

BIG BEND *Sentinel*

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Marfa, Presidio County, Texas

www.bigbendsentinel.com • \$1

Marfa dodges AEP vote

When the City Council last met on September 29 to approve its budget, council members all indicated they would be available to meet again on October 14. When the agenda for that meeting came out, there was a biggie listed—discussion of rezoning property to facilitate a new AEP electric substation, a controversial topic that drew dozens to council meetings discussing it.

Since the council had already had public meetings on the issue, and since it went through Marfa Planning & Zoning (which recommended a vote against the rezoning), it appeared the council may have been in a position to vote on the matter.

When Tuesday arrived, word spread that the meeting might be canceled due to lack of a quorum. Councilmembers Mark Cash, Eddie Pallerez and Raul Lara were out of town. That left Councilmembers Mark Morrison and Travis Acreman (also out of town but planning to attend on Zoom) and Mayor Manny Baeza, who has to recuse himself from discussions and actions as an AEP employee.

Meetings on the substation resulted in a rarity in Marfa—packed City Council meetings with numerous speakers opposing the plan. (Supporters of the plan, while in the minority, also turned out to speak of the need for the substation.) As an example, recent council budget/tax rate hearings that would raise Marfa property taxes on homesteads 50% this year only drew one to three speakers at each meeting.

The substation is proposed for a four-acre site lot on the east side of town, at Oak and Aparejo streets just before the bridge over Alamito Creek—currently zoned residential that would need a zoning change by the council to industrial.

Also on the agenda was consideration of a K-9 dog, “Roski,” for the Marfa Police Department. While the K-9 item garnered a lot of questions and criticism on social media—for its possible costs—it’s clear that hardly anyone knew that the K-9 unit was already in place for a few months. Marfa’s newest officer, Kelsy Flores, came from her role as a K-9 officer in Pecos with Roski. The council was well aware and even met Flores and Roski at a meeting.

Baeza said the item was to ensure the city was covering costs for any training, insurance and stipends for Flores—items of concern for those commenting on social media. Those figures were still being worked out as of Tuesday.

INSIDE



JUSTIN AVERSAÑO

Justin Aversano tonight at Glitch

5th annual Artblocks
this weekend—page 8

Sentinel News Project



Inspired by every inch of this place

Earth artist Colleen O’Brien, inspired by the Big Bend’s unique landscape, returns to Far West Texas to continue her ambitious body of work. Her signature style involves creating large-scale paintings *en plein air* using natural materials like dirt, soil, and rock. *Full story on page 9.*

County judge names ‘Buddy’ Knight to commissioner seat

A replacement for David Beebe

By Rob D’Amico

Last weekend, County Judge Joe Portillo said he was interviewing a handful of people to replace Precinct 4 County Commissioner David Beebe—who inadvertently resigned after announcing his candidacy too early for county judge for the Democratic Party Primary in March, likely against Portillo. The judge said on October 4 he knew of interested candidates and wanted to give them a voice on how they could serve the county.

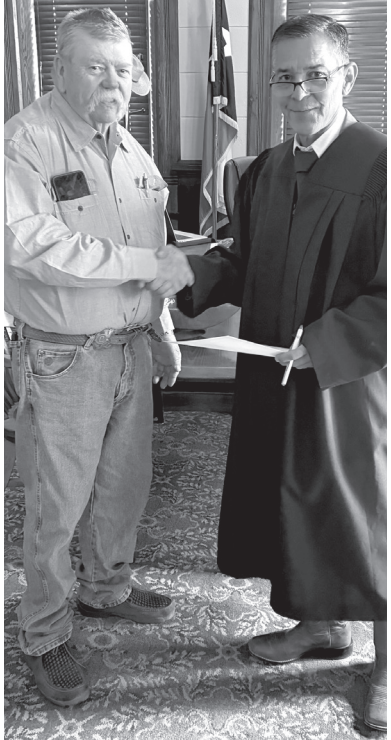
Per the Texas Constitution, county officials who announce their candidacy for another office more than one year and thirty days from the end of their term are subject to the “resign-to-run” law, which states: “Such announcement or such candidacy shall constitute an automatic resignation of the office then held.”

Beebe would have had to announce his candidacy in early December to be clear of the prohibition, and said he didn’t know about it when deciding to announce two weeks ago. However, case law shows that an Aransas County attorney in a similar situation was allowed to follow a “hold over” state law, meaning they could stay in their seat as long as the county judge or commissioners court did not replace them.

Beebe’s sometimes-ally on the Commissioners Court, Precinct 1 Commissioner Deirdre Hisler, and friends of Beebe’s lobbied the judge to let Beebe stay because of his extensive experience serving and following county government. But the judge said Saturday he knew of interested candidates and wanted to give them a voice on how they could serve.

On Friday, Portillo ignored the advice of Hisler and others and made a decision, appointing Frank “Buddy” Knight, a veteran of Marfa and county politics who previously served as a commissioner and Marfa ISD School Board member. Beebe had beaten Knight in the 2022 Democratic Primary to take his commissioner post.

Contacted Saturday, Knight said he did not go to the judge about being appointed, but had talked with some friends about the idea. When the judge came to him, Knight met



Knight and Judge Portillo

with him to discuss the position. After some “soul searching” he decided to take the offer. “What I care about is Presidio County and Precinct 4,” he said. “At this point in time, maybe I can help for a bit. I have some ideas I’m working on, and I appreciate that Mr. Beebe had some things he was working on.”

Beebe previously stated that he would stay in his seat until told to leave, meaning an appointment of someone else, and regardless of what happened, he would sit in on court meetings and assist the county however he could.

No “courtesy call”

“In 2022, voters had a choice between David Beebe and Buddy Knight and they resoundingly chose Beebe,” David Beebe and his wife Hilary wrote in a statement Monday. “On Friday, over the objections of constituents and other commissioners and without so much as the courtesy of a call, the judge took this unnecessary action because that is the kind of small, self-serving guy he is.”

Portillo said Monday that he looked at the situation from a simple view of following the law while also protecting the county. The automatic resignation provision under the Constitution is clear. “It doesn’t make provisions,” he said. “It doesn’t talk about specific instances. It just

Continued on page 3

‘A whole other country’

MPR launches podcast on the 1997 Republic of Texas standoff

By Sam Karas

Jeff Davis County

Last week, Marfa Public Radio debuted A Whole Other Country, a podcast about the 1997 Republic of Texas Standoff. In the ‘90s,

Richard McLaren—originally of Ohio—became convinced that Texas was not legally annexed by the United States to the letter of the law and ought to secede. He launched what the *Sentinel* called at the time a “paper war,” filing bogus liens to try to crumble an impostor empire lawsuit by lawsuit.

McLaren ended up in Jeff Davis County, where he spent hours at

the courthouse poring over property records, where he discovered numerous errors and inconsistencies. Using a creative interpretation of adverse possession laws, he amassed over 900 acres in an area called the Davis Mountains Resort (DMR) that he hoped was the start of a brand new country.

On April 27, 1997, the standoff kicked off when DMR resident Joe Rowe called the sheriff on three

people poking around an abandoned structure near his property. McLaren then sent Republic of Texas members to Rowe’s home to hold him and his wife hostage—in an instant, the paper war became a traditional war of threats and gunfire.

Sentinel talked to senior producer Zoe Kurland about the year she spent chasing this story down bumpy mountain roads.

How did you encounter the story of Richard McLaren?

Since coming out here for the first time nine years ago, I’d been hearing this story in fits and starts—if I went for a hike in the Davis Mountains and told someone about it, they’d be like, “Well, did you know about the secessionist movement that happened out there?” It was just sort of a fun fact about the region that was not fully fleshed out.

Once I started learning more about the story from people who had either been around at that time or wanted to tell me a little bit more, I was hooked. It’s an interesting historical event in and of itself, but I feel like it touches on a lot of threads and themes that I’m personally fixated on as a reporter in this region—this broader theme of people coming out to West Texas to play a fantasy version of Wild West life. I call it “cowboy cosplay” in the podcast.

Rick McLaren seemed like a

Continued on page 2




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Listen to A Whole Other Country online at Marfa Public Radio: marfapublicradio.org/podcast/a-whole-other-country.

Alpine council names new city manager

Other action changes city job requirements

Members of the Alpine City Council are hoping the city will soon have a city manager that will stick around for a while after voting to offer the position to Edgar Garcia at the October 7 council meeting.

Following a closed session to discuss the position, members voted unanimously to offer Garcia the position with a salary of \$120,000 a year.

Garcia received an official letter offering him the position on October 10 and took the weekend to review it, said Councilmember Robert Rückes.

On Wednesday, Interim City Manager Geo Calderon said the city is currently negotiating a contract with Garcia, so the position isn't officially filled yet.

While this would be Garcia's first time in the position of city manager, he has a background in economic development in similar communities and served as the City of McAllen, Texas, planning director for more than five years. He resigned from that position in January telling the McAllen Monitor that he felt it was time to do something new—consulting work in the private sector. But he noted at the time, "I'm sure I'm going to end up in the public sector eventually. I think that's where my passion is."

Rückes told Big Bend Sentinel that he's hoping Garcia will be a good fit, because the city has a lot of work to do to shore up its infrastructure. "I was wanting somebody that would be compat-

ible because unfortunately we've had a lot of turnaround in the city managers in this municipality, which is unfortunate and it causes a lot of hiccups," Rückes said.

Also unanimously passed by council was the final Wastewater System Asset Management Plan. The wastewater plan was developed by the firm Jacob/Martin to guide budgeting and infrastructure planning.

The council also adopted new job descriptions after council members requested changes to the entry positions to allow those without a high school diploma or GED to apply with the understanding that they will obtain a diploma or GED within a year.

Mayor Catherine Eaves, among other council members, requested the change saying that they hoped it would encourage more people to apply. "I feel that we do need more manpower," Eaves said.

This was "part of the city's ongoing initiative to modernize and standardize descriptions following the Evergreen Solutions Compensation Study," Calderon said.

Council also voted to change the speed limit along Gallego Avenue between South 1st Street and South 5th Street from 20mph to 30mph, despite hearing from two community members who were against the change.

In discussions, the City Council reviewed a draft application for nonprofit organizations requesting funds from the city and the contracting of Government Capital Securities Corp. (GCSC) as the city of Alpine's municipal advisor. GCSC would assist with financial planning as well as structuring and executing future debt issuances.

Chinati weekend showcases artists

The annual cultural right at the Chinati Foundation took over Marfa last weekend. Here are some of Jennifer Pittinger's photographs capturing the weekend.



Kenny Shachter's installation, POSTBOX, at the Sentinel cafe was a conversation starter for the artist.



Lanna Duncan wears a dress from Katie Kime's collection.



Tina Ravira's unique exhibit of cigarettes fashioned from beads.

Judge replaces Beebe

Continued from page 1

says it's an automatic resignation. So, under the law, [the seat] had to be filled."

Portillo said he was aware of the court case—Bianchi v. State of Texas—that allowed a county official to remain in office because the county judge and commissioners court did not replace him. The county's defense in allowing his hold over to continue was based in part on an Attorney General's Office opinion.

But Portillo said each case "is going to have different sets of facts and circumstances" resulting in a different opinion or court ruling. He also cautioned that not filling the seat could open the county up to a similar lawsuit over the validity of Beebe remaining and of any votes he cast. In the Bianchi case, the county judge and all commissioners were in agreement to keep the resigned county attorney—Richard Bianchi—in his position. The opposition to the hold over came from the local district attorney.

In Beebe's case, he had the support of Commissioners Deirdre

Hisler and Franky Ortiz to remain on the court, according to their statements to Big Bend Sentinel. Portillo made his opinion clear on the need to replace Beebe.

Knight's appointed term will end December 31, 2026. Knight, who served in the seat from 2018 to 2022 before being defeated by Beebe in the Democratic Primary, said emphatically that he is not interested in running for the seat in March.

Presidio County is a bit of an outlier in Texas politics and is solidly Democratic. Thus, a win in the Democratic Primary in March would make a candidate the shoo-in for the November election. "The good news is there is another election coming and Beebe is offering a change," the Beebes stated. "But if the voters say no thanks, we'll take four more years of this—he will concede as a gentleman should and we'll happily move on. Until the people weigh in, Beebe's going to keep right on doing what he's been doing—showing up for Presidio County every single day and striving to do better."

MARFA VISTA

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MARFAVISTA.COM

NOTICES

Texas Commission On Environmental Quality Notice Of Receipt Of Application And Intent To Obtain Water Quality Permit Renewal

PERMIT NO. WQ0014679001

APPLICATION. City of Presidio, P.O. Box 1899, Presidio, Texas 79845, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0014679001 (EPA I.D. No. TX0128481) to authorize the discharge of treated wastewater at a volume not to exceed a daily average flow of 950,000 gallons per day. The domestic wastewater treatment facility is located approximately 1.17 miles east of the intersection of Farm-to-Market Road 170 and Park Valley Avenue, in Presidio County, Texas 79845. The discharge route is from the plant site via pipe directly to Rio Grande River Above Amistad Reservoir. TCEQ received this application on September 24, 2025. The permit application will be available for viewing and copying at Presidio City Office, 507 West O'Reilly Street, Presidio, in Presidio County, Texas prior to the date this notice is published in the newspaper. The application, including any updates, and associated notices are available electronically at the following webpage: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and not part of the application or notice. For the exact location, refer to the application. https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=:104.3175,29.546388&level=18

ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE NOTICE. Alternative language notice in Spanish is available at: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications. El aviso de idioma alternativo en español está disponible en https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications.

ADDITIONAL NOTICE. TEQ's Executive Director has determined the application is administratively complete and will conduct a technical review of the application. After technical review of the application is complete, the Executive Director may prepare a draft permit and will issue a preliminary decision on the application. Notice of the Application and Preliminary Decision will be published and mailed to those who are on the county. wide mailing list and to those who are on the mailing list for this application. That notice will contain the deadline for submitting public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC MEETING. You may submit public comments or request a public meeting on this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application.

TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the Executive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.

OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONTESTED CASE HEARING. After the deadline for submitting public comments, the Executive Director will consider all timely comments and prepare a response to all relevant and material, or significant public comments. Unless the application is directly referred for a contested case hearing, the response to comments, and the Executive Director's decision on the application, will be mailed to everyone who submitted public comments and to those persons who are on the mailing list for this application.

If comments are received, the mailing will also provide instructions for requesting reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.

TO REQUEST A CONTESTED CASE HEARING, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN YOUR REQUEST: your name, address, phone number; applicant's name and proposed permit number; the location and distance of your property/activities relative to the proposed facility; a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the facility in a way not common to the general public; a list of all disputed issues of fact that you submit during the comment period and, the statement "[I/we] request a contested case hearing." If the request for contested case hearing is filed on behalf of a group or association, the

request must designate the group's representative for receiving future correspondence; identify by name and physical address an individual member of the group who would be adversely affected by the proposed facility or activity; provide the information discussed above regarding the affected member's location and distance from the facility or activity; explain how and why the member would be affected; and explain how the interests the group seeks to protect are relevant to the group's purpose.

Following the close of all applicable comment and request periods, the Executive Director will forward the application and any requests for reconsideration or for a contested case hearing to the TCEQ Commissioners for their consideration at a scheduled Commission meeting.

The Commission may only grant a request for a contested case hearing on issues the requestor submitted in their timely comments that were not subsequently withdrawn. If a hearing is granted, the subject of a hearing will be limited to disputed issues of fact or mixed questions of fact and law relating to relevant and material water quality concerns submitted during the comment period.

TCEQ may act on an application to renew a permit for discharge of wastewater without providing an opportunity for a contested case hearing if certain criteria are met.

MAILING LIST. If you submit public comments, a request for a contested case hearing or a reconsideration of the Executive Director's decision, you will be added to the mailing list for this specific application to receive future public notices mailed by the Office of the Chief Clerk. In addition, you may request to be placed on: (1) the permanent mailing list for a specific applicant name and permit number; and/or (2) the mailing list for a specific county.

If you wish to be placed on the permanent and/or the county mailing list, clearly specify which list(s) and send your request to TCEQ Office of the Chief Clerk at the address below.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE. For details about the status of the application, visit the Commissioners' Integrated Database at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/cid. Search the database using the permit number for this application, which is provided at the top of this notice.

AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION. All public comments and requests must be submitted either electronically at https://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/, or in writing to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Please be aware that any contact information you provide, including your name, phone number, email address and physical address will become part of the agency's public record.

For more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call the TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040 or visit their website at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/pep.

Si desea informacion en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.

Further information may also be obtained from City of Presidio at the address stated above or by calling Mr. Jimmy Avila, Water/Sewer Supervisor, at 432-229-3605.

Issuance Date: October 13, 2025

Public Notice

The Presidio County Appraisal District is seeking proposals for Bank Financial Depository for 2026-2027 fiscal years. Any and all interested Financial Institutions, please submit Depository Collateral Agreement Proposals to the Presidio CAD office at 107 E. Texas,P O Box 879, Marfa, Texas, (432)729-3431. All proposals must be received by November 3, 2025. The Board of Directors of the Presidio CAD reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal.

10/2,10/9,10/16

Notice To Creditors

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Roberto Lujan, Deceased, were issued on October 10, 2025, under Docket No. 2069, pending in the County Court of Presidio County, Texas, to Julia West. Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the estate, addressed as follows: Representative, Estate of Roberto Lujan, Deceased c/o Elizabeth J. Lewis, Attorney at Law LAW OFFICE OF ELIZABETH J. LEWIS, PLLC P.O. Box 101 Marathon, Texas 79842 All persons having claims against this estate, which is currently being administered, are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. DATED October 13, 2025

Julia West
By: *Elizabeth J. Lewis*
Elizabeth J. Lewis, Attorney for Representative

AROUND THE BIG BEND

Thursday October 16

Hike with Homeless Dogs
10:00 am-11:00 am
H3V6+G93, Park Rd 3, Fort Davis

Boxing at Maintenant
9 am-10:30 am
Maintenant, 1825 Rabbits Rd., Marfa, (773) 425-9858

Paint & Sip - Couples Edition
6:00 pm-9:00 pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave, Alpine

Social Dance Class
6:00 pm-7:00 pm
Studio, 207 E Holland Ave Alpine

Friday October 17

Indian Lodge Tour
4:00 pm-5:00 pm
Davis Mountains State Park
H3V6+G93, Park Rd 3
Fort Davis

Saturday October 18

Bend & Brunch
10:00 am-11:00 am
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave, Alpine

Birding Hike with a Ranger
8:30am-10:30am
Davis Mountains State Park
H3V6+G93, Park Rd 3
Fort Davis

Open Mic Night: Poetry
8:00pm-10:00 pm
Alcove Social
211 E Holland Ave Alpine

Marfa100 100k Bike Race and 50k fun ride
9:00am
USO
302 S. Highland Avenue
Marfa

Sunday April 19

Sunday Slow Stretch with Bailey
4:00 pm-5:00 pm
La Sala Studio, Studio, 207 E Holland Ave Alpine (432) 294-5793

Weekly events

Free Zumba Classes
Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30 pm at Marfa Public Library

Yin Yoga
Tuesdays at 12 pm at Marfa Public Library

Free Meditation Classes
Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:00 pm at Marfa Public Library

AA (online and sometimes in-person)
Saturdays at 12:00 pm at https://tinyurl.com/y686nnw2 and sometimes in-person at Marfa Public Library

AA (in-person)
Monday & Wednesday at 6:00 pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Alpine Farmers Market
Saturday at 9:00 am-12:00 pm at Alpine Visitor Center. Schedules are subject to change. Please visit Marfa Farmstand on

Marfa hosts district XC meet in Balmorhea

By Roxye Lara
The Marfa Shorthorns Cross Country team made a strong showing at the District Meet on Wednesday, October 8—an event hosted by Marfa ISD but held this year in Balmorhea due to the uncertainty surrounding the availability of the Marfa Golf Course. Balmorhea ISD stepped up to host, ensuring a successful and well-run meet.

The Horns left their mark on the course, highlighted by two individual District Champions: Alyssa Harden, a sophomore standout, won the Varsity Girls District Championship with a winning time of 14:23.2 in the 2-mile event and Dania Fernandez earned the Junior High Girls District Championship, crossing the line in 16:30.4 to bring home gold for the JH Lady Horns.

All four Marfa XC squads competed—High School Boys, High School Girls, Junior High Boys, and Junior High Girls—with several impressive individual and team performances throughout the day.

The High School Girls team led the way for the Horns, finishing 2nd overall and advancing to the Regional Meet. Harden continued to anchor the team's success, followed by Ora Webb, who clocked an impressive 15:16 as one of Marfa's top performers. The team had strong contributions from Itzel Urrutia (16:02.8), Zoey Salgado (16:15.5), Giselle Torres (17:26.7), Ava Flores (17:25.4), Mikayla Bentley (19:21), and Heiti Montes (19:43).

When asked about the team's standout performance, Head Coach Arron Luna praised the group's consistency and chemistry. "The leadership from Alyssa and the dedication Ora has shown all season have really set the tone for this team," Luna said. "Their work ethic has pushed everyone to perform at their best. One of the most motivating things we've had on the team this year are the additions of Mikayla and Heidi.

Those two have been committed all season and I look forward to seeing them improve in the upcoming seasons." While the Lady Horns celebrated a trip to Region-als, the Boys Varsity team fell just short of qualifying for the first time in nearly a decade. Despite that setback, Meet Director Linda Ojeda remained optimistic about the team's future.

"We were definitely missing one key ingredient—home field advantage," Ojeda said. "Marfa has hosted district meets at the golf course for several years. We train there, we know the course, and we hosted several invitational meets there also. Competing in Balmorhea gave the home team



LINDA OJEDA

Alyssa Harden

an edge, and they wisely took advantage of it. Still, I know our teams will bounce back next year and set their sights on reclaiming the district titles."

Next up for the Lady Horns Regional Qualifiers is the Regional Meet on October 21 at the Har-old Patterson Sports Complex in Arlington at 11 a.m. Lady Horns roll over Sierra Blanca in District sweep

Tuesday evening, the Lady Horns traveled to Sierra Blanca and delivered a dominant performance, sweeping the Vaqueros in a key district matchup.

Marfa came out strong in the first set, earning a 25-22 win with solid kills from the usual suspects—Raven Martinez, Ava Flores, Itzel Urruita and Dariela Muñoz. The offense flowed smoothly, setting the tone early.

In set two, down 13-9, Coach Osi Alferez called a timeout to reset. What followed was a momentum-shifting rally: Sierra Blanca attempted a kill, only for Raven to dig it out. On the next attack, Zoey Salgado shut it down with a standout block, and the rally ended with an inevitable kill by Raven Martinez that fired up the team. The set ended 25-19 in Marfa's favor, highlighted by five kills from Itzel, a block-point from both Ava and Zoey, and solid team defense.

With the sweep in sight, the Lady Horns came out blazing in the third set, jumping to an early 10-point lead. Ava Flores took control at the service line with 11 straight serves, including two aces. Marfa played their strongest set yet, with aces from Amaya Gomez and Liliana Zubia, plus kills from Dariela Muñoz and Adeline Marquez. Ava and Raven continued to add to their kill-count and the offensive power. The set ended in a dominant 25-11 finish, securing the sweep.

The Lady Horns are back on their home court this Saturday at 1 p.m. for a rematch against Fort Davis in district play.

Reminder: This Friday, the Marfa Shorthorns hit the road to take on the Grady Wildcats in another district showdown. Kickoff at 6:30 p.m. Junior High will also play at 4 p.m. Good luck, Shorthorns!

CROSSWORD

Edited by David Steinberg October 16, 2025

ACROSS

1 "Fingers crossed!"

6 Where the Knicks play, for short

9 Goes for a stroll

14 Relating to kidneys

15 French for "yes"

16 French for "goodbye"

17 Hunter of "The Hunger Games"

20 Tedious task

21 New Jersey county named for an English county

22 Ladder step

23 "Same old, same old" routine

25 Palindromic name in Genesis

27 Faith of "The Exorcist"

32 Former presidential pet Bo

34 Karate uniforms

35 Authorize, as a digital contract

38 Female lobster or chicken

39 Ivy of "Legally Blonde"

42 Long of "The Best Man"

43 Small salamander

45 "Ta-tal"

46 Speak like Daffy

47 Met expectations?

49 Midday snooze

51 Hope of "E.T."

55 Google Pixel, e.g.

57 Neither's partner

58 From ancient Scandinavia

61 "You ___ seen nothin' yet!"

62 Rolled Mexican chip brand

64 Hoss of "Ta"

65 "Go away!"

66 Become one

67 First word of many letters

68 Thornton Wilder's "Our ___"

69 Mr ___ (most-subscribed-to YouTube)

70 "NFL Live" channel

DOWN

1 Rankles

2 Recover from sickness

3 Burst ___ the scene

4 Sentence containing every letter

5 Gorie of "One Night in Miami..."

6 Fuzz on a rock

7 Brings to court

8 Donate

9 One of the horsemen of the apocalypse

10 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest or 10 Downing

Street

11 California congressman

Ted

12 Avid

13 Belted out

18 Rogen of "Steve Jobs"

19 Board bigwig, briefly

24 The Beehive State

26 Competed (for)

27 "Are you done wasting our time?"

28 Fiona, for one

29 "C'mon, ___ a little!"

30 Brit's "Heavens to Murgatroyd!"

31 Show with few episodes

32 "What a disaster!"

33 (The light's green!)

36 Main idea

37 California county known

for its cabs?

40 Second-in-command, briefly

41 Overly hasty

44 Capital of New Jersey

46 Parisian paper

48 Had pancakes, say

50 Na+ or Cl-

52 Senseless

53 Telecom giant head-quartered in Espoo, Finland

54 Common side dish with shrimp

55 Bygone

56 Kermit's greeting

59 Lose it

60 Work hard for

62 Rubber duck's "habitat"

63 Complete collection

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

10/9 © 2025 Andrews McMeel Universal www.upuzzles.com

10/16

Bad Actors by Aidan Deshong

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
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68						69						70		

SUDUKO

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

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10/16

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

SOLUTION:

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10/9

OBITUARIES

Crittendon managed Valentine ranches, known for conservation achievements

Lynn Hampton Crittendon was born July 10, 1928, in Rush Springs, Oklahoma to Ernest and Rhoda (née Hall) Crittendon. He passed from this life on September 3, 2025, at age 97. Lynn (or Crit, as he was known to family and friends) was a rancher, managing the Moore Ranch of Valentine, Texas, for over 65 years.

Lynn grew up in the small south Oklahoma community of Rush Springs among a large extended family in the midst of the Great Depression. His father ran a cotton gin during the season and a feed store the rest of the year while raising a large garden and steers to support the family, which included four brothers and a sister.

Once he was old enough, Lynn helped in the feed store until he suffered a case of pneumonia due to the dust. His mother refused to allow him back in the feed store and he worked in a hardware store until he left for college. Lynn was a stand-out high school basketball player, and due to his height and skills he was told he could try and walk on to the Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) team coached at that time by Hank Iba. Since they could not offer him a scholarship, he chose not to try and worked as a cook in a dorm cafeteria during the school year and loaded watermelons during the harvest months in summer to put himself through college, obtaining a degree in petroleum geology.

His next older brother, Bob, had come home from WWII and was just ahead of him in school pursuing a degree in petroleum

engineering. Bob actually taught Lynn in at least one class. Lynn participated in Army ROTC while at Oklahoma A&M. Upon graduation he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Ordinance Branch. Upon completion of his ordinance officer training in Aberdeen, Maryland, he was assigned as installation ordinance officer of White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico (now known as White Sands Missile Range). During his two years there, he met his future wife, Katherine Jane Moore, who taught at the base elementary school. They courted, enjoying times in Las Cruces, El Paso and Juarez. His final year of active duty was spent in Germany. Upon his return and discharge from active-duty, Lynn and Jane were married in Marfa, Texas, on September 25, 1954.

Upon leaving active-duty, Lynn was hired as a petroleum geologist by Haliburton Corporation, and the newlyweds went to Duncan, Oklahoma, for his initial training. Afterwards, he was assigned to Haliburton's Houston, Texas, office. After welcoming their first child in November of 1956, the couple decided to accept his father-in-law's offer to move onto and run the Moore Ranch in Valentine, Texas, which they did in 1957.

Lynn was a fast learner and was soon taking care of the home ranch and three other lease operations. He did keep in touch with his geology skills, serving as a consultant for his older brother Bob for several years. Lynn was



also very active in the community, serving for several years on the local school board, helped establish the Republican Party in Jeff Davis County, served on a legal board in El Paso, and was active in the Jeff Davis County Historical Commission. He followed in the footsteps of John Moore in his concern for land conservation and was recognized for his efforts by the State of Texas for his successful efforts on the Moore Ranch.

Lynn was preceded in death by his parents; his brothers, George Hall, Cook and Robert "Bob"; and his sister, Helen. He is survived by his sons, Bryan (wife Sherri) and Arthur (wife Angela); grandchildren Carl, William, Anna and Dustin; and great-grandchildren Harley, Bowen, Candace, Austin and Jack.

The Memorial Service was held on Friday, September 12, 2025, at Valentine Community Church. Family and friends may share condolences and sign the online register book at www.harper-funeralhome.com.

Chili ‘Hall of Flame’ member worked to help Terlingua High

Dorathy Williams, 91, of Terlingua, Texas, passed away peacefully on October 6, 2025. She was born on December 2, 1933, in Owosso, Michigan, to Allen and Evelyn Oates.

Dorathy attended school in Steele, Missouri, where she was a First Team All-State basketball player.

After school, she went on to work as a flight attendant and ticket agent for United Airlines. She later moved to Terlingua, Texas, where she became an active and beloved member of the community.

Dorathy was a devoted member of CASI (Chili Appreciation Society International), serving as a director from 2003 to 2011 and working with the Terlingua Trails "Upcomings" during that same

time. She was inducted into the Hall of Flame in 2001 and received the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.

She also worked at the Terlingua Mercantile for more than 16 years, where she was well known and loved by all.

A passionate community supporter, Dorathy dedicated much of her time to fundraising for Terlingua High School and other local causes.

Dorathy is survived by her husband, Tom Williams of Terlingua, and her daughter, Denise Saunders of Terlingua. She was preceded in death by her parents, Allen and Evelyn Oates.

The family deeply appreciates all the kind words, thoughts, and gestures shared on behalf of Dorathy.



In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in honor of Dorathy Williams to:

Sherrie Davis, CASI Scholarship Administrator
125 E. San Augustine
Deer Park, TX 77536

Alpine man embraced the natural world

Norman Nunley, born on January 3, 1961, in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, passed away peacefully on October 5, 2025, in Alpine, Texas. He was a gentle soul, dedicated to his family and deeply passionate about the natural world around him.

Throughout his life, Norman displayed a remarkable work ethic and a diverse range of interests that enriched his journey. He began his career as a groundskeeper while attending classes in biology, nurturing his profound love for the environment. His professional journey led him to a role in sales for Morrison True Value and Jarratt's Building Supply, where he connected with many in the community through his friendly demeanor. He also worked river tours in Big Bend National Park, sharing his expansive knowledge of nature with visitors and instilling in them a sense of wonder for the landscapes around them.

In addition to his various jobs, Norman achieved his dream of owning a small family business,

which he wholeheartedly devoted himself to, ensuring it became a cherished part of his family's legacy. An avid herpetologist, he had a fascination for reptiles and amphibians, reflecting his deep appreciation for all creatures great and small.

In his spare time, Norman found joy in gardening and cultivating his beloved tree orchards, always eager to share the fruits of his labor with family and friends.

Norman was an adored husband to Donna Nunley, who stood by him through life's ups and downs. He was a dedicated father, deeply loved by his daughters, Jaclyn and Jacey, and his son, Jacob. His family was the heart of his world, and he took utmost pride in watching them grow, supporting them in all their endeavors.

He is survived by his loving mother, Marge Nunley, who cherished him beyond words, and his dear sisters, Janet Cornett and Rebecca Davis, who shared countless memories with him throughout their lives.



Norman's family also carries the beautiful memories of his late father, Norman Nunley, and his brother, John Nunley, both of whom left a lasting impact on him.

As we remember Norman Nunley, we celebrate a life that was richly lived, filled with passion for nature, devotion to family, and an unwavering kindness that touched everyone around him. His gentle spirit, laughter, and love will forever remain in the hearts of all who were privileged to know him.

National Night Out

Presidio County law enforcement and first responders gathered on October 7 at Coffield Park in Marfa for National Night Out to greet the community, hand out giveaways and educate the public on partnering with authorities. Dozens enjoyed food, games, demonstrations and the chance to greet and thank first responders.



SENTINEL BAR NIGHT

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I will help you,
I will uphold you with my
victorious right hand.
Isaiah 41:10

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Celebrating OUR FIRST YEAR NOW OPEN UNTIL 7:00 ON WEEKDAYS

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.

LETTERS

Deep gratitude from Chinati director

ON BEHALF of The Chinati Foundation/La Fundación Chinati, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who made the 38th Annual Chinati Weekend so memorable. As an artist-founded, artist-centered museum, we're indebted to all the artists and everyone in the arts community who made Chinati Weekend 2025 possible.

This year, we were proud to celebrate the opening of two exhibitions, Fred Sandback: Sculpture and Oscar Hagerman: Sillas de México, which will be on view through June 2026. Fred Sandback: Sculpture was made possible by the extraordinary support of Amy Baker Sandback, as well as David Gray, Amavong Panya, and Joshua Decter. We're grateful to the Mexico City-based team at kurimanzutto, including Martha Reta, Claudia Janneth Barriga Gutierrez, Natalie Espinosa Selde, Manola Samaniego, Raúl Zorrilla, Monica Manzutto and José Kuri, for their help in bringing Sillas de México to Marfa.

A special thank you to Alejandra de la Mora for her contributions, and Oscar's son, Carlos Hagerman, for sharing his moving film El Patio de mi Casa, as well as Justin Almqvist for his installation support.

I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to the artists who participated in Chinati's weekend programs including: the Roscoe Mitchell Trio, with Roscoe, Vincent Davis, and Junius Paul, for their unforgettable performance; Jacqueline del Olmo and Primo Carrasco for lending their DJ talents on Friday and Saturday nights; and Artist in Residence Klara Lidén for sharing such inspired new work at the Locker Plant. Thank you to Jeanhee Yu, Dim Zayan, MarfaMUST, and all



ROGER BLACK

Roscoe Mitchell lights up the stage during Chinati Weekend

the local artists who welcomed visitors to your studios throughout the weekend. Thank you to our esteemed Board of Trustees: Douglas Baxter, Gabriel Catone, Lee Baumann Cohn, J. Patrick Collins, Chad Dayton, Miguel Fernandez, Mack Fowler, Franck Giraud, Sam Hamilton, George Kelly, Courtney J. Martin, Anthony Meier, Heather Pesanti, Noelle M. Reed, Annabelle Selldorf, Richard Schiff, José Noé Suro, and Steven Volpe. We're also grateful to Siete Leguas Tequila, RGINY, Aesop, Glazer's Beer & Beverage,

Gruet, and Ben E. Keith for their essential support. Thank you also to the City of Marfa, the Marfa Chamber of Commerce, and Texas Commission on the Arts for making this weekend's programming possible. I also want to thank the incredible chefs for their delicious contributions: Chef Oscar Cortazar of La Pajara in Chihuahua, Chef Brian Espinoza, and Sawtooth. Thank you to Virginia Lebermann and the Capri, Monika Bernstein and her incredible team, INDUSTRIHAUS, Rob Crowley, Tim Crowley, Jesse Barnes, Faith

Gay, and Cactus Liquors for your many contributions to the benefit dinner and beyond.

Chinati is grateful for the ongoing support of the people of Marfa and Far West Texas. Thank you to Arturo Alferez, Elizabeth Brito, Mark Cash, Belinda Dominguez, Janet Enriguez, Susan Flusche, Nancy Francis, Naomi Francis, Melissa Firmin, Rachel Gomez, Veronica Gomez, Donel Hartnett, Duke Hartnett, Levi Hinojos, Griselda Hinojos, Alexandra Howard, Raymond Jaquez, Alex Marks, Eliseo Martinez, Manny

Ontiveros, Linda Ojeda, Curtis Pittman, Sara Pittman, José Salgado, Daniel Santos, Vianney Santos, Julio Soto, Ricardo Velazquez, Sarah Vasquez. And thank you to Rainer Judd, Flavín Judd, Richard Griggs and the entire staff at Judd Foundation for their support of the weekend.

Chinati's educational and public programming is supported with generous grants from the Carl B. & Florence E. King Foundation, Humanities Texas, Milton & Sally Avery Arts Fund, Prentice Farrar Brown and Alline Ford Founda-

tion, Pulitzer Foundation, Rea Charitable Trust, Ruth Stanton Foundation, Start Small Foundation, Still Water Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, The Brown Foundation, The Cowles Charitable Trust, The Donald and Carole Chaiken Foundation, The George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation, The Permian Basin Area Foundation, The Sarofim Foundation, Union Pacific Foundation and Warren Skaaren Charitable Trust.

Supporting Judd's vision for Chinati, along with the vision of the artists in our collection and the artists that join us annually, is a wonderful and rewarding experience and would not be possible without the contributions of our staff, who work hard all year to make this weekend happen.

Many thanks to our exceptional visitor services staff, docents, and guards: Shea Carley, Kathie Compton, Al Davis, John Ehrke, Mo Eldridge, Katy Rose Elsasser, Kyp Hinojos, Alex Kamelhair, David Lanman, Kat Mckenna, Suzanne McLeod, Dillon Orr, Rory Parks, Janelly Pereira, Nick Terry, Prepney Torres, Chelsea Quinlan.

And thank you to the rest of my supportive and hard-working colleagues at Chinati, without whom this weekend would not be possible: Maritza Bautista, Julie Bernal, Michael Carnes, Sylvana Diaz, Rowdy Dugan, Micah Francis, Malinda Galindo, J.D. Garcia, Hannah Goldfarb, Regina Gutierrez, Sandra Hinojos, Christine Jackson, Haley Levin, Miguel Leyva, Rhonda Manley, Stephen Martin, Jen Rowles, Veronica Salinas, Ben Shurley, Rachel May Smith, Zade Williamson. We look forward to welcoming you back in October of 2026, when we will mark 40 years of The Chinati Foundation/La Fundación Chinati.

Caitlin Murray



The new Sentinel

A bigger calendar

Congrats! As a new resident (been in Marfa for a year), I would love a more elaborate calendar of the events happening in Marfa. For example; pop-ups, openings, musical and food events, etc. . . .

Jill, Marfa

A page about the arts

It was good to meet Kenny Schachter at the Sentinel. While speaking with him, I was reminded of the building on Highland where the Art Guys from Houston staged an art exhibition maybe 25 years ago. Do you remember that one??? Pure satire.

I've long enjoyed the Sentinel. It's where I learn about local art news since I don't get out much—ha. I'd love to see a separate page devoted to just the arts. That's my top suggestion.

Wells Mason, Marfa

Loving local journalism

I wholly applaud your new, creative direction in local and regional journalism!

Having worked both sides of a newspaper {Editor of college newspaper} and printer's monkey at the Gunnison County Globe

(one of the few hot lead, linotype operations) I love local journalism and hope for it's continued success.

John A. Cunningham

Marfa alum

My name is Debbie Kelly Dendy. My dad grew up in Marfa , a Marfa Shorthorn. We grew up going to see his mom and dad, Jack and Clair McCracken Kelly. Nana grew up in Marfa also.

You know at the Museum! And the Colonel House, the place we all grew up playing when we were in Marfa.

Cantaloupe , watermelon , chili chilirenos, Chewys,Marfa Style. . . . Mott's 5 and dime. . . . Paisano Baptist Encampment. . . . And the Glorious Marfa Lights!

Yes I've seen them a million times. Marfa was always a fun trip.

My family and the friends of my daddy and his sister have all passed away, as well as my dad. I've only been back one time since they have all passed and it was for a funeral of my dad's best friend.

Maybe someday I can come again. I'd love to keep getting the Sentinel, just as I have for about 10 years

Debbie Dendy

Reporting on gentrification

As a 30-year+ resident of Shafter and, before that, a small business owner in Alpine, I'd like to see the Sentinel run some articles discussing the gentrification of the Big Bend and how it is affecting the character of the small communities here.

Having retired as an educator of better than twenty-five years in Presidio, I've got a special interest in how our community schools are being affected.

Sam and Rob are my neighbors here in Shafter, and I've been working with them to establish a public water supply for our community.

I'm happy to hear that they will continue to supply great reporting for The Sentinel and The International.

We are fortunate to enjoy vibrant reporting on local affairs. Too many rural areas in the state have lost their local papers, becoming news deserts.

Thanks to y'all's newspapers and local reporting from Marfa Public Radio, it looks like Presidio County may avoid that fate.

Randall Cater, Shafter

The 'coolest people' helped spur the homecoming festivities

To all who participated in the Homecoming Parade, pep rally, and game, thank you from the bottom of my heart!

A huge thanks especially to the Presidio Blue Devils band and Molly Ferguson, who brought extra spirit and fun on Thursday with their marching band. What a privilege to share such generous neighbors in Presidio County!

Thank you also to Faith Gay and Cactus Liquors for the parade float and the donation of gorgeous homecoming bouquets for the court. And to Blair Park, David Bebee and family, to the library, the bank, MEF, Chinati, EMS, law enforcement, the fire department and all our parade participants. And oh my goodness, thank you to Mayor Manny Baeza for permitting us a last-minute street closure when I dropped the ball.

Thank you to the community who came out to watch the festivities and support the students, to the families and alums who came from near and far to celebrate being a Shorthorn. Thank you to my colleagues at school, to emcee and awesome boss Linda Ojeda, superhero/Cricut expert Rachel Gomez, senior class sponsors Lizzy, Donel and Curtis, and most of all to my students, who are earth's coolest people and best artists and for whom we would move mountains. I am still so tired from the frenzy of activity last week, but my heart is full!

Thank you!
Adele Powers
Marfa

Democrats ready to localize another national 'No Kings' event

The Big Bend Democrats will meet in Alpine on Saturday from 2 to 5 p.m. for a "We Say No to Kings" march from the Alpine Civic Center to the Granada Theater to protest President Trump's administration. Democrats and all residents from Fort Davis, Marfa, Alpine and Marathon and all of the Big Bend are invited to attend.

Marchers will meet at the Civic Center, 801 W. Holland and head to the Granada at 207 E. Holland. A police presence will accompany the marchers. Those that prefer not to march can meet up at the Granda. The event is part of a national movement for Saturday, and attendees can RSVP at mobilize.us/s/xuT1hV.

Turn the golf course into an art park for visiting A-listers

I have read all the BBS articles and letters of late on the subject of the potential closure of the golf course and some baseball field(s) due to budget constraints.

I'd like to offer a potential solution to the problem. Why not turn the golf course and ball fields into (drum roll please)....permanent outdoor art expositions?

There are already some of those in and around Marfa, so why not two more? Think of it—just go find some unused concrete culvert sections and line them up between a couple of golf course fairways. Find some shiny aluminum box/table things and place them between fairways. You could get some old dining chairs and arrange them in a semi-circle around a tee box or a green.

And get some old shipping containers and decorate them and arrange them artistically somewhere else around the course.

I think there are a bunch available lying in a field east of town! And you could rename the golf course the "Whole in One" art park—now that's literally literary art!

For the baseball fields, just put up a plywood sign next to the outfield scoreboard and stencil "SELL THE HOUSE SELL THE CAR SELL THE KIDS" on it and you've created a masterpiece art lovers will surely flock to and pay to see!

And label the concession stand "Gucci" and people from all over will come by just to take selfies in front of it!

The possibilities of doing

something like this are endless! Maybe some of the local artists or the big name artists who part-time in Marfa could contribute some suitable new works or something outdoor suitable from their collections to help out the locals?

Admission to and use of these art parks for sports would be free to locals, but out-of-towners would have to pay a respectable admission price to come and see these art installations. I bet in no time "art world A-listers" (a BBS term I've read) and their artist acolytes will be flying in to Marfa from NY, LA, Napa, etc., in their private jets in even greater numbers than now to see and be seen, all to the benefit of local golf and ball players! I know, brilliant, right?! You're welcome, Marfa!

Gordon Moller, Davis County

Democrats highlight positions open for candidates

There are several local positions up for election in 2026—and if you or someone you know is thinking about running, filing opens November 8. Here are the positions that will be on the ballot.

Local offices

- County Judge
- County Commissioner, Precinct 2
- County Commissioner, Precinct 4
- Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1
- Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2
- County Treasurer
- County Clerk
- Party Office:
- Democratic County Chair

If you're interested or have questions, feel free to reach out to us on November 8 at presidio-countydemocratic.party. We're happy to help connect you with the right information. Let's get more great people on the ballot!

Presidio County Democratic Party

OPINION



OUR WATER MATTERS

Hot springs of the Trans-Pecos

By Trey Gerfers

Our region is home to many unusual geothermal phenomena, including a mysterious hot cave (106°F) about 12 miles south of Lajitas as well as abandoned mercury mines flooded with hot water (113°F) at a depth of about 900 feet around Terlingua. The area also has several miniature geysers that spurt hot water (140°F to 194°F) nearly two feet into the

air from a series of small hot springs about 4 miles southwest of Candelaria. These curiosities, among many others, are described by Christopher D. Henry in “Geologic Setting and Geochemistry of Thermal Water and Geothermal Assessment, Trans-Pecos, Texas” published in 1979. It constitutes one of the most comprehensive surveys of hot-water features ever conducted in our area, whose most

common sites involve hot springs that occur “where a somewhat fortuitous combination of circumstances allows the hot water to reach the surface,” writes Henry. In an article titled “Geysers and hot springs” on the EBSCO Information Services website, William R. Hackett describes the water in hot springs “as rain and snowfall, which percolates several kilometers down into the Earth's crust

through permeable volcanic rocks and sediments.” The temperature of these rocks increases due to our planet’s geothermal gradient, which Hackett defines as “the rate at which temperature increases with depth in the Earth.” Henry reports that “[t]hermal gradients are at least 30°C [per kilometer of depth] ... and possibly higher along the Rio Grande. The increase in thermal gradient and heat

flow may be due to progressive thinning of the crust” beneath the Trans-Pecos region. This rise in the subsurface temperature heats the water, and because the “heated water is less dense,” it “is forced upward along fractures by descending cold water,” writes Henry. Depending on local conditions, “the complete cycle from snowflake to hot spring may take centuries or millennia,” according to Hackett.

Hot springs require very specific physical and thermal conditions. “If there is no focusing pathway to the surface, fluids may remain underground. If the heat source is not hot enough, or if there is too much cool groundwater, then warm springs may result,” according to Hackett. Hot springs are also very fragile. “Any disruption of the delicate plumbing systems by humankind or nature involving the extraction of fluids, injection of fluids, or perturbation of the water table will almost always yield unpredictable and possibly detrimental consequences to nearby thermal features,” writes Hackett.

By the same token, hot springs themselves can have major effects on local environments because their high soil temperatures destroy plant roots and their noxious vapors can form “death traps” for birds and small animals, according to Hackett. But hot springs also “sustain unique ecosystems that include specialized microorganisms and plants ... and even entire food chains of colorful algae, flies, and rare spiders ... wholly dependent on the supply of warm water.” The ecological importance of hot springs is further evidenced by their often “vivid surface coloration” for which “microorganisms are largely responsible,” writes Hackett, as well as the “birds and mammals that congregate near the year-round open water and green vegetation of hydrothermal features.”

Henry defines three distinct areas in the Trans-Pecos where hot springs occur: “the southern Hueco Bolson adjacent to the Quitman Mountains; the Presidio Bolson and its structural extension to the north, and the Big Bend region.” The most significant site in the southern Hueco Bolson is Indian Hot Springs, “a cluster of seven geothermal springs with high mineral constituents” located along the Rio Grande River about 25 miles south of Sierra Blanca, according to the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The name is apparently derived from the frequent use of the springs by Native

peoples before European settlement of the area. Henry measured the temperatures of these springs in 1976 and found the highest recorded temperature of any thermal spring in Texas at 117°F.

The best-known geothermal feature in the Presidio Bolson is Chinati Hot Springs, which Henry refers to by the earlier name of Ruidosa Hot Springs. Located about 8 miles north of Ruidosa, the waters of these springs emanate “from a concrete enclosure on a terrace ... evidently from gravels along a small bluff overlooking the terrace” about 10 feet above the adjacent creek. Henry measured a temperature here of 113°F.

The Big Bend region boasts perhaps the most famous hot springs in the whole state known simply as Hot Springs or Boquillas Hot Springs (and formerly as Langford Hot Springs) in Big Bend National Park. Henry describes at least six hot springs here along the Rio Grande on both sides of the border, which mostly “occur in impenetrable cane thickets.” The Hot Springs location inside the national park, however, features a manmade stone tub above the Rio Grande, where the hot water can accumulate before overflowing into the river below. Henry measured a temperature here of 104°F.

Perhaps the most fascinating geothermal features in our region involve two obscure artesian wells drilled by Gulf Oil Corporation back in 1965.

Originally intended as part of an exploratory effort to find petroleum, these super-deep, highly prolific wells known as Presidio Trust #1 and Swafford #1 (each with a highest-reported temperature of 180°F) ended up tapping some of the hottest water ever found in the Trans-Pecos by chance.

Indeed, as Henry points out: “Some thermal waters do not reach the surface but have been discovered accidentally; thus, there should be many as yet undiscovered thermal convection systems, particularly in [the] Presidio and Hueco Bolsons.”

To learn more, visit www.beg.utexas.edu/publications/geologic-setting-and-geochemistry-thermal-water-and-geothermal-assessment-trans-pecos.

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

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The Langford Hot Springs sits on the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park.

The event is free for general programming; “Anniversary Swag” packages that include special merchandise and a commemorative poster are sold out. For the complete schedule, see artblocks.io/articles/art-blocks-marfa-weekend-2025.

first time since its 1969 presentation at the landmark ICA show *Cybernetic Serendipity* in London; accompanied by his bronze cast sculpture *Seated Figure*, last shown at Allan Stone Gallery in 1966.

Cybernetic Highway aims to document the long-term trajectory of Robert Mallary's career and his integration of technological practices into a life of creative output.

Thursday, October 16—Opening party 7:30 p.m.
Friday, October 17—Breakfast with Kevin McCoy 10 a.m.
Film preview of *An Accursed Share* 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 18—An evening with Botto 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, October 19—Schmaints with Schmrrypto 2 p.m.
Closing reception 7:30 p.m.

110 WEST
DALLAS STREET

BIG BEND
Sentinel

Inspired by every inch of this place’

Earth artist Colleen O’Brien returns to the Big Bend

By Sam Karas

AN ACTUALLY-RAINY RAINY season has brought green to unexpected places around the Big Bend—and it’s also brought back earth artist Colleen O’Brien. Most recently of northern New Mexico, O’Brien will darken doorsteps, barstools and rocks in Far West Texas over the next few months as she plugs away at an ambitious body of work that began in Terlingua years ago.

O’Brien is a Texan by birth whose parents had a love affair with the Big Bend in the 1980s. As a result, she’s been steeped from birth in the beauty and legend of Far West Texas. “We had a framed picture of Clay Henry in our house growing up,” she said, referring to the famous beer-swilling goat who serves as mayor of Lajitas.

Most people intentionally avoid the Big Bend in late summer, but O’Brien has made it a habit. In 2022, O’Brien spent the month of August at Willow House, which offers fellowships and retreats for artists. In August 2024, O’Brien returned, this time to Big Bend National Park, where she took part in the park’s reinvigorated artist in residence program.

Across these two residencies, O’Brien painted earth works in her signature style—large scale work with natural materials created en plein air that mirror the shape of the land and the flow of its drainages. The Big Bend, internationally known for its violently creative volcanic geology, is an especially rich text. “All of a sudden I had this large body of work that sort of amounts to a survey of the region, through the paintings,” she said.

O’Brien’s process is part old-school landscape painting and part backcountry adventure. She started out making large-scale oil paintings, but as her work fixated on landscapes, she began to feel trapped in a traditional studio environment. Now, most of her paintings are created in one session in a singular location—usually a large rock. She spends a lot of time driving around and scouting locations, trawling for places that look hospitable enough to spend a few hours out in the elements. “The worst thing about painting a landscape and being inside is you just want to be outside,” she said. “My studio pretty much exists out of my car.”

THE ALL-IN-ONE-TAKE approach is key for both theoretical and practical reasons—in one session where O’Brien had to bail on a painting as a flash flood loomed, she returned to find that a curious deer had used it for an outhouse.

Most of the time, O’Brien gathers elements from the scene around her work space, using different types of dirt, soil and rock for a range of pigments and textures. She had to rethink her process ahead of the residency in the national park, which abides by strict federal “leave no trace” regulations—she



Car trunk studio: Colleen O’Brien’s typical studio spread laid out in the trunk of her car.

couldn’t take materials gathered within park boundaries outside.

The park helped her figure out a workaround, helping her connect with private landowners who would allow her to harvest materials that mirrored the conditions of promising sites in the park. As a

result, her own personal map of the Big Bend grew exponentially as she got to meet new people and explore beyond the typical weekenders’ itinerary. “We did everything by the book,” she said. “It was really fun.”

O’Brien frequently posts image carousels and vid-

eos of herself making the work, which she regards as a kind of performance. It’s a way of documenting the landscape that mirrors the paintings themselves—who are, in a way, witnesses to their own creation. “My philosophy on abstract painting is that it’s a series of movements within a certain time frame,” she said. “My work is about hiking out there, driving around, wandering, finding the right rock, rubbing your hands on it, putting your hands in the dirt, listening to the water run by you. And then at the end, you’re left with a record of it, the physical painting.”

“I feel like art can give you a lot of access to senses and emotion and memory and smell,” she continued. “What I want for my paintings is for people to be transported to a place. I don’t necessarily want people to necessarily look for figures or anything that’s representative.”

WHILE O’BRIEN considers herself a student—and steward—of the landscape, she does have an academic background in art. She studied at the Land Arts of the American West program at Texas Tech, which gave her room to breathe and the opportunity to study monumental works of the Southwest up close. (Her teacher, Chris Taylor, is a frequent Marfa dinner table guest alongside wife Ingrid Schaffner, the former curator of the Chinati Foundation.) “People hate on Lubbock, but the sky is like 70% of your view and all that red dirt everywhere—it just gives you space to think,” she said. “You’re not just staring at concrete and buildings. I don’t want to see the built environment; I think it wears on your senses.”

On her last day in the Panhandle, she gathered a box of red dirt from the canyons—a sentimental tether of sorts. The box rode around in her car for months before it finally found a home at a solo show of her work. “It was a very emotional piece for me, but some of the feedback on it was funny,” she recalled.

Though her work took her away from the Panhandle, she’s found a way to keep herself centered in places where the sky looms large. She’s made paintings at Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu, New Mexico, where God once told Georgia O’Keefe—a painter who also famously enjoyed working from rocks—she could have a mountain if she painted it enough. She’s also made work in Bisbee, Arizona, in a region known for mountain lion and jaguar sightings.

In all her years of painting in the backcountry, the Bisbee big cats came the closest to rattling her. Conventional wisdom holds that mountain lions see you more often than you see them, and that the best way to repel them is to act big and tough. “You’re not supposed to crouch down, and that’s my entire practice,” O’Brien said.

For now, she’s happy to be back in Far West Texas, where she feels like she can inhabit the role of the artist 24/7. It’s both an escape and a big responsibility—being adequately prepared to work outside in the desert in a place with few services has its risks, but the mental peace she feels out here is its own reward.

“I like the pace of life,” she said. “And I’m constantly inspired by every single inch of this place.”

Paintings on the line: Canvases hung out to dry at a house in Panther Junction during O’Brien’s 2024 residency in the park.



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