

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

Presidio excluded from list of ports slated for reopening after screwworm outbreak

By Sam Karas
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PRESIDIO — Ports of entry along the United States-Mexico border closed to cattle crossing began a phased reopening on Monday as both governments work to contain an outbreak of the New World screwworm, a deadly pest that burrows in wounds on livestock. At press time, Del Rio and Laredo were the only Texas ports included on the list for reopening later this summer — Presidio, which can see hundreds of thousands of cattle crossings per year, was not included.

To make matters worse, local officials say that they haven’t gotten a response to repeated inquiries about the closure from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the office of Congressman Tony Gonzales, the Big Bend’s representative in Washington. “We’ve been trying to get peoples’ attention as best we can, but it hasn’t been amounting to a whole lot,” said Presidio Mayor John Ferguson. “It’s like this big cloud hanging over our community.”

Ferguson took to social media to mobilize locals to lend their voice to the effort, encouraging folks to write to Congressman Gonzales and the USDA. “The cattle industry is critical to the local economies of Presidio, Texas and Ojinaga, Chihuahua,” he wrote. “We need results, not excuses!”

The New World screwworm was declared eradicated from the U.S. in 1966, but a recent outbreak in Mexico has come as close to the border as Veracruz — around 700 miles away. Officials on this side of the border made the call to close ports in order to prevent the disease from reemerging in the United States. “We are continuing our posture of increased vigilance and will not rest until we are sure this devastating pest will not harm American ranchers,” U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins wrote in a press release.

While American ranchers might be grateful for the added layer of protection, American cattle importers are suffering. Isela Nuñez of Pro Customs Brokers in Presidio said that the situation was getting “desperate” — cattle account for the second-highest volume of goods that cross the bridge in Presidio, just behind watermelon.

Everybody from cowboys to hotel operators to local taco vendors depend on the traffic that brisk cattle business brings. Without it, Nuñez

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In the path of the flood
Photo courtesy of Hilary Scruggs Beebe
Stranded vehicles litter a low water crossing near a cabin in Hunt, Texas, owned by the family of Marfa resident Hilary Scruggs Beebe. Beebe and her family narrowly escaped the historic flood that ravaged Kerr County on the morning of July 4, claiming the lives of over a hundred people and counting. See page 2 for more.

Citizens confront City Council over discriminatory comments

Calls for resignations unmet, mayor absent for proceedings

By Mary Cantrell
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MARFA — The citizens of Marfa flooded City Council chambers Tuesday night following the publication of a story in *The Big Bend Sentinel* online earlier in the day that revealed council members Eddie Pallarez, Mark Morrison and Raul Lara discussed limiting the city administrator search to men in a public meeting.

Many were also present to comment on the American Electric Power (AEP) rezone proposal. While the public comment period is always the first thing on the docket, Mayor Manny Baeza stated that the council had to “change up the agenda” because the

city attorney was only available for one hour. (It was unclear exactly what the attorney was consulting on; she attended remotely and never spoke.)

After brief routine proceedings the council moved on to hear a presentation from AEP Public Affairs Manager Fred Guerrero. At that point Baeza recused himself and left the room, due to his status as an AEP employee. While it is customary for Baeza to return to the meeting to participate in subsequent agenda items, he simply never did and missed the entirety of the citizen comment period. He was facing pressure from Council Member Travis Acreman to call for the resignations of Pallarez, Morrison and Lara in the wake of their biased comments.

The rest of the council was present with the exception of Baeza and listened to criticism from several citizens — the majority of whom were women — about their conduct. Anti-discrimination comments were, at times, peppered with references to the AEP rezone issue and Pallarez’s refusal to recuse himself from that decision despite retiring after a 46-year career with the company.

Marfa resident Dana Goolsby said she has avoided getting involved with the local government since moving to Marfa in 2022, given a past experience she had while serving as the mayor of Palestine, Texas, in which she was assaulted by a man who disagreed with her on a city budget issue.

“I could not have been coaxed into these chambers for anything short of something this offensive, this outlandish and this ridiculous, but I will always, always stand up and fight against this sort of blatant and prideful discrimination,” Goolsby said.

She said the sexist comments made by the three council members are “exactly the kind of behavior that leads to women being assaulted” and called on them to take accountability and resign — triggering a special election to fill their seats — due to the fact that they could no longer fairly conduct the city’s business. “You must step down before you drag your community down,” Goolsby said.

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For a moment, the Rio Grande roars back to life

River floods national park, minor damage reported

By Sam Karas
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BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK — Last Thursday morning, the Rio Grande reached a major flood stage on the eastern edge of Big Bend National Park. Per data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the gauge at Boquillas International Crossing registered a crest of about 21 feet. The floodwaters raged at around 30,000 cubic feet per second for around two hours, just shy of breaking a record for that gauge’s third-highest reading ever.

While most folks were celebrating

the rain, the flood caused a few headaches for park staff and visitors. Nine campers were evacuated and sent to higher ground in the Chisos Basin. The water washed out many of the park’s dirt roads and peeled away a section of pavement on the road to Rio Grande Village. The Hot Springs historic district was hit hard, dumping mud and silt in the ruins of the century-old hotel and post office. The Boquillas Port of Entry shuttered temporarily and is set to reopen on Friday, July 11.

Don Corrick, the park’s new chief of interpretation and visitor services, said that damage assessment was ongoing and park guests should

be prepared for mud. In a more general sense, he advised the park’s rainy season visitors to expect the unexpected. “Every flood event is unique and often unpredictable,” he said.

Floods pulsed in waterways throughout the area over the last week of June and first week of July. The National Weather Service in Midland reported 3.47 inches of rainfall at Panther Junction, 4.07 inches in Alpine and 4.79 inches in Fort Davis fell between the 23rd of June and the 4th of July.

Much of the *The Big Bend Sentinel*’s coverage area remained in alternating flood watches and

warnings throughout this time period, thanks to weather systems radiating from the Pacific Ocean. Smaller waterways swelled, turning downtown Alpine into a waterpark and stranding tourists in Marfa.

Shafter residents living on the other side of Cibolo Creek were trapped much of last week by an impassable crossing. Cibolo Creek Ranch assisted by bulldozing mounds of mud from the crossing that allowed high-clearance vehicles to cross.

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Big Bend region averages 8-20 inches of rainfall each year, varying based on elevation.

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Presidio man killed in Ojinaga gunfire, 3 others escape

By Rob D’Amico
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OJINAGA — A 20-year-old man from Presidio was killed early Sunday morning after he and his friends were caught in a hail of bullets, apparently intended for a car parked behind them.

The deceased, Alan Valenzuela, was previously a student in Presidio ISD schools, according to Presidio Mayor John Ferguson, whose wife Lucy had taught Valenzuela long ago. Two other men and a woman were not injured. All were employees of Cibolo Creek Ranch. A source who requested

anonymity, said a survivor in the attack, who also preferred not to be identified, gave an account of what happened. The four were at the Palace Bar early Sunday morning when gunfire erupted. The woman ran and hid in the restroom while Valenzuela and the two others sped off at a high speed in their Jeep.

Sources with knowledge of the incident — including Ferguson — said they had heard that the men were caught in a crossfire possibly linked to cartel violence. A video sent to *The Big Bend Sentinel* appears to show the Jeep parked when another vehicle drives up and begins firing at a white car behind

the Jeep, and the stray bullets hit the back of the Jeep.

The friends drove to the International Bridge, where help arrived, but Valenzuela was already deceased. Justice of the Peace Juanita Bishop said Tuesday that she arrived at the bridge to pronounce Valenzuela dead at 3:59 a.m.

The Sentinel could not find any details of the shooting in Ojinaga media other than Facebook posts noting gunfire early Sunday morning and one person dead. The Presidio County Sheriff’s Office posted a “Rest in Peace” tribute to Valenzuela on its Facebook page

this morning.

Presidio ISD issued a statement: “We are deeply saddened by the sudden passing of our former student, Alan Valenzuela. He was a cherished member of our community whose light touched many lives. Alan will be remembered for the kindness, laughter, and spirit he brought to those around him.” A Community Vigil will be held today (Thursday, July 10) at 5 p.m. in the Presidio High School Cafeteria. Counseling services will also be available at the Presidio ISD Administration Building on Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Capital Highlights

Death toll climbs in Hill Country flooding, legislators will investigate response to crisis

Gov. Greg Abbott said Sunday he’s likely to instruct the Texas Legislature to investigate early warning systems and other governmental responses to July 4 flash flooding that killed at least 119 people in the Hill Country.

Lawmakers are set to convene in Austin on July 21. Meanwhile, as of late Sunday, an additional 173 people were still missing. In addition to local first responders, more than 1,300 state personnel were dispatched to the scene.

Abbott has issued a disaster declaration covering 21 Hill Country counties, where rain continued to fall through the weekend.

“We will be relentless in going after and ensuring that we locate every single person who’s been a victim of this flooding event,” Abbott said. “We’re not going to stop today or tomorrow.”

Appeals court: Immigration law unconstitutional

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has blocked a 2023 Texas immigration law that would have permitted local police to arrest people believed to have illegally crossed the Texas-Mexico border. The vote was 2-1, The Texas Tribune reported.

“For nearly 150 years, the Supreme Court has recognized that the power to control immigration — the entry, admission, and removal of aliens — is exclusively a federal power,” the ruling says.

The Trump administration earlier this year dropped the federal government’s opposition to a suit filed by two immigrant rights groups and El Paso County challenging the constitutionality of the Texas state law. It would have made it a Class B misdemeanor to cross the border between ports of entry. Subsequent offenses could have resulted in a second-degree felony.

It was not immediately known whether the state will appeal the Fifth Circuit ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Interfaith parents sue to block Ten Commandments law

Two separate lawsuits are challenging a law passed during the last legislative session requiring posters of the Ten Commandments be hung in all public school classrooms. The San Antonio Express-News said the latest suit was filed against several Austin, Houston and San Antonio-area districts.

“Permanently posting the Ten Commandments in every Texas public-school classroom — rendering them unavoidable — is plainly unconstitutional,” one of the suits states.

The plaintiffs are parents from Jewish, Christian, Unitarian Universalist and Hindu faiths, plus some who are nonreligious. They are represented by the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Church and Faith.

The new law, which would take effect in September if a court doesn’t halt it, would require all publicly funded schools to hang a 16-by-20-inch framed poster of the Ten Commandments in a “conspicuous place” in every classroom.

First case of West Nile illness in state reported

The first case of West Nile illness in Texas this year has been reported by the Department of State Health Services in a resident of Brazos County.

West Nile is transmitted by mosquitoes and 80% of people exposed do not get sick, but the rest can have symptoms such as fever, nausea, headaches, muscle fatigue, and muscle and joint pain. Fewer than 1% suffer more serious symptoms, including some fatalities.

“Texans should be aware that mosquitoes transmit disease, and some of these illnesses, like West Nile and dengue, can be severe,” said Department of State Health Services Commissioner Jennifer A. Shuford, MD, MPH. “But taking steps to prevent mosquito bites and

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Screwworm outbreak

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and her competitors in the import-export industry have had to make layoffs — and are starting to worry about the survival of their businesses as a whole. “Our local economy is hurting,” Nuñez said. “Presidio is being forgotten.” The bridge has been closed to cattle imports a few times in recent memory, each time with big consequences for small town Presidio. COVID put a major damper on economic development, and fear of violence along the border in the mid-2010s required the intervention of former Congressman

Pete Gallego to help reopen the port to its full capacity. Cattle that would have otherwise been routed through Presidio are instead heading for Puerto Palomas, across the border from Santa Theresa, New Mexico. That’s a major logistical disadvantage for some markets in Texas, for whom crossing through Presidio saves time and money. Nuñez said she’s not sure what to say to calm investors interested in the up-and-coming port. “We still don’t have a real answer as to why Presidio’s not opening,”

she said. Despite all the frustration, help may be on the way: on Tuesday, Chihuahua Governor Maru Campos Galván posted on Facebook that she had met with Tony Gonzales and encouraged him to include Presidio-Ojinaga in the list of approved ports. “We’ll continue working hand in hand to strengthen our binational collaboration and boost Chihuahua’s whole economy,” she wrote in a press release.

‘Just between us men’: Council members discussed limiting city administrator search to male candidates in open session

By Mary Cantrell
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MARFA — Council members Raul Lara, Eddie Pallarez and Mark Morrison came under fire this week following an exchange they had about limiting the search for a new city administrator to male candidates in the open session of a City Council meeting last Thursday. Council Member Travis Acreman called for their resignations in the days following, as did many citizens at a subsequent City Council meeting on Tuesday. (See story on page 1.) The *Big Bend Sentinel* was not present at the Thursday meeting but obtained the official recording. Council Member Mark Cash was not present. About eight minutes into the meeting, in which the primary topic of discussion was the hiring of a new city administrator — previously called the city manager — Mayor Manny Baeza and Interim City Administrator Kelly Perez left the room to print off missing resumes. No one was sitting in the audience. After some brief back and forth about the candidates, Pallarez whispers to fellow council members — seemingly forgetting the public meeting is being recorded as is typical — “Guys, I’m looking at males. I’m looking at males,” Pallarez says, laughing and adding, “Shhhh.” “I didn’t hear nothin’,” Morrison jokes. “I’m just drinking my water here.” “Because with all these women here,” Lara remarks, later confirming with *The Sentinel* that he was referring to the central office staff at City Hall. “But I ain’t saying you’re wrong,” Morrison said, which was then met with more laughter by Pallarez. “Ain’t disagreeing.” “Absolutely,” replies Lara. “Just between us men,” Pallarez says. “And we have to make them understand how our government works,” Lara says before the mayor re-enters the room and proceedings get underway. (Lara was likely referring to the situation with the previous City Manager

Andrea Walter who was let go after around a month on the job, with one of the reasons cited by council members being a miscommunication between council and her about who was the chief executive officer of the city — the city manager or the mayor and City Council.) There are not currently any women sitting on Marfa’s City Council. Acreman, who notified *The Sentinel* about the discriminatory offhand exchange on Thursday, said he was “really distressed by the attitude” fellow council members demonstrated about female candidates. “I think that my fellow council members’ sentiment demeans and disrespects hard working women,” Acreman said. “Unfortunately for me, there is no apology that can unring this bell, because any action that this council takes from now on is going to be tainted by this gleeful admission of bias, and the only avenue I see is that the council members should resign and step aside and make way for new leadership.” Acreman called on Mayor Baeza, as the city’s top official, to ask for Lara, Pallarez and Morrison’s resignations from City Council. Baeza did not respond to a request for comment from *The Sentinel* and did not address the issue at Tuesday night’s meeting, where he was largely absent from proceedings. When reached for comment Tuesday morning, Lara initially claimed that he had only “overheard” and had not participated in the discussion about narrowing the focus to only male candidates. “That was a conversation that Mark and Eddie were having,” he said. He stated that because there have been primarily female city administrators in the past, “maybe a man would work better, I don’t know.” Lara later admitted to his part in the conversation but said the decision on how to move forward is currently in the hiring committee’s hands. The hiring committee, which was set to assess and narrow down a list of finalists, is made up of Mayor Baeza and council members Morrison and Acreman. “It was just a conversation that we were having, I guess out loud, but it’ll

be up to them to decide who makes the cut and who doesn’t,” Lara said. Morrison told *The Sentinel* that the discussion “was wrong” and he does not intend to discriminate against any candidates. “Joking around like that is never appropriate. I shouldn’t have done that,” Morrison said. “Even behind closed doors, [you] shouldn’t joke around like that.” “Of course we’re not going to be limiting our search to male candidates,” he added. “Or I’m certainly not. I’m looking for a qualified candidate — doesn’t matter male, female, young or old.” Morrison said he is willing to recuse himself from the city administrator hiring committee if called upon to do so. “If that’s what Council and the city wants and prefers, I’m happy to do that because of my inappropriate comments,” he said. Pallarez told *The Sentinel* that there were simply more male candidates presented — of the 10 candidates the mayor sent council members to consider, nine are male. The one woman is on his “short list” of five candidates, he said. “I know what I said and I know what type of applicants we got,” Pallarez said. “They could take it for whatever they want to take it for, jokingly and not jokingly, or whatever. We got nine out of 10.” “Acreman is just throwing spaghetti on the wall hoping that something sticks,” he added. “He’s an idiot. All he’s trying to do is make room on the council for his husband, Tony [Georges].” (Acreman recently accused fellow council members and the mayor of firing Walter for being a “whistleblower,” which they denied.) Pallarez said that he has “nothing against females” and was more eager to hire Walter than any other council member because of her qualifications and managerial potential. “I am no male chauvinist pig,” Pallarez said.

Editors Note: This story has been updated since it was originally published online. To listen to the meeting recording, visit bigbendsentinel.com.

Escaping the flood: One Marfa family’s account

By Hilary Scruggs Beebe

El Tambo is the name of the home I built for my mother 12 years ago on the North Fork of the Guadalupe in Hunt, Texas. It means “roadside inn.” It’s not a large property, but private; a small house on tall piers with long spans of glass looking over the shimmering green waters of what some call the Velvet River. Long summer days spent at leisure with those we love are the whole purpose of the place — and for the last several months, David and I had been looking forward to spending this July 4th there with our dear friends and owners of *The Big Bend Sentinel*, Maisie, Max, and their 3-year-old son. Our guests were late leaving Austin on the 3rd. Max called as they were packing up, and we touched on the weather. The sun was out, but it had been raining a little every day. David hollered to Max over me that 2-5 inches of rain was predicted. This struck us as little more than an annoyance, and we concluded we would end up inside for at least some of the holiday. The regional flood watch that was in place was not unusual. Max wanted to know where the house stood with respect to the river. I responded that the house was 20 feet from the river, but with five grandchildren, my parents had already gated and thoroughly child-proofed the deck. “What happens when it floods?” Max wanted to know. “Well,” I explained that the house was built to recent FEMA standards to withstand a 500-year flood, but “if it floods, you basically can’t leave.” As an abstraction, the low-water crossings that dot the Guadalupe amount to a brief vignette each time the road and the river weave in or out of the other. On a normal day, you catch a glimpse of something — a swimming hole with a rope swing or shallow rapids where folks set up lawn chairs to bask in the sun. In a flood, the crossings recede into the mud-colored current, and the spaces between them become islands of their own. At any rate, we had no cause for concern. It was David’s birthday and I was cooking dinner. We put our 2-year-old to bed a little earlier than usual, fearing the excitement of her friend’s arrival would overstimulate. “We are going to have so much fun tomorrow!!” I assured her and we said her prayers, rushing because I had a lot to do. But as I wrangled her into pajamas and zipped up her sleep sack, I made our customary request to God for protection. Dinner consisted of mushroom risotto, good conversation and too much wine. When we went to sleep after midnight, the sound of the rain outside rendered nothing if not a deep sense of relaxation. Sometime after 3 a.m., Max and Maisie woke us up, anxious that we see the river. We stumbled back to the main room and looked down — flashes of lightning lit up a vast spread of brown, fast-moving rapids — not merely beside the house but beneath it. The sight took me aback, and I ran to different vantage points to look again as though it could possibly have been an optical illusion. Max and Maisie wanted to leave — but I explained that the road either way to the left or right of us would only take us into the river. We could get up a hill by crossing the road — but only if it was still possible to drive. We walked out in the rain to the driveway, where the water was just up over our ankles. If we were going to leave, we had to do so immediately. We roused our toddlers and ran to start our cars. Once parked a safe distance from the raging river, we had nothing to do but wait. With the storm clamoring overhead, our house below went dark, just 4 minutes after we exited the mechanical gate. A notification came over my phone regarding severe weather and flash flooding in the area. No kidding.

About an hour later, headlights came towards us from up the road, and a friendly neighbor called out my parents’ name. It turns out our neighbor, Paul Simone, is a volunteer firefighter with the Hunt VFD, foreman of the ranch up the road, and one heck of a Good Samaritan. He and his wife Martha took us into their hunting cabin, furnishing us with beds, food, flashlights, cooking supplies and even toys to divert the children. Exhausted, we all crashed in the dark cabin, and when I woke a couple hours later my mind was racing – was it possible the house was gone? I quietly left and drove down the hill to find the river had receded as fast as it had risen, leaving a mark that indicated it had peaked within 2 feet of the 500-year flood plain. The rain had not entirely stopped, so we collected necessities and spent the day in the Simones’ cabin — finding dark humor in our plight, marking basic victories of survival like making coffee in the car and grilling meat we had marinated the day before. With no Wi-Fi and weak cell service, we only started to sense the gravity of what had happened from the frantic messages slipping through from family and friends. Maisie and I drove to the top of the hill where we could get a slightly better signal. Then we read the most horrific news. On Saturday, Max and I were up earliest and found the low-water crossings were passable again. First, we drove west, where the road was blocked a mile or so down — an abandoned truck in a precarious crater. Heading east, we went as far as Camp Waldemar, where a sheriff’s deputy told us we could get all the way to Ingram and reach I-10. None of us will ever forget that somber drive. The damage on the North Fork was not insignificant — the road is littered with debris. We wondered how much livestock had gone loose. Passing Waldemar, we saw them loading school buses with little girls who should have been having the best summer of their lives — but would yet be rejoined with their families to see happier times ahead. When we got to Hunt, where the Forks meet, we encountered true devastation — homes and vehicles crushed, if not eliminated. Where rows of old cypress trees once shaded the river, remnants were deformed, stripped of bark, and littered with debris, up to 30 feet high in the air. In the flood’s wake, the natural beauty of that stretch of river has been scourged, and there is only evidence of violence left behind. The heaviness in the air was palpable and, looking at the faces of those we saw along the way, I knew we could all feel that weight — of pervasive death and mutual grief. We’re back in Marfa now, and I think we are yet to truly exhale. We cannot overstate our gratitude to Paul and Martha Simone. They were strangers who showed us care and kindness in our hour of distress. We are encouraging those who want to help to support the Hunt Volunteer Fire Department. We are thinking a lot about what went wrong to exacerbate this disaster. With so many still missing and the final toll yet unclear, we believe it is important to refrain from casting blame and find unity for recovery in the present. Only by the grace of God and the passage of time will all the pain this event has caused be extinguished. For us, there will be more summer days spent at El Tambo, and the physical reminders of this tragedy will be gone before long. However, having experienced for ourselves the dangerous potential of our beautiful river, knowing the terror of those lost and the agony of the bereaved, we as Texans owe it to our children to never forget. We must put aside differences and pursue every means possible that this cannot ever happen again.

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THEATRE OF THE

BIG BEND

Citizens speak out

(Continued from page 1)

Resident Lisa Kettyl also expressed her “anger and disappointment” at the council for their “misogynistic remarks.”

“When members of this City Council declared that they would look at males for the open city administrator position, and that they decided to do so between ‘just us men,’ you failed the community of Marfa,” Kettyl said. “The women, non-binary people and gender fluid people of this community deserve better.”

“This city is full of talented, smart, skilled women and non-binary and gender fluid people, many of which work in the city government and in our courthouse,” she added. “They are judges and clerks and administrators. Is it the position of the city council that they are unfit to fill all of those rules because of their gender?”

She cited several studies that shed light on women’s effectiveness as governmental leaders, in regards to reduced spending and corruption. Kettyl then scrutinized what the men on city council have accomplished, citing issues of dead water meters, which has yet to be fully addressed, and increased police funding, including the purchase of a license plate reader that “violates the privacy” of residents and visitors.

Calls for council members' resignations and condemnations of their behavior were also voiced by residents Rhonda Manley, Lindsay Smith, Katie Inglis and Bob Schwab, who said the comments are not to be taken lightly and, coupled with other recent issues, lead to an overall distrust in the city’s leadership.

“While y’all might think that your discussion was funny — a joke between boys — all it does is empower other men who maybe think that violence against women or talking down to women or not hiring women is acceptable behavior,” Smith said.

“You’ve lost the trust that’s essential to doing your work,” Inglis said. “Until this behavior is addressed, how can we move forward with matters like the AEP substation or any other pressing issue in good faith?”

Schwab specifically took issue with Lara’s comment to *The Sentinel* that because the previous city manager —



Staff photo by Mary Cantrell

Lisa Kettyl addresses city council members in front of a packed house.

who was a woman — didn’t succeed that “maybe a man would work better.” He said her short tenure and ultimate dismissal reflect more on council members' inability to make the right hiring decision. “It wasn't the gender of the individual, it was your poor decision,” Schwab said.

“And maybe this community wants better decision-makers on its council.”

Patrick Daly, Morrison’s partner, spoke next in defense of the council members, stating that he is appreciative of their work. He mostly addressed the gathered crowd,

BBNP flooding

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Presidio, the area’s lowest population center, receives around 11 inches of rain a year; the relatively lush Chisos Basin receives around 19 inches. Much of that precipitation falls over the summer and early fall, with major historic flood events clustered between May and September.

But that sense of normal is shifting. Climate and water data collected in the park shows abnormally dry conditions starting around 2010 — a trend that’s offered only a few years of reprieve ever since, and mostly at high elevations.

Some old-timers say those numbers have been headed this way for a long time. When the river went dry at the mouth of Santa Elena Canyon in the spring of 2022, haunting images of the flaky riverbed made their way into publications across the country. That May, *The Sentinel* spoke to river guides who said they’d started seeing the writing on the canyon wall in the 1990s when the river dried up dramatically and the commercial rafting industry was forced to consider alternate ways of getting around the park.

Even before tourism took off in Terlingua, park records show that the Big Bend went through extraordinarily dry periods. In the 1950s, as the park’s legendary first superintendent fell ill, administrators had to figure out how to fill Ross Maxwell’s big shoes while navigating a drought that reduced the river to a few shallow pools between Santa Elena and the Hot Springs.

The very idea of the park was also the product of outside-the-box thinking during extreme weather — Big Bend was born during the Great Depression, and many of its roads, trails and outbuildings were built by folks who might otherwise work on farms and ranches. The cattle industry in South Brewster County was hit hard, making the pitch from the government to accept a check in exchange for a dream and a way of life an easier sell.

To make a millions-of-years-long story short, the big rain last week was welcome after an especially dusty spring, but it’s just a drop in the bucket. “It’ll change, and it’ll change back,” said veteran river guide Mike Davidson, who has seen the river go through numerous

ups and downs since his first trip on the mighty, muddy Rio Grande nearly 50 years ago. “It’s still a desert river.”

Over the weekend, Davidson rafted Santa Elena with a handful of Terlingua VIPs. Once considered by many the park’s premiere river trip, a downstream passage has been physically impossible (with very, very brief exceptions) since the great dry-up in 2022. Davidson and his party were treated to a dramatic thunderstorm with vicious headwinds — he had to put sunglasses on in the near-dark to keep the water out of his eyes while steering the boat — but they were treated to the rare sight of waterfalls pouring over the edge of the canyon walls. “It was epic,” he said.

Davidson is hopeful he’ll get back on the river this year but is too experienced to bet on it thanks to a complex calculus of climate change and international diplomacy. “It’ll take a while for it to go back down — and hopefully we’ll get rain before it goes back down to zero — but without any rain events or reservoir releases, which I don’t think are forthcoming, it just goes back to nothing,” he said.

By “reservoir releases,” Davidson is referring to treaty obligations set between the United States and Mexico in 1944. For all its charm and grandeur in the Big Bend, the river is still an international boundary — and it has a job to do. For the past 81 years, Mexico has been obligated to release 350,000 acre feet of water to the United States from the Conchos River on five-year cycles in the hopes of meeting the needs of farmers and hydroelectric power-users in Texas.

In recent years, that arrangement has become a flashpoint. Mexico has lagged further and further behind on its obligations, leading leaders all the way up to President Trump to issue reprimands. From the Mexican perspective, the main issue is that there’s no water to give: the Rio Grande itself runs dry much of the time between El Paso and Presidio, thanks to insatiable upstream water use between the river’s headwaters and the Elephant Butte Dam in New Mexico.

The water that boaters enjoy in Big Bend National Park — and that brings life to crops in the Rio Grande

Valley — mostly comes from the Conchos, which is in imminent danger of the same fate.

Data from the International Water and Boundary Commission (IBWC), the agency that monitors water in the Rio Grande and helps administer the treaty, suggested that reservoirs on the Conchos got a little bit of a boost from last week’s rain event, which triggered floods all across the state of Chihuahua. La Boquilla Dam — which became the center of an uprising of angry farmers who took over the reservoir in 2020 in hopes of preventing Mexico from releasing any more water to the United States — got a lift of around 32 million gallons, but is still critically endangered at just 18% of its capacity.

The drying trend has long-term negative consequences for the health of the river. Kevin Urbanczyk, director of the Rio Grande Research Center at Sul Ross, considers the Conchos reservoir levels to be the “smoking gun” in the Rio’s slow death.

Urbanczyk says that looking at historical accounts and photographs can be helpful — starting with accounts of the first Spaniards arriving in the area in the 1500s, who described a wide river with sandy banks. Since the arrival of the Anglos, the river channel has narrowed and its banks have become choked with invasive vegetation like salt cedar and Arundo donax, a particularly thirsty kind of rivercane. These changes accelerated around the turn of the 20th century, when industries like mining and cattle ranching stripped the landscape and changed the way low-lying areas experienced flooding.

Historically speaking, the annual summer flood season acted like a toilet flush for invasive species and misplaced sediment. Urbanczyk describes this process a bit more politely as a “reset” — the likes of which the Big Bend hasn’t seen for almost two decades. “Every 20 years or so the river experiences something like the 2008 flood, but this was not a 2008-type reset event,” he explained.

Barring massive social and political change, the most folks can do is wait for rain. “[Last week’s rain] was good, but it’s not enough,” Urbanczyk said. “The demands of the water in the Conchos Basin are just

asking for a show of hands of who would run in the next election to serve the city. “What I hear about is everybody complaining about the council members,” Daly said. “But how many of you have chosen to run for council?”

The last time the city held an election was in 2023. Elections have been canceled for the past two years due to a lack of candidates vying for the positions. At this point, all the council members and the mayor have been appointed, rather than elected, to their current terms.

Goolsby said she would run, and she and Daly had a tense back and forth exchange during which he got upset at her for interrupting him and said, “Let me talk.” The situation escalated when he passed Goolsby, who was standing, on his way back to his seat from the podium. According to a witness and Goolsby, Daly clapped his hands together right in front Goolsby’s face, prompting two Marfa PD officers to step in and separate the two.

“It was a very forceful, aggressive move to make towards anybody but especially a woman after everything that’s transpired,” Goolsby said in an interview after the meeting.

The meeting concluded with council members' comments. Pallarez repeated statements that appeared in the initial Sentinel article and said the whole situation was being “misconstrued.” Members of the audience called on him to take accountability for the situation and apologize, stating that they had heard the meeting recording for themselves. Pallarez said he was refusing to resign over his comments or recuse himself from the AEP rezoning proceedings.

Pallarez and Morrison said they apologized privately to the women at City Hall. Morrison then apologized publicly and stated that he’s “certainly not perfect,” and hopes to do better, which was met by “thank yous” from women in the audience.

Lara, tearing up, apologized directly to his niece who was in the audience and stated that his mom was his greatest advocate who he took care of into her old age. He took responsibility for this part in the conversation, but said his actions that day do not reflect his true character. “I am deeply sorry to all the women,” Lara said. “Because that’s not the person I am.”

Play it Safe this Monsoon Season!

Tips from Don Corrick
Chief of Interpretation at Big Bend National Park

- Visitors should check the daily weather forecasts at park visitor centers and posted on bulletin boards.
- Storms can pop up very quickly and unexpectedly. Visitors should trust their instincts and err on the side of caution. If the weather looks serious but the forecast does not show rain — trust your eyes and ears! (And again, always err on the side of caution.)
- Park visitors should be aware that most park roads are crossed by low water crossings, and any of these can flash flood during the rainy season.
- Never try to cross flowing water! The flowing water may be more powerful than it looks, and modern cars are relatively lightweight, which may make them vulnerable to being pushed off the roadway. The high water prevents you from seeing if the roadway is blocked, damaged or washed out completely. Water in smaller arroyos often recedes quickly, so motorists should be patient and wait for the water to drop.
- Never camp or leave your vehicle in an arroyo or dry stream bed. Flash floods can be generated by thunderstorms that are out of sight.
- Floodwater is often contaminated, so people should avoid getting into the water. Beware of animals displaced by floods, including venomous snakes and stinging insects.

going to go up, and this chronic lack of or zero flow is the reality. It’s the unfortunate normal.”

Capital highlights

(Continued from page 1)

eliminating mosquito breeding areas around homes are proactive measures that can reduce the risk of mosquito-borne illness.”

Several steps can be taken to avoid West Nile, including wearing long sleeves and pants, using insect repellent, and removing standing water in outside containers. A total of 455 cases of West Nile disease were reported in 2024, including 56 deaths.

Adult education programs squeezed by federal funding freeze

A federal hold on funding for adult education programs is affecting Texans enrolled in such programs as GED classes, workforce training, and instruction in English. The Texas Standard reported \$78 million the state was slated to receive for these programs this month has been paused.

Sharon Bonney, CEO of the national Coalition on Adult Basic Education, said people enrolled in adult education programs could have their studies interrupted in the next few weeks.

“Closures will start immediately,” Bonney said. “We’ve already heard from a number of local programs. This is going to be across-the-board mass closures and layoffs.”

The funding usually goes to states from the Department of Education as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, passed in 2014.

Northeast Texas farmer plans run against Abbott

A former firefighter and farmer from Wood County plans to run next year as a Democrat against Abbott, the Houston Chronicle reported. Bobby Cole is vowing to “take back the government for working people of the state.”

“Republicans have spent 30 years in office, and working men and women have been having to pay the cost,” Cole, 55, said. “It has to stop.”

Cole retired as a firefighter in Texarkana and later Plano. He maintains a family farm in Quitman where they raise 300 head of cattle and also chickens.

Abbott has been governor since 2014 and has already announced plans to run for reelection.

Funding boost for schools comes with strings attached

Texas lawmakers are providing public schools with \$8.5 billion in new funding, but some school administrators say the money comes with provisions that limit their independence to a greater degree than previously, The Tribune reported.

The largest portion of the new money goes for teacher raises, with districts having little discretion on who gets raises. Lawmakers did not significantly raise the base amount school districts receive, leaving some districts struggling to pay for non-teacher items, such as rising operational costs and compensation for support staff.

Some educators say that while they are grateful for the teacher pay raises, they are disappointed in a lack of flexibility in how money is spent.

“I think that that’s really, really dangerous when you don’t trust leaders in public education to do the best they can for kids,” said Megan Simoneau, an educator of 21 years who teaches high school math in the Leander school

district. All that “most teachers, and most principals, and most superintendents are really attempting to do, is do the best they possibly can for the students, and the families, and their communities.”

Summer anti-drunk driving campaign launched

More than 1,000 deaths were recorded in Texas last year from alcohol-related crashes, and the Texas Department of Transportation is again launching a public awareness campaign to cut down on those fatalities.

The agency’s “Drive Sober. No Regrets” campaign is underway, along with increased law enforcement continuing through mid-July. Officers are on heightened lookout for impaired drivers in hopes of reducing DUI crashes and fatalities across Texas.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, Lufkin, and Cedar Park. Email:gborders@texaspress.com.

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Opinion

Dear Editor,

As a homeowner of 18 years in Marfa, I am writing to voice my opposition to the electrical substation that is being proposed by AEP on the corner of E. Oak and N. Aparejo streets.

I recently did an automobile trip across Texas, and I saw several substations that were in place for small towns and not one that I saw was located within a residential neighborhood. There are reasons for this.

There are potential safety risks including electrocution hazards as well as fire and explosions. Not to mention the environmental and aesthetic concerns with noise pollution (transformers and cooling equipment can create humming and or buzzing noises). This can be disruptive to residents, especially at night. The visual impact would certainly detract from the aesthetic of the neighborhood creating a negative impact on property values.

Another potential concern is that electrical substations emit electromagnetic fields which can potentially be an adverse health risk to residents living near the substation.

I urge the city council members, mayor and all city officials to reject the proposal from AEP for this substation addition!

Thank you,
Martha Gannon



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OUR WATER MATTERS

World cities and rural communities facing ‘climate whiplash’

By Trey Gerfers
tgerfers@pcuwcd.org

WaterAid UK is a British organization dedicated to making “clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere,” according to its website. In a recent report titled “Water and climate: Rising risks for urban populations,” WaterAid UK warns that “[w]ater emergencies are becoming more frequent and severe ... Right now, 90% of natural disasters are water-related, and cities — especially in low-income countries — are on the frontlines.” The report’s findings “highlight the variability of climate change impacts across the globe and emphasize the heightened risks in highly populated cities with existing vulnerabilities.”

According to the United Nations, “55% of the world’s population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68% by 2050.” In North America, over 82% of the population lives in urban areas. This “gradual shift in residence of the human population from rural to urban areas” has picked up speed in recent decades, giving rise to so-called “megacities,” which the UN defines as cities with a population of 10 million or more. The intensification of climate instability is placing many of these urban residents at higher risk because “[o]ften, cities’ water supply, sanitation, and flood management infrastructure, and the systems that support them, were designed and developed when the impacts of climate change were less extreme and populations much smaller,” according to the report. “[A] mixture of political decisions, underinvestment and socio-historical factors, have created urban concentrations of deprivation where deep and intersecting social and infrastructural vulnerabilities are being exposed and exacerbated by intensifying climate hazards.”

Hazard events like droughts and floods are growing demonstrably more complex. The authors emphasize that the warming of the atmosphere means that it can hold more moisture. This phenomenon can have two distinct consequences. “First, a warmer atmosphere will tend to draw more moisture upward from land areas through evapotranspiration that may not be replaced by incoming precipitation.” This can make the land drier, “allowing anomalously warm and dry periods to become more intense, potentially leading to deeper droughts.” The second consequence of a warmer, more moisture-rich atmosphere involves an intensification of precipitation events such that “when precipitation does occur over a city, it may arrive in larger amounts for the same storm duration, potentially leading to increased flooding.”

“As the climate crisis throws the water cycle out of balance,” the report

warns, “it is impacting many of the world’s largest cities in ways that are hard to anticipate and plan for.” Some cities “are experiencing dramatic climate reversals — places used to heavy rainfall now face drought, while historically arid regions now grapple with unexpected floods.” But perhaps the most harrowing development described in the report is a phenomenon called “climate whiplash.” According to the authors, “Many communities ‘whiplash’ between droughts that dry up water sources followed closely by floods that overwhelm infrastructure, destroying toilets and sanitation systems and contaminating drinking water, with huge impacts on people’s health.” Fifteen percent of the cities examined in the report showed this trend, and the authors caution that “[t]hese whiplashing extremes in quick succession can be particularly hard for communities to prepare for and recover from.” Among the cities “experiencing an intensification of both wet and dry extremes,” Hangzhou, China, and Jakarta, Indonesia, as well as Dallas, Texas, topped the list.

While these sorts of studies often focus on cities (because that’s where the most people live), rural communities are also experiencing intensifying drought and precipitation cycles. The Independence Day weekend floods in the Texas Hill Country, following years of below-normal rainfall, are perhaps the clearest warning to date that climate-related events may be moving beyond our state’s ability to plan and prepare for them. Affected communities are not only grappling with the startling loss of life and the destruction of countless homes and businesses, but many of them are also under boil-water notices because the flooding has compromised their potable water systems.

In searching for solutions, the authors stress the need for “climate-resilient water, sanitation and hygiene ... services that can withstand extreme climate hazards such as floods and droughts, backed by systems that can cope, adapt, transform and recover in the face of [the] shifting frequency and severity of these climatic events.” Infrastructure resiliency upgrades will play an essential role in climate adaptation, according to the report, with “an underestimated potential to contribute to climate mitigation and net zero emissions efforts, primarily through improved wastewater treatment and safe reuse.” The authors also tout the advantages of “green infrastructure” such as permeable surfaces, urban wetlands, and green roofs to “help absorb excess water during floods while also conserving water during dry periods” as well as “contextually-appropriate ... rainwater harvesting and wastewater recycling” to mitigate “the effects of prolonged droughts.” More attention is also needed to ensure that “[s]anitation facilities and services ... can withstand flooding and prevent spilling of human waste” to better protect public health.

“As the global water cycle changes throughout the world, often becoming less predictable and more extreme, climate-resilient water, sanitation and hygiene services and systems will be essential to the health and social stability of cities,” the authors write. We must understand that water is “the backbone of a healthy society ... As governments and communities globally adjust to a new climate reality, change starts with water.”

Visit <https://washmatters.wateraid.org/publications/rising-risks-urban-populations-water-climate-change> to read 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.

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Marfa women wear out hiking shoes after 41 days on the Camino de Santiago

By Mary Cantrell
mkcantrell@bigbendsentinel.com

MARFA — “You leave everything behind,” said Marfa resident Virginia Platt of her recent adventure hiking the Camino de Santiago, a pilgrimage through Northern Spain. “There’s no calls, no grocery store, the day-to-day things you do everyday are not there. Your focus is: get up, walk, sleep, and do it again.”

Platt was joined by Marfa resident Virgie Pallarez on a 41-day, over 500-mile trek this summer through the Camino de Santiago, or Way of Saint James, a web of historic routes throughout Europe that end in Northwest Spain at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, where the body of the apostle Saint James is reputedly buried. The two women started their pilgrimage on May 11 in St. Jean-Pied-de-Port, France, and completed the route on June 20 before flying back to the states, where their first stop was for a Whataburger in El Paso.

“We definitely wore out our shoes,” Pallarez said of the journey. “They were worn out. There was no giving them to anybody for whatever reason. Throw those suckers away.”

Platt and Pallarez started training for the Camino in August, lifting weights at the gym and going on five-hour, nine-mile walks daily towards Alpine and Valentine. They were inspired by Platt’s sister, who also joined them on the Camino, and the movie “The Way” with Martin Sheen. They viewed YouTube videos about the excursion, learning to limit their backpacks to no more than 10% of their body weight. Convertible pants, wool socks, Vaseline and trekking poles were among their essential gear.

Following the trail’s symbol of a bright yellow arrow, the hikers steadily wound their way through the agricultural lands of Northern Spain — where they encountered farm animals like cows and chickens — and the Pyrenees Mountains, scenic rivers, national parks, quaint villages, monasteries, and more.

“It’s beautiful throughout. It’s just unbelievable,” Platt said. “Sometimes you’re so exhausted, so tired and then you see the views, and you go, wow, this was worth every pain and ache that you had that day.”

Despite their training regime, the elevation gain on the Camino proved to be challenging, and their bodies protested the constant walking, leaving them to continuously nurse various ailments. “I didn’t get any blisters at all the entire time, but I did sprain my ankle, pull my hip,” Platt said.

“It’s a physical and mental challenge,” Pallarez said.

But the small group stuck to a rigid schedule, with no rest days, and became accustomed to wrapping their feet as needed when they started their day at 9 a.m. and finally shucking off their hiking shoes — and indulging in a well-earned beer — when they reached their destination.

“You do see a lot of people limping but I think once you commit to it, it’s really difficult to stop,” Platt said.

“I think the first few days you’re excited about it, and then after that it’s like anything else, it’s a discipline,” she added. “Just get up and go. You gotta go. There’s no other decision to make other than you’ve gotta walk.”

But they found fellow hikers — who greeted each other with the sentiment



Photo courtesy of Virginia Platt

Abel and Alpha Silva, Dan and Virginia Platt and Virgie Pallarez take off on the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage on May 11 from Saint Jean Pied de Port, France.

“Buen Camino” — and townsfolk were eager to lend a hand when possible, and they met a lot of interesting people along the route, they said.

“Virgie was a pharmacy, a go to place,” Platt laughed. “I think that in and of itself creates a community of friends, even though sometimes you don’t even know their name, you keep seeing them.”

Platt said she spent the first half of the journey focusing on the religious aspect, praying for souls and those who are sick, and the second half listening to music to stay motivated. Pallarez said she also found the time on foot spiritually enriching.

“I prayed a lot throughout the whole thing... things that I’ve gone through, people who are sick,” Pallarez said. “It’s everybody’s Camino. I felt I had to let go of certain things that I had been through. And I did, I came back at peace.”

In addition to being accompanied by Platt’s sister Alpha Silva — who turned 69 during the trip — and her husband Abel, the two were kept company part of the time by husbands Dan Platt and Eddie Pallarez, and by the Pallarez’s granddaughter. At the end of the Camino, Platt and Pallarez left their worn trekking poles in boxes with other hikers’ discarded gear and went to Valencia to rest up for four days. They said they intend to keep walking now that they are back home in Marfa, but it is perhaps too soon to tell if they’ll take on another Camino de Santiago pilgrimage.

“Hey, we finished,” Pallarez said. “That’s all that matters. We finished.”

Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg June 17, 2025

ACROSS

1 Social media request for followers to assess one's clothes

9 "I feel seen by this meme"

13 "Totally standard behavior"

15 "We should turn on the AC!"

16 NYC site of a 1969 civil rights uprising

17 Groups of athletes

18 Large amount

19 Penne _____ vodka

20 Skewered Indonesian dish

21 Orange fruits that symbolize good fortune in Chinese culture

24 Glass fragment

26 "It's not worth getting into"

29 "Schitt's Creek" star Catherine

30 Pond buildup

32 Small mattress size

33 Traditional Scottish skirts

34 Egg layer

35 Carried

36 Depend (on)

37 Library item

38 Utility bill statistic

39 Steve Jobs or Simone Biles, e.g.

41 Sounds made with two fingers

42 Training subject for kitchen workers

45 Try to get

47 Franken-stein's assistant

48 Mrs., in Spanish

51 Improvise, _____ overcome

52 Buddhist scholar

55 Fruits squeezed into margaritas

56 "OK, I'm done complaining"

57 Crystal ball user

58 Beach vacation reminders

10 Closing statement?

11 NYC home of "Christina's World"

12 Crafty website

14 Showy basketball shot

15 "This means war!"

21 Wet blanket

22 Slices of history

23 Permission slip signer, maybe

24 Backed (away)

25 Illustrious individuals are inducted into it

27 Performs like Taylor Swift

28 Patella's joint

29 Vegetable with a pentagonal cross section

30 Important datum for a sneakerhead

31 Corp. leader

35 Gentle baseball hit

37 What a first-class Emirates seat can recline into

40 Civil wrongs

41 Mass delivery?

43 Author's representative

44 Actress and activist Jane

45 Ladies

46 Garfield's canine pal

48 Obsessive fan

49 Surrealist

50 Creative pursuits

53 _____CIO (labor union group)

54 _____Lankan Airlines

DOWN

1 Rapid

2 What : means in an analogy

3 Animated character

4 Anderson Cooper's channel

5 Tee-

6 "Twilight" vampire Cullen

7 They're under fire

8 "Law & Order: SVU" actress

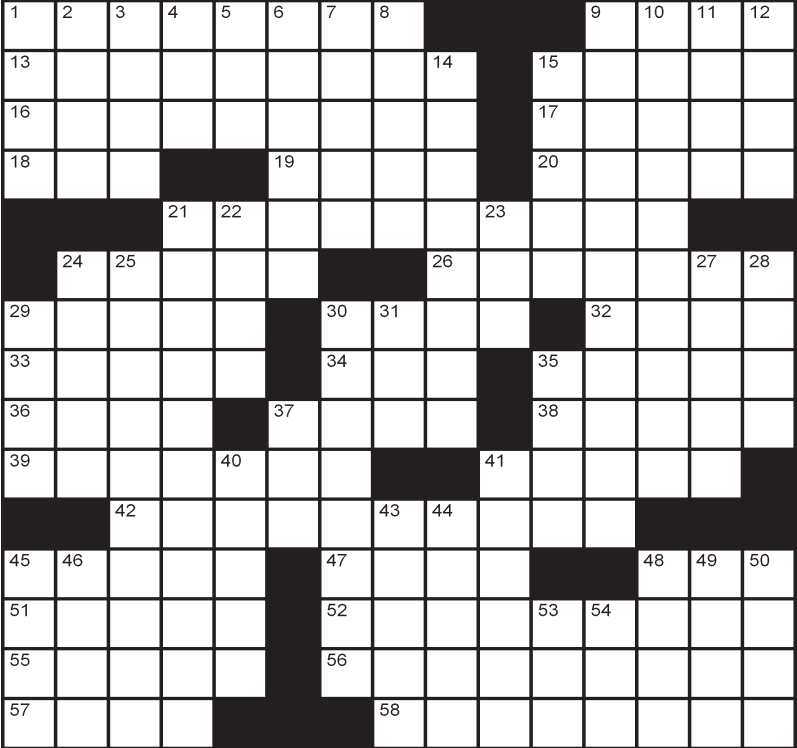
9 "Let me try and rephrase ..."

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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

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6/17 Summer 2025 Themeless Week, Puzzle 2 by Rafael Musa



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DRAWING OF THE WEEK

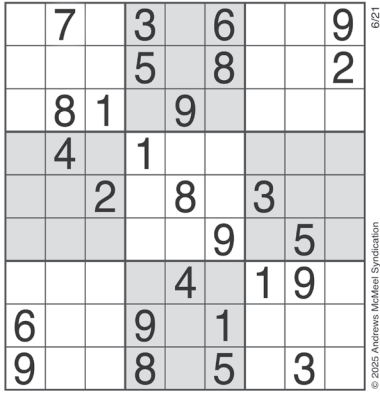


Dariela Munoz
10th grade - Marker

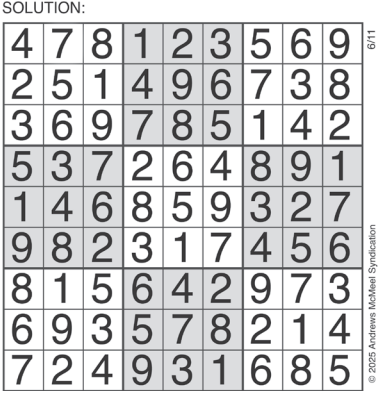
Sudoku & Crossword puzzles:

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



Solution from last week's puzzle:



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JUDD

Marfa Education Foundation reports major growth as it prepares to pass largest budget yet

MARFA — The Marfa Education Foundation (MEF), a local nonprofit supporting educational programs at Marfa ISD since 2011, is preparing to approve its largest-ever budget in early August. As the district faces another year of operating under a budget deficit, MEF’s expanded support is becoming increasingly vital.

MEF funds essential programs that might otherwise be cut due to limited district resources and enables projects the school would likely never be able to consider.

“In the year ahead, we’re looking forward to major improvements in the music program and at least one new computer lab — though we’re hoping funding comes through for a second,” said Executive Director Abby Boyd. “We’re looking at a 79% increase in program funding — maybe more.”

At the June 30 school board meeting, Boyd presented financials reflecting MEF’s significant growth. “We saw a 67% increase in fundraising from the 2023–24 school year to 2024–25,” she said. “That includes grants we apply for as well as donations from individuals and local businesses.”

So, what’s fueling this momentum?
“We have long-standing relationships with several foundations that continue to support our programs, and we’re also forming new ones,” Boyd said. “It’s a rigorous process with many funders, but the good news is they see that our school is worth investing in.”

In the past two years, MEF has secured support from five new foundations and has applications pending with two more.

One of the largest awards for the coming year is a \$120,000 grant from the FMH Foundation to support music and performing arts. The funds will cover instruments and equipment for the conjunto band, costumes for Ballet Folklórico, and a subscription to QuaverEd, a web-based music curriculum for elementary students.

The conjunto band — introduced to the middle and high school schedule in 2023 — quickly became popular among students. “As soon as Superintendent Alferez proposed the idea, I knew we had a strong chance of getting it funded,” Boyd said. “Not only is it a great cultural fit for our community, it’s the right size for our student body.”

It’s not just foundations that are making a difference. Local fundraising and community events have also helped MEF surpass goals.

In the 2024–25 school year, MEF was the featured nonprofit for the Marfa100, raising \$3,000. The Marfa Municipal Alliance also dedicated its Loretta Lynn tribute show at Planet Marfa to MEF, raising another \$3,000. This year’s “Armed and Generous,” a community arm-wrestling competition that funds MEF scholarships, brought in nearly \$11,000.

“I thought setting the goal at \$10,000 was a stretch, but we hit it and kept going. I was blown away,” Boyd said. “Each donation is a vote of confidence from our community — an investment in Marfa’s future through our students. Our community depends on Marfa ISD graduates. Look around — locals fill the most essential roles. And as we do a better job of preparing students for the working world, I hope to see these kids in some of the higher-profile roles in Marfa that often go to people outside our community.”

Looking ahead, MEF is prioritizing technology infrastructure to better prepare students for future opportunities.

“Marfa’s contribution to the BBRISE collaboration with Marathon and Alpine ISDs will be a computer science pathway,” Boyd explained. “We’re hoping to get the new computer lab up and running before the end of the school year so students can take dual-credit computer classes and earn professional certifications.”

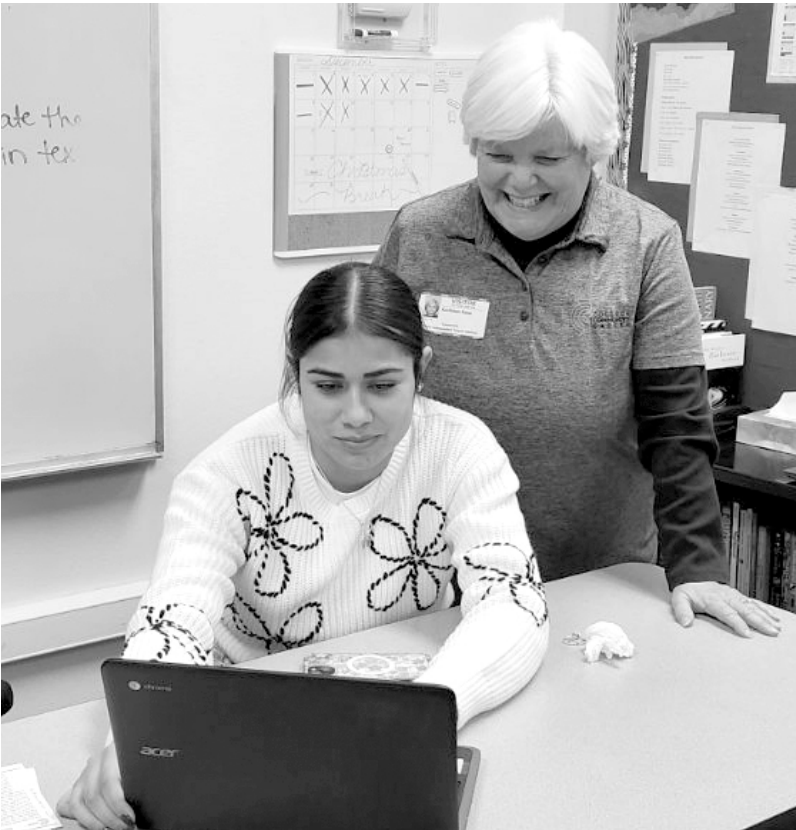


Photo by Candy Dominguez

Kathy Rose of College Community Career helps Loretta Rivera with a FAFSA application.

A recent labor market analysis of the area supplied by BBRISE found that three of the top five most in-demand skills are related to computer literacy. “These classes benefit all students — those entering the workforce right after graduation, and those pursuing degrees in computer science or anything else,” Boyd said. “These are universal skills. It’s a smart move for Marfa students.”

Marfa Elementary will be the first to benefit from the increased investment in technology. A grant from the Prentice Farrar Brown and Alline Ford Brown Foundation will support the installation of a new computer lab for the 2025–26 school year. Principal Rosie Martinez has already included technology skill-building in next year’s curriculum plan.

Beyond major projects, MEF continues to fund a wide range of programs that students and teachers rely on — from college and career readiness to classroom supplies, field trips, academic competitions, literacy, the arts, facility improvements, teacher training and scholarships.

“Public school funding in Texas has decreased by 12.9% per student since 2020,” Boyd noted. “When you add in the large amount Marfa ISD pays back to the state because of high property values, the district is in a tough position. We see our duty not just as supporting individual students, but supporting our community as a whole. We all need to be involved in finding a solution.”

Big Shop Sale



At former Vocational School Building 400 N. Summer
Saturday, July 12th, 9a.m. - 3p.m.

Lots of art works of various sizes, ceramics, sculptures, strange old things, plumbing parts, antique ceiling fans, Christmas ornaments, CDs (not your Top 40, no) and some furniture.

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AROUND THE BIG BEND

Thur
July
10

Paint & Sip
6 - 9pm at Alcove Social
No experience necessary – just relax, create, and enjoy some drinks while we guide you through a featured painting!

Cinderella
8 - 10pm at Kokernot Outdoor Theatre
See Rodgers + Hammerstein's CINDERELLA come to life on the beautiful stage at Kokernot Outdoor Theatre. This is the Broadway musical of the classic fairytale with an up-to-date, hilarious libretto by Douglas Carter Beane.

Calamity Creek
6 - 9pm at The Ritchey
Enjoy live music from Calamity Creek, at The Ritchey. No cover.

Fri
July
11

Chasen Wayne Honky Tonk Machine
6 - 9pm at The Ritchey
Enjoy live music from Chasen Wayne Honky Tonk Machine, at The Ritchey. No cover.

Tom Griffith
7 - 9pm at Alcove Social
Enjoy live music from Tom Griffith, at Alcove Social.

Davis Mountain Clinic Grand Opening
2pm at Jeff Davis Courthouse
Join us for a ribbon cutting ceremony to honor Airman 1st Class James “Adam” Lassiter as we celebrate the opening of the Davis Mountain Clinic and the exceptional milestone of increasing healthcare access for Jeff Davis County.

Camp Cooking Made Easy
7 - 9pm at Davis Mountains State Park
Join park host Kari for this fun, outdoor-oriented cooking demo and learn how to make simple & delicious camp meals.

Sat
July
12

My Dog Park Volunteer Day
9am - 12pm at Marfa Dog Park
Please join us for the first ever Marfa Dog Park volunteer day. We will pull goatheads, rake mulch, trim bushes, talk about our dogs. Lunch will be provided at the end. Please leave the pups at home and bring gloves or tools if you have them.

Junior Ranger Academy
2 - 3pm at Davis Mountains State Park
This fun, ranger-led workshop is aimed for kids, ages 5-12 (but open to all), who want to build their outdoor skills.

Sun
July
13

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Ongoing Weekly Events & Classes

Xbox Monday
Mondays (all day) at Marfa Public Library

Yin Yoga
Tuesdays at 12pm at Marfa Public Library

Free Meditation Classes
Tuesday & Thursday at 6pm at Marfa Public Library

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

AA (in-person)
Monday & Wednesday at 6pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Alpine Farmers Market
Saturday at 9am - 12pm at Alpine Visitor Center

Free Boxing at MAINTENANT
Thursdays at 9am
Sundays at 10am

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



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OBITUARIES



MILLER

Thelma Gene Barton Miller, a beloved matriarch, passed away peacefully in her home in Fort Davis, Texas, on June 30, 2025, surrounded by her loving family. Born on March 26, 1922, in New Orleans, Louisiana, although raised in Vancouver, B.C., Gene lived a life rich with love, community service, and family ties. Gene's educational journey culminated in her recognition as valedictorian of her high school, a testament to her hard work and dedication. On March 29, 1945, she married Fountain Moreau "Roe" Miller Jr., embarking on a partnership that would span decades and bring forth a family that she cherished deeply.

Throughout her life, Gene nurtured

her family while also contributing to the broader community. She held the honor of having served twice as the Worthy Matron of Fabens, TX Chapter 763 Order of the Eastern Star. Gene also served as the president of the Fabens ISD Parent Teacher Association of Fabens and was a valued member of the West of the Pecos Cattle Women's Association. Her legacy as a volunteer shone brightly during World War II, where she worked with the USO in Seattle, Washington, and was later recognized as one of three civilians cited by the Canadian government for her significant contributions to Project "Green Light." She also took pride in her involvement with Bloy's Camp Meeting since 1945 and was an active member of various organizations including the Marfa Ace High-Deuce Low Bridge Club, the Daughters of the British Empire, and the Overland Trail Museum Historical Society.

Gene's journey took her across various locales in Texas. She and her cowboy husband lived at the Rockpile Ranch in Jeff Davis County, as well as having periods of residence at Pompeys Pillar Montana, Tornillo, and Orla, Texas. Ultimately in 1991, Fort Davis became her final home, where she continued to bask in the company of her loved ones

She is survived by her devoted children, Sandra Miller Reinhardt and her husband Dale of Merryville, Louisiana; and Thomas Barton Miller and his wife Pam of Fort Davis, who carry forward her legacy of compassion and strength. Gene was preceded in death by her husband, F.M. Roe Miller Jr.; her parents, John Stanley Barton and Ruby Stewart Barton; her brother, John Barton; her sister Eleanor Davidson; and her grandson, Oriz Lee Miller. Gene leaves behind her beloved sister Joan Moxness, her sister-in-law Bonnie Barton, cherished niece Lauren Stedman, along with her adoring grandchildren, Roe Anne Day (Randy), Kaysie Taccetta (Joe), and Bart Miller (Diana). She was a proud great-grandmother to Cash Day, Carter Day, Trent Taccetta, Gracie Taccetta, James Miller, Josh Miller, and a great-great-grandmother to Alexandria Rose Miller and Avacyn Miller.

A graveside service to honor and celebrate Gene's life will be held on July 11, 2025, at Hillcrest Cemetery in Fort Davis. Friends and family are invited to gather from 11 am to noon as they remember a remarkable woman whose influence and love will continue to resonate through the lives she touched. Honorary Pallbearers

will be Steve Kennedy, Wayne Seipp, George Womack, Jim Espy, Tom Lee Waterston, Joe Duncan and Ron Traux. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that memorial donations to honor Gene be made to the following organizations:

Bloys Camp Meeting
Angela Becker
6 Desta Drive, Suite 2670
Midland, TX 79705

Joes, Espy, Finley Camp
Bill Coffey
PO Box 391
San Angelo, TX 76902

Jeff Davis County EMS of Fort Davis, Texas, Overland Trail Museum Historical Society of Fort Davis, Texas, or a charity of your choice.

Thelma Gene Barton Miller's spirit lives on in the hearts of her family and community, a lasting legacy of love, commitment, and unwavering support. She will be deeply missed but fondly remembered.

Vaya con Dios, MOM.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home and gifts and condolences may be left by visiting www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com.



ESPINOZA

Belinda L. Espinoza, a dedicated mother and grandmother whose love knew no bounds, was born on March 9, 1967, in Alpine, Texas, and left this earth far too soon on July 4, 2025, also in Alpine. Anyone who had the honor of knowing Belinda will remember her fiercely hardworking nature and vibrant spirit. Throughout her life, Belinda embraced her career with an unwavering commitment, often

juggling multiple jobs to provide for her family. She lent her talents to Sul Ross State University as well as several years at the local grocery store, where she held various positions from bakery staff to cashier and even store manager. Her final role was as a trusted mail carrier for the United States Postal Service, a testament to her tenacity and strong work ethic.

Belinda was more than just her impressive career; she was known for her sarcastic humor coupled with a nurturing heart. Those who spent time in her presence could always expect a hearty laugh, along with moments filled with care and love. Her family was her pride and joy; she radiated affection for her children and grandchildren. As they remember her, they hold dear the heartfelt sentiment they often expressed to her, "We love you to the moon and back, Granny B."

Beyond her dedication to work and family, Belinda had hobbies

that brought her joy. She delighted in collecting earrings, always ensuring they matched the holidays. Her creativity and love for food manifested in her passion for trying new recipes, especially when preparing Sunday dinners for her loved ones. Each meal was infused with love, creating cherished moments around the dining table.

Belinda's legacy continues through her beloved family members who survive her: her daughter, Dolores Ruth Savery, and son-in-law, Richard Savery; along with her sons, Doyle Clayton Pearce, and daughter-in-law, Briana Vega; and Charles Allen Pearce have been touched by her unconditional love. Her grandchildren, Davien Jeremiah Pearce, Gabriella Renae Pearce, Robert Andrew Pearce, Richard Mason Savery, Leah Marie Pearce, Trevor Clayton Pearce, Kevin Joenel Savery, Allen Chase Savery and Aubrey Isabelle Pearce, will carry forward the values she

instilled in them, forever cherishing the memories of their remarkable matriarch.

Belinda is preceded in death by her parents, Victoriano and Dolores Espinoza, and brothers, Juan A. Espinoza and Joenel A. Espinoza.

As we reflect on the impact Belinda had on everyone around her, her hard work, infectious laughter, and boundless love will remain etched in the hearts of all who knew her. She may have left this world, but her spirit will always watch over her family, guiding them with love and warmth.

Services were held at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church in Alpine on Wednesday, July 9, 2025. Burial took place following the services at Holy Angels Cemetery.

Services were entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home and gifts and condolences may still be left by visiting www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com.

Redford resident still fears the rain, awaits a court ruling on her flooding case

By Rob D'Amico
rob@bigbendsentinel.com

REDFORD — Barbara Baskin doesn't celebrate the rain. She fears it — ever since a spring of 2023 soaking sent water from the hills north of Highway 170 into a detention pond built by Presidio County, a federally-funded project that was supposed to protect her home down a dirt road below.

Instead, on May 27 of that year, the pond's 12-foot retaining wall collapsed in the onslaught of drainage and sent a wall of water rushing toward her house, forcing her and her dog Lucy to flee to higher ground while water swirled around and into her home.

Baskin, 74, said her pleas for Presidio County assistance went unanswered after the storm, and she eventually filed a lawsuit against the county, alleging 14 years of making the drainage situation on her property worse.

While Baskin lobbied numerous allegations of intentional negligence by the Road and Bridge Supervisor Ruben Carrasco, the complexities of the law — an exemption to county immunity for damage caused by motor driven vehicles — sent the case into esoterica around the timing of the work and the damages, without any examination of county negligence. Then 394th District Judge Roy Ferguson agreed with the county's assertion that it was immune from such lawsuits, and he dismissed the suit on July 30, 2024.

Strangely, county road crews — which hadn't been to Baskin's property for 14 months — showed up on the day of Ferguson's ruling to move around a lot of dirt, according to Baskin, then left the next day, leaving her exposure to future flooding even greater. Drone aerial photography of the work reviewed by *The Sentinel* showed it made her situation worse by channeling any future drainage straight to her home. County officials said the timing was a coincidence.

Baskin's attorney, John Sopuch, appealed Ferguson's ruling to the 8th Court of Appeals in El Paso in August of last year, where the case has sat without any action since January 3.

Baskin said she spent the past few months paying thousands of dollars out of her own pocket to try and improve the water-scarred land around her property. She reported today that she "is fine," since a recent two inches of rain in the recent downpours somehow sent the water away from her home.

Baskin, a former archaeologist in the Big Bend who lives off of County Road 18, said she seeks higher ground in a trailer above her house every time it rains, now with an additional foster dog and worrying about a pair of mules often stuck in her rain-drenched fields toward the Rio Grande. "All of us are up in the trailer every night for safety," she texted *The Big Bend Sentinel*. "I was awake all night and kept expecting the water to flow in, but none came."

The family of Ramon P. Sanchez wishes to thank all for your support, food and flowers during the loss of our brother.

He will be greatly missed.
God Bless

Sincerely,
Rosa Bonilla
Grace Johann
Freddy Sanchez

FROM THE ARCHIVES

May 22, 1926

JIMMIE SCHOTE APPOINTED DEPUTY MARSHAL

Folks beware. We now have a deputy marshal, our public-spirited marshal, Mr. Raetzsch, who in the past has been too busy looking after good roads and other civic interests to pay very much attention to the speed demons, drunks, etc., has appointed a deputy, Mr. Jimmy Schote, and he packs a mean looking gat. Mr. Schote is not a large man and looks as though he might be under a strain when he packs that great big gun, but it evens his chances with the biggest of them.

They say that while Mr. Schote has been in the Big Bend section he has had considerable experience in hunting (especially badgers) so he must be a pretty good shot with that pretty little pistol of his.

So beware, you would be Old-fields and bad yeggmen, our deputy is coming out, and he is steppin' high, wide and handsome.



Seeking groundskeeper for large, historic KC Ranch in West Texas

We are looking for a motivated individual to help us maintain and improve a historic ranch property and home.

Primary responsibility will be based around a large ranch house and grounds used by ranch owners and guests. Duties include seasonal mowing, weed and brush control, irrigation system maintenance, care and maintenance of house exterior, maintenance of small equipment, maintenance of other ranch facilities. The ranch headquarters compound should be ready to receive guests at any time.

The workload around the headquarters varies seasonally, and though the primary focus of this position is stated above, this person will also help out with other ranch activities as time allows. High efficiency in completing your work may allow for an expanded role.

We are heavily focused on capital improvements and continued upgrade of ranch infrastructure. Attention to detail and pride in your work are a must.

Must be in good physical shape and able to work outdoors year-round. This is a full time, stable, long-term position with an excellent organization. You will be joining a great team.

Ranch is located west of Balmorhea, TX on the north slope of the Davis Mountains. This is a beautiful place to work. While we are unable to provide housing on the ranch at this time, should the right candidate want to relocate for this position, we will work with them on this matter.

Competitive pay, excellent benefits to include health/dental/vision insurance, paid time off, 401K matching, etc.

Please express interest and include resume via email to wrice@fmmep.com

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Free entrance is available for residents
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Classifieds & public notices

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ballroom Marfa awarded \$25,000 energy efficiency grant
MARFA — The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation announced last week that it has awarded \$3.4 million in Frankenthaler Climate Initiative (FCI) grants to 74 visual arts organizations across the United States supporting the advancement of energy efficiency and clean energy projects.

Ballroom Marfa was awarded \$25,000 to develop a plan to preserve the historic 1920s ballroom while simultaneously addressing climate change by implementing the necessary energy efficient upgrades.

Established by the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation in 2021, FCI has helped over 300 museums and arts institutions across the U.S. to implement transformative climate solutions — funding over \$17.5 million in projects in 40 states.

For more information, visit frankenthalerclimateinitiative.org/

Alpine scoops six prestigious Texas Travel Awards
ALPINE — The City of Alpine is thrilled to announce its remarkable success in the recent Texas Travel Awards, where it proudly took home an impressive six accolades. These statewide and small market honors highlight Alpine’s unique blend of natural beauty, vibrant arts scene, rich history, and

community spirit.

The awards include the statewide Best Views honor for Hancock Hill, acknowledging the stunning panoramas accessible just a short walk from Sul Ross State University. Our town’s vibrant character was also recognized with Best Public Art for Alpine’s Downtown Murals, showcasing the community-driven artistic endeavors that have transformed our streets into an outdoor gallery.

The Museum of the Big Bend at Sul Ross State University earned Best Museum, recognizing its high-caliber exhibits and commitment to preserving our regional history and art. For those who enjoy the outdoors, Big Bend Stargazing was named Best Outdoor Activity, celebrating the exceptional dark skies of the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve.

Our unique landmark, The Desk on Hancock Hill, was crowned Best Instagrammable Spot, inviting visitors and locals alike to capture its distinctive charm. Finally, The Ritchey was recognized as Best Music Venue, affirming its role as a key part of Alpine’s music scene, hosting local and touring acts.

“This recognition from the Texas Travel Awards is a positive validation of our community’s efforts,” said Alpine Mayor Catherine Eaves. “We especially want to congratulate Visit Alpine and the Alpine Visitor Center for their work in facilitating these nominations and securing this statewide recognition for our town. It’s a win for every resident, artist, business owner, and organization that contributes to making Alpine such a special place. We encourage everyone to revisit these award-winning attractions and share their Alpine pride.”

Unaccompanied immigrant minors face growing hurdles from the Trump administration crackdown

By Nicol Leon and Gibran Caroline Boyce
Puente News

Immigrant children who crossed the border without a parent or guardian are increasingly in the crosshairs of the Trump administration. That has meant children facing immigration judges without lawyers, and stricter screening processes for releases from shelter custody that have prolonged stays to more than five months.

Adding to tensions are increasing arrests outside immigration courtrooms and raids that could sweep up adult relatives and other hurdles.

The chaos for the children and teenagers can be seen in the nation’s immigration courts in such cities as New York, El Paso, and Phoenix.

"You are here because the United States government believes that you should be removed from the United States," said black-robed Judge Ubaid ul-Haq to a girl from the Dominican Republic who watched him via video from a shelter. "It is my job to determine whether you can be removed from the United States."

The judge, sitting in a courtroom in Manhattan last May, was precise. But the teen girl looked frustrated, as a court interpreter translated to Spanish. The minor’s identity is being withheld because of sensitivities in the case.

“For an adult, it’s almost impossible to navigate immigration court,” said Michelle Ortiz, the director of U.S. legal services at the nonprofit International Rescue Committee (IRC). “Imagine a 12-year-old, 4-year-old, a 17-year-old. It’s impossible to present a case without a lawyer.”

The tougher policy changes are adding to the minors’ trauma, advocates say.

Regardless of one’s politics, said Tatine Darker, an immigration attorney with Church World Service in New York, “Let’s all agree that children should be off limits.”

About 26,000 minors saw funding for lawyers yanked in late March, setting up a legal battle over a landmark anti-trafficking law that has led to chaos. The move slashed the budget of about 100 nonprofits across the nation that helped provide direct legal representation for immigrant minors. For the minors, all under the age of 18, that meant making decisions alone about their defense.

In late April, U.S. District Judge Araceli Martínez-Olguín issued a preliminary injunction so funding would again flow for legal assistance. The judge noted some nonprofits had already issued layoff notices. Citing a friend-of-the-court brief, the judge said children without counsel faced “greater risk of exploitation and human trafficking.”

In mid-May, an appellate court rejected the Trump administration’s bid to pause the lower court ruling.

A week later, a spokesperson for the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) said, “The government is in full compliance with the court’s order.” The spokesperson for the agency that oversees shelters within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) declined further comment, citing ongoing litigation.

Hurdles

Inside a Dallas immigration courtroom earlier this month, an attorney said his four-year-old client couldn’t make the hearing because his parent was detained by immigration agents. Caseworkers for the boy appeared before Judge Charissa Dvorak to back the story. “I will waive the presence of the child,” the judge said.

In El Paso, Texas, at the Catholic nonprofit *Estrella del Paso*, which provides legal services to immigrants, executive director Melissa López tries to figure out how to keep her legal staff together. Her biggest worries are the children.

Stricter screening sent the minors’ shelter stays soaring. The average length of care per month jumped from roughly two months in December 2024 to more than five months by May 2025, according to HHS data. Advocates fear the mental health of minors will suffer from prolonged stays in government-funded shelters as relatives or sponsors meet new vetting requirements. Many of the screening hurdles have been under litigation, as well. A federal judge recently ordered a return to old requirements but advocates say it’s too early to tell if that will reduce shelter time.

Without attorneys, unaccompanied minors are forced to seek expensive private lawyers. In El Paso alone, immigration attorneys who specialize in these cases can charge at least \$5,000 for a legal process that may take up to three years to resolve, said López of *Estrella del Paso*.

The funding is only guaranteed through September 2025, said Ortiz of the International Rescue Committee, a nonprofit that operates in six states. What happens after that remains uncertain. “These cases last years and years,” Ortiz added. “And if we don’t know whether we’ll have funding after September 29, we can’t make any more commitments beyond the ones we’ve already made.”

Nicol León reported from El Paso, New York, and Phoenix. Gibran Boyce reported from El Paso and New York. Dianne Solis contributed to this story from Dallas.

This story was co-published with Puente News Collaborative in partnership with palabra and the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York (CUNY). Puente News Collaborative is a bilingual nonprofit newsroom, convener, and funder dedicated to high-quality, fact-based news and information from the U.S.-Mexico border.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CITY OF MARFA, TEXAS
STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Separate sealed bids for the construction of **Street Improvements** will be received by the **City of Marfa, Texas**, until **2:00 PM**, on **July 29, 2025**, at **Marfa City Hall 113 S. Highland Ave., Marfa, TX 79843**, and then at said location publicly opened and read aloud. This project consists of the removal and replacement of approximately 5,755 LF of base material and road surface for five streets in the City of Marfa. Streets to be replaced include (1) Russell Street from US 90 north to Columbia Street (estimated 2,190 ft); (2) Mesa Street from US 90 north to Lincoln Street (estimated 1,210 ft); (3) North Gonzales Street from Columbia Street north to 3rd Street (estimated 1,010 ft); (4) East Galveston Street from US 67 east to South Dean Street (estimated 435 ft); (5) 3rd Street from SH 17 west to Austin Street (estimated 910 ft).

The Contract Documents, consisting of Advertisement for Bids, Information for Bidders, Bid Proposal, Bid Bond, Agreement, Performance and Payment Bonds, General Conditions, Notice of Award, Notice to Proceed, Plans, and Specifications, may be examined at the following location:

Jacob & Martin, LLC
3465 Curry Lane, Abilene, Texas 79606

The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all bids. Bids may be held by the Owner for a period not to exceed 60 days from the date of bid opening for the purpose of reviewing the bids and investigating the qualifications of Bidders prior to awarding of the contract.

Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS must be ordered online at www.jacobmartin.com. Orders for CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may include hard copies for pick up, mail out or digital download via www.jacobmartin.com. Upon verification of online payment, hard copies may be picked up at Jacob & Martin, LLC, located at 3465 Curry Lane, Abilene, TX 79606. Cost for hard copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS will be **\$100.00** for 11x17 plans. Cost for digital download of CONTRACT DOCUMENTS will be **\$0.00**. Contractors must purchase a set of CONTRACT DOCUMENTS to be considered a registered plan holder eligible to bid the project.

Bid Bond: A certified check or bank draft, payable to the order of the **City of Marfa**, negotiable U.S. Government bonds (at par value) or a satisfactory Bid Bond executed by the Bidder and an acceptable surety in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the total bid shall be submitted with each bid.

City of MarfaManuel Baeza, Mayor
June 26th and July 3rd, 10th, 17th, 2025

JOB OPENING

The Presidio County Appraisal District is seeking a full-time Data Processor Clerk for our Marfa office. Bi-lingual preferred. Must be able to work M-F,

8:00 am- 5:00 pm. High School/GED required. Please submit applications/resume to the Presidio CAD Office, P O Box 879, Marfa, Texas 79843 or by email cramirez@presidiocad.org. . All applications must be submitted by August 1, 2025. The Presidio CAD is an equal opportunity employer.

07/03,07/10,07/17,07/24-2025

GOVERNMENT CONTACTS

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Judge Jose Portillo:
(432) 729-4452

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

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Judge Greg Henington:
(432) 837-6200 Ext. 200
Alpine Mayor Catherine Eaves:
City Hall: (432) 837-3301
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Jarratt Dirt Work and Paving, Inc.
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E-mail: office@jarrattdirtwork.com

HELP WANTED

Jarratt Dirt Work and Paving, Inc. is accepting applications for Class A CDL drivers. Drivers Must be able to pass a drug and alcohol screening. Duties to include driving belly dumps, haul trucks, water trucks and dump trucks, as well as being able to operate some heavy equipment. Work is located primarily in the Fort Davis, Alpine, Marfa, Texas area. Pay depends on experience. Health insurance and retirement package included after a trial basis. Please come by Fort Davis, Texas office between Tuesday – Friday 9 A.M. – 3 P.M. to pick up an application or call to plan if another time is needed. EEO

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.

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