BIG BEND
Sentinel

Vol. 93 No. 34 • November 13, 2025 Combined with the Presidio International Marfa, Texas • $1

Council okays water charge, K-9 stipend

By Rob D'Amico

Marfa

On Tuesday, the Marfa City Council approved a new water surcharge intended to pay off debt for infrastructure improvements near Fort D.A. Russell and the East Heights section of the city.

Water and wastewater customers will now be charged $4.44 per connection per month to pay Presidio County, which took out a loan from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for its participation in the Economically Distressed Areas Program (EDAP). Of $4.6 million the county was awarded from the TWDB through the EDAP program, roughly $3 million is in the form of a grant while the remaining sum, $1.6 million, is in the form of a loan.

The county will assume ownership of the infrastructure being constructed near Fort D.A. Russell and East Heights, and then ownership reverts back to the city after the loan is paid.

The Marfa components of the EDAP grant are a new sewer system for the Fort D.A. Russell area and a new water and wastewater system for East Heights in Marfa, under El Paso Street from the west end of the neighborhood to the Tumble In RV Park. Additional county projects not paid for by the surcharge include planning, acquisition and design of new water systems for Las Pampas and Shafter.

City legal counsel Teresa Todd told the counsel that the D.A. Russell improvements were required. "Four years ago, TCEQ declared that area a public nuisance and mandated that we do this," she said.

Trey Gerfers, general manager of the Presidio Underground Water Conservation District, is helping manage the EDAP project. He said he plans to give a comprehensive update on the status of all the projects at a December 10 Commissioners Court Meeting. He also plans a written update in his *Big Bend Sentine*l column, Our Water Matters, soon. Gerfers noted that the D.A. Russell and Heights projects are done with pre-design, closing in on finalizing environmental assessments and will then move to a final design phase. The city and county would need additional funds—such as new, future grants from the Texas Water Development Board to complete all the projects.

Continued on page 5



A state police truck keeps watch at the gold mine. **Photography by Félix Márquez, Koral Carballo, and Benjamin Rasmussen**

Gold, guns and cartels

Part One: A gold mine in Mexico was taken over by the sons of "El Chapo" Guzmán. Mexican officials and generals said they would help an American businessman reclaim the mine—after hefty bribes.

By Steve Fisher

PUENTE NEWS COLLECTIVE

La Mexico

BARRELING DOWN the highway at 100 mph, a convoy of state police vehicles blew through speed bumps as it entered a small town in the Sonoran Desert. Blasting over them was hell, but Alejandro Sánchez knew that slowing down was too risky: here, locals call them "death bumps," because reducing your speed gives cartel snipers a better chance of taking you out.

Sánchez and the officers protecting him had left Hermosillo, the capital of the state of Sonora, before sunrise on June 23 and, by 7 a.m., had arrived in Altar. There's not much pedestrian traffic because the town sits in the heart of a cartel war zone, and anyone who walks the streets risks being caught in crossfire.

Still, it was a place to gather reinforcements, so the convoy stopped under the town's welcome arch and officers wielding AR-15 semi-automatic weapons found high ground to watch for threats. Within minutes, four more patrol trucks raced up to join the security detail.

Their destination: a gold mine. Sánchez, the officers knew, was key to the mine's future and keeping it out of the hands of a major cartel.

For three years, Sánchez had worked to revive the mine, encountering corrupt officials and cartel operatives. He once had to dive for cover during a firefight. But now he was close to resuming operations at the mine with deposits worth billions. "Let's go!" Sánchez said. And they were off.

A cigar lounge in Newport Beach

Four years ago, Sánchez was enjoying a Cuban cigar at an elegant cigar lounge in Newport Beach, California, when the manager introduced him to a friend, Nicah Odood, who had a problem. The manager knew Sánchez had contacts in Mexico—top businessmen and politicians. Maybe he could help.

Odood was the partial owner of a gold mine in Mexico that had been taken over by the four sons of the notorious drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán. Odood wanted to hire Sánchez to be his fixer—to persuade the police and military to drive out the sons known as "Los Chapitos." Sánchez declined. He had no interest in mining and no experience confronting the Mexican underworld. But Sánchez did have a personal connection to Sonora, where the mine is located. He was mostly raised in an orphanage in Hermosillo.

Odood then made an offer: help reclaim the mine and the orphanage would reap 1% percent of the profits. "The orphanage really helped me a lot in many ways," Sánchez recalled. "And it just dawned on me, 'What is it that I have done in return to repay them?'" He told Odood he'd do it. Sánchez set to work in January 2022.

"I thought it would just take a few phone calls and the problem would be resolved," he said. By his own admission, Sánchez went into the job incredibly naíve. What he didn't realize was that the mine lay in the path of a key narcotics trafficking route into the United States and that taking back the mine also meant cutting off the Chapitos not just from the gold, but millions in drug profits.

The orphanage

Sánchez was born in 1971 in Mexicali, Baja California, to the maid of a wealthy banker. As a single mother, she couldn't afford to raise him so she sent him first to an orphanage in Mexicali, but she didn't like how he was treated there. Then the wife of the banker recommended the Kino Institute in Hermosillo, where Sánchez's mother sent him when he was 5.

At the orphanage, Sánchez was especially fond of the prefect, Francisco Fimbres. "He gave me that affection that I was lacking because I never had a father figure," Sánchez said.

Continued on page 6

31st annual archeology conference brings the past to life

By Sam Karas

Alpine

Last weekend's Center for Big Bend Studies conference attracted a small crowd of archaeology buffs to Far West Texas for its annual conference celebrating the Trans-Pecos and Northern Mexico. Twenty-eight presenters gave lectures on captivating topics from across the region, giving an opportunity for professionals in the field the opportunity to mingle with each other and the general public.

While many of the talks were given by researchers with many years of experience, the conference's up-and-coming academics had groundbreaking work to share—suggesting that there's a bright future ahead for a field that spends most of its time looking toward the past.

'Migration palimpsests'

Dr. Laura Ng, assistant professor of anthropology at Grinnell College in Iowa, kicked off the conference with Grinnell College senior Jorge Salinas on the overlap between 19th century Chinese railroad worker camps and sites frequented by more contemporary migrants crossing the United States-Mexico borderlands.

In the early 1880s, Chinese laborers played a brief but pivotal role in settling present-day towns along the Southern Pacific Railroad Line, which roughly follows Highway 90 west of Del Rio. Though this history has had more visibility in the past few years—most notably with Kenneth Tam's 2022 Ballroom Marfa show Tender is the hand which holds the stone of memory, which was in direct response to these stories—it's still an undersung chapter of local history.

Robert Reed Ellison—a cowboy also remembered by history as the first Anglo to report seeing the Marfa Lights—described Marfa in 1883: "Joe Buhl, a Frenchman, had a saloon in one tent, and off a little ways a Chinaman had a restaurant. No one was there except a Railroad agent and operator and two section crews, all Chinamen."

Ng, who specializes in Chinese diaspora archaeology, was unable to find much in the way of oral histories or written testimonies to paint a clearer picture of what life was like for the men whose labor connected Far West Texas with the coasts. Her work follows in the footsteps of archaeologist Alton K. Briggs, who recorded a site near Langtry in 1969 on land owned by the Skiles family. Many of the features mapped by Briggs are no longer visible, so when she visited the same site this past year, she had to rely on Briggs' research and artifacts collected by local landowners to get a clearer view.

Those artifacts included rice bowls, tea tins and objects called "opium lampshades," used to consume the opiate. After her field visit, she teamed up with Salinas, who had done research on opium-related artifacts, which are often sensationalized and misinterpreted. "Looking past its association with addiction, opium was historically consumed as a means of mitigating joint pain and other physical ailments," Salinas explained. "Grueling labor and harsh conditions were not uncommon for Chinese workers, and such forms of pain management most likely played a major role in their day-to-day survival."

Ng also brought a more contemporary set of artifacts to Salinas for more context: backpacks, water bottles and other items brought across the border by undocumented migrants, likely during the large

Continued on page 5

INSIDE

Alpine Artwalk November 21-22



Yosdy Valdivia, page 8

Presidio offers junk car towing

Page 3

Sentinel News Project

8 04879 36235 7

AEP to file special use permit for substation

Marfa

The power company AEP will file a special use permit application with the City of Marfa—as soon as next week—to rezone land and build a new electric substation after the City Council declined its regular application to rezone land from residential to industrial on October 23.

The council supported a different avenue, asking AEP to file an application for a special use permit, which would allow for industrial uses not normally allowed on a lot zoned Residential 1, which is the designation for the 3.5-acre lot at Aparejo and Oaks streets. Those permits are often called "conditional use permits" because they are usually accompanied by conditions that the applicant must follow.

The special use permit application would then go before the city's Planning and Zoning Commission for review. At that stage, the public can weigh in on details it would like to see that were lacking in the original application—the site's footprint, materials used, height and width of the infrastructure, as well as fencing, screening and landscaping planned. The P&Z Commission could also stipulate conditions it would like to see with AEP before making any recommendations on approving or denying the application. The application would then go to the City Council for a decision.

AEP had been awaiting receipt of the permit application, which it expected to receive this week, according to spokesperson Fred Guerrero. At that point, AEP will begin filling in the needed details, he said.

City officials have been reviewing the initial plans since January

Continued on page 5



MARISSA CRISE

Sul Ross archeologists Devin Pettigrew practices his atlatl weapon.

Shorthorns fall to Longhorns 65-34

The Marfa Shorthorns closed out their season with an exciting, high-scoring matchup against the Buena Vista Longhorns. Despite falling 65-34, the Horns displayed their toughest determination of the season in the final home game of the season and it truly reflected their progress throughout the year.

Buena Vista jumped out to an early 16-0 lead in the first quarter before Marfa answered back with a powerful 5-yard touchdown run by Manny Dominguez, cutting the deficit to 18-6. Later in the first half, Alex Rodriguez broke through with an 18-yard touchdown run, and quarterback Austin McGary connected on a 15-yard touchdown pass to Ayden Alvarez to keep the Horns within striking distance. The teams traded scores through the second quarter, with Marfa heading into halftime trailing 36-20 after an exciting back-and-forth offensive showcase.

In the second half, Marfa came out energized. Rodriguez led the offensive attack, tossing a 35-yard touchdown pass to McGary and adding another touchdown drive later in the fourth quarter. Ayden Alvarez added a late rushing touchdown, helping the Horns reach 34 points on the night.

Senior Darren Campos was the standout performer of the game, leading the Shorthorns offense with a tremendous effort on the ground and through the air, totaling 75 rushing yards and directing the Horns' offensive rhythm. Manny Dominguez, playing in his final high school football game, made a major impact with a touchdown and an explosive 30-yard kickoff return that energized his team. While the Shorthorns did not advance to the playoffs, the game highlighted their growth and unity as a team. Senior Night was an emotional and memorable evening as the community celebrated the dedication of the Class of 2026 athletes: Manny Dominguez, Darren Campos, Alejandro Rodriguez, Garry "Gopher" Webb, Ayven Pippen, Dylan Ibarra, Chris Huerta, and senior cheerleaders Ava Flores, Amaya Gomez, and Raven Martinez. These senior Shorthorns left it all on the field.

Marfa Junior High Shorthorns vs. Longhorns

The Marfa Junior High Shorthorns closed out their district season against a strong Buena Vista team, falling 31-0 in a hard-fought game. Despite the final score, the Shorthorns worked hard on both sides of the ball.

Buena Vista struck early, taking advantage of a quick touchdown run and a successful two-point conversion midway through the first quarter. The Longhorns added another touchdown pass and extra point before the quarter ended, giving them a 15-0 lead. They continued to build on their momentum with two more scores in the second quarter—one on the ground and another safety in the third—sealing the game at 31-0.

Offensively, Ty Bejaran led the way for Marfa with a great offensive effort in the loss and the young Horn had a strong running game and showed great leadership during his breakout performance over the past four district games. Fabian Marquez followed with several long yard carries, averaging strong yards per touch and explosiveness throughout the game, while, defensively, Logan Pippen had several solo tackles, showing great effort. Aiden Salgado also contributed with a solid solo tackle, helping the team limit Buena Vista's big plays in key moments. Though the Shorthorns came up short on the scoreboard, their continued development and hard work helped the team's progress this season.



BELEN SOTO

Darren Campos fights for every yard while Ayden Alvarez comes in for backup.



ALPINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

A hay truck plows into the low bridge entering Alpine on Highway 90 in December 2024.

Traffic changes ahead to raise bridge, avoid truck strikes

Alpine

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), El Paso District, working together with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) will temporarily close the U.S. 67/HWY 90 railroad bridge in Alpine to complete a bridge-raising project aimed at improving safety and preventing future bridge strikes.

The bridge has been the recipient of ongoing trucks crashing their tops into it. The project will have UPRR crews raise the bridge clearance from 13 feet 7 inches to 14 feet 3 inches, enhancing safety for vehicles traveling through the area and reducing the risk of striking the bridge.

The 24-hour closure, affecting both eastbound and westbound traffic, will begin at 5 p.m. Tuesday, November 11, and ends at 5 p.m. Wednesday, November 13.

The closure will impact direct access through Alpine. Drivers should plan for the following detours:

Commerce traffic traveling eastbound to Alpine and traffic coming from Presidio, will be detoured to SH 17 to Fort Davis then SH 118 to Alpine or SH 223 to avoid the underpass.

Commerce traffic traveling westbound to Alpine will be detoured to SH 118 or SH 223 to Fort Davis then SH 17 to Marfa to avoid the underpass.

Motorists are asked to plan ahead, expect delays, and follow all posted detours and construction signs.

CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Nearly 3 million cast ballots statewide

By Gary Borders

Texans showed up in record numbers for this off-year election. Unofficial statewide returns indicate nearly 3 million cast ballots—nearly 15% of all registered voters in the state, the Austin American-Statesman reported.

That appears to set a new record for off-year election turnout in Texas, driven in part by key local issues in larger counties, such as Travis and Bexar counties.

The statewide leader in voter turnout was tiny Loving County on the Texas-New Mexico border, where more than half of the county's 140 registered voters cast ballots.

Nelson fighting GOP lawsuit over closed primaries

The state's top election official is fighting a GOP lawsuit that seeks to restrict the state's primaries to registered party members, the Texas Standard reported. Republican Secretary of State Jane Nelson in her filing said that decision should be left up to state lawmakers, not the courts.

She said that a court ruling now, with the March primaries just a few months away, would "confuse voters, unduly burden election administrators, or otherwise sow chaos or distrust in the electoral process."

The Texas Republican Party claims the state's open primaries violate their constitutional right to freedom of association. Key Republicans, such as Attorney General Ken Paxton, complain Democratic and independent voters are casting ballots in Republican primaries to back more moderate candidates.

Closing Texas primaries would require overhauling the state's voter registration system, require changes in state law, and take years to implement, the Standard reported. Lawmakers filed at least six bills in 2025 to close the primaries but all failed. Nelson said state lawmakers could take the issue back up in the 2027 session.

Significant increase in whooping cough in Texas

The Texas Department of State Health Services is reporting a steep increase in cases of pertussis, or whooping cough, this year. Early data indicates Texas has had more than 3,500 reported pertussis cases through October, four times the number reported over the same period last year. This is the second straight year the state has experienced high increases in pertussis cases, according to DSHS.

Pertussis can cause serious and possibly life-threatening complications in infants and young children who are not fully immunized.

About one-third of babies younger than a year old who contract pertussis need to be hospitalized. Pertussis is a highly contagious illness with early symptoms akin to the common cold.

It can lead to extended coughing fits that can last for weeks or even months.

State exceeds 3 million registered businesses

Texas has set a record high by exceeding 3 million registered businesses, Gov. Greg Abbott announced.

"This milestone shows the true strength of the Texas economy. Texas is the land of freedom and opportunity where businesses and workers can chart their own path to succeed and thrive," he said.

The number of registered business entities in the state has more than doubled since 2015, when 1.4 million businesses were registered.

The total includes both businesses incorporated in Texas and out-of-state entities conducting business here.

The largest classification is in-state, limited liability companies (LLCs).

Texas to buy 54,000 acres for new state park

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission last week accepted a gift of a 54,000-acre ranch in the western Hill Country, the Statesman reported.

The Silver Lake Ranch, about 125 miles west of San Antonio, is being acquired from the Moody Foundation.

"We actually haven't been using it for a long time," Elle Moody, with the foundation, said in an interview before the formal vote by the parks commission.

"But hopefully it will be in the near future for camping and paddling and mountain biking. So we're really looking forward to opening it up to the wider public." The parcel, located in Kinney and Edwards counties, would be second in size only to Big Bend Ranch State Park, at 300,000 acres and purchased in 1988. "This is exactly that kind of property that could really help expand or meet the demand for recreational opportunities on public land in Texas," Luke Metzger, with Environment Texas, said.

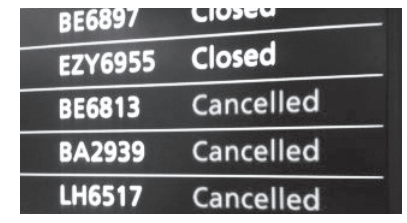
"I swear, that's just some of the prettiest country I've ever seen in Texas.

It's just gorgeous out there." The money to purchase the ranch would come from the state's new Centennial Parks Conservation Fund, established in 2023 when voters agreed to allocate $1 billion to create a dedicated revenue stream to increase the state's parks inventory.

Major Texas airports see flight reductions during shutdown

Four Texas airports will have the number of daily flights reduced by 10% by November 14, as the government shutdown drags on and air traffic controllers and TSA officers, working without pay, increasingly call in sick or are otherwise absent.

The Dallas Morning News reported the reduction at DFW could mean 96 fewer flights a day, or more than 13,000 fewer seats. Love Field is seeing cuts of 20 flights a day, or roughly 3,000 seats. In Houston, both Houston International Airport and Hobby also have seen flight reductions.The airports have seen major delays during the shutdown. Sara Nelson, president of the Association of Flight Attendants, called for an end to the shutdown. "The only way aviation keeps moving during a shutdown is because air traffic controllers and TSA officers come to work without getting paid, while everyone who supports their work for our safety and security is sent home without pay," said Nelson. "Cutting capacity is a regular tool used to keep aviation safe when increased risks are present."



HOTELSTVEDI

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

THIS SEASON,
SHARE THE GIFT
OF CONNECTING!



Refer a friend or neighbor to BBT,
and you'll both receive a $100 bill credit
when they sign up for service!

BBT RELIABLE. LOCAL.
CONNECTED.

800.592.4781 | BIGBEND.COM

Terms apply.

We are your local funeral home!

MOBILE MORTICIAN
OF TEXAS

(432) 249-1333

Owned and operated in the Big Bend area
by James Hall.

The funeral home that comes to you,
no matter your budget

https://www.facebook.com/MobileMorticianofTexas
https://www.instagram.com/mobilemorticianoftexas/
https://twitter.com/MMofTexas

43430 Hwy 17-s
P.O. Box 2174
Fort Davis, TX 79734

PRESIDIO INTERNATIONAL



SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

Sul Ross archeologist Devin Pettigrew films an exhibit for his hunting class.

La 31 conferencia anual del CBBS da vida al pasado

Read in English on page 1

Por Sam Karas

Alpine

El fin de semana pasado, la conferencia del Centro de Estudios de Big Bend (CBBS por sus siglas en inglés) reunió a un selecto grupo de aficionados a la arqueología en el extremo oeste de Texas para su evento anual que celebra la región de Trans-Pecos y el norte de México. Veintiocho ponentes ofrecieron charlas sobre temas fascinantes de toda la región, brindando a los profesionales del campo la oportunidad de interactuar entre sí y con el público en general. Si bien muchas de las ponencias fueron impartidas por investigadores con amplia experiencia, los jóvenes académicos de la conferencia presentaron trabajos innovadores, lo que sugiere un futuro prometedor para un campo que dedica gran parte de su tiempo a estudiar el pasado.

'Palimpsestos migratorios'

La Dra. Laura Ng, profesora adjunta de antropología en Grinnell College (Iowa), inauguró la conferencia junto con Jorge Salinas, estudiante de último año de Grinnell College, hablando sobre la relación entre los campamentos de trabajadores ferroviarios chinos del siglo XIX y los sitios frecuentados por migrantes contemporáneos que cruzan la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México.

A principios de la década de 1880, los trabajadores chinos desempeñaron un papel breve pero crucial en el asentamiento de los pueblos que hoy conforman la línea del Ferrocarril del Pacífico Sur, que sigue aproximadamente la Carretera 90 al oeste de Del Rio. Si bien esta historia ha tenido mayor visibilidad en los últimos años —sobre todo gracias a la exposición de Kenneth Tam en el Ballroom Marfa en 2022, Tender is the hand which holds the stone of memory (Suave es la mano que sostiene la piedra de la memoria), que surgió como respuesta directa a estas historias—, sigue siendo un capítulo poco conocido de la historia local.

Robert Reed Ellison, un vaquero recordado también por la historia como el primer anglosajón en reportar haber visto las Luces de Marfa, describió Marfa en 1883: "Joe Buhl, un francés, tenía un salón en una tienda de campaña, y un poco más allá, un chino tenía un restaurante. No había nadie más que un operador del ferrocarril y dos cuadrillas de trabajadores, todos chinos".

Ng, especialista en arqueología de la diáspora china, no pudo encontrar muchos relatos orales ni testimonios escritos que le permitieran comprender mejor cómo era la vida de los hombres cuyo trabajo conectaba el extremo oeste de Texas con las costas. Su trabajo sigue los pasos del arqueólogo Alton K. Briggs, quien documentó un sitio cerca de Langtry en 1969, en terrenos propiedad de la familia Skiles. Muchos de los rasgos que Briggs cartografió ya no son visibles, por lo que, cuando visitó el mismo sitio el año pasado, tuvo que basarse en la investigación de Briggs y en los artefactos recolectados por los terratenientes locales para obtener una visión más clara.

Entre los objetos encontrados había cuencos de arroz, latas de té y lámparas llamadas "pantallas de opio", utilizadas para consumir el opiáceo. Tras su visita de campo, se asoció con Salinas, quien había investigado objetos relacionados con el opio, a menudo objeto de sensacionalismo e interpretaciones erróneas. «Más allá de su asociación con la adicción, el opio se consumía históricamente para aliviar el dolor articular y otras dolencias físicas», explicó Salinas. "

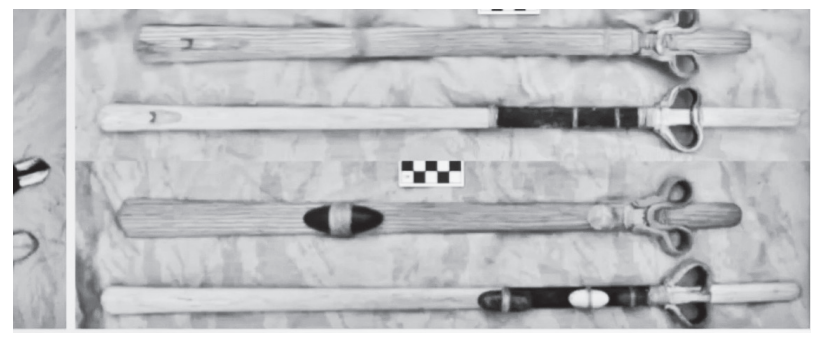
El trabajo extenuante y las duras condiciones eran habituales para los trabajadores chinos, y estas formas de controlar el dolor probablemente desempeñaron un papel fundamental en su supervivencia diaria". El dúo consideró necesario incluir en su investigación la migración contemporánea para contextualizarla, así como los patrones migratorios practicados por los pueblos indígenas antes de la colonización. «Creo que es importante mantener vivas estas conversaciones sobre la migración actual en Estados Unidos», afirmó Salinas.

'Descartar la hipótesis'

La conferencia concluyó con una presentación del Dr. Justin Garnett, nuevo miembro del Centro de Estudios de Big Bend, cuya investigación se centra en la piedra y el hueso y cómo estos materiales se utilizaban en la fabricación y el desecho de herramientas. Su presentación se centró en el período de los Cesteros II (aproximadamente entre el 4000 y el 1500 a. C.), poniendo a prueba la hipótesis de que estos pueblos antiguos utilizaban palos curvos para defenderse de los dardos de átlatl.

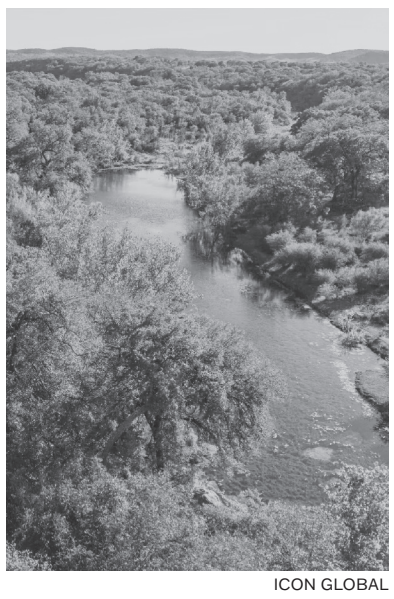
Las armas y las puntas de proyectil constituyen un campo de especialización importante dentro de la arqueología, pero los investigadores rara vez tienen la oportunidad de probar tecnologías prehistóricas por sí mismos. «La gente parece reacia a realizar simulaciones de combate», explicó Garnett, a pesar de que existen varios deportes contemporáneos que se asemejan a antiguas formas de lucha. Garnett, el profesor Devin Pettigrew del CBBS y un equipo de voluntarios perseverantes trabajaron durante varios años para perfeccionar su simulación, experimentando con diferentes maneras de embotar los proyectiles. (Las puntas de los palos de golf "fueron un desastre", pero una aproximación al tiro con arco contemporáneo parecía funcionar).

Incluso con una considerable cantidad de acolchado, los proyectiles —impulsados, para mayor realismo científico, con la fuerza suficiente para matar a un ciervo— dieron en el blanco. Aprender a prepararse para no inmutarse y arruinar los resultados requirió mucha práctica y perseverancia. "Uno se hartaba", dijo Garnett sobre ser alcanzado repetidamente por dardos de alta velocidad. El equipo intentaba averiguar si los palos curvos que encontraban en los yacimientos de Basketmaker II se usaban para desviar los proyectiles en combate, pero descubrieron —a lo largo de varios años e innumerables moretones— que, incluso con práctica, con frecuencia se lastimaban al intentar defenderse de los dardos con el palo curvo. En cambio, es más probable que estos palos se usaran como bumeranes; al ser lanzados, pueden tener la fuerza suficiente para romper las patas de animales tan grandes como caballos. "Quizás sea hora de abandonar la hipótesis del palo de defensa", dijo Garnett.



SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

The conference included a display of weapons and defensive tools.



ICON GLOBAL

The Silver Lake Ranch

Texas comprará un nuevo parque estatal

La Comisión de Parques y Vida Silvestre de Texas aceptó la semana pasada la donación de un rancho de 54,000 acres en la región occidental de Hill Country, según informó el periódico Statesman.

El Rancho Silver Lake, ubicado a unas 125 millas al oeste de San Antonio, está siendo adquirido a la Fundación Moody. "En realidad, llevamos mucho tiempo sin usarlo", dijo Elle Moody, de la fundación, en una entrevista previa a la votación formal de la comisión de parques. "Pero esperamos que pronto se pueda usar para acampar, remar y practicar ciclismo de montaña. Así que tenemos muchas ganas de abrirlo al público en general".

El terreno, ubicado en los condados de Kinney y Edwards, sería el segundo más grande después del Parque Estatal Big Bend Ranch, con 300,000 acres, adquirido en 1988. "Este es precisamente el tipo de propiedad que podría ayudar a ampliar o satisfacer la demanda de oportunidades recreativas en terrenos públicos de Texas", dijo Luke Metzger, de Environment Texas.

"Les aseguro que es uno de los paisajes más hermosos que he visto en Texas. Es simplemente precioso".

El dinero para la compra del rancho provendría del nuevo Fondo de Conservación de Parques del Centenario del estado, establecido en 2023 cuando los votantes aprobaron destinar mil millones de dólares para crear una fuente de ingresos específica que permita aumentar el número de parques estatales.

Presidio se prepara para retirar autos chatarra, instalar iluminación

Por Sam Karas

Presidio

El lunes por la tarde, el Ayuntamiento de Presidio abordó diversos temas relacionados con infraestructura y política, solicitando la ayuda y la opinión de la ciudadanía. El alcalde John Ferguson también incluyó un punto en la agenda para hablar sobre la mejor manera de ayudar a los residentes durante el cierre del gobierno —un gran porcentaje de la fuerza laboral de Presidio trabaja para la Oficina de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza y otras agencias federales—, pero con el cierre más largo en la historia de Estados Unidos llegando a su fin, los concejales pudieron concentrarse en asuntos más rutinarios que requerían atención.

Ayuntamiento recolectará autos

Durante el verano, la ciudad emprendió una campaña llamada "Embellezcamos Presidio" con el objetivo de impulsar el turismo y la inversión. Voluntarios de la comunidad y del despliegue militar de la Fuerza de Tarea Conjunta en la Frontera Sur se han reunido en varias ocasiones para recoger basura del centro, pero el proyecto también incluye un componente patrocinado por la ciudad que comenzó con la recolección de llantas y electrodomésticos viejos para ayudar a los vecinos a limpiar sus patios y garajes.

El consejo votó a favor de iniciar oficialmente la segunda fase del programa "Embellezcamos Presidio", eximiendo a los residentes del pago de las tarifas por llevar vehículos viejos al vertedero e incluso ofreciendo el servicio de remolque gratuito.

Los vecinos pueden acercarse o llamar al Ayuntamiento para deshacerse de un vehículo viejo que ocupe espacio dentro de los límites de la ciudad. El concejal Fernando Juárez consideró que era un excelente segundo paso para limpiar las calles de la ciudad. "Se trata de fomentar la responsabilidad", afirmó.

Iluminando la noche

El concejal Juárez también expresó su preocupación por las zonas oscuras e irregulares en las calles de la ciudad, especialmente en la calle O'Reilly, la principal arteria del pueblo. "

Creo que nuestra iluminación no es suficiente", declaró.

El alcalde interino Christian Montoya opinó que la falta de iluminación en ciertas zonas del pueblo no solo representaba un problema de seguridad, sino que también podría disuadir a los turistas de visitar Presidio. "Creo que mejoraría mucho la estética", concluyó.

Juárez comentó que se había puesto en contacto con AEP, la empresa que suministra el alumbrado público a Presidio, y que le habían indicado que podrían instalar nuevas luces sin costo alguno para la ciudad.

El alcalde Ferguson y el exconcejal Arian Velázquez-Ornelas sugirieron reunirse con Stephen Hummel, especialista en cielos oscuros del Observatorio McDonald, para asegurarse de que las nuevas luces cumplieran con las regulaciones regionales sobre cielos oscuros. «Creo que podemos tener calles visibles y seguras sin comprometer la calidad del cielo», afirmó Juárez.

Oficina de Convenciones

El Ayuntamiento concluyó la reunión convocando a nuevos miembros para la Oficina de Convenciones y Visitantes (OCV por sus siglas en inglés) de Presidio, que se reúne al menos mensualmente para votar sobre el uso del impuesto municipal a la ocupación hotelera (HOT por sus siglas en inglés). La junta ha experimentado una alta rotación de miembros en los últimos meses, lo que generó opiniones divididas entre los concejales sobre cómo abordar la situación.

Un miembro del público sugirió que el Distrito de Desarrollo Municipal de Presidio (PMDD por sus siglas en inglés), que opera con un porcentaje del impuesto sobre las ventas de la ciudad, debería fusionarse con la Oficina de Convenciones y Visitantes (CVB por sus siglas en inglés), pero los funcionarios coinciden en que el asunto tendría que ser presentado ante un asesor legal.

El alcalde Ferguson se ofreció como voluntario para formar parte de la junta directiva y así impulsar la iniciativa.

Quienes estén interesados en formar parte de la CVB de Presidio pueden llamar o visitar el Ayuntamiento, donde podrán recoger una solicitud con instrucciones para enviar una carta de interés. Para llamar al Ayuntamiento y consultar sobre las vacantes (o sobre el programa de vehículos usados), marque el 432-229-3517.

City of Presidio to toss junk cars, add lights, seek tourism board members

By Sam Karas

Presidio

On Monday afternoon, the Presidio City Council tackled a number of topics dealing with infrastructure and politics, calling for the public's help and input. Mayor John Ferguson also included an agenda item to talk about how best to help folks during the government shutdown—a large percentage of Presidio's workforce is dedicated to Customs and Border Protection and other federal agencies—but with the longest shutdown in U.S. history winding down, council members were able to focus on more routine issues that needed tending to.

City to collect junk cars

Over the summer, the city embarked on a campaign called "Make Presidio Beautiful" aimed at increasing tourism and investment. Volunteers from both the community and the Joint Task Force-Southern Border military deployment have come together a handful of times to collect litter from downtown, but the project also includes a city-sponsored component that began with hauling off junk tires and appliances to help community members clean up their yards and garages.

The council voted to officially begin phase two of Make Presidio Beautiful by waiving fees for residents to drop off junk vehicles at the landfill—even offering to tow them away for free. Councilmember Fernando Juarez thought it was a great second step toward cleaning up the city's streets. "It's about getting people to be responsible," he said.

Lighting up the night

Councilmember Juarez was also concerned about inconsistent dark patches along city streets, particularly along O'Reilly Street, the town's main drag. "I don't believe our lighting is adequate," he said.

Mayor Pro Tempore Christian Montoya felt that the lack of lighting in certain parts of town wasn't just a safety issue, but could potentially be discouraging tourists from checking out Presidio.

Juarez said that he had reached out to AEP, the company that helps Presidio keep the lights on, and that they had indicated that they could put up new lights at no cost to the city. Mayor Ferguson and former Councilmember Arian Velázquez-Ornelas suggested meeting up with the McDonald Observatory, to make sure that the new lights were in compliance with the region's dark sky regulations. "I think that we can have streets that are visible and safe and still maintain our dark skies posture," Juarez contended.

Tourism board members needed

The city ended the meeting by putting out a call for new members for the Presidio Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), which meets at least monthly to vote on how the city's Hotel Occupancy (HOT) tax can be spent.

The board has had a lot of turnover over the past few months, which council members were split on how to address. One audience member suggested that the Presidio Municipal Development District (PMDD), which operates with a percentage of city sales tax, should be merged with the CVB, but officials agree that the issue would have to be brought before legal council.

Mayor Ferguson stepped in and volunteered to be on the board to help generate positive momentum.

Those interested in serving on the CVB or towing junk cars should call City Hall at 432-229-3517.

Come TOAST THE DESERT WITH US!
320 W EL PASO · 432.426.6651 · THEMARFASPIRIT.COM
Visit! Marfa Spirit Co
GODBOLD BLDG
DOWNTOWN
DISTILLERY TOURS · DREAMY COCKTAILS · GIFTY THINGS

MAC SEPTIC PORTA POTTIES
Rick McIvor
Owner / Operator
325-812-5541
RickMcIvor7@gmail.com
P.O. Box 640, Fort Davis, TX 79734

FINDARANCH OUT WEST
SUPERIOR Land Network
Specializing in Texas Ranch and Rural Properties
Cleat L. Stephens, Broker
FindARanchOutWest.com

KING LAND & WATER
Protecting Clients. Conserving the Land.

MNB
THE MARFA NATIONAL BANK
24 Hour ATM
Loans
Personal Banking
Business Banking
301 S. Highland Ave. - Marfa
432-729-4344 or 877-729-4344 www.marfanb.com

COCHINEAL
MARFA
CASUAL FINE DINING IN FAR WEST TEXAS
107 West San Antonio Street
Marfa, Texas 79843
432 729 3300 - cochinealmarfa.com

MOONLIGHT GEMSTONES
Paul Graybeal, Owner
Ben Toro, Associate
432-729-4526
pgagates@gmail.com
moonlightgemstones.com
P.O. Box 1220
1001 W. San Antonio St.
Marfa, Texas 79843
Mon-Sat, 10-5pm
Sunday by Appt
Lapidary • Silversmith • Custom Jewelry • Rocks • Fossils • Minerals

LIVINGSTON INSURANCE AGENCY
IRAM MARQUEZ
903 W SAN ANTONIO-PO BOX 965-MARFA, TX 79843
OFFICE - (432) 729-4306 FAX - (432) 729-4305
Iram@MarfaInsurance.com
www.marfainsurance.com

NOTICES

The City of Presidio
is calling out for Letters of Interest from the public for the Planning
& Zoning Commission, Presidio Convention & Visitor's Bureau, and the Presidio
Municipal Development District. Last day to submit your Civic Board Letter of Interest, PMDD Application, PMDD Questionnaire no later than December 23 at 5pm. PMDD APPLICATION & QUESTIONNAIRE ARE ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE
www.presidiotx.us
Must be a registered voter of the municipality and reside at said city for at least six-months, pursuant to Texas Local Government Code Section 22.032.

Please submit your application and Letter of Interest to the address below:
City of Presidio
CitySecretary
P.O. Box 1899
Presidio, TX 79845
Physical Address: 507 W.O'Reilly St., Presidio, Texas
or email to: bornelas@presidiotx.us

The City of Presidio
is accepting applications for Animal Control Officer with the Police Department. The position is full-time. This position works under the general supervision of the Chief of Police.
Brief job description:
patrol and respond to calls for service, investigations, shelter maintenance, animal care, maintaining logs, records, and other documentation, assist in playgrounds and adoption events, other duties as assigned.
Candidates must have the following minimum qualifications:
• Must be legal to work in the US
• Must be at least 18 years of age
• Valid commercial driver license with a proven good driving record
• Must have a high school diploma or equivalent
• Pass a drug test and background check
• Regular and timely attendance required
• Ability to get along with others in a professional and cordial manner
• Ability to lift 50 lbs
• Willingness to handle all types of animal species
• Ability to work occasional weekends and holidays as well as take after-hour calls

Application and complete job description available at City Hall. Applications available online at www.presidiotx.us.
A City of Presidio employment application is required to be considered for the position.
The City of Presidio is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.
Please submit your application to the address below:
City of Presidio
City Secretary
P.O. Box 1899
Presidio, TX 79845
Physical Address: 507 W. O'Reilly St., Presidio, Texas
The City of Presidio is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.
This position is open until November 28, 2025.

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION CITY OF MARFA ORDINANCE NO. 2025-13 ASSESSING AN EDAP WATER SURCHARGE
On November 11, 2025, the Marfa City Council passed Ordinance No 2025-12 to assess a monthly surcharge on residential and commercial water or wastewater accounts to pay the principal and interest for the
cost of city infrastructure projects (East Heights and Fort D.A. Russell)
included in a Presidio County grant/loan being funded by Texas Water
Development Board Financial Assistance Project No. 10457 under the Economically Distressed Areas Program (EDAP), as specified in the Interlocal Agreement with Presidio County dated December 13, 2023.
Ordinance No. 2025-12 (with the Interlocal as an Exhibit) may be found in its entirety on the city website at cityofmarfa.com. Assessment of this EDAP Surcharge will begin with the billing in November 2025. The surcharge will be computed annually as specified in the Ordinance. For FY 2025-2026, the amount of the surcharge is $4.44.

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION CITY OF MARFA ORDINANCE NO. 2025-13 SETTING NATURAL GAS RATES AND FEES

On November 11, 2025, the Marfa City Council passed Ordinance No.
2025-13 to set fees and rates for the City Natural Gas Utility. Rates are
hereby set as follows: $18.33 per MMBtu inside the city limits (no increase), and $24.50 per MMBtu outside the city limits (an increase of 96 cents). The monthly meter fee has been increased from $16.00 to $17.00. Ordinance No. 2025-13 may be found in its entirety on the city
website at cityofmarfa.com. New rates will take effect with the
November 2025 billing.

Big Bend Conservation Alliance is Hiring Neighborhood Coordinators
As part of the "Everything's Connected in Presidio" EPA-funded community engagement initiative, the Big Bend Conservation Alliance is seeking to hire four Neighborhood Coordinators. Neighborhood Coordinators are local residents who will lead participation efforts, strengthen communication, and build trust between community members and the project team. Neighborhood Coordinators will serve as the primary contact for the residents in their neighborhood, organize and facilitate community meetings and outreach activities, gather feedback, and coordinate volunteers. Neighborhood Coordinators must be a resident of the neighborhood/colonia they represent. This is a grant-funded position under the EPA program. Coordinators will serve throughout the duration of the project and will receive training, support, and compensation for their work. This is a part-time position. Compensation is $25/hr.
To see the full job description and to apply, visit www.bigbendconservationalliance.org

Big Bend Conservation Alliance está contratando Coordinadores/as de Vecindario
Como parte de la iniciativa de participación comunitaria financiada por la EPA llamada "Todo Está Conectado en Presidio", Big Bend Conservation Alliacnenestá buscando contratar a cuatro Coordinadores/as de Vecindario. Los/las Coordinadores/as de Vecindario son residentes locales que liderarán los esfuerzos de participación, fortalecerán la comunicación y fomentarán la confianza entre los miembros de la comunidad y el equipo del proyecto. Servirán como el principal punto de contacto para los residentes de su vecindario, organizarán y facilitarán reuniones comunitarias y actividades de alcance, recopilarán comentarios y coordinarán voluntarios. Los/las Coordinadores/as de Vecindario deben ser residentes del vecindario o colonia que representan. Esta es una posición financiada por una subvención bajo el programa de la EPA. Los/las Coordinadores/as trabajarán durante toda la duración del proyecto y recibirán capacitación, apoyo y compensación por su trabajo. Esta es una posición de medio tiempo. La compensación es de $25 por hora.
Para ver la descripción completa del puesto y postular, visite www.bigbendconservationalliance.org.

CROSSWORD

Edited by David Steinberg November 13, 2025

ACROSS
1 Navigation tech
4 Gleam
9 Aggressive poker bet
14 "That feels amazing"
15 Judge in the MLB
16 Birch relative
17 *Answer to "Who's the fairest of them all?"
19 ___ Lama
20 Cover with asphalt
21 Doofus
22 Shed one's skin
23 Extract metal from
25 *Not click on, say
29 Hawaiian hello (or goodbye)
31 Prefix with "skeleton"
32 First lady?
33 "Just a ___!"
34 Carnivore's diet
35 Steeped beverage
36 *Not attending class
40 ___ Antonio
41 First gentleman?
42 Up to, briefly
43 Purple yam used in Filipino cuisine
44 ___-Manuel Miranda
45 Passion
48 *Credit option for wealthy clients
52 Sleep condition
54 Slang word after "jam" or "strategy"
55 ___ de parfum
57 Chris who was on "Saturday Night Live"
58 Less friendly
60 Support for a basket ... or what combines with either word in each starred clue's answer?
62 Tamale topping
63 Yellow-brown shade
64 Pet that purrs
65 Romantic meeting
66 Tibetan capital
67 Rare bill

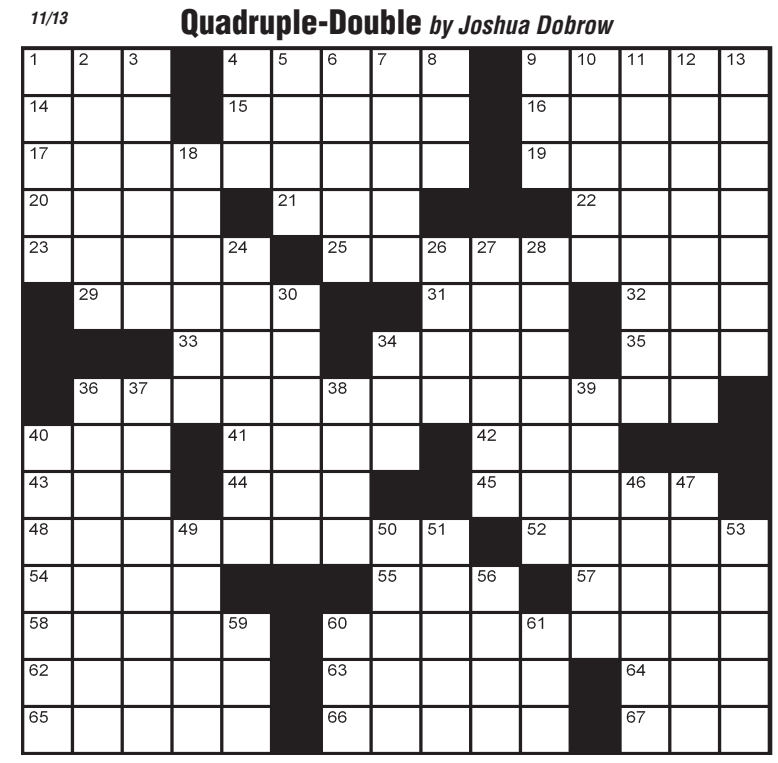
DOWN
1 Sounds of shock
2 "A man, a plan, a canal: ___" (classic palindrome)
3 Tool for getting down and dirty?
4 Watched
5 "LMAO"
6 Like Joyce and Yeats
7 "Au contraire!"
8 Springfield-to-Boston dir.
9 "Tubular!"
10 Davy Crockett's last stand
11 "It'd be my pleasure"
12 Hydroplane?
13 Djibouti neighbor
18 "They crushed us!"
24 Birds-and-bees discussion, colloquially
26 Formations of geese
27 Win-and-place bet
28 Tax-sheltered investment option
30 Low on the pH scale
34 James Bond's studio
36 Vehicle that may be suspended
37 With some reservations
38 Mom's mom
39 Seasoned vet
40 Survive (on)
46 Like some short plays
47 Alter, as boundaries
49 Magnus Carlsen's game
50 Get in contact with
51 Russian cottage
53 Expand on
56 Hawaiian instruments, for short
59 Tattletale
60 Landlocked nation in South America: Abbr.
61 Bikini top

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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

11/5
© 2025 Andrews McMeel Universal
www.upuzzles.com

11/13
Quadruple-Double *by Joshua Dobrow*



SUDUKO

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

11/13

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

© 2025 Andrews McMeel Syndication

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

SOLUTION:

11/6

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

© 2025 Andrews McMeel Syndication

Conference looks at early Chinese railroad workers

Continued from page 1
post-COVID spike in migration in 2021. Ng and Salinas had collaborated previously at Grinnell on Hostile Terrain 94, a documentary art piece tracking migrant deaths along the border in Arizona.

The duo felt it was necessary to include more contemporary migration in their research for context, as well as patterns of migration practiced by Indigenous people before colonization.

"I think it's important to keep these conversations going on migration today in the United States," Salinas said.

'Let the hypothesis die'

The conference closed with a presentation by Dr. Justin Garnett, a new addition to the Center for Big Bend Studies whose research focuses on "stone and bone" and how those materials were used in the manufacture and discard of tools. His presentation focused on the Basketmaker II period (from around 4000 to 1500 B.C.), testing out a hypothesis that these ancient people used curved sticks to defend against atlatl darts.

Weapons and projectile points are a big specialty field within archaeology, but researchers rarely get to test out prehistoric technologies for themselves. "People seem reluctant to do combat simulations," Garnett explained.

Garnett, CBBS Professor Devin Pettigrew and a team of resilient volunteers worked over the course of several years to perfect their simulation, experimenting with different ways to blunt the projectiles. (Golf club tips "were a disaster," but an approximation of contemporary archery tag seemed to work.) Even while wearing a significant amount of padding, the projectiles—propelled, for scientific realism, by enough force to kill a deer—made their mark. Learning how to brace so as not to flinch and sully the results took lots of practice and grit. "You'd get so sick of it," Garnett said of being repeatedly shot at by high-speed darts. The team was trying to figure out if the curved sticks they were finding at Basketmaker II sites were used to whack incoming projectiles out of the air during combat, but the team found—over the course of several years and innumerable bruises—that even with practice, they more often than not hurt themselves when attempting to fend off darts with the curved stick.

Instead, it may be more likely that these sticks were used as boomerangs—when thrown, they can carry enough force to break the legs of animals as large as horses. "It might be time to let the fending stick hypothesis die," Garnett said.

AEP forges ahead on substation rezoning

Continued from page 1
and held a series of public hearings to gather citizen input. Criticism has centered around that it is an unwise precedent to rezone from residential to industrial, as well as unfair to put an industrial use near existing houses.

Citizens also have objected to what they say is an insufficient effort by the power company to look at alternative sights. A smaller group of Marfa citizens have supported the new substation as a way to bolster Marfa's power needs, which have come close to exceeding what exists in the past few years.

With holidays approaching and meeting times getting scarce, it's uncertain how long this new process will take. For full coverage, see bigbendsentinel.com/aeprezone.

Water rates rise

Continued from page 1
The council also came to an agreement on how much to pay Marfa Police Department's K-9 unit—Officer Kelsey Flores and her dog Roski—in a stipend in addition to her salary. The council agreed on $360 net a month, which she can use to cover travel expenses for required monthly training as well as food and other equipment.

Big Bend Sentinel has requested police records on Roski's use in drug detection, but the department is still working on computer searches to meet that request.

The council also approved its 2026 street improvement plans, not to exceed $3 million. Slated for repairs are: Summer Street from Columbia to South Lincoln; Washington Street from Summer to Gonzalez; Murphy Street from Summer to Gonzales; Highland Avenue from Washington to 1st (both east and west); Murphy Street from Austin to Russell; 1st Street from Austin to Dean; East Columbia Street from Dean to Russell; Abbott Street from El Paso to San Antonio; El Paso Street from Kelly to Austin (and maybe Highland Avenue).

"We're going for the ones that are really, really far gone," Mayor Manny Baeza told the council. "We looked at the routes that people use."

Sentinel is changing, but before moving too far, we want to hear from you. What are we doing right or wrong? What do you want to read and see in the paper? Let us know!

—**Roger Black**

Email:
publisher@bigbendsentinel.com

Sentinel

OBITUARY

Supporting the Boy Scouts and coaching were his focus

Doyle Kent Babb passed away October 25, 2025, at the age of 86. He will be missed beyond words.

Kent was born in Ozona, Texas, on August 10, 1939. He was a descendant of one of the early pioneer families that settled West Texas in what is now Big Bend National Park. In his early years, Kent attended school in a one-room schoolhouse near the family ranch in Langtry, Texas, through the fifth grade, after which he spent his middle school years in Del Rio, Texas, and his high school years in Ozona, where he was a multisport letterman, graduating in 1957.

Upon graduation from high school, Kent received a football scholarship to Texas Western College in El Paso, now University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) where he was the starting running back. It was there that he met his wife-to-be, Kay Young, a Texas Western cheerleader from El Paso. They married in 1961.

After graduating from Texas Western, Kent began coaching football and baseball at one of the area high schools in El Paso. After four years of coaching, Kent began his career in the insurance and financial services industry, moving his family to Austin, Texas, in 1967. It was in Austin where Kent built his business, his clientele, and enjoyed a successful 50-plus-year career in the insurance and estate planning arena. Throughout that career, Kent found time to coach Little League baseball, Pop Warner football, and to spend quality time with family and friends, whether that was on the football field, the kickball or baseball diamond, or on one of the many hunting trips in Central, West, and South Texas.

Kent was a family man, never missing his son and daughter's kickball, football, baseball, and basketball games....and he was always up for a hunting excursion with family and/or friends.

After the kids were grown, Kent continued his passion for quail hunting in South Texas and reignited his love for horseback riding and team roping through cowboy gatherings and roping events up into his mid-70s, all while winning buckles and reuniting with old friends and making new friends along the way. When Kent became a grandfather, he re-entered the world of kids sports where he and Kay spent time attending soccer, baseball, football, and basketball games watching his grandchildren play and compete until his health prevented him from doing so.

In addition, Kent was very involved with the Estate Planning Council of Austin, Rodeo Austin, and the Metropolitan Club where he served as a board member and past chairman.



Doyle Kent Babb

However, his greatest philanthropic focus and community involvement centered around the Capitol Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America where he served on both the Executive Committee and Executive Board and served on several other committees including the Nominating, Legal, and Ranch and Game Management committees. He also led the annual Sporting Clays Event, which was a big fundraising event for the Scouts.

In 2000, Kent was presented with the Silver Beaver Award, which is a national award presented by local councils and given to individuals for their noteworthy service of exceptional character to the Scouts located within the local council's jurisdiction. Throughout his life, Kent was a devoted husband and father, and a friend to many. He cherished the relationships, both personal and professional, that he developed along the way, many of which were overlapping and existed right up until his death.

Kent is survived by his wife of nearly 64 years, Kay Babb; his son, Wes Babb; daughter, Laurie Babb; granddaughter, Kennedy Babb; and grandson, Chase Babb.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to a charity of your choice or to the Boy Scouts of America. A memorial service and celebration of life honoring Kent will be held Thursday November 20, 2025, at Weed Corley Fish located at 5416 Parkcrest Drive, Austin, Texas 78731, beginning at 1:30 p.m. with a reception to immediately follow.

Perrie Lee Little Whalen

Perrie Lee Little Whalen went to be with her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on the 28th day of October 2025. As previously noted, a memorial service was being planned.

The graveside memorial service in Perrie's honor will take place at South Park Cemetery in Roswell, New Mexico, at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

AROUND THE BIG BEND

Thursday November 13

Book Fair
8:00 am-7:00 pm
Marfa JSHS Campus in the library
Marfa

Opening reception for NowHere Exhibition no. 0009 "SIXTH-SENSE"
5:00 pm-8:00 pm
Club Nowhere 401 s highland ave
Marfa

Friday November 14

Special premier of "Vast" a film by Joe Davis and Scott Lamberty
7:30 pm
Club Nowhere
401 s. highland ave
Marfa

Live Music: Couple of Wanderers
6:00 pm-9:00 pm
Alpine

Star Party at the Fort
8:00 pm-10:00 pm
Big Bend Ranch State Park
Terlingua

Saturday November 15

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

Sunday November 16

Dana Cooper
7:00 pm-9:00 pm
The Ritchey
Alpine

Open Mic Night: Music
4:00 pm-7:00 pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave
Alpine

Boxing at Maintenant
10:00 am-11:30 am
1825 Rabbits Rd., Marfa

Weekly events

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

Yin Yoga
Tuesdays at 12 pm at Marfa Public Library

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

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

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

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

Filing for the 2026 election is underway

County Chair Ramon Rodriguez Aranda announced last week that he is offering resources and assistance to candidates to file for local, county seats in the March Democratic Primary.

Filing Window & Where to File:
• First day to file: November 8, 2025
• Last day to file: December 8, 2025, at 6 p.m.
• Where to file: With the county chair, Ramon Rodriguez (not with the county clerk)

Aranda said all candidates must schedule an appointment with him to submit their completed, notarized forms and filing fees or petitions.

Official Resources from the Texas Secretary of State (SOS) include:
• Candidate information and filing guide:https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/candidates/index.shtml
• Election forms for political subdivisions (includes candidate forms):https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/forms/pol-sub/index.shtml
• Appointment of Campaign Treasurer (Form CTA):https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/data/forms/coh/cta.pdf
• Campaign Finance Guide for Candidates:https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/data/resources/guides/GPFCA.pdf

Filing fees for most county offices (county judge, county clerk, county treasurer, and county commissioner) are $750, but candidates can file a petition with 50 signatures in lieu of fees. The filing fee for justice of the peace is $375 or a petition with 50 signatures, and there is no fee or petition required to file for Democratic Party chair.

For more information on the process, laws on campaign finance and advertising, contact Aranda at blue@presidiocountydemocratic.party.

¡PACHANGA!
GRETEL FOR CONGRESS

• Meet Gretel Enck, Democratic Candidate for TX 23
• BBQ by Mark Scott
• Music by Zona Mutante
Sunday, November 23, 4 pm
Domingo, 23 de noviembre, 16:00 h
Rancho Scott / Scott Ranch, 721 S. Highland
The event is free, everyone is invited.
El evento es gratuito, todos están invitados.
paid for by Gretel For Congress

ALPINE SMALL ANIMAL PRACTICE
AND LARGE ANIMAL SERVICES
Mary Dodson, D.V.M.
Zachary Dodson, D.V.M.
3201 N. HWY 118, Box 7
Alpine, Texas 79830
432-837-5416
Mon. - Fri. 7:45 - 12:00 & 1:30 - 5:30
after hours - emergency 432.837.5416

PRESCRIPTION SHOP MARFA
A full-service pharmacy. Now accepting many insurance plans for service while you wait.
105 East Oak Street,
next to Marfa Country Clinic
432.729.4244
rxshopmarfa@gmail.com

ClearPoint WELLNESS
Feel Like Yourself Again
Lisa Hastings, DC
Dr. of Chiropractic, Multisensory Functional Integration
In Marfa by appt. 432.214.2031 www.clearpointwellness.com

Now. A plumber you can trust.
Serving all three Big Bend counties. For leak repair, drain cleaning, water heaters, fixtures, filtration system, gas (natural and propane), and new construction.
HIGH DESERT PLUMBING
Dependable • Local • Veteran • Insured • Licensed M-46345 (432) 538-8039

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.

Guns, cartels, and gold

Continued from page 1

When Sánchez's mother couldn't afford to buy him shoes, Fimbres would give him a pair. Fimbres taught him how to pray the Rosary, and Sánchez remains a devout Catholic. From Fimbres and other teachers, he developed a strong sense of right and wrong. "He was strict with me," Sánchez recalled. "But not as strict as with the other kids."

It was a painful time in Sánchez's life. He felt abandoned by his mother and didn't know his father. He was lonely during those years, especially when the other boys left to visit relatives. Sometimes, Fimbres would invite him over for dinner, and Sánchez remembers the homecooked meals vividly. Fimbres' wife made the best wheat tortillas and black beans.

It was during those summer breaks when Sánchez missed his mother most. She sometimes visited him in Hermosillo—or had him come to Mexicali, where she then lived. But such visits were rare.

The priest had told him he could talk to God in time of need, so the boy would walk down to the chapel, kneel in the pews and ask why he couldn't be with his mother. God didn't give him an answer. Still, it felt good to talk to someone about it. His mother later married an American citizen, and when Sánchez was 17, she secured U.S. citizenship for herself and her son.

Sánchez would eventually settle in Newport Beach and study business administration at Rancho Santiago Community College, but he dropped out and hawked perfume, enticed by promises that he could get rich quickly. Sánchez soon realized he couldn't make ends meet. Disillusioned but undaunted, Sánchez determined he would one day live the American dream. And he did. He married the daughter of Cuban exiles and they had a son. An introduction from his brother-in-law led to a job with a company selling mortgages.

To his new job, he brought the discipline and perseverance he had learned at the orphanage. He rose through the ranks quickly, thanks in part to his personality; he can be firm and direct one moment, and crack a joke at his own expense the next. Eventually, he struck out on his own, representing U.S. companies launching ventures involving debit cards in Latin America.

Sánchez traveled to some of Mexico's biggest cities and met powerful bankers, senators and tycoons as he promoted the debit cards. But until he joined the fight for the mine, Sánchez had not returned to Hermosillo in 38 years. The cartels weren't so prominent back then. "Now you see guns, drugs. I didn't grow up in this Mexico," he said.



The truck incinerated in the battle was riddled with bullet holes.

The gold and narco road

As Sánchez would learn, Spaniards discovered gold in 1771 in a desolate area 50 miles south of what is now Arizona. They called the place La Ciénega, a corruption of an Indigenous word and an incongruous name —the swamp—in a desert wasteland.

Though "mine" implies tunnels, the prospecting at La Ciénega took place over a vast area—about 14,000 acres—largely near the surface. The mine shut down in 1905 when it appeared the surface gold reserves had been exhausted, but later owners would try to extract La Ciénega's hidden riches.

Odood, a real estate agent from California who had been investing in mining in Mexico for a few years, entered the picture in 2015. He negotiated with the mine's owner to purchase mining rights to La Ciénega. The region at that time was dominated by the Caborca cartel, run by the infamous narcotrafficker Rafael Caro Quintero, but soon, rival cartels were battling to control parts of Sonora. Los Chapitos invaded Caborca territory and, in time, more than 3,000 people would be killed in the war.



Sánchez sits in the orphanage in Hermosillo, where he lived as a boy.

By 2022, when Sánchez agreed to help Odood, the Chapitos had forged an alliance with yet another criminal organization, the ultraviolent Deltas, famed for their paramilitary tactics and penchant for .50 caliber weapons firing rounds the size of cigars. The Deltas took the mine from a weakened Caborca cartel at gunpoint.

The Deltas also commandeered at least 200 ranches in the region, driving out families and transforming their homes into outposts and lookouts. They stole thousands of heads of cattle, slaughtering some for food, selling the rest to fund their war. They now controlled not only the mine, but also a crucial drug-trafficking route to the U.S.

The general's warning

Sánchez made his first trip to Mexico City on Odood's behalf in 2022 and met with a few retired generals he knew from his business dealings. Over dinner in a wealthy neighborhood—he picked up the tab—Sánchez made his pitch. "I need you to connect me with the local general so we can kick these guys out," he said. The generals weren't so sure.

"You'll not only need the minister of defense, you'll also need the Marines," one told him. The cartel forces, he warned, were "literally an army." "Holy moly," Sánchez later recalled thinking. "So it's not that easy." Sánchez traveled to Hermosillo, around 100 miles from La Ciénega and saw a geologist who had worked at the mine. He was even more pessimistic than the generals.

But to Sánchez, there had to be a way. He was divorced by now and threw himself entirely into the project, spending most of his time in Hermosillo. He quickly built up a network of people who knew about the mine. He next met the general who commanded the regional battalion and persuaded him to provide a military escort so Sánchez could see the mine for himself. He brought along anxious shareholders who had invested in Odood's project.

Sánchez and his team rode in a convoy of around 12 Humvees, accompanied by soldiers in tactical gear armed with high-powered weapons. The convoy stayed away from the main base of cartel operations and, to their relief, faced no resistance. Perhaps the Deltas didn't feel threatened, or didn't dare defy the show of force. The investors walked around the property and a geologist collected soil samples.

Then, in November 2022, an apparent breakthrough—the husband of a powerful Sonoran politician introduced Sánchez to a top police commander over a steak dinner in Hermosillo. Sánchez laid out his conundrum. "Don't worry," the commander replied. "I can take care of your problem for you." The next morning, the commander laid out the solution: all the cartel needed was a cut of the profits, and a percentage for himself, for the trouble.

Along with his deep-rooted belief in the rule of law, Sánchez had adopted a motto: Never negotiate with terrorists, and to him the Chapitos were terrorists. He thanked the commander and left.

A new owner

Sánchez would later learn that Odood was not the only one with mining rights to La Ciénega. The other owner was Jonathan Cooper, a Colorado entrepreneur of diverse ventures who had bought into the mine in 2020. Cooper had kept a hands-off posture, leaving the Mexican side of operations to Odood.

By winter of 2022, Sánchez was becoming disillusioned with the project. Though the Chapitos controlled the mine, there was still planning and research to be done for when operations could resume. Bills went unpaid, Sánchez said, and his lobbying was getting nowhere. He decided to track down Cooper. "You don't know me, but I am working on your mine in Mexico," Sánchez told Cooper. The operation was in disarray, he said, and most important, a cartel had seized the mine. Cooper had heard none of this. At this point, Cooper and Sánchez believed they would be able to get onsite because the military seemed prepared to help. They just needed food and lodging at the mine to do it.

There would be much back and forth between Cooper and Odood, and before the year was out, the owner of the mining rights before Odood took them back. (Odood could not be reached for comment.) Cooper then bought the entire rights to the mine. He made Sánchez a part owner, and Cooper said he too would donate to the orphanage.

Sánchez soon discovered that he and Cooper shared a visceral disgust of corruption. Cooper had heard some police in Mexico were crooked, but he never imagined the government would ignore the takeover of a gold mine. What would it take to get the Mexican military to act?

A kilo of gold a day

As 2023 unfolded, it became clear to Sánchez that the military barracks near Hermosillo lacked basic technology needed to gather intelligence on the cartels, so the company donated 15 drones—at $15,000 each—along with night vision goggles, satellite phones and even a large flatscreen for a war room.

Still, no progress. But one night in Hermosillo, over yet another of the meals expected for any business to be conducted, came a possible lead. A Sonoran politician told him he had arranged a meeting with the generals in charge of northern Mexico. On one condition. "For the meeting to happen," he said. "The generals will need a million dollars." Sánchez, furious, declined. He began to wonder if there were any clean officials in the country. By then, Sánchez had developed a network of informants who told him the cartel had strengthened its presence at the mine. About 50 workers were extracting up to a kilo of gold a day, guarded by 150 sicarios, or hitmen.

In December, Cooper flew to Mexico City to see a Mexican entrepreneur who wanted to invest in La Ciénega. He told Cooper he had done him a huge favor. The entrepreneur had spoken to cartel leaders, he said, and Cooper's crew could move onto the mine immediately, provided he gave the cartel 15% of his profits. "You don't even need the militarv." he said, beaming. "I will absolutely not accept," Cooper said. "You're an idiot," the flummoxed entrepreneur replied. "This is how things are done in Mexico."

The torture chamber

Again and again, just when it seemed Mexican authorities might intervene, complications arose. More demands for bribes. More equipment needs. More reasons not to act. Troops couldn't launch a raid that December because of Christmas. March 2024 was out because soldiers were needed to patrol beach towns filled with American spring breakers. But perhaps in April.

That month, Sánchez texted Cooper saying there was no money left for salaries and he was getting desperate. "I am right there with you brother," Cooper replied. "I am literally selling a part of my wine collection." Already, he had taken a $600,000 loan, using as collateral a signed Michael Jordan jersey the basketball great wore when he played on the U.S. Olympic Dream Team. This all played out as the Chapitos and their allies, the Deltas, battled other cartels to control Sonora. "You have six cartels fighting for territory plus fighting for your gold project," Sánchez texted Cooper.

Near the mine was a hamlet, also named La Ciénega and overrun by the cartel. At least one home had been turned into a torture chamber. Sánchez was with authorities when they later found bloodstains on the walls and pieces of fingers on the floor.

By June, Sánchez's informants told him the mine was operating 24/7. Using more than 30 backhoes and bulldozers, miners dug up 1,500 metric tons of earth a day, leaving in their wake a trail of environmental destruction. Dump trucks carried the soil to an immense sluicing operation, where water from two reservoirs washed away dirt to reveal gold nuggets.

"Just received news that the bad guys pulled in the month of April a little over 17 kilos of gold," Sánchez wrote Cooper. "They are taking all your gold." It was worth $1.4 million. Then, Sánchez met an informant who changed everything. The informant was an ex-military commander who had developed his own network of informants. Their tips had helped authorities arrest various drug traffickers. Introduced to Sánchez by a law enforcement official, the informant said he would turn his attention to La Ciénega. "We're going to totally eliminate the cartels," he told Sánchez. "Trust me." The informant began sharing intelligence that Sánchez passed on to Sonoran state police.

By then, an enterprising police chief, Víctor Hugo Enríquez, had taken the reins of the state police at the behest of the governor of Sonora, Alfonso Durazo. The governor, who has made a broadside effort to reduce crime in his state and attract U.S. investment in the region, brought Enríquez on board to root out drug traffickers and restore safety for the hundreds of ranchers near the mine. Enríquez got to work, taking down drug lords, one after another, sometimes guided by information Sánchez passed on from the informant. He was soon texting Sánchez about cartel strongholds, sometimes attaching Google Maps images of buildings marked with red crosshairs. "The base for the Deltas armed forces," he wrote to Sánchez of a site near the mine. "They're the top target. There are five sicarios here, armed with .50-caliber Barretts."

The informant's secret weapon: sex workers the cartel had brought to La Ciénega pueblo to service mine workers. He paid the women $100 each to learn all sorts of things: names, where cartel members lived, what cars they drove. The Chapitos had installed a furnace, the sex workers said, to melt the gold into ingots. One sex worker identified the mine manager as Erick Cabrera, who also led a special forces team for the Chapitos. His wife managed the gold shipments to the states of Jalisco and Sinaloa, the sex workers said. In September, the informant sent Sánchez a video of Cabrera, dressed in a military-style uniform, firing a Kalashnikov. After squeezing off 10 rounds, he flashes a peace sign.

The informant also sent Sánchez a video of a Cessna landing on a rudimentary airstrip near the mine. It was dropping off AK-47s and picking up a load of gold bars. The informant provided more information on yet more targets, firing off dozens of texts in the space of a few minutes. "I expect you'll act on it as soon as possible," he wrote.

Within days police arrested a Delta assassin, who filmed himself smoking a joint and wearing a gold chain from which hung a gold-encrusted Saint of Death, who is believed to provide safe passage to the afterlife. Three days later, police arrested two more sicarios. But the informant became increasingly impatient for the military to act. "You have to move faster," he wrote Sánchez.

The raid

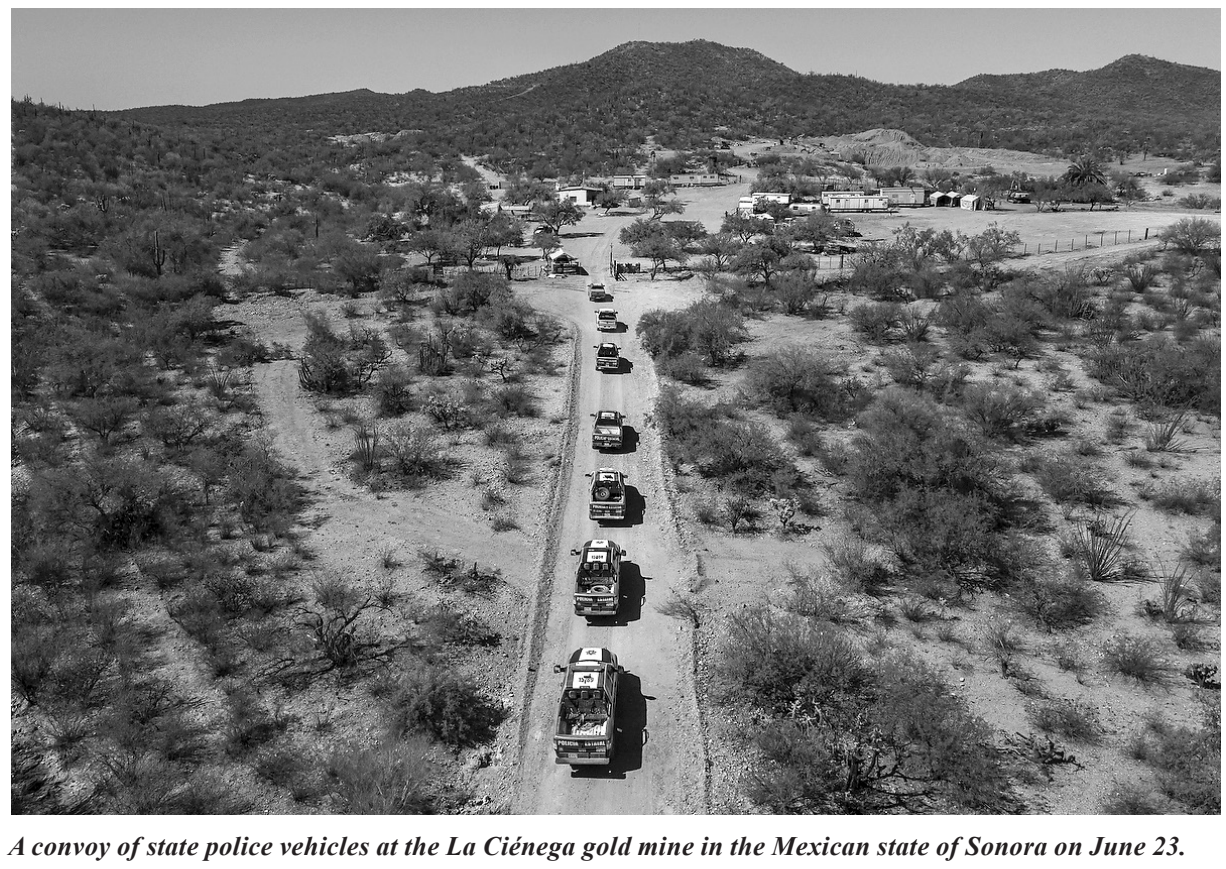
By the fall of 2024, the Mexican government finally agreed to move on La Ciénega. The operation would involve scores of troops, similar to U.S. Marines, and more than 100 Sonoran police. "I am preparing everything for the move-in," Sánchez texted Cooper. "Waiting for another helicopter to arrive from the south."

On Sept. 24 officials told Sánchez the operation would launch the next day at 2 a.m. "Safe journey, my friend." Cooper texted. "Amazing job getting us here." Sánchez tried to get some sleep, but it was a fitful rest. At 1:30 a.m. he donned a uniform to blend in with the troops and joined 70 tactical vehicles, patrol trucks and armored vehicles.

The governor ordered that Sánchez be taken in an armored truck. The convoy took off, accompanied by two helicopters—one of them a Black Hawk—and a T-6 Texan warplane. The forces blasted through the mine's front gate and agents jumped out of their vehicles, weapons drawn. They fanned out across the property, searching a small cave for a weapons cache and cautiously casing sleeping quarters. But there was no bloodshed, no sicarios—just a few frightened dump truck drivers.

Next week: Part two

This article is based on government documents and extensive interviews with U.S. and Mexican government officials and mine workers.Fisher is a special correspondent. This story was supported by the Pulitzer Center and co-published with Puente News Collaborative, a bilingual nonprofit newsroom, convener and funder dedicated to high-quality, fact-based news and information from the U.S.-Mexico border



A convoy of state police vehicles at the La Ciénega gold mine in the Mexican state of Sonora on June 23.

OPINION



LETTERS



Ramon Rodriguez Aranda

Aranda offers thanks when stepping down

To the beautiful people of Presidio County: It has been one of the greatest honors of my life serving as your county chair for the Presidio County Democratic Party. First, I was appointed to this position, then went on to run on the ballot unopposed, receiving the support of the people of Presidio County to lead and organize.

After much thought and reflection, I want to share with you all that I will not be seeking reelection as your county chair for this upcoming term. These past two and a half years have been full of purpose.

We have built a robust structure for our county party that serves our communities, a party that has helped many through different programs and projects, all for the betterment of our communities and those that are many times overlooked.

We have launched strategies and initiatives from civics to charity all in today's political environment. Through this, we have created long-lasting alliances and strengthened connections with our communities and leaders.

To family, friends, volunteers, community members, party coordinators, colleagues, and all of those that I have met along the way—thank you so much. You are all many reasons we have accomplished so much because of your dedication to the Democratic values we are all so proud of.

My current term ends at the beginning of March, but until then, there are still projects underway and work to do for our county. It is my hope that the next person to take this position will continue this vision. One that is set in service, collaboration, innovation and the love for Presidio County.

Thank you all for allowing me to serve you. This county will always be home to my heart, and I will always fight for it.

Ramon Rodriguez Aranda
Presidio County
Democratic Party Chair

Gratitude for the ancestors brought to rest

The People of La Junta for Preservation wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many hands and hearts who helped bring the Ancestors of La Junta home on November 1, 2025.

What took place at the Cementerio del Barrio de los Lipanes was more than a reburial—it was a moment of community healing. Over the weeks leading up to the ceremony, our families worked together to raise tipi, care for the poles, prepare the grounds, and coordinate so that the Ancestors could be received in the way they deserved. We are deeply grateful to all who offered prayers, songs, food, and support, and to those who traveled from near and far to stand beside us.

Our sincere appreciation goes to David Keller, who worked beside our Elders to dig the graves with care and humility. We also thank the Center for Big Bend Studies for supporting the return of the remains, and our partners at Big Bend Conservation Alliance and Mellon Foundation for their ongoing commitment to cultural preservation and community-led stewardship.

We hold deep gratitude for the Elders of People of La Junta for Preservation—Billy Hernandez, Juan Hernandez, Joe Portillo Jr., Lorenzo Hernandez, Norberto Ornelas, Alonzo Muñiz, and Oscar Rodriguez—whose steadfast encouragement and hands-on support reminded us that the strength of our women is rooted in the love of our families.

Finally, to our guiding Community Elders, Xoxi Nayapiltzin and Enrique Madrid, we offer thanks for their prayers, wisdom, and continual reminder that this work is sacred and enduring.

This ceremony was not an ending, but a beginning—a reminder that healing comes through community, and that our responsibilities to the land and to one another are ongoing.

May the memory of this homecoming inspire us all to continue protecting what is sacred.

People of La Junta for Preservation

Correction: *The number of individuals served by the Marfa Food Pantry is 435. A November 6, 2025 article in* Sentinel*, "Food pantries . . ." incorrectly stated the number served by using a figure for families.*

OUR WATER MATTERS

Stress on hydroelectric power

By Trey Gerfers

IN THE LAST issue of "Our Water Matters," we kicked off an exploration of the complex interplay between water and energy based on the example of hydropower, the harvesting of electricity from the power of falling water.

The Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) maintains a Water Power Program within its Energy Science and Technology Directorate whose mission is to "enhance and accelerate the contributions of water power in facilitating more reliable, resilient, and affordable electric power sources, infrastructure, and systems." ORNL describes hydropower as "a key contributor to the nation's energy portfolio, helping to fill in the gaps between traditional sources of electricity and intermittent sources such as wind and solar."

In order "to better understand and predict the conditions that impact sustainable hydropower electricity generation," ORNL launched the Section 9505 Assessment to design a "spatially consistent assessment approach … to gradually downscale global environmental change signals into watershed-scale hydrologic projections." Among the most critical issues threatening the resilience of hydropower systems and infrastructure, the assessment's authors identify "the duration and severity of extreme drought events" which are "projected to increase in many parts of the United States" as well as the "timing of available supply and peak demand [which] is increasingly coming into conflict."

According to the ORNL's energy demand analysis, "temperature-driven water and energy demand is expected to shift from winter to summer," presumably due to rising temperatures that will result in hotter winters and summers. "Although, ideally, one may expect to mitigate this conflict through reservoir management, the intensified hydrologic extremes combined with all other competing water management objectives will limit the ability and flexibility to store more water resources to meet peak demand," write the assessment's authors. "Furthermore, in arid regions, the enhanced reservoir evaporation [due to higher ambient temperatures] may result in a sizable reduction in storage and further exacerbate the nexus of electricity demand and water availability. . . Overall, the results suggest that maintaining operational flexibility remains a key challenge for federal hydropower reservoirs."

Any approach to managing these reservoirs must take into account the critical role watersheds play not only in energy generation but also "in supporting … drinking water supplies, agriculture, and recreation."

According to ORNL, "Rising demand for these essential services, coupled with environmental changes, is placing unprecedented stress on water resources.

In turn the strain on the system is increasing uncertainty and competition for these resources, impacting everything from reservoir operations to river-basin management."

In order to grapple with these challenges, ORNL has developed a "Roadmap to Intelligent Watersheds" that integrates "advancements in monitoring, data sharing, supercomputing, modeling, and artificial intelligence … to connect data more effectively with decision-making, particularly at the complex watershed scale."

Another resource that ORNL has developed is HydroSource, "a comprehensive national water energy digital platform" to promote "a better understanding of the sensitivity of power plants to water availability" and provide "a basis for planning future actions that will enable adaptation to environmental variability and change." HydroSource includes the "new stream-reach development data set" that "identifies untapped U.S. stream-reaches with high (greater than 1 MW) and low (less than 1 MW) energy potential." The data set comprises "more than 100 reaches" where hydroelectricity dams could be constructed "with at least 100 MW of potential capacity."

However, as author and UT-Austin professor Michael E. Webber writes in his book titled "Thirst for Power: Energy, Water, and Human Survival," the "construction of large dams has such a large impact on ecosystems" that it makes "building new ones … contentious in most developed countries. While efforts to build major dams are still under way in Asia and South America, increasing hydropower generation in the United States and Europe faces a lot more resistance." As a result, grid managers in this country might have better luck pursuing "smaller-scale opportunities, known as 'small hydro' or 'microhydropower.'"

Webber goes on to point out that ORNL has identified "new power generating capacity … by adding power houses to some of the 80,000 dams in the United States that are used for storing water, controlling floods, and managing navigable waterways, but do not make electricity."

Also known as "new stream-reach development (NSD) opportunities," these projects "form an overwhelming majority of the nation's remaining hydropower resource potential," according to ORNL. Webber contends that "[b]ecause these nonpowered dams have already incurred many of the construction costs and ecosystem impacts, adding power to the existing dam site is often a faster, less expensive, and less controversial way to expand hydropower than creating new reservoirs that displace people and flood ecosystems."

From assessments to roadmaps to new stream-reach development opportunities, the United States will need all of the above and more to meet the challenges posed by our new climate reality. But hydroelectricity is just one of the many sources of power dependent on an abundant supply of water. As we continue taking a closer look at the water energy nexus, the next issues of Our Water Matters will delve into other forms of energy that all share the same indispensable ingredient.



GRENDEL KHAN

A hydroelectric plant in Putnam, CT

Gerfers is general manager of the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District.

BIG BEND Sentinel

Editor	**Rob D'Amico** *rob@bigbendsentinel.com*
Reporter	**Sam Karas** *sam@bigbendsentinel.com*
Contributor, Manager	**Mary Etherington** *mary@bigbendsentinel.com*
Copy Editor	**Ariele Gentiles** *ariele@bigbendsentinel.com*
Designer, Advertising	**Andrew Siegfried** *designer@bigbendsentinel.com*
Sports Reporter	**Roxy Lara**
Distribution	**Gilberto Carrillo**
Distribution	**Rene Gonzales**

Sentinel News Project
www.bigbendsentinel.com

Published Weekly on Thursdays 50 times a year by Sentinel News Project, A Texas non-profit organization.

President and Publisher	**Roger Black** *roger@bigbendsentinel.com*
Director	**Don Gardner**
Director	**Gonzalo Garcia Barcha**

Office	209½ W. El Paso St., Marfa
Mailing address	Drawer P, Marfa, TX 79843
Telephone	(432) 729-4342
Contact	editor@bigbendsentinel.com
Advertising	ads@bigbendsentinel.com

Annual subscription rates are $50 in Presidio, Brewster and Jeff Davis counties, and $60 elsewhere in and the United States. Special rates apply abroad.
Periodicals class postage paid at Marfa, Texas 79843.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Drawer P, Marfa, TX 79843

© Copyright 2025 Sentinel News Project. All rights reserved.

ART Sentinel

Peas and honey

Marfa artist explores 'sweetness and strangeness'

Peas in Honey is a new solo exhibition by artist Haley Levin, opening at Do Right Hall in Marfa on Saturday, November 15, from 6-8 p.m. The show will remain on view through November 22, closing with an evening of live music from Tiny Vipers and Ghosts I've Met at 5 p.m.

In Peas in Honey, Levin brings together a series of recent paintings and other items. Through a visual language of shape, rhythm and intuitive mark-making, Levin explores the sweetness and strangeness that punctuates daily life, finding warmth in the absurdity and intimacy of imperfection.

Do Right Hall is located at 110 W Dallas St., Marfa. Admission is open and free to all. Follow along on Instagram at @haleysplat or visit haleylevin.cargo.site for more.

Rubino's poetry recalls his father's diner

New Jersey poet Frank Rubino will be reading from his work and in conversation with Marfa resident, poet Eileen Myles, at Stop & Read Books–215 Highland Street in Marfa–on Saturday, Nov. 15 at 7 p.m.

Myles will give an introduction to Rubino's new collection of poems that recollect the poet's childhood at Frank's Lunch Service, his father's luncheonette. Its scope is broader, though, as it transcends autobiographical particulars to connect with wider experiences of intimacy and camaraderie.

Myles said Frank is everyone's poet, a smart purveyor of the "achy beauty of everyday."

Praise for Lunch Service

"Frank's Lunch Service is a memoir told the way life is actually experienced: as a progression of prominent places, momentous memories, pivotal insights–at times chronological, other times kaleidoscopic."

–Anton Yakovlev

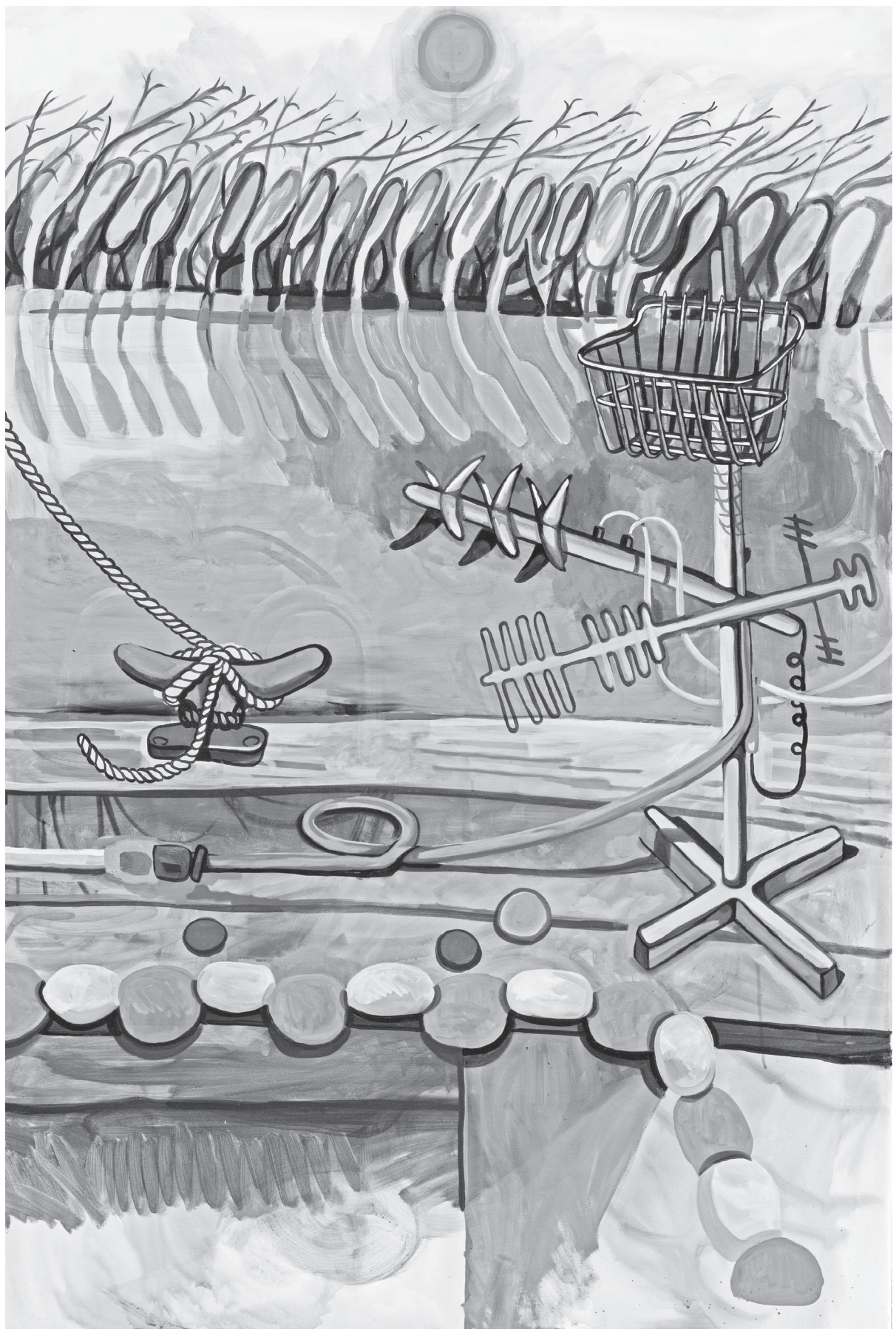
"Blackballed from the Honor Society, wearing a Bradlee's hoodie with no logo, it's teenage Frank, working in his family's diner on wheels. His father's favorite comedies are Roadrunner cartoons. His mother woodburned "Love, Mom," into the back of his guitar. If you want the real Jersey, it's here."

– Bob Holman

"These poems grapple with but never aim to define American masculinity. Instead, they offer an interior view of the things boyhood and manhood can encompass, which is to say, depth and complexity. Rubino's poems challenge toxic masculinity by witnessing its presence, which gives its practitioners grace and a way to move past. I will read this book to my son one day."

–Tamara Zbrizher

Frank Rubino has been published in *The Platform Review, DQM, Thimble, Chaleur, Caliban, The World, Little Light, and Vending Machine*, and was the featured poet in *The Red Wheelbarrow 14*.



Haley Levin, "Reeds," oil on canvas, 36x48 inches, 2025.

Presidio artist featured in Alpine fest

Artwalk Alpine, West Texas' longest-running arts festival will celebrate its 32nd year on November 21–22. The street festival transforms the main streets of Alpine into a vibrant showcase of artistic talent and community spirit.

This year's featured artist is Yosdy Valdivia, a visual artist known for her evocative paintings and dreamlike landscapes. Born in Texas in 1998, Valdivia earned her BFA from Sul Ross State University and began her career in Presidio, Texas, where she now lives and works. She runs Galeria Raices, her own creative space that serves as a hub for artistic expression and collaboration.

Her work has been exhibited across the U.S. and internationally, including in Mexico, Belgium (The Color of the Sage, 2022), and Austria (Memories of Life and Death, 2023). Valdivia has also created public murals along the U.S.–Mexico border in Presidio and Ojinaga, Mexico.

Her paintings explore themes of longing, uncertainty and fate using fluid, abstract imagery to capture the fleeting beauty of emotion and perception.

Artwalk guests can view diverse artworks, meet artists, shop at downtown businesses, and enjoy food and drinks while taking in live performances throughout the festival.

The event will feature dozens of local artists on 5th Street and 5th Street Plaza, with extended hours for 16 local businesses and performances by eight Texas bands–all free of charge in Alpine.

Artwalk hours

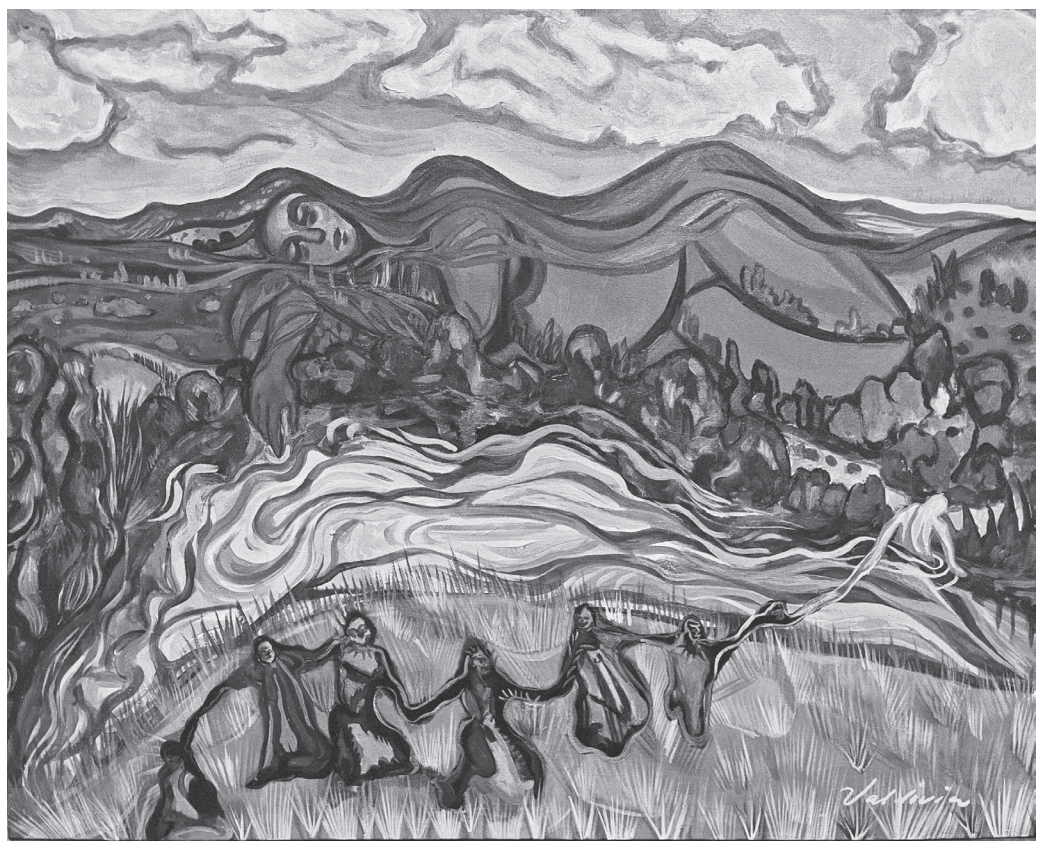
Saturday, November 22
10 a.m.-10:30 p.m.

Live music schedule

Friday, November 21
Bands begin at 5 p.m.
Headliner: Mariachi Santa Cruz at 8:30 p.m.
Local favorites: The Swifts, Puro Party Allstarz

Saturday, November 22
Bands begin at 3 p.m.
Headliner: Jonathan Tyler and the Northern Lights at 8:30 p.m.
Local favorites: Rick Ruiz and Few Too Many, Anthony Ray Wright and Emilie Clepper, Doodling Hogwallops

For more information, visit www.artwalkalpine.com



Yosdy Valdivia's Madre del Desierto

Vanishing art

(Gone too soon, like a rainbow)

Chinati's 'Art in Context: Art, Architecture' set for Houston this weekend

By Mary Etherington

THERE are plenty of examples of someone's hard work and creative genius vanishing without a trace. It happens every day. What once was now exists only in the vault of the mind, or the mind's eye, if we are lucky. From cave paintings to frescos, those artists weren't thinking, "It's scheduled to be gone next week or tomorrow," and much of it has been stumbled across by accident, restored and preserved through photos like the frescos from Pompeii. And yet temporary art paintings on walls are made with an end date printed in catalogues and on gallery schedules.

Smith College Museum of Art chose to have Nancy Spero apply text and images directly on the wall of a stairwell shortly before the museum was to be closed for renovation in 1990. It was moving work. Her figurative women in repetition and text from Bertolt Brecht cascaded down the stairwell. It seemed dismissive to have the artist first create and install the work only to have it erased forever, painted over shortly thereafter.

Former Chinati Foundation artist in residence Kate Shepherd created and exhibited wall paintings in Marfa that indeed are different in every way from Spero's wall paintings, however, both elicit that reaction of so much work, so wonderful, powerful, and gone too soon.

Shepherd's exhibition at Do Right Hall in Marfa last April was concurrent to the "Art in Context Part I" at Chinati, definitely part of a tradition of ephemeral work. The strength of her painting, the abstract and geometric calling of light on the flat surface, the sheer size of the work, the color blocks, all add up to a dynamic and lasting impression. It's left to each of us to conjure again in memory or photos. It's a bold and courageous way to make a great viewing experience for those who are able to learn about the new wall painting and travel to see the exhibition before it's gone.

The Chinati two-part symposium, "Art in Context: Art, Architecture, and the Middle Landscape" launched with Part l in Marfa proper. Many of the participants in Part I of the symposium got the chance to see the Shepherd exhibition that included these Marfa wall paintings, and as they headed out of town at the close of the symposium, white paint went on the gallery walls covering it. After the first coat of white paint there was a ghost image, and then the subsequent coat of paint made them but a memory, image here and gone.

In an attempt to help me understand Shepherd's statement, "They are like rainbows," answers all my questions.

Part II of the Art in Context symposium takes place in Houston at Rice University November 14 and 15 and will continue the conversations of Part I that were more specific to the artillery sheds, the site overall and environmental concerns of the campus in Marfa, and will then expand to the context and concerns of other environments.

In Part II, participants can see Shepherd's first and only permanent wall painting, Tricycle Red, Pelican Gray, etc., partial octagons, 2021, installed in the rotunda of the Rice University Jones Graduate School of Business. What a happy accident of art in context adjacent for the participants.



Kate Shepherd works at Do Right Hall on wall paintings.