of geothermal exploration in the region. "We've been working with the Mexican government,

and there is potential for this resource to benefit communities on both sides of the Rio Grande," he said. Gamaliel Bustillos Muñoz, consul of Mexico in Presidio, has emphasized the need for more education on the Mexican side of the border “because no one is talking about this down there.” Heightened awareness and collaboration could open doors to greater binational development.

The meeting served as a prelude to the Geothermal Rising conference in Hawaii, where Gerfers and Kennedy are set to participate in a rural geothermal workshop facilitated by Ken Wisian of the Bureau of Economic Geology at UT-Austin. This international conference

presents an unparalleled opportunity to showcase Presidio's potential and learn from global experts in the field.

In exploring the opportunities offered by its geothermal resources, Presidio County must remain open to all possibilities. Suemnicht summed it up best when he explained that during the exploration phase “there's a lot of hand-wringing that we ... face with people that don't have [the geothermal resources] they hoped for.” But the most important question to be asking, he emphasized, is: “What are you doing with what you have?”

For more information about the Presidio County Geothermal Working Group, contact John Kennedy at info@presidiotxmdd.org.

Chisos basin to close

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While the Basin is closed, other parts of the trail system in the Chisos Mountains will remain open — though the majority of those routes are challenging. VandenBerg said that the park will continue to require overnight permits for backpackers, which provide an opportunity to rangers to share valuable information and gauge hikers' preparedness for their trip.

Both the lodge project and the water system project are being funded through the Great American Outdoors Act which supports infrastructure projects in the national parks. Big Bend netted \$77 million.

“It is a great time for Big Bend to see these much-needed infrastructure and facility improvements,” Superintendent O’Connor wrote in a press re-

lease. “We’re excited to finally begin work on a well-engineered facility that fits the landscape and meets high standards for energy, water, and operational efficiency to better serve the visitors of today and tomorrow.”

Archives of the Big Bend receives grant to digitize Harry Warren collection

ALPINE — A TexTreasures grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) will help to digitize the entire Harry Warren Papers collection beginning this fall at the Archives of the Big Bend at Sul Ross State University in Alpine. The collection is expected to be freely available to the public by Fall 2025.

The Harry Warren Papers consist of journals, correspondence, scrapbooks, biographical and historical materials, financial records, literary manuscripts, and published monographs by Warren (1859-1931), a historian, author, teacher, farmer, customs official and attorney. Warren took extensive notes of his travels, documented major events, and collected several firsthand accounts from people in our region who were traditionally silenced or ignored, including Mexicans, Mexican Americans and Native Americans. His journals (1891-1926) include accounts of several Texas borderland raids during the Mexican Revolution, as well as

the only known contemporary account of the Porvenir Massacre. As such, they are consistently used and cited by researchers and students of Texas history, Mexican American history, borderland history and military history throughout the state and region.

Interest in said journals has significantly increased since the 2022 archaeological excavation of the Porvenir Massacre site, which found U.S. Army ammunition fired from military-issued weapons alongside the Texas Ranger and civilian ammunition. The Warren collection is now one of the Archives’ most requested and widely used manuscript collections. While some of these requests have been from Sul Ross students and area researchers, most are from visitors, journalists and researchers from outside of West Texas, with some requests coming from as far as the United Kingdom.

The primary purpose for this digitization project is to improve accessibility to Harry Warren’s journals for researchers. Currently, interested researchers need

to either view circulation copies in person or submit a reproduction request and pay a fee for PDF scans. This project will provide instant and free digital access to high quality scans of the original journals through the Archive of the Big Bend’s Preservica public portal and through a grant-funded portable digital display kiosk.

This unmanned, contactless display is intended to increase access and encourage interest in the Harry Warren Collection and the Archives of the Big Bend to Sul Ross students and visitors and will be used at off-site Archives of the Big Bend outreach events, including the annual Border Region Archives Group (BRAG) Archive Bazaar, which consistently reaches hundreds of researchers and enthusiasts throughout West Texas and southern New Mexico.

The grant for \$9,999 is just one of more than 40 this year from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to the TSLAC under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act. TSLAC awards

competitive grants annually, as funding allows. For the 2025 grant cycle, TSLAC has awarded approximately \$1.2 million in competitive grants. The TexTreasures Grant will provide assistance and encouragement to 12 libraries to provide access to their special or unique collections and to make information about those collections available to library users across the state.

“The Archive and its staff are an invaluable resource to journalists in Texas such as myself, and the Warren Collection is a singular lens into Texas history. In 2022, while working as senior editor for Texas Monthly, I created ‘White Hats,’ a six-episode podcast series on the history of the Texas Rangers,” said Jack Herrera, a journalist. “Warren’s journals were undoubtedly the most important documents I read during my eight months reporting across the state.”

For more information, visit www.library.sulross.edu/archives/.

Gas prices continue to fall in Texas

TEXAS — Average gasoline prices in Texas have fallen 2.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.70 on October 21, according to GasBuddy's survey of 13,114 stations in Texas. Prices in Texas are 3.8 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 30.6 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has declined 1.3 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.56 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Texas was priced at \$2.15 yesterday while the most expensive was \$3.59, a difference of \$1.44. The

lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.15 while the highest was \$3.59, a difference of \$1.44.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 3.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.13 today. The national average is down 6.2 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 39.7 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices: Midland Odessa — \$2.73, down 13.5 cents per gallon from

last week's \$2.87. San Antonio — \$2.63, down 19.4 cents per gallon from last week's \$2.82. Austin — \$2.66, down 17.4 cents per gallon from last week's \$2.83.

"The median U.S. price for gasoline has just slipped below the \$3 mark for the first time since early 2024, while the national average price of gasoline has returned to decline as oil prices have begun to cool off after Iran's attack on Israel, due in part to sources saying Israel has agreed not to attack Iran's oil infrastructure," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "With the potential of an attack on Iran's

oil infrastructure decreasing as a result, the risk calculus for oil is decreasing, and with continued economic weakness in China providing bearish sentiment, oil prices late last week slipped back below the \$70 per barrel mark, opening the door for a longer decline to potentially return to the national average. I'm hopeful that the downward trend will continue again this week for a majority of Americans as we see the average price of gasoline start to make a targeted effort to fall below the \$3 mark for the first time since 2021."

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Conceptos erróneos sobre la caza

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los boy scouts. Tenía probablemente 11 o 12 años. Fue por esa misma época cuando maté mi primer ciervo. Pero desde que tengo memoria, me han fascinado este tipo de cosas.

Atribuyo mucho de ello a mi padre, porque a él también le fascinaban. No era arqueólogo, pero coleccionaba puntas de flecha de niño en su granja. Nos introdujo a la caza y nos llevaba a museos en las vacaciones familiares.

En un momento creo que mis padres estaban un poco preocupados por mí, como diciendo: "¿Qué va a pasar con nuestro extraño hijo?". Yo era un supnerd. Tenía que saber sobre estas cosas. Estudié en línea en los foros de atlátl y básicamente investigaba y escribía estas cosas largas sobre ellos en los foros. Había investigado lo suficiente como para saber cómo eran estos artefactos arcaicos y quería replicarlos con precisión. Para mí, los fabricantes indígenas de estas herramientas, que seguían miles de años de tradiciones, eran las personas de las que quería aprender.

¿Está realizando actualmente algún trabajo de campo en la región de Big Bend?

Durante el verano, [Sul Ross] tuvo una escuela de campo y trabajó en un refugio rocoso cercano. Uno de los refugios rocosos tiene los restos de un equipo de caza arcaico temprano, así que estamos excavando para encontrarlos. No encontramos ninguno este verano, pero el verano pasado encontramos un atlátl de 7.000 años de antigüedad, así como parte de un bumerán de caza.

También estoy trabajando en un proyecto con arqueólogos que trabajan en Mongolia. Están encontrando puntas de flecha y esqueletos de ovejas argali en sitios alpinos, y estoy trabajando con cosas que encuentran. Aquí en la universidad, estamos tratando de montar un laboratorio de arqueología experimental que incluirá un componente balístico. En este momento necesitamos financiación.

¿Puede hablarme de los experimentos con cadáveres de bisontes que ha realizado en Colorado y Montana?

Son experimentos exploratorios. Se pueden hacer mu-

chas cosas con los datos, pero básicamente, conseguimos un bisonte, el ganadero lo sacrifica para nosotros y luego experimentamos con él con armas de la Edad de Piedra. Registramos todos los datos balísticos y luego lo descuartizamos con herramientas de piedra.

Limpiamos los huesos y observamos las puntas rotas y los huesos rotos, así como los datos de impacto balístico para aprender sobre la eficiencia de las armas. En este momento estoy aplicando eso para pensar en la megafauna [animales que pesan más de 100 libras] y el potencial de caza, para el debate sobre por qué se extinguió la megafauna. Eso es lo que me interesa.

Gran parte de su trabajo gira en torno a la antigua arma, el atlátl. ¿Qué simbolizaba esta arma para nuestros antepasados?

No puedo decir qué simbolizaba para la gente, ¿verdad? Eso es cosmología y creencias y esas cosas. Es muy, muy difícil para los arqueólogos reconstruirlo. Pero era una herramienta de caza muy importante.

Por ejemplo, en América, sospechamos que los primeros habitantes del continente tenían esta arma y que era con ella con la que cazaban principalmente. El arco y la flecha no la superaron hasta hace unos 2000 años, aunque hay pruebas de que el arco y la flecha empezaron a aparecer en la parte norte del continente hace unos 12 000 años.

Esta es la principal arma utilizada durante la prehistoria aquí, y definitivamente tenía un significado simbólico y cosmológico en las culturas mesoamericanas.

Su trabajo es imaginativo porque llega a decenas de miles de años en el pasado para decirnos algo sobre los humanos de hoy. ¿Considera la caza un acto imaginativo?

Sin duda. Tienes que ser capaz de especular, imaginar y pensar en posibilidades como cazador homínido. Hay teorías que sostienen que la caza, en parte, es lo que crea la cognición moderna, porque tienes que almacenar un montón de información sobre las cosas que estás cazando y también imaginar posibilidades.

Por ejemplo, cuando los san [en el sur de África] están cazando, están rastreando animales, y cuando pierden el rastro, tienen que imaginarse que son el animal y

pensar: “¿Adónde voy ahora?”. Antes de que existieran las armas de fuego, la gente se vestía para parecerse a los animales que estaban cazando. Tenían que ser muy convincentes, por lo que tenían que tener todos los comportamientos.

Llega tan lejos que los cazadores nativos americanos que hacían esto tenían que pasar por todos los canales rituales adecuados antes de salir a cazar de esa manera. Cuando te pones el traje de ciervo y sales y te comportas como un ciervo, es tan intenso que te estás convirtiendo en un ciervo. Pasas por un período liminal en el que pasas de ser humano a ciervo. Y ese es el lugar peligroso en el que estar, donde puedes ser atacado espiritualmente, por lo que tienes que tener protecciones en su lugar.

Entonces, ¿fue, en cierto modo, un acto de creatividad?

Sí. Otro argumento sobre la caza es que cuando se rastrea, se almacena conocimiento sobre símbolos, lo que crea la capacidad de recrear símbolos en el arte. Por lo tanto, es parte de lo que se muestra a través del arte rupestre y las historias, enseñando a la gente a través de una forma entretenida de comunicación.

¿Cree que con el avance de la tecnología se pierde la conexión intuitiva con la caza de la que dependían nuestros antepasados en el pasado utilizando armas simples?

Hasta cierto punto, sí. Con las armas de caza preindustriales, hay que estar muy cerca [de un animal]. A menos de 20 metros, preferiblemente más cerca. Eso puede requerir una habilidad increíble y un conocimiento sobre cómo va a responder un animal, para imaginar dónde va a estar. Cómo actuar para convencerlos de que eres el animal, en el caso de que estés usando un disfraz.

Sin embargo, los cazadores modernos tienen que conocer el comportamiento animal. Sin embargo, no siempre lo son, porque muchas veces ahora es algo que se hace cinco días al año.

¿Cuáles cree que son los conceptos erróneos más grandes sobre la caza?

Una de ellas es que es fácil. Existe algo llamado

Ecología del Miedo, que es el estudio de los comportamientos antidepredadores en los animales de presa. Los animales de presa no son estúpidos y pueden adaptarse a la depredación. Por lo tanto, si se utiliza un tipo diferente de arma, responden. Cuantos más depredadores haya, mayor será la respuesta.

No es justo decir que teníamos estas tecnologías simples y que cazar era difícil y justo para el animal, pero ahora hay tecnologías modernas y no es justo. Esa transición no es tan sencilla, porque estas relaciones depredador-presa cambian.

¿Cuáles son las ramificaciones ecológicas de la caza hoy en día?

Bueno, los administradores de la vida silvestre la utilizan como una herramienta para controlar las poblaciones de vida silvestre. Pero los cazadores más dedicados tienen una mentalidad conservacionista. Quieren un ecosistema saludable porque quieren experimentarlo. [La caza moderna] se enfrenta a una gran percepción pública negativa por parte de personas que, honestamente, no la entienden del todo, porque no lo han hecho y no están dispuestas a intentarlo.

La realidad es que se utiliza como herramienta y también crea un gran impulso para mantener la vida silvestre en el paisaje. La gran mayoría de los cazadores no se preocupan por el momento de matar algo, porque eso no suele ser tan divertido. Pero todas las cosas que lo rodean sí lo son.

El Dr. Devin Pettigrew dará una conferencia sobre los datos de su último experimento con bisontes: “Reconsiderando la caza de megafauna en el Pleistoceno: estado del debate y perspectivas de los experimentos con el atlátl y el dardo” el 5 de diciembre en el edificio de ciencias Warnock para la serie de seminarios científicos de la Universidad Sul Ross. Todos son bienvenidos.

Pettigrew mencionó que programó su curso de Antropología de la caza para que comience a las 5 p. m. en previsión de que se registren más oyentes para el curso. A los no estudiantes se les permite auditar hasta dos cursos por semestre en la Universidad Sul Ross. El costo de auditar un curso es de \$ 50 por semestre.

Grupo de trabajo sobre geotermia

(Continuación de la página 1)

valiosa... Se puede hacer a un ritmo que tenga sentido para el proyecto", dijo. Nichols y Suemnicht también sugirieron involucrar a investigadores universitarios en estudios de campo para caracterizar mejor el recurso geotérmico a un costo reducido.

La discusión también abordó los plazos de los proyectos desde el inicio hasta la generación de energía. Según Suemnicht, "ha habido proyectos en Nevada recientemente que se han puesto en marcha en cuatro años, pero eso es un poco inusual. El plazo habitual es de unos cinco a siete años", y las perforaciones suelen realizarse en el tercer o cuarto año. En cuanto al tema de financiación, Suemnicht destacó que "la economía de estos proyectos ha cambiado considerablemente debido a los incentivos fiscales y también a los incentivos financieros relacionados con la inversión de la Ley de

Recuperación Económica y la Ley de Reconstrucción Mejorada". El condado de Presidio está bien posicionado para aprovechar al máximo estos incentivos.

Al reflexionar sobre el potencial del proyecto, Trey Gersfers, que ha estado trabajando en la iniciativa geotérmica en el condado de Presidio desde hace algún tiempo, afirmó: "Tenemos algunas de las rocas más calientes al este de las Montañas Rocosas que están más cerca de la superficie. Tenemos un puerto de entrada que recién ahora se está desarrollando de una manera que realmente aprovecha esa fuente de energía. Calificamos para muchísima ayuda y subvenciones. Y creo que tenemos un gran prestigio como parte de la región de Big Bend".

John Kennedy, consultor de planificación urbana del PMDD y el Ayuntamiento de Presidio, destacó el al-

cance internacional de la exploración geotérmica en la región. "Hemos estado trabajando con el gobierno mexicano y existe el potencial de que este recurso beneficie a las comunidades de ambos lados del Río Grande", dijo. Gamaliel Bustillos Muñoz, cónsul de México en Presidio, ha enfatizado la necesidad de una mayor educación en el lado mexicano de la frontera "porque nadie está hablando de esto allí". Una mayor conciencia y colaboración podrían abrir las puertas a un mayor desarrollo binacional.

La reunión sirvió como preludio a la conferencia Geothermal Rising en Hawai, donde Gersfers y Kennedy participarán en un taller de geotermia rural facilitado por Ken Wisian de la Oficina de Geología Económica de UT-Austin. Esta conferencia internacional presenta una oportunidad incomparable para mostrar el potencial

de Presidio y aprender de los expertos globales en el campo.

Al explorar las oportunidades que ofrecen sus recursos geotérmicos, el condado de Presidio debe permanecer abierto a todas las posibilidades. Suemnicht lo resumió mejor cuando explicó que durante la fase de exploración “nos enfrentamos a muchas preocupaciones con personas que no tienen [los recursos geotérmicos] que esperaban”. Pero la pregunta más importante que debemos hacer, enfatizó, es: “¿Qué están haciendo con lo que tienen?”.

Para obtener más información sobre el Grupo de trabajo geotérmico del condado de Presidio, comuníquese con John Kennedy en info@presidiotxmdd.org.

La cuenca de Chisos cerrará

(Continuación de la página 1)

Chisos Basin. Con el camino sinuoso hacia el corazón del parque cerrado, VandenBerg anticipó que los patrones de visitas cambiarían. Dijo que se estaban preparando planes para mejorar el estacionamiento en otras áreas muy congestionadas.

Mientras la cuenca esté cerrada, otras partes del sistema de senderos en las montañas Chisos permanecerán abiertas, aunque la mayoría de esas rutas son desafiantes. VandenBerg dijo que el parque seguirá exigiendo permisos

para pasar la noche para mochileros, lo que brinda una oportunidad a los guardabosques de compartir información valiosa y evaluar la preparación de los excursionistas para su viaje.

Tanto el proyecto del albergue como el proyecto del sistema de agua se están financiando a través de la Ley Great American Outdoors, que apoya proyectos de infraestructura en los parques nacionales. Big Bend obtuvo \$77 millones.

Terlingua CSD students face charges for false alarm

By SAM KARAS
sam@bigbendsentinel.com

TERLINGUA — On October 10, two Terlingua CSD students were arrested after the Brewster County Sheriff’s Office (BSCO) received a tip about a potential bomb threat. Further investigation revealed two students had been using school computers to discuss bombing the campus.

Their plans turned out to be a hoax, but they were arrested and taken to the Brewster County Jail in Alpine and have since been released on bond.

The two students — Annica Paige Herrera and Caitlin Ayami Staib — face charges for “false alarm or report.” Because Herrera and Staib are 17 years old, they are considered adults by the Texas

criminal system.

False alarm crimes are typically class A misdemeanors, but are enhanced to a felony when the false alarm concerns a school or public utility.

While the students’ motives remain unclear, there have been an unusually high number of violent threats called into Texas schools this year.

At the end of September, the Austin American-Statesman reported that at least 25 students across the state had been arrested and charged with false alarm or terroristic threat.

These crimes have been blessedly rare in the Big Bend, but still seem to reflect the trend. In December 2022, a man called 911 to report that he had placed multiple bombs around campus at Presidio

High School. Dispatch received a second disturbing call — under the name “Ricardo” — who said that he had killed his parents and planned to shoot anyone who responded to the scene at the school.

PISD Police Chief Joel Nuñez said that a tremendous amount of effort and personnel was put into securing the campus after the threat was received. Luckily, school was out that day and there were only two staff members in the building — the major risk was that students were on their way from another town to play against the Blue Devils.

The Presidio Police Department and Border Patrol personnel also responded. Nuñez recalled that there were a dozen officers in total who helped to secure the scene. “We secured the area, evac-

uated everyone from the building, and then spread out to search each classroom for any signs of bombs or suspicious activity, but we found nothing,” he said.

Nuñez’s experience mirrored that of the Brewster County Sheriff’s Office in responding to the false threats. The school was evacuated and Dori, an explosive-detecting K9, was deployed to make sure the campus was safe.

While the threat turned out to be a hoax, the experience left law enforcement rattled. “These types of false reports will not be tolerated by Sheriff Dodson,” the BCSO wrote on Facebook. “They interrupt school days and pull Sheriff’s Office resources away from potential actual emergencies.”

Horarios y lugares de votación anticipada

TRI-COUNTY — La votación anticipada para las elecciones generales del 5 de noviembre comenzó el lunes 21 de octubre y se extenderá hasta el viernes 1 de noviembre en toda la región de Big Bend.

Fechas, horarios y lugares:

Condado de Presidio

8 a. m. a 5 p. m. del 21 al 25 de octubre
7 a. m. a 7 p. m. el sábado 26 de octubre
8 a. m. a 2 p. m. el domingo 27 de octubre
7 a. m. a 7 p. m. del 28 de octubre al 1 de noviembre
Centro de visitantes de Marfa (U.S.O.), 302 S. Highland Ave., Marfa
Edificio Presidio Spencer, 803 O’Reilly St., Presidio

Condado de Brewster

8 a. m. a 5 p. m. del 21 al 25 de octubre
7 a. m. a 7 p. m. Sábado 26 de octubre
13 a 19 h Domingo 27 de octubre
7 a 19 h Del 28 de octubre al 1 de noviembre
Complejo de oficinas de la jueza Val Clark Beard (antigua biblioteca), 203 N. 7th St., Alpine

Condado de Jeff Davis

8 a 17 h Del 21 de octubre al 25 de octubre
7 a 19 h Sábado 26 de octubre
9 a 15 h Domingo 27 de octubre
7 a 19 h Del 28 de octubre al 1 de noviembre
Oficina del secretario del condado y del distrito, 111 N. Front St., Fort Davis (ingrese por las puertas verdes dobles)

Para obtener más información sobre las contiendas y enlaces a boletas de muestra, visite bigbendsentinel.com/election2024.

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MARFA — Join Marfa Live Arts on Saturday, November 16, at the U.S.O. Marfa Visitor's Center for Ándale a Marfa, which will bring people from Ojinaga and El Paso to dramatize events from the Mexican Revolution period as well as celebrate with songs played by Arturo Guerrero (Telemundo’s “La Voz”) and his mariachi band. November marks the 111th anniversary of the Mexican Revolution and Marfa

played a key role during this important time in our border history.

Opening the show will be Ojinaga historian Victor Sotelo Mata, who will present ¿Por Donde Vino Villa Atacar Ojinaga? about Pancho Villa during the Mexican Revolution and how Marfa played a pivotal role. Marfa High School’s folklorico dancers will then take the stage, followed by Ojinaga actress Lydia Gallegos who

will perform La Noche Fria, a monologue about the women of the Mexican Revolution. Closing out the night will be Arturo Guerrero and his four-piece mariachi band who will be playing songs from the Mexican Revolution.

This is a free event open to all. Tamales will be provided by Socorro Mena and beer provided by Cactus Liquor.

Early voting times and locations

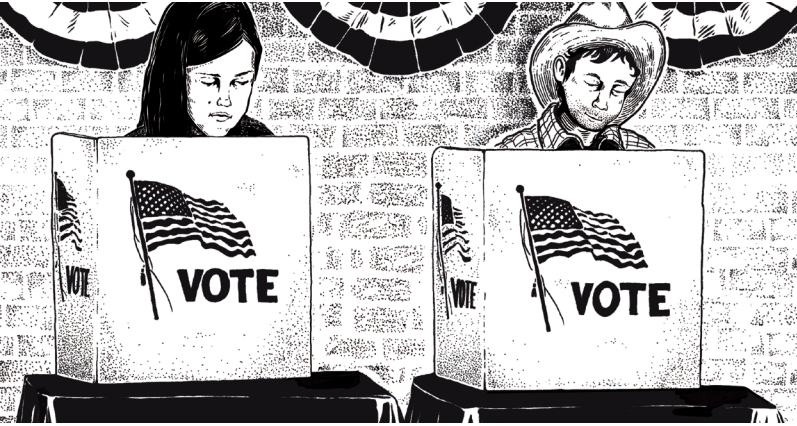


Illustration by crowcrumbs

TRI-COUNTY — Early voting for the November 5 general election started on Monday, October 21, and runs through Friday, November 1, across the Big Bend region.

Dates, times and locations:

Presidio County

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. October 21 to 25

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, October 26

8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, October 27

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. October 28 to November 1

Marfa Visitor's Center (U.S.O.), 302 S. Highland Ave., Marfa Presidio Spencer Building, 803 O'Reilly St., Presidio

Brewster County

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. October 21 to October 25

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, October 26

1 to 7 p.m. Sunday, October 27

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. October 28 to November 1

Judge Val Clark Beard Office Complex (Old Library), 203 N. 7th St., Alpine

Jeff Davis County

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. October 21 to October 25

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, October 26

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, October 27

7 a.m. to 7 p.m. October 28 to November 1

County and District Clerk's Office, 111 N. Front St., Fort Davis (enter through the double green doors)

For more information on races and links to sample ballots, visit bigbendsentinel.com/election2024.

A letter from state Rep. Eddie Morales

I am running for re-election to the Texas House District 74 in order to continue to deliver tangible results for our border and rural communities. Representing HD 74 over the past four years has been an incredible privilege. Together we have achieved meaningful change and growth that we can build upon. During this time, I had the honor of serving as the vice chairman of the Texas House Energy Resources Committee, working to uphold Texas' energy dominance while fostering energy innovation in our district. We also serve on influential committees like the Local & Consent Calendars, Elections, and the Select Committee on Health Care Reform. Our staff and I are proud of the progress we have made and so should you.

Since I first ran for the Texas House, our campaign slogan has been "A Voice for All." That commitment has never wavered. In my time serving you, I've remained one of the most bipartisan members of the Legislature — working with Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike to pass policies that benefit all Texans.

Regardless of political party, I will always fight to represent your voice in Austin. I grew up in one of those infamous colonias with substandard infrastructure along the border, and since the age of 12, I have worked at our family tortilla factory which has now served the community for over 36 years. After

law school, I returned to Eagle Pass to practice law, and it has been a privilege to represent local governments, small business owners, individuals from different walks of life, as well as big companies employing hundreds and sometimes thousands. Our communities are facing significant challenges and while our Country had the fastest economic recovery from all G7 industrialized countries we understand Texas should do more to help constituents face their financial challenges.

Schools are underfunded, access to healthcare services continue to dwindle, and our basic freedoms are increasingly under attack. But these challenges can be addressed through proactive, responsible leadership — not political gamesmanship. Despite the obstacles, we have accomplished significant victories for our region. In response to unprecedented immigration challenges, I was proud to be a joint-author of Operation Lone Star, securing billions of dollars in border security funding for our communities. We also made a historic investment in rural broadband, allocating over one billion dollars to bridge the digital divide in rural areas. Recognizing the burden of rising property taxes, we increased the homestead exemption and returned approximately \$7 billion in local property taxes to homeowners — saving the average taxpayer \$1,300.

While these achievements are important, our work is far from finished. As a product of local public schools and the father of a public school teacher, I am a staunch advocate for fully funding our public schools and public charters and giving teachers the recognition and compensation they deserve. Expanding Medicaid and recruiting medical staff to rural areas is another key priority — doing so would transform Texas from leading the nation in uninsured residents to being a leader in healthcare innovation and access especially in rural and underserved areas.

Moreover, under the current state leadership, Texas women have had their reproductive rights stripped away without exceptions — this is unacceptable, and I am committed to restoring those freedoms.

Our focus remains committed to securing funding for water, sewer, and roadway infrastructure to our communities; increasing trade and economic commerce along the border instead of demonizing it; and increasing vocational, trade and higher-ed opportunities for our next generation. As we enter the final stretch of this campaign, I humbly ask for your continued support so we can foster a better Texas for generations to come and continue to be "A Voice For All!"

Flu shots urged as flu season begins

Texas Influenza Awareness Day started the month on October 1, and DSHS recommends Texans get vaccinated against flu as soon as possible to protect themselves and their families from illness. Because the body takes about two weeks to make flu antibodies after getting a flu shot, early vaccination is critical as flu cases traditionally begin to rise this time of year.

"We recommend everyone ages six months and older get a flu shot as soon as possible," said DSHS Commissioner Jennifer Shuford, MD, MPH. "Flu

illness spreads rapidly through our communities, and unfortunately small children and older adults, pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions often suffer the most severe effects. The time is now to protect yourself and your family from flu illness."

DSHS advises those with symptoms of flu to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, especially those who might be at greater risk of serious flu illness. Those in high-risk groups with flu symptoms should contact their physicians immediately

as antiviral treatments are available but are most effective when prescribed soon after symptom onset. These drugs can reduce flu symptoms faster and may also prevent flu illness complications.

For more flu prevention tips, visit dshs.texas.gov/influenza-flu. Information about where to find a 2024-2025 flu vaccine, as well as vaccines for other respiratory illnesses like COVID-19 and RSV, can be found at Vaccines.gov. You can also contact your local health department, doctor, or pharmacy to learn where you can get a flu shot.

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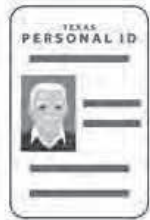
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- Current Utility Bill
- Government document with your name and address including your Voter Registration Certificate
- Bank Statement
- Government Check

If you're eligible to vote by mail, learn more about the requirements and how to identify yourself on your ballot by mail materials.

Find out more about voting in Texas at

VOTETEXAS.GOV

POWERED BY THE TEXAS SECRETARY OF STATE

or call 1-800-252-VOTE (8683)

*For voters aged 18 - 69 years, photo ID can be expired for up to four years. For voters aged 70 and older, photo ID can be expired for any length of time if otherwise valid.

Defendants in Alpine fentanyl case sentenced

ALPINE — Three tri-county individuals who pleaded guilty to possession of fentanyl and methamphetamine with intent to distribute were sentenced in federal court on September 25.

All three were sentenced to federal prison with three years supervised release and credit for time served, including: Willie Ben "Sapo" Lara III, 30 months; Emily Rachael Medley, 15 months; and Michael Angel Espinosa 27 months.

The three were arrested on March 5 in Sierra Blanca when a deputy stopped their car and a subsequent search

found 10.9 grams of fentanyl pills, 2.6 grams of fentanyl powder, and 3.5 grams of fentanyl in rock form, according to court records. Federal agents interviewed the three, who admitted to traveling to New Mexico to buy the drugs before returning to Alpine to sell them.

Lara's brother — Ismael "I.J." Vega, 23 — died of a fentanyl overdose while taking drugs with his mother, who also overdosed, on February 15 at their home in Alpine, but the mother lived, according to sources close to the family and a toxicology report that showed fentanyl as the cause of death.

Preventative Health Care Services is hiring for the following positions:

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CITY OF PRESIDIO PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

GRANT APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

The City of Presidio plans to apply for the upcoming 2025-2026 Texas Community Development Fund from the Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) Program of the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). These services are being solicited to assist the City in its application and administration of the TxCDBG contract, if awarded, to support needed community development improvements such as water and/or wastewater improvements in the City of Presidio. Accordingly, the City is seeking to contract with a qualified Professional Administrator or Service Provider (individual/firm) to prepare the application and/or administer the awarded contract.

Please submit your proposal of services and a statement of qualifications for the proposed services to the address below:

City Administrator
City of Presidio
507 W. O'Reilly Street
PO Box 1899
Presidio, TX 79845

Proposals shall be received by the City no later than 4:00 pm on Monday, November 4, 2024. The City reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit proposals, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit proposals.

The City of Presidio is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

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