

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

## It’s time for candidates to file for local city council, school board elections

By MARY CANTRELL  
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TRI-COUNTY — The candidate filing period for the May 3 General Election is now open with a filing deadline of 5 p.m. Friday, February 14. Early voting runs from April 21 to April 29, 2025. Voters will decide on Presidio and Marfa city council candidates as well as Marfa ISD School Board candidates and any ballot measures.

In order to qualify to run in the General Election, candidates must have resided in the respective city where the office is held for at least six months, must be 18 years of age or older, be a U.S. citizen, and must not have been convicted of a felony. A full list of qualifications can be found on the secretary of state’s website.

**Marfa City Council**  
The terms of Mayor Manny Baeza, Mayor Pro Tem Raul Lara and City Councilmember Travis Acreman will be up for election this coming May.  
Baeza has served three two-year terms as mayor, having first been elected to the position in 2019. Before that he served as a council member. Baeza said he intends to file for reelection to continue his current role as mayor. Lara has served three two-year terms on city council, two as a councilmember and a third as mayor pro tem. Lara said he intends to run for reelection. Acreman was elected to his first term in 2023 and said he plans to file for reelection.  
City council members and the mayor serve two-year terms. Council members are “at large,” meaning they do not fill a specific seat, convene twice a month and are paid \$50 per meeting. The mayor is paid \$100 per meeting.  
Interested parties are encouraged to pick up applications in person at City Hall, 113 S Highland Ave. Applications are also available in both English and Spanish online at <https://cityofmarfa.com/government/page/elections>.  
To submit applications, individuals may file in person at City Hall, mail their applications to City Hall at PO Box 787, Marfa, TX 79843, or email them to [secretary@cityofmarfa.com](mailto:secretary@cityofmarfa.com).

**Marfa School Board**  
The terms of Marfa ISD school board members Teresa Nuñez, Ruben Martinez, Phil Boyd and Jay Foster are up for election. Boyd, Place 5, and Foster, Place 3, were recently appointed but still have to file to keep their seats.  
Nuñez, Place 7, has been on the board, most recently serving in the role as board president, since 2016.  
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Staff photo by Mary Cantrell  
*Alexi Hernandez, representing Marathon FFA, won the grand championship for market swine with a Hampshire barrow at the 81st annual Big Bend Livestock Show this past weekend*

## All eyes on the US-Mexico border as Trump sworn in for 2nd term

By SAM KARAS  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Monday, President-elect Donald Trump will drop the hyphen and assume the office of president for the second time. Presidio County was one of a small handful of rural counties that didn’t show up to the polls in red hats, but neighboring Jeff Davis and Brewster Counties turned out to support the former leader’s return to the White House.  
The border has by and large dominated political discourse this campaign cycle, with the president-elect promising “mass deportations” of the estimated 11-14 million undocumented people living and working in the United States. Elsewhere in Texas, the state has offered up land to house detention facilities and border walls. (Marfa Public Radio recently confirmed that the Brewster Ranch, a record-smashing state land acquisition adjacent to Big Bend National Park, would not be used for such purposes.)  
On the local level, some folks

are hoping that a Republican administration — backed by a right-wing majority in the House and Senate — will result in more funding for law enforcement, who receive grant support based on their proximity to the border.  
Thanks to that triple Republican majority, Congress has launched into the reconciliation process, which essentially allows lawmakers to bypass the filibuster and sign spending-related bills on partisan legislative priorities with little backlash. The Big Bend’s representative in the House, Tony Gonzales, is a Republican who serves on both the Homeland Security and Appropriations Committees — which could be a financial boon to cash-strapped cops and courts.  
At last Wednesday’s Presidio County Commissioners Court meeting, Precinct 4 Commissioner David Beebe wondered as much, after listening to a report from Presidio County Sheriffs Office Secretary Shanna Elmore, who approached the court in the process of applying for this year’s round of

federal Operation Stonegarden grant funding. Operation Stonegarden is a federal initiative intending to increase border security.  
Local officials decided it was too early to tell, but grant awards ballooned even during the Biden administration, which many on the right criticized for not spending enough on the border. The county netted just under a million dollars between the spring of 2021 and Inauguration Day 2025 — trailing record-breaking numbers of apprehensions.  
Ramon Rodriguez, chair of the Presidio County Democrats, said he hopes that certain aspects of Trump’s immigration plan don’t trickle down locally, and he doesn’t want the focus on the border to detract from other pressing financial needs like school funding.  
Rodriguez was concerned that the remote area would be sought out by speculators for detention facilities — and that ordinary residents could be harmed by increased law enforcement on the border in general. “We’ve already seen the use of

military forces in places like Eagle Pass and Shelby Park, and there’s a real worry that this could expand to our area,” he said. “The increased militarization doesn’t just create tension but also puts undue stress on our communities, making everyday life more difficult for families living along the border.”  
State Sen. Cesar Blanco — another Far West Texas Democrat — also brought up concerns about Trump’s tariff plan on imported goods, which could impact port cities like Presidio and his hometown of El Paso.  
Blanco also wanted to highlight the economic contributions of immigrants targeted by Trump’s deportation plan, which could impact citizen members of mixed immigration status households. “This issue is particularly troubling, as immigrants play a vital role in Texas’ economic productivity, especially in West Texas,” he said. “[Immigrants] are essential contributors to industries like agriculture, construction, and general workforce services, addressing labor shortages in both low- and high-skill jobs.”

## 89th session of the Texas Legislature kicks off in Austin

By SAM KARAS  
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AUSTIN — On Tuesday, lawmakers returned to the Capitol for the 89th session of the Texas Legislature — a session that was contentious before it began, thanks to a nail-biter of a House speaker race that ultimately crowned Rep. Dustin Burrows of Lubbock to one of the most powerful positions in state politics.  
The Texas Legislature is in session for 140 days every two years, this year ending on June 2. Only the governor can call “special sessions,” in which the governor defines which issues can be addressed with legislation.  
While the Texas-Mexico border continues to be a top concern, a few other important issues have generated buzz. Gov. Greg Abbott’s school vouchers program — which would allow public funds to be used for private school tuition — is a major piece of unfinished business from the last session, which stretched into a near record-breaking overtime of four special sessions. (The program was and is unpopular with rural representatives on both sides of the aisle, who worry that funds will be diverted from local schools into private schools in bigger cities.)  
Abbott failed to get voucher legislation passed due to the roadblock of rural legislators and Democrats, but he and Burrows have signaled they now have the votes for some kind of “school choice” bill to pass. Public education advocates — who saw new school funding held hostage to a voucher bill last session and ultimately denied — will continue to fight against taxpayer dollars for private schools, but they are also putting their hopes into billions of dollars in state funding, including pay raises for teachers. Lawmakers enter the session with a \$23.8 billion surplus, but will hear from many constituencies on how to spend it, including property-tax buy downs, infrastructure spending and water initiatives.  
Another major issue is cannabis. Even in our dusty corner of the Lone Star state, shoppers may have noticed THC-A and Delta 8 products on shelves — chemical byproducts and variations of the

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## New delivery service brings groceries from Odessa to the Big Bend

By MARY CANTRELL  
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TRI-COUNTY — Trans-Pecos Delivery Services, a new company founded by Alpine couple Matthew and Rebecca Roggow, transports groceries from H-E-B, Sam’s Club and Walmart stores in Odessa to customers over two hours away in rural Big Bend country.  
Like many, the Roggows, who moved to Alpine in 2019, were frustrated by the high prices, low quality and limited options that plague local supermarkets. They became accustomed to tacking on a trip to the store when traveling for their sons’ sports competitions — events often hours away in neighboring West Texas towns.  
“We’re no stranger to driving West Texas raising our three boys,” Matthew said.  
“We would often find ourselves on our way back from some game, stopping in Odessa and Midland, or stopping in El Paso,” he added. “And, of course, those purchases were much less compared to what they were locally.”  
Matthew, a retired law

enforcement officer with a master’s degree in operations management, and Rebecca, a professional driver for Sul Ross Athletics, saw the opportunity to start a grocery transportation service that provides “better quality, fresher produce, more choice, reasonable prices and options to shop in bulk” in exchange for a delivery fee.  
They crunched the numbers and found that grocery carts of items from Lowe’s, for example, cost around \$66 to \$100 more than similar carts from H-E-B and Walmart. The Roggow’s said that even with their delivery fee — which ranges from around 12 to 16% of total order costs, not including sales tax — customers are saving money.  
“We’re not trying to take advantage of our community by charging exorbitant prices,” Matthew said. “In fact, we’re passing those savings onto the customer.”  
Importantly, Rebecca said, the service gives big families greater access to affordable bulk goods and those with dietary restrictions more dairy-free, sugar-free and gluten-

free options.  
The start-up venture has made three delivery runs since its December 2024 launch, the most recent trip consisting of orders from 24 customers. The capacity of their 24-foot trailer, outfitted with industrial freezers, coolers and racks with netting, is double that, Matthew said.  
The company currently serves Fort Davis, Marfa, Alpine and Marathon and expects to expand to Presidio and Terlingua at the end of the month. Deliveries are planned for twice a week.  
Here’s how it works: customers go to Trans-Pecos Delivery Services’ website to see the next scheduled pick up where a store, date and time will be specified, then customers build carts and place curbside orders on respective stores’ websites and finally go back to share their order details with the Roggows. Items are dropped off to customers at central locations in each town.  
The H-E-B, Walmart and Sam’s Club stores they pick up from in Odessa were chosen in order to accommodate their truck and trailer,

Matthew said.  
The Roggows said, so far, the stores and their employees have been accommodating. A recent curbside attendant at H-E-B expressed awe at the level of their operation and at the fact that they are transporting the grocery orders

over two hours away, they said.  
“It was funny to watch their expressions,” Matthew said. “They’re like, ‘Y’all are going all the way down to Alpine?’ And it’s like, yeah, we live down there.”  
“He said he’s never seen anything

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Photo courtesy of Matthew Roggow

*Husband-wife duo Rebecca and Matthew Roggow recently founded Trans Pecos Delivery Services to bring quality, affordable groceries from Odessa to tri-county residents. No strangers to windshield time, the two read and listen to audio books on the road.*



## City council & school board elections

(Continued from page 1)

meaning she’s served three three-year terms. Nuñez said she intends to file for reelection. Martinez, Place 6, was appointed in 2022 and has served one three-year term. He said he intends to file for reelection. School board members convene once a month and are volunteers. They serve three-year terms. School board

elections have been canceled the past three years due to too few candidates vying for the seats. Interested candidates may visit the Marfa ISD Administration Office, located at 400 W. Lincoln, to pick up a packet from the superintendent’s secretary, Griselda Hinojos.

## 89th session of Texas Legislature

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psychoactive plant. Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has declared war, believing that a 2019 law legalizing “hemp products” has left too much leeway for producers and business owners to peddle goods that could be harmful and otherwise illegal. On the local level, the Big Bend’s representatives so far appear focused on practical, quotidian projects, cleaning up laws relating to smaller courts and county governments. That’s likely to change as the session heats up — while an unusually high number of bills were filed ahead of session this year, it’s still very early in the cycle. A small sampling of a few of the issues Big Bend representatives have announced support for ahead of the session:

### REP. EDDIE MORALES

Juror privacy — House Bill 1495 would add fine print to state laws to protect personal data collected by the court system when people report for jury duty. The bill would “prohibit release of personal information collected during the jury selection process,” which includes jurors’ social security numbers and drivers license numbers, as well as the basic demographic information recorded on juror questionnaires. Privacy

concerns around data collection online have become a hot topic in recent years, and that conversation has entered the realm of legal scholarship as high-profile cases with anonymous juries — like the Trump “hush money” trial — have hit headlines. Alpine’s hotel occupancy tax — Each session, tourist-heavy destinations across the state clamor for the laws around hotel occupancy taxes (HOT funds, for short) to shift. The law — which aims to put “heads in beds” across the state — adds a small upcharge to lodging bills that are required to be spent on tourism promotion. Morales’ HB 1039 would strike a section of the law that specifically targets Alpine, stipulating that 50% of the funds or more must be used on “advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs,” and that 15% apiece or less can be used on arts programming and historical preservation projects designed to draw tourists. The bill would even the playing field for the city with nearby Marfa and Presidio, who have slightly more flexibility in how they spend their HOT money.

### SEN. CESAR BLANCO

Air conditioning in state prisons — Blanco is one of a handful of co-

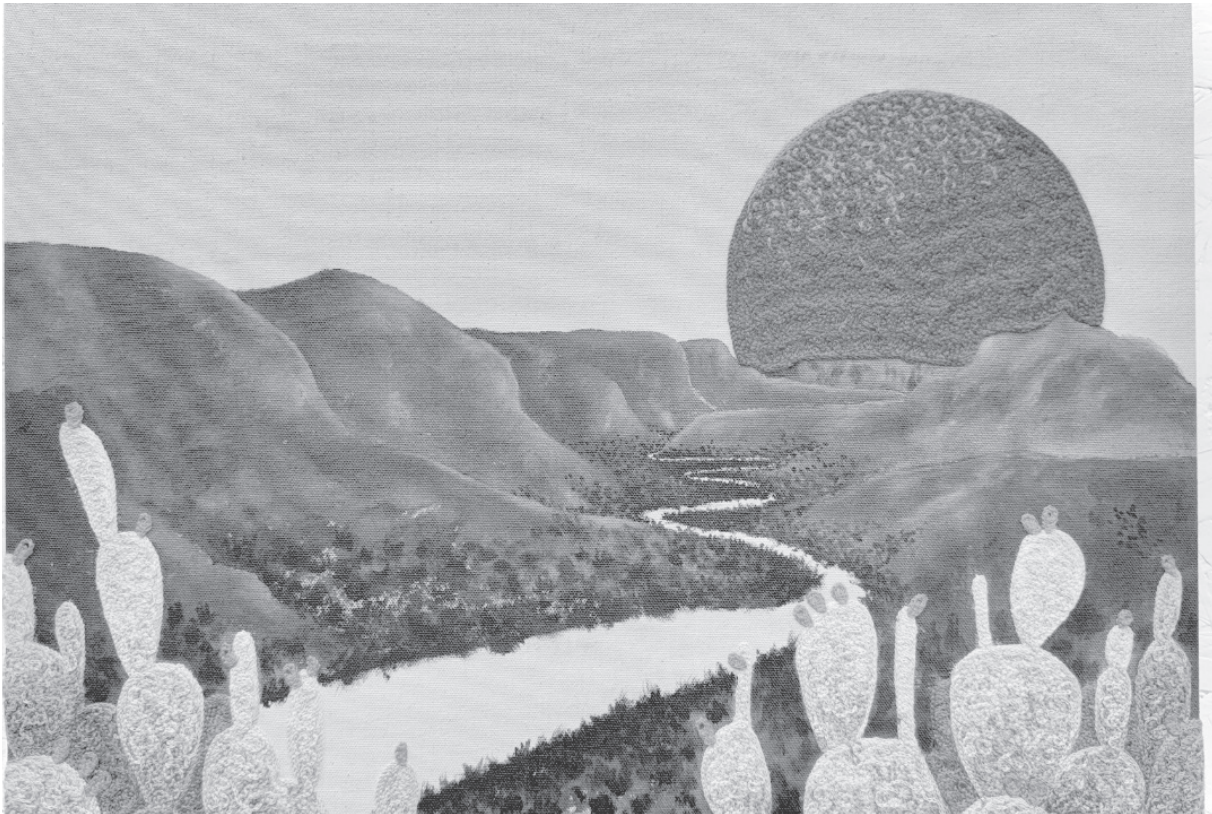
authors on a bill that would require Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) facilities to house inmates in climate-controlled temperatures between 65 and 85 degrees. The bill was inspired by the plight of Bernie Tiede, a convicted murderer (and inspiration behind the 2011 Jack Black film) who suffered a stroke after his Huntsville cell reached a sweltering 112 degrees. One of the lead attorneys on Tiede’s suit against the TDCJ is Alpine’s own Jodi Cole, who has teamed up with filmmaker Richard Linklater and a star-studded cast of attorneys to advocate for the 70% of state inmates serving their sentences without air conditioning. Healthcare — This session, Blanco will continue to push for the HEAL Texans act, which would override current licensing laws to allow Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioners (APRNs) to provide primary care in underserved communities. Much like the wildly successful grant-funded community paramedicine programs in Terlingua and Presidio — which authorize EMTs to make preventative care-related house calls — the bill allows healthcare professionals already living and working in remote areas to expand the services they’re able to offer. “This bill will give our families the healthcare they need and deserve closer to home,” he told *The Sentinel*.

## ‘Paintstitch’ auction to benefit Big Bend Conservation Alliance

From the Big Bend Conservation Alliance

THE BIG BEND — Thank you to everyone who has purchased a bandana to support The Big Bend River Rangers program during our end-of-year fundraising campaign. Because of your donations, this program can continue to bring students out of the classroom and into nature to learn how to protect and steward the river and land. If you have been intending to give and haven’t yet, it’s not too late. We’re excited to share that we are launching an online auction. Dana Falconberry has generously created and donated The River is Home paintstitch to help support the Big Bend River Rangers. Get your bids ready at <https://bbca.schoolauction.net/bigbendrivrerrangers/>, and let’s have some fun raising money for the Big Bend River Rangers! Bidding opened on Monday and ends Friday, January 24, 2025, at midnight CST. Dana Falconberry created this piece exclusively for Big Bend Conservation Alliance and it is only available through this auction. "I am calling these pieces ‘paintstitches’ as they incorporate both acrylic paint and chainstitch

embroidery,” Falconberry said. “Typically, I begin with the paint and add chainstitching after nearly all the painting is completed. In these pieces I am interested in centering the experience of the present flora as they engage with the land, water, and sky around them. I wonder if the prickly pear sees this view of the Rio Grande at sunset the same way we do. Do you marvel at the receding mountains and winding river, longing to hear their stories as we do, little cactus?" "I spend an extended period of time in the Big Bend region every spring, and this past year I spent a lot of time particularly in the state park,” Falconberry said. “This view of the Rio Grande from River Road took my breath away. When Shelley [Bernstein of BBCA] approached me about a design for the year-end campaign featuring the river, this place immediately came to mind. While driving along the river it is impossible not to notice the abundance of green life that surrounds the river in stark contrast with the exposed rock of the mountains in the distance. While designing this scene for the bandana, I also wanted to portray this through paint and embroidery; the magic river reflecting the sky and drawing life too close to it, like fans crowding the stage at a concert."



“The River is Home” by Dana Falconberry, acrylic and chainstitch embroidery on stretched canvas, 16”x20”.

## Enrollment-based funding is the better option

By LUIS FIGUEROA

The 89th Texas Legislative Session starts this week. Education reforms will be a key focus, including enrollment-based funding, a critical initiative we’ve pushed for the last couple of sessions. Enrollment-based funding is an alternative to our current school funding method. It means funding our schools based on enrollment — the number of actual students served — instead of basing it on attendance (what we do now). The system used in Texas — Average Daily Attendance (ADA) — is calculated by adding attendance counts throughout the year and dividing that by the number of instructional days. That means if a student misses school, they are

not counted for funding purposes that day. Why It Matters: School districts plan and budget based on enrollment and can rely on this number much more accurately than guessing how many students will miss school on a yearly basis. Enrollment-based funding reflects the actual cost to schools since charters and school districts get no cost savings from students being absent. Teacher salaries, utilities, and other expenses do not change based on attendance. Attendance-based funding disadvantages districts with high concentrations of low-income students and students with chronic health issues. Only six states use attendance-based funding — Texas, California, Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Missouri. The Bottom Line: Enrollment-based funding is a worthwhile endeavor that has bipartisan support. Texas children are suffering from learning loss, teacher shortages, and cost-cutting measures. Enrollment-based funding makes fiscal sense, and it’s the right thing to do for students whether they attend charter, rural, small, or large schools. Go Deeper: Read ”Count Every Student: Attendance-Based Funding Leaves Too Many Students Behind” by Chandra K. Villanueva, Every Texan director of policy & advocacy, at [www.everytexan.org](http://www.everytexan.org). *Luis Figueroa is the chief of legislative affairs for Every Texan, which offers knowledge, solutions, and tools to help Texans more easily understand, discuss, and make decisions about public policy.*

## Guitar in the Big Bend kicks off in Feb.

TRI-COUNTY — Guitar in the Big Bend and Sul Ross State University Music Program announced that acclaimed international concert artists Duo Fortis will be coming to Alpine and Marfa for two concerts and a masterclass. Performing together as Duo Fortis, Isaac Bustos and Alejandro Montiel (both professors of guitar at the University of Texas at San Antonio), have traveled the world performing and teaching. In the fall season of 2024 alone, Duo Fortis performed and taught in Columbia, Argentina and Chile along with various locations throughout the United States. Guitar in the Big Bend events are made possible by generous support from The City of Alpine, The Hotel Paisano, West Texas National Bank and Sul Ross State University Music Program. More information can be found at [www.guitarinthebigbend.com](http://www.guitarinthebigbend.com), Instagram at @guitarinthebigbend and Facebook at Guitar in the Big Bend.

The schedule for Guitar in the Big Bend 2025 is: **Free Marfa concert** Duo Fortis February, 7, doors 6:30 p.m., performance at 7 p.m. St. Paul’s Episcopal Church **Free Alpine concert** Duo Fortis February, 8, doors at 5:30 p.m., performance at 6 p.m. Museum of the Big Bend, Alpine **Alpine Events:** Masterclass February, 8 1-3 p.m. Sul Ross State University, Fine Arts Building **Texas Luthier Display / Presentation** February, 8, 3-5 p.m. Sul Ross State University, Fine Arts Building



Photo by Trish Badger *Alejandro Montiel (left) And Isaac Bustos of Duo Fortis.*



Photo courtesy of Matthew Roggow

*Jacob Roggow, a senior at Alpine ISD, helps with his parents’ business, Trans Pecos Delivery Services, by accepting curbside orders at H-E-B in Odessa.*

## Grocery delivery service

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like our trailer,” Rebecca added. “It was very organized. It’s industrial, the refrigerators, the freezers. He was just wowed by it.” Matthew said there has been a lot of interest in the new service already and they are prepared to meet whatever demand arises, even if it means increasing deliveries, hiring staff and eventually expanding into another rural region. “We’ve looked at places like Iraan, Sheffield, Sonora, Ozona, all of those communities sort of fit the same profile as we do down here in Brewster, Presidio and Jeff Davis counties,” Matthew said. “We will look to expand. We will look to hire employees. We will look to match our services with the demand level of the community.” *For more information, visit [transpecosdeliverservices.com/](http://transpecosdeliverservices.com/)*

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# Filmmaker Joe Salinas leads 14th Annual Marfa Live Arts Playwright Workshop

By JD GARCIA

MARFA — With Marfa Live Arts’ Playwriting Workshop entering its 14th year, the organization has shaken things up by eschewing the traditional stage-trained playwright instructor, opting instead to bring onboard Joe Salinas, an El Paso-based multidisciplinary artist with a passion for storytelling and skateboarding. A prolific filmmaker and photographer, Salinas has produced projects for National Geographic and has worked with Austin-based directors Robert Rodriguez (Spy Kids, Sin City, El Mariachi, Machete) and Richard Linklater (Dazed and Confused, Boyhood.)

Salinas, who was once a resident of Marfa, brings his decades of experience as an actor, writer, and director to the table, and is currently leading Marfa High School students through a week-long course which will culminate with the best plays brought to life on stage in early March.

“It’s going to be awesome. I’ve really been looking forward to working with these kids,” Salinas said. “I plan on hitting the ground running with them, and I know there will be countless things that I’ll learn too.”

Salinas, who has previously worked with children teaching acting classes, filmography and photography, explained that his workshop will likely stray from the traditional classes which he believes will allow for further personal introspection. “It’ll be really cool to work with these kids on storytelling,” he said. “I think out here, there’s just a freedom of expression. Of being able to write and develop a script and write out scenarios and tell stories that can be in their own voices. I want them to smile and not be too regimented and not have any anxiety. It has to be fun.”

One reason the playwriting program has thrived for over a decade has been its partnership with Marfa High School and the participation of MHS English teachers Donel Lara and Coach Linda Ojeda. “I’m really glad that we’re still continuing this partnership,” Ojeda said. “These kids

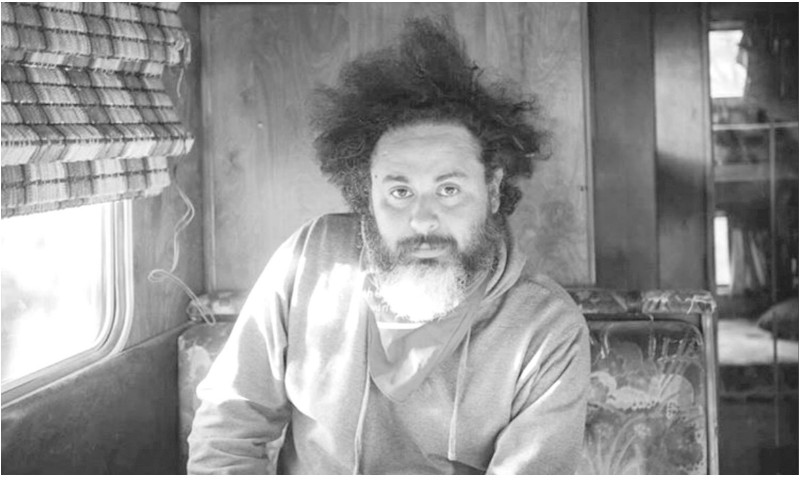


Photo by Rowdy Dugan

*El Paso-based filmmaker Joe Salinas teaches the 14th Annual Marfa Live Arts Playwriting Program at Marfa High School this week. Winning one-act plays will be performed in March with community actors.*

are pretty ambitious and a lot of them are going on to higher education. We’re thankful for this opportunity.” The program, Ojeda added, has been a success due to the playwrights in residence. “One of the most important things is that the kids can relate to the individual doing the workshop,” she said. “Starting from the first year, Marfa Live Arts has always brought it with the playwrights selected. They’ve always been easily relatable to our kids and they let the students have an open mind about what they’re going to be writing about and pick the topics they want. They really do bring out

the best in the kids.”

Though this will be his first time instructing a Marfa Live Arts program, Salinas did serve as a producer at Marfa Live Arts’ November program, Andale a Marfa, which featured mariachi singer Arturo Guerrero, Marfa Folklorico and Ojinaga historian Victor Sotelo Mata at the USO Building. “When I had first moved here, I heard a lot of good things about Marfa Live Arts, so I’m really honored to be able to get to do this program at the school,” Salinas said. “Hopefully the students will be able to use this later in life. Maybe there will be an amazing playwright or director that will look back and recall their experiences during this week.”

For Salinas, the playwright workshop also gives local teenagers a chance to discover something new about themselves and open the possibility of a career in the performing arts. “When I was a kid, this type of work seemed out of my world. I grew up poor and I would just think that there’s no way I would ever be able to get to do things like this. And it’ll be cool to let these kids know that it doesn’t matter about all that stuff that’s out of your control. When you’re in the moment, writing and expressing what is in your heart. You realize, yes, you’re actually able to do this stuff and make it happen. Then it’s like, the whole world is theirs,” he said.

For Salinas, the entire experience will boil down to one thing: community. “Marfa is the perfect place for the arts. I hope these kids have or can open their eyes and know that it all exists if they want it to. There’s nobody competing with each other and everyone here is helping and interested in what other people are doing, and that’s just amazing,” he said. “I hope the kids here understand that they have something really unique and cool. I think it’s important and great that this program exists, and they get the opportunity to be able to do it.”

For more information on Marfa Live Arts programs, please visit [www.marfalivearts.org](http://www.marfalivearts.org).

## Remembering and honoring lives lost in Pecos train derailment

From Daniel Alvarado, Reeves County director of digital media

PECOS – A solemn ceremony to honor the lives of two individuals tragically lost in the train derailment that occurred on December 18 will take place on Sunday, January 19, 2025 at 4 p.m. at the West of the Pecos Museum, 120 E Dot Stafford St, Pecos. Please wear yellow and red as a gesture of respect and solidarity.

The ceremony will provide an opportunity for reflection, support, and healing, while expressing solidarity for the grieving families. While the two gentlemen we are honoring — locomotive engineer Clay Burt and conductor Phillip Araujo — honoring were not members of our immediate community, their service and sacrifice have deeply impacted

us all. As the conductor and engineer onboard the train, they gave their lives in the line of duty, and we will come together to honor their memory and offer support to those who grieve their loss.

The ceremony, titled "United in Love and Remembrance: A Tribute to Those We’ve Lost," invites members of the public to join together in a show of unity, strength, and remembrance.

"During difficult times like these, we must continue to come together as a community, state and nation to offer comfort and support to those who are grieving," said Daniel Alvarado, volunteer master of ceremonies. "This ceremony will serve as a reminder that even in the darkest moments, love, unity, and faith can bring us strength and healing."

In addition to the ceremony, music will be featured to offer a sense

of solace and reflection. We are pleased to announce that all music played during the event has been granted permission from the respective recording labels, ensuring the event is both legally and respectfully conducted.

The event will be held at the West of the Pecos Museum front steps. Members of the public are invited to attend, show support, and help honor the memories of the two individuals lost. Together, we can remind the families and our community that they are not alone in their grief, and that we stand united during this heartbreaking time.

For more information, please contact Volunteer Emcee Daniel Alvarado at [danthecamman@gmail.com](mailto:danthecamman@gmail.com).

## New energy industry guidelines help protect night sky

From the McDonald Observatory

FORT DAVIS — Protecting the night sky is a collaborative endeavor — one The University of Texas at Austin’s McDonald Observatory has helped advance in West Texas since the launch of its Dark Skies Initiative in 2010. Now, oil and gas facilities in nearby New Mexico are joining the effort, with help from a new set of lighting guidelines tailored to their industry.

“Light doesn’t stop traveling when it hits the state line,” said Stephen Hummel, McDonald Observatory’s Dark Skies Initiative coordinator. “We are excited that our neighbors to the north are committed to helping preserve the night sky. Responsible outdoor lighting has many benefits to workplace safety, local economies, and — key for us — astronomical research.”

On January 8, the Dark for the Park Alliance released a new set of lighting guidelines for New Mexico’s oil and gas industry. Lighting Guidance Options for the Energy Industry provides cost-effective strategies to reduce unnecessary light and energy waste while maintaining or exceeding job site safety standards.

The document builds on similar guidelines for the state of Texas, which were published in 2018 by McDonald Observatory and the Texas Oil and Gas Association. Key principles include shielding lights so they shine down rather than up, using task-appropriate light intensity, and opting for amber-colored bulbs. Thanks, in part, to the local adoption of these guidelines, McDonald Observatory enjoys some of the darkest night skies in the continental United States.

The Dark for the Park Alliance is working towards a similar goal. It seeks

to maintain or restore the night sky quality of New Mexico’s Permian and San Juan basins (in the state’s southeast and north, respectively) through the adoption of night sky friendly outdoor lighting practices.

The Alliance was founded in 2023 after Carlsbad Caverns approached the oil and gas industry with the idea of collaborating on dark sky efforts, and highlighting their benefits to the local economy, heritage to the lands, and future stewardship of them. Today, Alliance members include Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Chaco Culture National Heritage Park, New Mexico Oil and Gas Association, the Bureau of Land Management, the New Mexico State Land Office, DarkSky International, DarkSky New Mexico, Apache Point Observatory, and McDonald Observatory.

Through a pilot program, the Alliance partnered with Franklin Mountain Energy (FME) to implement night sky friendly lighting at three of its Carlsbad-area facilities: two existing sites and one new. After adopting the guidelines, the retrofitted sites saw a 60% reduction in lighting energy consumption. Additionally, the estimated amount of skyglow produced by the sites — that is, how bright the night sky appears due to excess artificial light — was reduced by 99% when measured 25 miles away.

In recognition of their commitment to protecting and maintaining the nighttime environment, DarkSky International has recognized the FME locations as DarkSky Certified. These are the first oil and gas sites in the world to receive this distinction, setting a precedent for the industry.

To learn more about night sky friendly lighting practices, visit [mcdonaldobservatory.org/darkskies](http://mcdonaldobservatory.org/darkskies).

## Around the Big Bend

FEATURED EVENTS [Advertise With Us](#)

Nov 27 - Sep 3  
Wine Down Wednesday  
Alcove Social

Nov 27  
Hoodooos and the Rio  
Big Bend Ranch State Park

Nov 27 - Dec 28  
Dark Sky Tour  
Davis Mountains State Park

Wednesday, Nov 27

Hoodooos and the Rio  
Big Bend Ranch State Park | Terlingua, TX

2:00 pm 73.1 mi

Wine Down Wednesday  
Alcove Social | Alpine, TX

4:00 pm 21.8 mi

The Big Bend Sentinel recently launched a new online feature — Around the Big Bend — designed to let our community find and post events.

Anyone can post events for free, with options to boost visibility with payment at [www.bigbendsentinel.com/events](http://www.bigbendsentinel.com/events).

Annual Ministry Appeal • 2025

MINISTRY LEADERS KICKOFF EVENTS

Thursday, January 23

Pecos 11AM

Santa Rosa de Lima Catholic Church

620 E. 4th St.

Marfa 5PM

St. Mary’s Catholic Church

211 W. San Antonio St.

CATHOLIC LEGACY FUND

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MEET AND GREET

Friday, January 24

Endowments \* Planned Gifts \* Annuities

Marfa 2:30PM - 5:30PM

St. Mary’s Catholic Church

211 W. San Antonio St.

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[www.catholicfoundationelpaso.org](http://www.catholicfoundationelpaso.org)



Opinion

Dear Editor,

While watching the devastating fires in California, I couldn't help but wonder about the status of the fire hydrants in Marfa. After the Judd Architecture fire in 2021, I remember many fire hydrants were not working. The last *The Sentinel* reported in 2023, there were still some not working. Is there an update on the number of fire hydrants still out of order?

Thank you,  
Colby Martin  
Marfa

*Editor's note: The Big Bend Sentinel has covered the issue of inoperable fire hydrants with several articles since the Judd Foundation Architecture Building fire in June 2021, when we reported that 11 hydrants were inoperable, including a key hydrant that delayed fire response. This week The Sentinel reached out to Marfa's Public Utilities supervisor, Chuck Salgado, who is responsible for the actual repair of hydrants. He said his count currently shows three inoperable hydrants (and one with low-flow) set to be repaired in March, and that the out-of-service hydrants are "still overlapped by nearby hydrants in the immediate area." Marfa Fire Chief Gary Mitschke, whose volunteer fire department routinely inspects the hydrants, said a report on a recent inspection is forthcoming.*

...

In 1918, 15 men from the small border town of Porvenir, Texas, were killed just a few hundred yards from their homes. It took 100 years for the State of Texas to finally acknowledge this event with a proclamation and historical marker. However, several years after this, 14 of these men are still missing their certificates of death. For many, a death that happened over a century ago may be of little significance, but for the families and descendants of these men, these certificates are an important part of their history.

One of the victims, Longino Flores, was issued a Delayed Certificate of Death in 2019, yet we have been unable to get approvals for death records on the remaining men. After the death certificate was issued Longino Flores, a family member of Manuel Moralez attempted to get a death certificate issued for him and was denied without explanation.

We have recently submitted applications for delayed certificates of death for 13 of the victims of Porvenir to the Presidio County Probate Court. It is our hope that they are approved and that we can close this chapter, allowing them to finally rest in peace.

Unfortunately, dealing with Presidio County has not been easy. We have attempted to follow the statute as closely as it is written but have been given different or even incorrect information when inquiring with the county. There has been a lot of back and forth, and it seems that they are unfamiliar with Sec. 193.007 of Title 3 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, which has made it all the more difficult to get anything done. It took years just to be able to get the applications. The historical marker is in Presidio County; the ceremony was held at the Presidio County Courthouse. Why then, is it so difficult to issue these death certificates?

The story of Porvenir cannot be swept under the rug any longer. It caught the attention of media all over the United States. Even Hollywood picked it up, making a mention in "911: Lone Star." But this isn't about Porvenir; this is about a group of men who, over 100 years later, do not have a simple document afforded to anyone who dies in this country.

Yolanda Mesa  
Oakland, California



OUR WATER MATTERS

Water and the 89th Texas Legislature

By TREY GERFERS

Water infrastructure is one of those unsexy topics that lawmakers tend to ignore until there's a crisis. One of the most persuasive ways to garner support for increased water infrastructure funding is to highlight its importance to the Texas economy. Texas 2036, which calls itself "a nonprofit, nonpartisan public policy research and advocacy organization driving state policy solutions with data," makes a very strong economic case for paying greater attention to water infrastructure in its recent report titled "Foundation for Economic Growth: Assessing Texas' Water Infrastructure Needs." The report's chief author Jeremy Mazur, Texas 2036 director of natural resources and infrastructure policy, asserts that "Texas faces two critical challenges. The first involves the need to expand its water supply portfolio for a drought-prone and growing state ... If Texas fails to develop the broad, diversified water supply portfolio needed for the next prolonged, severe drought similar to that of the 1950s" the state could experience annual GDP losses of up to \$160 billion with "nearly 800,000 jobs lost, and an exodus of families seeking refuge — and water — elsewhere."

The second challenge, according to Mazur, involves "addressing the problems attributable to aging, deteriorating water and wastewater infrastructure ... The daily inconveniences and sometimes life-altering effects of water system failures ... represent thousands of small economic cuts that translate into a meaningful wound to Texas' economic well-being." Unless the state makes significant new investments over the next 15 years, "deteriorating water and wastewater systems will contribute to nearly \$320 billion in GDP losses for Texas — an amount equal to the size of the state's current two-year budget."

State Sen. Charles Perry, chairman of the Texas Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs, finds that current repercussions are already having a stark impact. In a recent commentary for the Texas Water Journal titled "Now or Never: It's Time to Address Water Scarcity in Texas," Perry describes how "[c]ities and towns across the state are limiting, if not altogether withholding, development permits over water concerns. In August 2024, the city of Conroe, near Houston, adopted a temporary development moratorium due to water scarcity. Local governments in the Rio Grande Valley are discussing the same option. In Central Texas, permits for water wells and groundwater withdrawals are becoming increasingly contentious as springs and existing wells have run dry in recent years."

Both gentlemen contend that the main issue is funding. Mazur, for example, makes a compelling case for the "substantial funding gap

... between Texas' long-term water infrastructure funding needs and the projected state and federal funding effort." Among the many examples cited to demonstrate the existing shortfall, Mazur reports that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), which awards funds for infrastructure projects in Texas, received "applications totaling nearly \$4.6 billion for only \$481.8 million in available [wastewater infrastructure] funding" in state fiscal year 2025. "This amounts to a record-setting subscription rate of \$9.48 for every available dollar." The numbers are even more staggering for drinking water projects. In the same state fiscal year, according to Mazur, "TWDB received over \$4.6 billion in [drinking water infrastructure] applications for only \$444.4 million in available funding, a record-setting subscription rate of \$10.45 for every available dollar." Based on these and other data, Mazur identifies "a long-term funding gap of over \$110 billion for Texas' water infrastructure" in the coming years.

In the face of these challenges, both Perry and Mazur argue that the 89th Legislature, which convenes this month in Austin, must act quickly in order to avoid "endangering both the premise and promise of the Texas economic miracle," in Mazur's words. The recommended actions entail two steps. Step 1 would establish a dedicated revenue stream for water infrastructure funding. This could involve committing a set portion of collected sales tax to the Texas Water Fund, which "follows the model for state highway funding approved by the Legislature and voters in 2015." According to Mazur, "the dedication of sales tax revenues would provide more reliable funding for water infrastructure needs ... because state sales tax collections grow in concert with greater state economic activity." This approach "replicates the successful funding model already used for state transportation projects" and offers "the reliable funding stream needed" to provide a minimum of \$1 billion per state fiscal year that will be required "to underwrite Texas' long-term water infrastructure needs."

Step 2 would involve recapitalizing the Texas Water Fund with an interim endowment. Mazur recommends that "at least \$5 billion [in budget surplus funds] be allocated towards the Texas Water Fund" as a "one-time deposit" to provide "bridge" financing until sales tax revenues can be collected. This increased funding will also require "enhanced legislative oversight and transparency," according to Mazur, such as annual reports from the TWDB to the Legislature, and a "publicly-facing project tracker that quantifies progress made towards addressing the state's water supply deficit and aging, deteriorating water systems."

After Presidio County's tragic loss of TWDB funding last year, one would also hope for a reformed application process that is more responsive to rural realities.

In articulating the quandary confronting the 89th Legislature, Perry emphasizes that "[w]ater infrastructure is costly and takes years of planning and construction to develop, but it will be more costly and more consequential the longer we wait to get started."

Visit <http://bit.ly/3PAWziz> to view the full report.

*Trey Gerfers serves as general manager of the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District. A San Antonio native, he has lived in Marfa since 2013 and can be reached at [tgerfers@pcuwcd.org](mailto:tgerfers@pcuwcd.org).*

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Friday, January 17  
Viernes 17 de Enero  
4 pm

**PRESIDIO**  
Saturday, January 18  
Sabado 18 de Enero  
11 am

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## Career and technical education collaborative names regional director

### From the Big Bend Rural Initiative for Success in Education

ALPINE — The Big Bend Rural Initiative for Success in Education (BB-RISE) named Jarrett Vickers as their inaugural regional director this week. BB-RISE is a regional career and technical education (CTE) collaborative between Alpine ISD, Marathon ISD and Marfa ISD that enhances college and career readiness across the Big Bend. Additional partners include Sul Ross State University, Odessa College, the Education Partnership of the Permian Basin and Empower Schools.

BB-RISE is a first-of-its-kind partnership in the Big Bend, and one of only five such partnerships in Texas. Through BB-RISE, Alpine ISD, Marathon ISD and Marfa ISD will operate inter-district CTE programs, allowing students to participate in CTE programs at neighboring school districts while remaining enrolled in their home district. Starting in the 2025-26 school year, BB-RISE is planning to open Alpine High School’s certified nursing assistant program to students at all three districts; additional CTE programs in business management and information technology are also being explored for this regional approach.

Vickers takes the lead at BB-RISE with over 17 years of educational leadership experience, including most recently as the principal at Alpine High School. In that role, Vickers led the transition into the new AHS building in 2022, increased academic outcomes on state assessments by an average of 10% over the past two years, and increased CTE funding for the campus by over \$100,000. Under his leadership, Alpine High School has ranked as one of the highest performing high schools in West Texas.

Previously, Vickers served as an accomplished teacher, head coach and athletic director in districts across Texas. Vickers’ proven educational leadership and statewide experience were key factors in his selection for this inaugural position.

“Launching and leading BB-RISE requires an exceptional leader, someone with extraordinary vision and organization, knowledge of the intricacies of secondary schools and CTE programs, and well-developed strengths in collaboration, culture-

building, and leading people,” shared Alpine ISD Superintendent, Michelle Rinehart. “Mr. Vickers exemplifies this diverse skill set. He has proven his ability to lead for instructional excellence while building strong relationships with students, staff, and families. As the BB-RISE regional director, Mr. Vickers will expand his impact beyond Alpine and across the Big Bend, as he helps improve post-secondary opportunities and outcomes in all three communities.”

BB-RISE is a fully grant-funded program supported by investments from the Still Water Foundation, Permian Basin Area Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the MPact Fund at the Moody Foundation. Additional applications have been submitted for the Texas Regional Pathways Network grant and to West Texas philanthropic foundations to expand BB-RISE’s CTE offerings.

“I am excited to see the shared commitment we all bring to preparing the next generation of leaders with the skills and experiences needed to succeed in today’s competitive workforce,” shared Marathon ISD Superintendent Ivonne Durant. “Together, we are forging pathways that will empower students to thrive in high-demand industries and make a lasting impact on our communities. Mr. Vickers is the ideal administrator to lead a successful, student-centered Career and Technical Education program across our three districts.”

BB-RISE was conceptualized in the summer of 2024 by the Alpine, Marathon and Marfa superintendents. Grant funding was coordinated by Rinehart at Alpine ISD in order to move the initiative forward. Yvonne Realivasquez helped lead the BB-RISE ideation and planning in the fall of 2024, before transitioning to an executive leadership role at the College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas.

Over the coming months, Vickers will lead BB-RISE from a newly formed partnership into its official launch, with students from all three districts enrolling in regional CTE programs starting in August. Goals for the initiative include developing and implementing two new, high-quality CTE pathways for students aligned with regional workforce demands, establishing industry partners

to provide work-based learning opportunities for students, coordinating sustainable revenue through a balanced portfolio of funding sources, and increasing the number of high school students enrolled in CTE pathways and earning 15 college credit hours before graduation.

“I am truly appreciative of this amazing opportunity given to me by Mr. Alferez, Dr. Durant and Dr. Rinehart,” shared Vickers. “I am also grateful for the new journey ahead. I embrace this new role as a chance to grow, learn, and contribute, knowing that each step is a gift.”

This spring Vickers will lead all three districts through finalizing partnership agreements, coordinating logistics to open CTE programs up to students from neighboring partner districts, supporting CTE teachers in expanding their program offerings, engaging with students and parents in all three communities about new program opportunities, and applying for additional state and philanthropic funding to expand BB-RISE.

Vickers will continue as Alpine High School principal through the end of June, while taking on planning aspects of the BB-RISE regional director position starting this month. Vickers will move full-time into the regional director role in July.

“Marfa ISD is excited to collaborate with Mr. Vickers in his new role as BB-RISE regional director to impact more students in the Big Bend area,” shared Marfa ISD Superintendent, Arturo Alferez. “His expertise will be invaluable for the success of the program.”

Vickers and his wife, Amanda Workman, athletic director at Sul Ross State University, have lived in Alpine for four years. Their son, Jak, attends the Alpine Child Development Center.

Alpine ISD will initiate a hiring process for its next high school principal later this spring.

“Being the AHS principal the last three years has been the most rewarding leadership position I have ever been in and I am truly grateful for all the staff and students I have worked with,” said Vickers. “I am excited to be a part of an initiative like BB-RISE that will show students across the Big Bend the unlimited post-secondary opportunities that are available.”

### Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg January 6, 2025

#### ACROSS

- 1 Scientist Joliot-Curie or singer Cara Bookcase buildup  
6 “No... and/or but’s”  
13 “SNL” alum-nus Seth Falco of “Nurse Jackie”  
15 Exclamation point’s point Led (In this answer, note the first 3 letters + the last 2)  
19 Plastic \_\_\_\_ Band  
20 Tennis do-over  
21 Raring to go  
22 Inits. before a summary  
23 Google smartphone Enclosure for plants (... first 3 letters + the last letter)  
27 Egyptian beetle  
29 Dazzles  
30 Answer to “Are you?”  
31 Tent that features a smoke flap  
35 Cards that can be wild  
36 Voting, for example (... first 2 letters + the last 2)  
38 Feudal worker  
40 Utterly pointless  
41 Glove compartment essential, once

- 44 It goes on bread or a bed  
46 Barbecue gas  
48 Succeeded impressively (... first 2 letters + the last 4)  
52 Holy artifact  
53 Tears in half, say  
54 \_\_\_\_ point (center of attention)  
56 Small batteries  
57 Lawyer: Abbr.  
58 Utmost extremes, and a theme hint  
61 Small  
62 “It’s clear now!”  
63 Literary castaway Robinson  
64 Inspiration for the Beatles’ “Day Tripper”  
65 Follower of “flaw” or “key”  
66 Depleted

#### DOWN

- 1 WhatsApp communica-tions  
2 Exact copy  
3 Test you need to focus for?  
4 Not as messy  
5 Mess up  
6 Make younger with CGI  
7 Cow’s milk producer  
8 \_\_\_\_ Nevada  
9 Bill’s adventure partner  
10 Put on a pedestal

- 11 Melting pots?  
12 Squalls or tornadoes  
14 “Steady as \_\_\_\_ goes”  
18 “Dig in!”  
22 “Give Me One Reason” singer  
23 Chapman Tire pressure inits.  
24 Queen of hip-hop  
26 Any Olympic athlete, once  
28 Drink, for short  
32 Tailor’s fastener  
33 Green prefix  
34 Scholarly URL ending  
36 Pungent green  
37 Water-free port  
38 Pixies  
39 Spewed ash or anger  
41 General discomfort  
42 Jennifer of “Friends”  
43 Bench press target, for short  
44 Many a doctor’s handwriting  
45 Prevent from exploding  
47 Join forces  
49 Lavishes love (on)  
50 Drinks with FlaMango and LlamaNade varieties  
51 Pitch  
55 Co., such as Blockbuster  
58 Canola \_\_\_\_  
59 Tax return org.  
60 Movie backdrop

#### PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

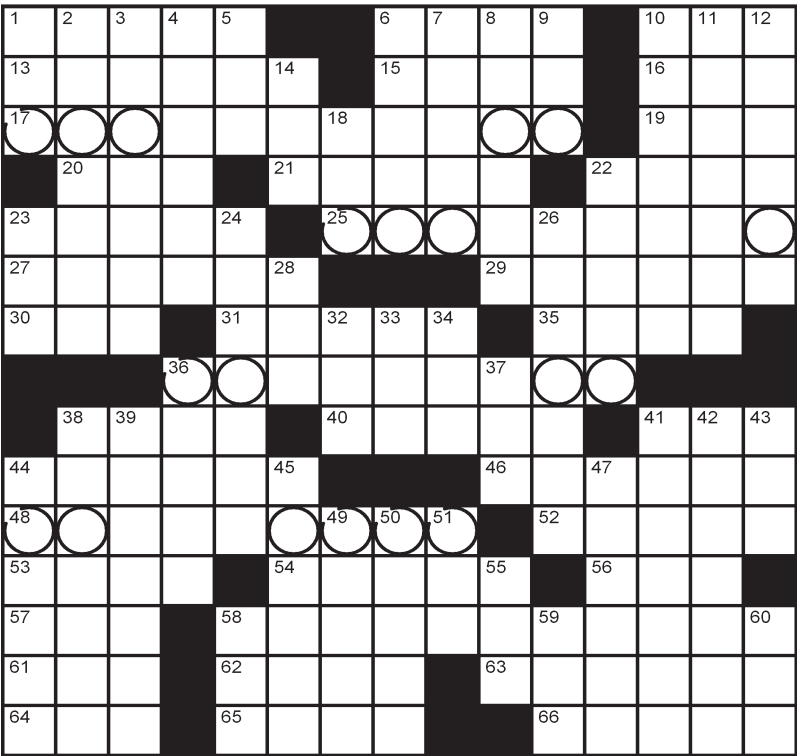
C C S A M C D R E D  
L O W P R E S E A S O N  
U C A N T T O U C H T H I S  
B A N A L S E E R A C I D  
N Y T N A S A R I  
P A P A O F F T H E G R I D  
E A R C O I L M I A  
T H E F U N N Y T H I N G I S  
P O T T O E S U F O  
P L A Y I T C O O L S A S S  
A I R N A H P A T  
X M E N R A R E L A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

1/5

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1/6

#### Edge Cases by Dennis McCartney



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### DRAWING OF THE WEEK



Aubrianna Medrano  
6th grade - graphite

### Sudoku & Crossword puzzles:

#### UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

### Solution from last week's puzzle:

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

### © MARFA SCHOOL LUNCH MENU ©

| MAY       | Thu, Jan 16                                            | Fri, Jan 17                                      | Mon, Jan 20 | Tue, Jan 21                                         | Wed, Jan 22                                 |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| BREAKFAST | WAFFLES, SAUSAGE, JUICE, FRUIT, MILK                   | BREAKFAST COMBO (EGG, POTATOES, BISCUIT, CHEESE) | NO SCHOOL   | BREAKFAST SANDWICH, JUICE, FRUIT, MILK              | FRENCH TOAST, SAUSAGE, JUICE, FRUIT, MILK   |
| LUNCH     | STEAK FINGERS, GRAVY, ROLL, GREEN BEANS, CORN, PEACHES | FRITO PIE, BEANS, TOMATOES, PINESPPLE, DESSERT   | NO SCHOOL   | OVEN FRIED CHICKEN, POTATOES, TOMATOES, ROLL, FRUIT | PIZZA, CARROTS, GREEN BEANS, FRUIT, DESSERT |

For more sports events please visit:

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### MARFA SHORTHORNS SPORTS CALENDAR

16th: JH Girls at Fort Davis, JH Boys at Fort Davis



## Chinati Foundation seeks interested beginner ecologists for paid practicum



Photo courtesy of Rowdy Dugan

Applications to participate in The Chinati Foundation’s paid Grasslands Practicum, taking place in April, are open until February 21.

MARFA — Are you interested in the West Texas ecoregion? Do you want to learn more about stewarding native grasslands as well as Chihuahuan Desert plants and soil? If so, we encourage you to apply to the Chinati Foundation’s Grassland Restoration Practicum taking place April 14-18.

The practicum is a five-day, paid opportunity for those interested in West Texas ecology and grassland ecosystems. Through expert-led tours of surrounding gardens, greenhouses, conservation sites and hands-on fieldwork, participants will gain skills to understand the Chihuahuan Desert’s grasslands and learn how to better contribute to their conservation.

This is a one-week program totaling roughly 40 hours. Participants will earn \$15/hr and will receive lunch daily. Transportation for site visits and field trips will also be provided. Enrollment is limited to five participants. Women and gender nonconforming people are strongly encouraged to apply. To apply, visit chinati.org/grasslands.

Applications close February 21. Questions can be emailed lsmith@chinati.org This program is generously supported by #startsmall.

## CBP officers at El Paso port make large cocaine seizure

From U.S. Customs and Border Protection

EL PASO – U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers working at the Paso Del Norte international crossing at the El Paso Port of Entry seized 41.6 pounds of cocaine on January 9. The drugs were hidden in the quarter panels and dashboard of a car being driven by a 21-year-old male U.S. citizen.

“CBP officers remain vigilant in their efforts to stop any and all drug smugglers,” said acting CBP El Paso Port Director Arnie Gomez. “CBP officers will utilize multiple tools to stop drug loads.”

The seizure was made just before 6 a.m.

when a 1997 Lincoln Town Car with a lone male driver arrived from Mexico. A CBP officer at the primary inspection booth selected the vehicle for a secondary exam.

CBP officers performed a Z-Portal (X-ray) scan of the truck and noted anomalies in the appearance of the vehicle.

A physical exam of the vehicle resulted in the discovery of 10 cocaine-filled bundles hidden in multiple compartments.

CBP officers arrested the driver. He was turned over to the Texas Department of Public Safety to face charges associated with the failed smuggling attempt.

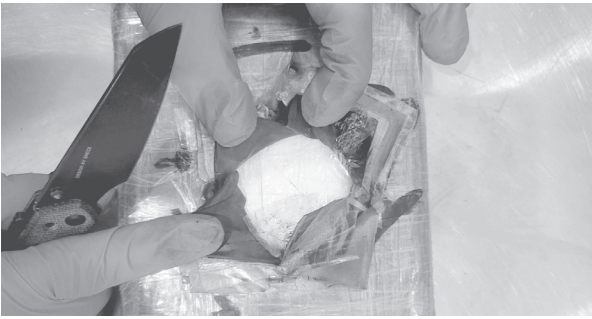


Photo courtesy of U.S. Customs and Border Protection

A CBP agent examines cocaine stopped at an El Paso border inspection.

### AROUND THE BIG BEND

Thur  
Jan  
16

#### Book Reading & Solo Performance - John Bush

6pm - 7:30pm at The Ritchey  
Join us for a reading & solo performance at the Granada Theatre on Thursday, January 16th!

#### Hike with Homeless Dogs

10am - 11am at Davis Mountains State Park  
Help a homeless dog have a great time on the trail!

#### Monthly distribution day

4pm - 6pm at Marfa Food Pantry

#### Stefan Prigmore

7pm - 9pm at The Ritchey  
Come watch Stefan Prigmore play at The Ritchey, no cover!

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Sun  
Jan  
19

#### Colt Wayne Keeney + Alex Teller

7pm - 9pm at The Ritchey  
Come watch Colt Wayne Keeney + Alex Teller play at The Ritchey, no cover!

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Ongoing  
Weekly  
Events &  
Classes

#### Free Zumba Classes

Monday & Wednesday at 6:30pm at Marfa Public Library

#### Yin Yoga

Tuesdays at 12pm at Marfa Public Library

#### Free Meditation Classes

Tuesday & Thursday at 6:00pm at Marfa Public Library

#### AA (online & sometimes in-person)

Saturday at 12:00pm at https://tinyurl.com/y686nnw2 and sometimes in-person at Marfa Public Library

#### AA (in-person)

Monday & Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church

#### The Alpine Farmers Market

Saturday at 9:00am - 12:00pm at Alpine Visitor Center

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

Fri  
Jan  
17

#### Birding for Beginners

10am - 11:30am at Davis Mountains State Park  
Learn the basics of birding, then apply your skills on a short walk.

#### Live Music: Tom Griffith

6pm - 8pm at Alcove Social

#### Alpine Community Projects 2025 Summit

5:30pm at The Granada Theatre  
Please join us for the Alpine Community Projects 2025 Summit, visit https://www.alpinecommunityprojects.org/january-2025-summit for more information.

Sat  
Jan  
18

#### Texas Native Seed Project

1pm - 3pm at Alpine Public Library  
The Big Bend Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas will hold this months program on Saturday January 18 at 1:00 PM in the AEP room of the Alpine Public Library.

#### Arts in the Park

2pm - 3:30pm at Davis Mountains State Park  
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March 29, 1984

## Concern for hazards of trains resurfaces at commission session

By SHELLEY GILBERT-ALLISON

Marfa City Commissioners at Tuesday's regular session were presented a 474-signature petition asking for a city ordinance to slow trains to 15 miles per hour inside the city. Vince Bruttomesso, who presented the petition, said only six of the 480 people approached since 5 p.m. Monday had refused to sign.

At least three citizens at Tuesday's meeting said they had not yet seen the petition but would like a chance to sign. The move came in response to Sunday morning's fatal car-train accident at the Austin Street crossing, in which Filiberto "Beto" Hernandez was killed and Delia Mata critically injured.

Mayor Bobby Martinez also responded to the tragedy, by telephoning Southern Pacific Railroad, he reported at the meeting in an emergency item added to the agenda by Commissioner Sandra Holzheuser. SP representative A.M. Henson of Dallas has promised to attend the next regular commission meeting at 7 p.m., April 10, Martinez reported.

Also, Henson "assured me" the railroad plans to start installing gates at all remaining unblocked crossings in town except the cemetery crossing, Martinez said, "I'm sure at their expense" and that of the Texas Highway Department. He said Henson said the work would begin in the next several "weeks or months." Commissioners and citizens discussed at length the recurring railroad hazard and what other towns such as Alpine have done. The situation is "of great concern to (this) council," Martinez said. "If you notice, (car-train wrecks) have been one every year for the last three years, mas o menos."

Estimated total cost of erecting gates at the Mesa and Russell crossings was about \$10,000 last year. Both those crossings had already been approved by the railroad for gates, but the work was never started.

#### Also at Tuesday's meeting:

\* New City Attorney Kenneth DeHart of Alpine was introduced to a round of applause.

\* Wanda Pierce challenged commissioners on the use of hotel-motel tax exclusively for Marfa Activity Center. She spoke on behalf of the municipal golf course, which attracts tourists but does not benefit from the tax.

\* A sole bid by Mark Wohleking of \$1,625 for Lots 12 and 13, Block 5, Raetzch Addition, was accepted. No bids came in on two other city-owned properties up for bids.



City police officers Bob Bigler and Mark Wohleking, DPS Trooper Blaine Shuffield and West Texas Ambulance Service operator Billy Mather examine the aftermath of a fatal car-train collision here early Sunday morning.

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## OBITUARIES



### OLSEN

**Paul Roger Olsen** of Alpine, Texas, died Wednesday, January 8, 2025, in Midland, Texas. He was born on January 28, 1933, in Audubon, Iowa, the son of Lois (Mead) and Peter Olsen. Paul grew up in small-town Iowa and, after graduating as a political science major from the University of Iowa, served in the U.S. Army. He was stationed in Butzbach, Germany,

where he and newlywed Nan (Bray) started a family. In 1959, Paul and Nan returned to her hometown of Austin, Texas, and would later separate.

Paul traveled to Alpine, where he met, fell in love with, and married Kathleen Holland Stradley. They shared almost 40 remarkable years together and built a life filled with good friends and family. Together, they traveled across the country and around the world. An avid photographer, their travels and lives together are wonderfully captured in Paul's photos. One of his favorites stands next to his desk at the K-Gage ranch, a beautiful photograph of Kathleen in the markets of Barcelona.

His friends recognized Paul — or “Pablo” — as a social animal. He really enjoyed meeting and talking to new and interesting people. He often regretted he was not a better listener, which opened

the opportunity for him to say, “Do you have just another minute?” And he would launch into a story about their extraordinary family, friends or some intriguing person he and Kathleen had met. Paul would note that good stories could be, and should be, improved upon. He relied on Kathleen to help get the facts right, and she often did so with wry humor and a wink.

Paul was an enthusiast of the way of life that generations of pioneers and ranchers built from San Antonio west to the high plateau country surrounded by the Chisos and Davis mountains. He was proud of his Danish heritage as well as the extended Olsen family who emigrated from Aero, Denmark. And Paul loved the friends he worked with at Sul Ross State University. He would note that the university's namesake, Lawrence Sullivan “Sul” Ross, was also Iowa-born.

Paul is survived by a loving family, including a brother-in-law, nieces, nephews and the six men he considered sons and their spouses and children. He was preceded in death by wife Kathleen; as well as Nan Bray Olsen; daughter Nancy Olsen Gregory; an infant son, Mead; his brother Alan Olsen; and baby sister Carol Ann Jorgensen of Cedar Falls, Iowa.

A private burial will be held for Paul for immediate family, to be followed by a memorial service to celebrate his life on a later date. Alpine Memorial Funeral Home in Alpine is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Memorials in Paul's memory may be directed to one of the several endowments established by Sul Ross State University or to the Midland Memorial Hospital whose many doctors, nurses and staff are truly remarkable.



### ROMAN

Maria Yolanda Roman was born on January 15, 1943, in Ruidosa, Texas, to Regino S. Nunez and Guadalupe Nunez (Mediano). She was the second-born child but the oldest female among her siblings Jesus (Jesse), Maggie, Jeanie and Mario. She grew up in Marfa, Texas, where she developed strong maternal instincts, often helping care for her younger siblings, taking on household chores and even assisting her father with car repairs.

Maria married her high school sweetheart, George Roman Jr. As George served in the Air Force, Maria had the opportunity to travel the world, temporarily living in Bakersfield, California, and

Pordenone, Italy, before moving to Del Valle, Texas, where she raised her family and eventually laid down roots in Austin, Texas.

Maria was the proud matriarch of the Roman family, raising four children: George (Suzy), Rome, Gabriel, and Regina (Robert). She was a devoted grandmother to ten grandchildren — Rhiannon, George (Ben), Gianna, Rome, Nicolas (Nico), Tylin, Dontae, Jazmine, Rae, and Rocco — and a cherished great-grandmother to Kaitlyn, Lauren, Ian, Caiden, Jayli, Jiovani, Kairo, Iyanna, Nyla, and Katalina. Maria was ever-present in their lives, having a hand in raising each and every one of them. She delighted in creating memories with her grandchildren, from catching lizards, to taking them shopping for school supplies, cheering them on at their sporting events, and inviting those willing to join her at church.

Maria worked for the IRS for 42 years, holding multiple positions and earning the respect of her colleagues for her dedication, attention to detail, and unyielding work ethic. She approached every challenge with determination, embodying the resilience and strength that defined her character.

Maria's stubborn, headstrong nature was paired with an immense capacity for love. A devout Catholic, she infused her faith into her daily life and family traditions. She loved making her family feel safe, using rituals passed down through generations. She often performed sana, sana, colita de rana, rubbing a comforting hand over her children and grandchildren's aches, and would cleanse them from the mal de ojo by carefully rubbing an egg over them. Her ability to soothe and protect her family was one of her many superpowers.

Maria had a natural gift for bringing joy to her family's lives. She made up silly songs to sing to the kids, filling the house with laughter and love. Midnight Wendy's trips for chicken nuggets, her homemade tortillas and rice, and her dedication to ensuring everyone felt cared for were just some of the ways she showed her love. She was always there to support her family in whatever they wished to do.

Her passions extended beyond family life.

In her younger days, her competitive spirit shone brightly in basketball and volleyball, especially enjoying basketball's intensity, where she could fight both on and

off the court. She was a lifelong fan of Kenny Rogers and Tom Jones, and her favorite song, "Put Your Head on My Shoulder" by Paul Anka, was a timeless comfort. She adored watching crime mysteries like Law and Order: SVU and could often be found engrossed in Lifetime movies.

Maria shared a special bond with her cousin Lonnie Mendoza, enjoying crossword puzzles together, and she maintained a close connection with Mary Jane Mendoza.

Maria was an extraordinary woman, full of life, love, and an unwavering devotion to her family. She was truly one of a kind, a beacon of strength and warmth. Her family was immensely blessed to have had her as their foundation, their guide, and their heart. The lessons she imparted and the love she shared will be treasured forever.

Maria is preceded in death by her son, Rome; her daughter, Romelia; her brother, Jesus (Jesse); and her parents, Regino and Guadalupe.

Maria will be deeply missed by all who knew her and even more so by her family. Her unwavering love, resilience, and the traditions she instilled will live on in the hearts of those she touched.

## Shorthorns make strong push in district play

By LINDA OJEDA

MARFA — The Marfa Shorthorns continue to assert their dominance in district competition, with both the boys' and girls' basketball teams emerging as top contenders after the first round of play.

The Shorthorn boys have secured first place in the district standings after one round, displaying a dynamic and disciplined style of play. Head Coach Arron Luna continues to fine tune the shorthorns with a disciplined and hardworking approach at practices with meticulous preparation, while Alejandro Rodriguez (junior guard) has been a key factor in their success, leading the team's offense with his impressive scoring ability. His performance on the court has helped the team maintain their momentum and solidify their position at the top of the district leaderboard.

On the girls' side, the Lady Shorthorns are holding strong in second place, with only one loss to Balmorhea, with Ava Flores and Raven Martinez providing consistent leadership on offense.

The duo continues to control the pace of the game and create scoring opportunities which has been crucial for the team's success. Both players have shown remarkable poise, helping the Lady Shorthorns remain competitive against tough district rivals.

As the teams head into the second round of district play, the Shorthorns remain focused on their goals. Both teams are determined to make deep playoff runs.



Photo courtesy of Linda Ojeda

*Freshman Austin McGary clears the boards against the Paisanos as Asael Zubia moves in for offensive position.*

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Free entrance is available for residents of Presidio, Brewster, and Jeff Davis counties.



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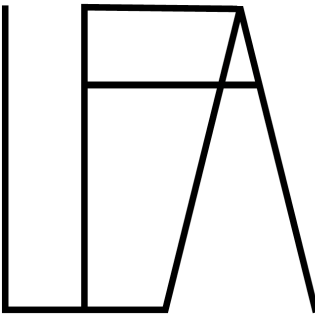
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# Classifieds & public notices

ATTENTION PROPERTY OWNERS

Property owners have certain rights that may reduce their property tax burden.

HOMEOWNERS

Persons who own their residence may claim their home as a residential homestead. The filing of this document is only necessary if the homeowner has changed homesteads, the appraisal district has requested an updated application, or the owner has become eligible for additional exemptions since last year. A copy of a current driver’s license must accompany the application. Persons who purchase their home during 2024 and the home purchased does not have an existing homestead exemption from the prior owner, the new owner may receive a prorated homestead. The proration is from the date the homeowner qualifies. Details may be obtained from your local appraisal district. Homeowners may also defer the portion of the tax on their residence homestead if the value of the home was raised more than 5% above the previous year. Although the tax collection is deferred, interest continues to run on the unpaid portion of tax at a rate of 8% per annum and the deferred tax remains a lien on the property. To apply for the deferral, the owner should contact the appraisal district which appraised the property in question and complete an application.

DISABLED PERSONS

Persons who are disabled under Social Security law are entitled to additional exemptions on their residential homestead. Disabled applicants must apply with the appraisal district and furnish a determination letter from Social Security. Disabled persons receive all benefits on their home that are available to over 65 persons (see below).

PERSONS WHO ARE OVER 65 YEARS OF AGE-EXEMPTIONS AND DEFERRAL

Persons who are over 65 years of age or disabled persons may file for additional exemptions and a ceiling on school taxes for their residential homestead if they became 65 during 2024 or will be 65 during 2025. Over-65 persons should apply for this exemption at the appraisal district office in their county. Over-65 persons are also eligible to defer paying the tax on their residential homestead if they wish. The taxes continue to accrue during the deferral plus interest, but no attempt will be made to force payment during the deferral. Details and an application may be obtained from any appraisal district or the State Comptroller.

DISABLED VETERANS

Persons who have been declared disabled by the Veteran’s Administration are eligible for additional exemptions on property they own. The declaration letter from VA is mailed annually, but the appraisal district only needs a copy in the first year of eligibility or if the percentage of disability changes. In certain situations where the disabled vet is 100% disabled, unemployable and receiving 100% disability compensation, their homestead may be completely exempt. An annual reapplication for the 100% exemption may be required by the Chief Appraiser.

FARM AND RANCH OWNERS

Farmers and ranchers may be entitled to receive an alternate method of appraisal determined by the farm income to the property. This method is available to farms and ranches commercially raising crops or livestock or which are used as a wildlife habitat under State guidelines. An application for agricultural use value and additional information is available from your appraisal district. Re-filing is only necessary if requested to do so by the Chief Appraiser.

EXEMPTION APPLICATIONS

Exemption applications for all property tax exemptions including total exemptions for charitable, religious, and other total exemptions may be obtained from an appraisal district nearest you or through the State Comptroller’s Office at 1/800-252-9121 or from their website at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxforms/02-forms.html>

BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY OWNERS

State law **requires** the filing of a rendition declaring what types of business personal property that a person or company owns. Failure to file the rendition will result in a 10% penalty. If a fraudulent rendition is filed, a 50% penalty is mandated. A rendition can be obtained from the appraisal district office where the property is located. Deadline-April 15. A 30-day filing extension is available by written request.

AVAILABILITY OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Taxpayers may receive certain notices required by law from the local appraisal district in electronic format. Written agreements with the county appraisal district must be entered first, ensuring what electronic means of delivery are acceptable. If you are interested in receiving communications in electronic format, you should contact your local appraisal district to receive a form requesting electronic communications and how that communication should be transmitted.

PROTESTING PROPERTY VALUE

Taxpayers whose property value increases by at least \$500 will be mailed a reappraisal notice stating the proposed value. The taxpayer may file a protest of the value change by completing the protest form that will be included in the notice. An informal hearing will be available to taxpayers, and if not satisfied, the taxpayer may have a formal hearing before the Presidio County Appraisal Review Board.

If you have questions about any of these topics, please contact the Presidio County Appraisal District at (432)729-3431 or come by our office at 107 E Texas St., Marfa, Texas. Other information may also be available on the Comptroller’s website at [comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/](http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/)

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

LEGAL NOTICE

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Mixed Beverage Permit (MB) by Wrong, LLC dba Wrong Marfa to be located at 110 N Highland Ave, Marfa, TX  
Buck Johnston - Manager  
Member

Application is being made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Malt Beverage Retail Dealer’s Off-Premise Permit by Dolgencorp of Texas, Inc. d/b/a Dollar General Store #24666 located at 1911 S State Highway 118, Alpine, Brewster County, TX 79830. Officers of said Corporation are Steven R. Deckard, CEO, Kelly M. Dilts, CFO, Neal E. Miller, VP Tax, and Emily C. Taylor, EVP/Secretary.

The City of Marfa Board of Adjustment has scheduled a Special Meeting for January 29, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Casner Room, City Hall, 113 S. Highland Street, Marfa, Texas. This meeting is open to the public. There will be an election of officers followed by discussion and the rendering of a decision regarding:  
• Variance No. 25-01, requested by Lisa Chestnut, from the requirements of Marfa’s Zoning Ordinance, regarding side yard setback for an accessory building at 906 W. El Paso Street, also known as Block 2, Lot 17, Humphris Addition.  
Additional information concerning the above Variance is available by calling Ann Dunlap, Board of Adjustment Secretary, at (432)729-4315.

Davis Mountains Nut Company needs general help and a management trainee

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Preventative Health Care Services is hiring for the following positions:

Accounting Asst., Bookkeeper, Nurses (CNA,LVN or RN), Nurse Supervisor in Marfa, Family Nurse Practitioner, CMO, Dentist, Director of Nursing in Marfa, Human Resources in Alpine.

For information on application please call: **Cathy 432-837-4812**

Trailer for sale in Alpine

It's an older trailer and it's completely gutted inside of it. If you'd like to see it, please contact at 432-940-7879 and if no answer leave a message. Asking \$10,000 but will take best offer.

Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Marfa Independent School District's State Financial Accountability Rating

Marfa Independent School District will hold a public meeting at 6:00 p.m. January 27, 2025 in the Marfa Board Room 400 W Lincoln Marfa, TX 79843

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Marfa Independent School District’s rating on the state’s financial accountability system.

PUBLIC NOTICE

AUCTION AND SALE OF ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLES Pursuant to the authority granted under the Texas Transportation Code, Section 683.011, and or Section 683.031: and having complied with the notification procedures required on Section 683.012 of this Article, the Sheriff, Presidio County, Marfa, Texas, shall conduct an auction and sale of abandoned motor vehicles at 10:00 A. M., Saturday, January 18, 2025 at the following location: Outside the Marfa Airport Impound Lot, Hwy 17 N, Marfa, TX 79843.

- Abandoned vehicles to be sold are:  
(1) YR UNKNOWN, ACE CO TRAILER, VIN: 11WES1622EW124758  
(2) 2000 DODGE 4D, VIN: 1B3ES46C8YD590155  
(3) 2002 ISUZU 4D, VIN: 4S2CE58X624609106  
(4) 2011 DODGE 4D, VIN: 2B3CL5CT1BH519842  
(5) 2011 FORD PK, VIN: 1FTFW1ET7BFC90531  
(6) 2012 FORD 4D, VIN: 1FAHP2EW3CG141041  
(7) 2013 FORD LL, VIN: 1FM5K7B84DGC52578  
(8) 2013 FORD LL, VIN: 1FM5K7B8XDGB58009  
(9) 2013 TOYT PK, VIN: 5TFLU4EN6DX072136  
(10) 2017 TRLR, MODEL UNKNOWN, VIN: 50FT1C72XJA730231

Danny Dominguez, Sheriff, Presidio County Sheriff’s Office, P.O. Drawer V, Marfa, Texas (432) 729-4308



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CITATION BY PUBLICATION - TRC 109 & 114

THE STATE OF TEXAS:

Cause No. **8276**

**BENITO BARRAZA**

IN THE 394TH DISTRICT COURT

VS

OF

PRESIDIO COUNTY, TEXAS

**UNKNOWN HEIRS OF NATIVIDAD LUJAN AND UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ANTONIO ACOSTA**

TO: DEFENDANTS UNKNOWN HEIRS OF NATIVIDAD LUJAN AND UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ANTONIO ACOSTA AND ANY AND ALL KNOWN OR UNKNOWN OWNERS OF CLAIMANT OF ANY INTEREST, RIGHT OR TITLE IN LOTS 9, 10, 11, 12, AND 13, BLOCK TWO, BELLAIRE ADDITION, PRESIDIO COUNTY, TEXAS  
Defendant- GREETING

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: "You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 am on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you."

You are hereby commanded to appear by filing a written answer to the Plaintiff’s Petition at or before 10:00 o’clock A.M. on the Monday next after the expiration of 42 days after the date of issuance of this citation the same being Monday **JANUARY 27, 2025** before the 394<sup>TH</sup> District Court of Presidio County, Texas, at the Courthouse in the city of Marfa, Texas. Said Plaintiff’s First Amended Petition was filed in said court on the 12th day of December 12, 2024 in the above entitled cause.

A brief statement of the nature of this suit is as follows, to-wit: Claims for Adverse Possession and Trespass to Try Title of the Real Property  
If land describe Lots: 9,10,11,12 and 13, block # TWO, BELLAIRE ADDITION in PRESIDIO COUNTY, TEXAS, and for declaration of fee simple title in Plaintiff as is more fully shown by Plaintiff’s First Amended Petition on file in this suit.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at Marfa Texas this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December 20, 24

Attorney for Plaintiff:  
Julie M. Balovich  
P.O. Box 385  
Alpine, Texas 79831  
Tel: (43 2) 303-1606

Clerk of the Court:  
**FLORCITA ZUBIA**  
P.O. BOX 789  
Marfa, Presidio County, Texas  
By Florcita Zubia Deputy

GOVERNMENT CONTACTS

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

BREWSTER COUNTY

Judge Greg Henington:  
(432) 837-2412

CITY OF MARFA  
Manny Baeza, City of Marfa Mayor  
mayor@cityofmarfa.com  
(432) 295-0048

Alpine Mayor Catherine Eaves:

City Hall: (432) 837-3301  
Email: mayor.eaves@ci.alpine.tx.us

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

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

Judge Curtis Evans: (432) 426-3968

FEDERAL:

U.S. Sen. John Cornyn:  
(202) 224-2934 (D.C. office)

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz:  
(202) 224-5922 (D.C. office)



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