

Rivals for Congress meet the voters

Democrats face off in Alpine session

By GINA VERA

Alpine

The four democratic candidates for U.S. Congressional District 23 met with the residents of Alpine in a candidates' forum held Saturday at Sul Ross State University.

The candidates, including Gretel Enck, Bruce Richardson, Santos Limon, and Katy Padilla Stout, will face off in the Democratic primary on March 3. The winner of the March 3 Democratic primary will go against the Republican nominee in the November 3 General Election. The seat is currently held by incumbent Tony Gonzales.

Enck spent 25 years working for the federal government in the National Park Service until she was forced into early retirement by cuts made by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). "I definitely don't feel like I'm done serving my communities or my country, and I'm definitely not done standing up for my core values of courage, integrity, and service," Enck said.

"Pay their fair share"

Enck said she is running for the "common good," and "common ground." Within common good, Enck included affordability and income equality. "And that also means holding billionaires and large corporations accountable and making them pay their fair share," Enck said.

She said she's also running to "save our democracy," from what she sees as a failing system of checks and balances. "This administration is violating our Constitution, undermining our national security, wrecking our economy, and we're bombarded with more every week," she said. "They're killing our neighbors because the checks and balances are failing."

Richardson grew up in Denton and has lived in Congressional District 23 for 10 years. He got to know the area and its residents through his work with the Census Bureau in 2020, "talking to people I didn't know in places I



Candidates for the congressional House District 23 take questions from the audience at a forum Saturday.

didn't know existed," Richardson said.

Richardson said he is running for office because he remembers the Cold War and doesn't like what he is seeing. "Listening to Donald Trump, it's starting to sound familiar," he said. "I'm fighting to defend our democracy and to restore affordability in the face of price gouging by corporations and other bad actors."

Learning from the railroad

Limon has lived in the district for more than 50 years. He is the grandson and great-grandson of men who helped build the Southern Pacific Railroad and is a civil engineer who now works on railway infrastructure around the world and in the energy sector.

Working on the Southern Pacific Railway from San Antonio to El Paso has given him the opportunity to meet the people and learn about the issues in the region, Limon said. "They're having water problems on the other side of the railroad tracks. They're having all these difficulties," he said.

Stout is from San Antonio. She spent almost 10 years as a public-school teacher before going to law school and beginning work representing children and families going through the foster care system, so the education system and caring for people are important issues for her. "That's something that's really near and dear to my heart in regard to helping people who need help, helping the most vulnerable in our community. That's something I've been doing for a long time, whether that's been working in Title I schools or if it's been working with my clients," Stout said.

While her father was a rancher and attorney, he grew up as a migrant farm worker, Stout said. Her grandfather and great-grandfather were also migrant farm workers. "It was through education that we were able to get to where we are. To be able to move up into the middle class and see that systematically being closed down for so many people and so many children is really heartbreaking," Stout said.

The first questions moderator Reagan Stone posed to the candidates focused on immigration—"What types of programs should we as American citizens provide undocumented people so that they're not illegally present or inhumanely detained? And what types of changes overall would you push for surrounding national immigration policy?"

"Defend our democracy"

Richardson said his perspective came from the 20 years he spent in China, much of it living and working there illegally. There was no path for legal residency there, Richardson said. "When I see what's happening here though, it is night and day. I cannot imagine ICE agents dressed

for combat going after people in their homes. This is ridiculous," he said.

The focus should be on development of legal pathways for people coming into the United States, Richardson said. "We need a way to bring people in regardless of how they got here, and at least give them some sort of permanent residency where they can live and breathe and have their being and raise the families that they've already started here."

Limon said his perspective comes from having more than 14 family members that work for the United States Border Patrol, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency and having lived in South Texas for so many years. He and the majority of his family members involved in those agencies do not agree with the tactics being used, he said.

"I've been condemning the acts up in Minnesota," Limon said. "The atrocities that they've been doing up in Seattle, all over the country. This is not who we are. The Constitution protects everybody. It protects U.S. citizens, residents, and especially illegal immigrants as part of the Constitution."

Stout condemned the randomness of the removals, actions against children and the limiting of people's ability to protest. "We've always been a country

that's been able to say what we want, where we want in public spaces, and I think all of that is being attacked. I think that it is very unfortunate that not only are we targeting adults, but now we're targeting children," Stout said.

She also fears that the situation is progressing quickly. "They may start with a certain demographic,

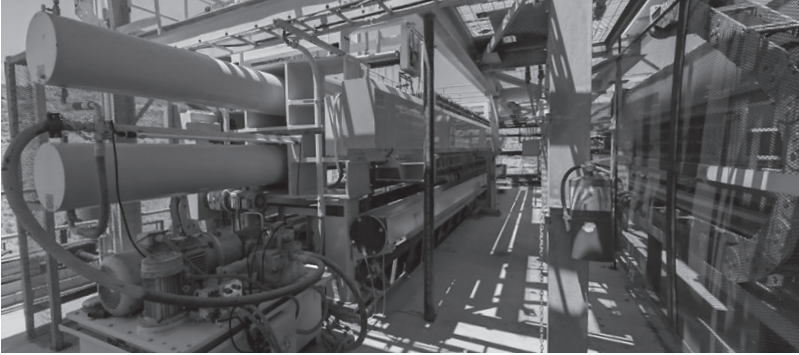
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County candidates continue tradition of breaking the law

Half the candidates neglect filing required documents

Marfa

More than half of the candidates running in local Presidio County elections for the March 3 Democratic primary have broken the law by failing to file timely campaign finance reports. Since there are no Republican candidates for most county offices (except the Republican Party County JP 2 race and the count chair), the winners of races without a



A filter press stands ready at the Shafter mine.

Silver prices spur Shafter mine opening

A year-long spike in silver prices—rising from \$30.81 per ounce last January to \$94.80 on Tuesday—is providing momentum for an Australian company to surge ahead with reopening the mine in Shafter.

In October, James Bay Minerals—an Australian company with holdings in the United States and Canada—announced that it would be acquiring the silver mine at Shafter. The company announced in a press release that it had "firm commitments" from investors to finance the project to the tune of \$18 million. The company then rebranded itself as Black Bear Minerals.

Recently, trucks and personnel have been seen working at the mine site, which still has heavy

equipment and processing facilities left by its former owner, Aurcana, which acquired the mine in 2008 before closing it in 2013 after silver prices plunged to less than \$20/ounce.

Black Bear Minerals posted public notices in Big Bend Sentinel, noting it had applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for a renewal of a water quality permit for water discharge, indicating it is moving forward with its project.

Shafter has been a hub for mineral extraction since 1883. During the mine's heyday in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it produced 2.3 million tons of ore containing 35.2 million ounces of silver.

ALLEGED ALPINE ARSONIST SPEAKS

Former firefighter says he did not set wildfire blazes

By ROB D'AMICO

Alpine

The former firefighter and emergency medical technician charged with lighting a series of up to 10 wildfires throughout Alpine over the course of months, and possibly years, said he is living with a shadow over him while the court system crawls along at a snail's pace.

"The fact is I didn't do it," David Matthew Neet said Monday by telephone. "There was somebody else. [Investigators] were looking at somebody else as well. The same person I was thinking of." Neet, who now is living in El Paso, did not say who he suspects



FACEBOOK

Neet: "I didn't do it."

committed the arson. While no one was injured in any of the wildfires—some of which could have been set up to two years before Neet's arrest—at least one fire came up directly behind a residence.

Sheriff's deputies arrested Neet on July 5, 2024, and he was indicted on September 17, 2024. Although originally charged with 20 counts of second-degree felony arson, the indictment was for only one count. Neet eventually pled not guilty in a February 14, 2024, hearing and was released on a personal recognizance bond, which didn't require paying anything toward his original \$300,000 bond.

Neet said that for the months he was imprisoned, he never saw a judge, which he said should have happened shortly after the indictment. "I sat in jail for seven and a half months without any idea what's going on," he said. "Once indicted, I should be able to go see a judge. They say speedy trial, speedy everything. That wasn't [happening]."

Neet said he feels just as isolated from the case now, not knowing where it stands, and that he hasn't heard from his attorneys at Far West Texas Regional Public Defender since September. He said at one point he was offered a plea deal, but then prosecutors pulled the deal, which he declined to comment further on.

Evidence from security cameras

A probable cause arrest affidavit for Neet's arrest outlines much of the prosecutor's case against him—alleging that Neet used incendiary devices to light brushfires, then rushed to the fire station to grab his gear and join crews to fight the blazes. A deputy spotted a white pickup truck near a fire in the Sunny Glen Estates subdivision, then used security camera footage to get a license plate on the truck, which was traced to Neet. By reviewing security tapes, the deputy pieced together when and where the truck was traveling when several fires broke out.

The footage showed Neet's pickup heading out of town, only to return just as fires were being reported on several occasions. Investigators also obtained records from a fireworks stand just east of town that revealed a credit card purchase by Neet on June 29 for a "Ground Bloom Flower," a type of firework found at one of the brushfires. Security camera footage also placed him at the firework stand. A court record for a search of Neet's car revealed items found, including fireworks, matches, a GoPro camera, "fire-starters," tape and a "backpack with electronics."

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INSIDE



The nation has one-tenth the population density of Big Bend

Greenland?

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New Alpine city manager takes office

Mayor and council remain hopeful amid past firings.

By GINA VERA

Alpine

New Alpine City Manager Henry Arredondo took office on Tuesday, with a background in finance and leadership style that impressed city officials despite issues with two previous organizations.

Mayor Catherine Eaves said he was her first choice in candidates reviewed. He was also the first choice for City Council members and staff, Eaves said. “You know when we started that interview, we were just going to talk to him, find out who he is, what his thoughts are.”

“We didn’t intend to offer him the job, but he just blew us away,” Eaves, all members of the City Council and city department directors participated in the interview process.

It was Arredondo’s experience that impressed them, Eaves said, including his long history in finance, his stints as city manager for Del Rio and Dilley, Texas, and his leadership style.

They were impressed despite Arredondo’s troubled departure from the City of Del Rio and the San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District. Arredondo was fired from his position as Del Rio city manager after nearly four years (2015-2018) there.

Arredondo attributed his firing to differences with a new administration. The firing came soon after Mayor Bruno Lozano was elected to office and was not a unanimous decision for the Del Rio City Council. The vote was 4-2.

“So there was an election in May. A new mayor comes in, and he decides that he wants to terminate me,” Arredondo said. There was no reason given, he added. Lozano did not respond to messages left by Big Bend Sentinel.

City officials and staff are aware of his dismissal from Del Rio and his departure from the school district, Eaves said, adding that most of the candidates had similar incidents in their careers.

“The average career span of a city manager is about three to five years in the state of Texas,” Eaves said, “Councils change. You have different personalities. And it’s just a tough job.”

City officials and staff are also impressed with Arredondo’s leadership style, Eaves said. “We were adamant as a council that we have some one who will let the directors do their jobs because they are the experts,” she said. “That has not been the case recently.”

After growing up in Del Rio, Arredondo attended Texas State University and received a degree in finance with additional classes in accounting. He went on to receive a master’s degree in management from Sul Ross State

University and is working on a certificate as a public manager through Texas State University.

After getting his degree in finance, Arredondo moved to Mexico where he worked in that area for various companies.

He spent 25 years in Mexico working for international companies including German, Japanese and American. The work was “mostly finance,” Arredondo said, “keeping the books, costing products. Every month you have to calculate your profits. You do the accounting, close the books.” He said the companies were \$75 million to \$300 million companies.

Arredondo’s career in city administration began in Del Rio when he was hired as the city’s chief accountant in 1998. “And that’s kind of where I learned, the structure of a full-service municipality,” he said.

At that time, Del Rio was about two years behind in city accounting, Arredondo said.

“When you get into a situation like that, there’s a lot of learning and growth that happens, because you’re under pressure,” Arredondo said. “You’re behind, so you’re actually working on the current plus catching up. So, there’s a lot of work that needs to be delegated to others.”

He also gained a lot of experience from the city’s handling of a flood that damaged more than 1,000 homes, during that time, Arredondo said.

Arredondo left his position as the city administrator of Dilley, Texas, to come to Alpine. Dilley City Secretary Natasha Prado, who worked directly with Arredondo, praised his leadership style and his expertise in finance. She learned a lot from Arredondo, said Prado, and believes that he has a lot to share with Alpine staff.

Arredondo is tied to Alpine through marriage. His wife, whom he met while he was a student at Sul Ross, was raised in Alpine and much of her family still lives here. His wife, who is a teacher and the owner of her own soap-making business, is considering opening a store in Alpine, Arredondo said.

A lawsuit filed by Arredondo against the City of Del Rio is still active. The suit alleges that the city violated its contract by terminating him without a unanimous council vote. His contract stated that a termination required a unanimous vote, and attorneys are in the process of determining what the city owes him, Arredondo said.

After his dismissal from the City of Del Rio, Arredondo worked as the chief financial officer for the San Felipe-Del Rio district. Arredondo left that position after his department fell for an online scam which misdirected a debt payment.

While the monies were sent by another employee and the scam was caught before the funds left the bank, school district officials held him responsible, Arredondo said.



ROB D'AMICO

The director of the Democratic congressional campaign for HD 23 fires up the forum crowd to back the candidates.

Candidates hone in on immigration

Continued from page 1

but it will move to everyone as we are seeing really quickly.” Stout said.

Enck said that while the issue is complicated there are answers and actions that should be taken quickly, including approving legislation that has already been introduced and closing down U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Such legislation was introduced by Rep. Veronica Escobar and is very similar to what was in Congress in 2023, Enck said. “It’s a bipartisan compromise bill. It’s not perfect, but let’s enact that right now. It offers both increasing resources to Border Patrol to work on the border that we need and want, specifically cross-border trade and commerce. That is a huge economic driver in this district and for America,” she said. The bill also creates pathways to citizenship and increases resources to courts to deal with the backlog of cases, Enck added.

Enck said she has no problem calling for the abolishment of ICE. “There is immigration and customs enforcement work that needs to be done, but this agency has proven that it’s not what they’re about. So, get them out of there,” she said.

Stone then called on candi-

dates to address the economy. “What would you do to stabilize economic policy from tariffs that are increasing our housing and food prices to workforce instability ... How do you think, candidates, as potential members of Congress, you can best affect policy on the prices of stuff and services?”

Limon said he is against tariffs, which he believes will cause more problems. Instead, he would work to reform the tax system, which he believes can drive inflation and focus on farming. “We have to invest in farmers,” he said. “We have to invest in ranchers. We have to invest. We have to be the U.S. that we once were, entrepreneurs, manufacturing.”

Stout said that as a mother, and through direct work with community nonprofit agencies, she has seen the impact that high prices are having on area residents and that tariffs and the instability that they bring are not the answer. Instead, Stout said, she would work to bring about paid parental leave and affordable childcare.

“Universal healthcare, everybody is concerned about healthcare, whether it’s cuts to the ACA, subsidies, Medicaid, et cetera,” Stout said. “Let’s solve it. Let’s shore those up. Let’s restore what’s been lost, right? Let’s move

forward toward Medicare for all.”

Enck said she would work to rebuild agencies gutted by DOGE such as Housing and Urban Development, bring about universal pre-K, childcare and healthcare, shore up Social Security and support unions.

Richardson said he would start by repealing the Big Beautiful Bill, work to bring about Medicare for all. But along with this he would call for public hearings regarding price gouging. “We have to fight that in any way we can in the courts and in public opinion on pricing. Much of our pricing has been driven by private equity moving into spaces where they were not 20 years ago, like housing and other things that everybody has to buy,” he said.

The candidates were then asked about their ideas regarding healthcare.

Healthcare is a right that should be extended to all, Stout said. “I fully believe that we should extend Medicare. Short of that, we need to have more federally funded access to healthcare, such as if we have rural hospitals or rural clinics, that would be helpful,” she said.

The issue is complicated, especially in rural areas, Enck said. “There’s so much involved in fixing this system, and that’s why I say I want to move to Medicare for all. Because with any luck, if everybody has care, everybody will use it,” she said.

Richardson said he supports Medicare for all and a woman’s right to choose. He also addressed the specific needs of rural Texas. “West Texas, as we all know, we’re in a healthcare desert. Regardless of how much money you have. I will sponsor legislation to set up clinics where we have accessible healthcare.” Richardson said.

Limon said he would focus on funding healthcare infrastructure in West Texas because, even with insurance, there is no place to go. “We need much better funding. We need to be more attractive to the doctors that don’t want to come down here. That’s one of the issues that’s been hurting us here, especially in Alpine, Texas,” Limon said.

Ballot by mail applications available

Marfa

Presidio County Clerk Carolina Catano is reminding everyone that applications for ballots by mail are now available and can be picked up at her courthouse office, which is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Applications for ballot by mail must be received by the clerk by February 20 for the March 3 primaries. March 3 is also the deadline for those ballots to be received. Applications can be given to the clerk by:

- In-person delivery;
 - Regular mail;
 - Common or contract carrier; or
 - Fax (if a fax machine is available to the Early Voting Clerk)
- Email (send a signed, scanned application as an attachment to an email to the early voting clerk)

Laws on campaign finance still ignored

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missioner candidate); Carolina Catano (appointed county clerk incumbent); Dina Jo Marquez (JP 1 candidate); Jesseca Murillo (JP 2 candidate) and Bianca Bailon (JP Precinct 2 candidate). Republican Amabilia “Amy” Galindo filed her treasurer’s report for the JP 2 race.

Not filing the reports were: Portillo; Margarito Hernandez (Precinct 2 county commissioner incumbent); Fernando Juárez (Precinct 2 county commissioner candidate); Brenda Pando Covos (county clerk candidate); Florcita Zubia (appointed county treasurer candidate); Jusby Vasquez (county treasurer candidate); Angel Miguel Campos (JP 2 candidate).

Portillo and Hernandez, did not respond to requests for comment. Zubia said she has been tied up with a family member’s medical treatment in El Paso and will file reports as soon as she gets back to Marfa.

Murillo also said she has been dealing with a family member’s medical issues, but said she plans to file the reports. Covos said she will get reports filed by the end of this week or beginning of next week, and Campos and Vasquez said they will work to get the documents filed soon.

Democratic Party county chair candidates Irma Juárez (Democrat, unopposed) and Dan Dunlap (Republican, unopposed) are not required to file reports.

To view the reports, the public can go to the Presidio County clerk’s office and flip through a folder of filed documents. State law requires that they be posted online, something the county in its struggles with web updates has failed to do, although the clerk, Catano, said she would get it done.

Big Bend Sentinel is reserving the option to file complaints with the Texas Ethics Commission if candidates do not timely file any required reports. One reason candidates might not take penalties seriously is that the Texas Attorney General’s Office refuses to enforce the requirements when the commission refers scofflaws, according to a 2024 story in the Texas Tribune.

Attorney General Ken Paxton, who owed \$11,000 in fines at the time of the story, rarely filed lawsuits to go after delinquencies. “Since Paxton took office in 2015, the ethics commission has referred 2,500 unpaid fines to the attorney general for enforcement, the Tribune found,” the story said. “During that time, Paxton’s office has filed just 175 enforcement lawsuits, or 7% of the cases referred to it.”

An obvious reason for the campaign finance laws is to allow the public to see if donors might wield undue influence over elected officials.

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PRESIDIO INTERNATIONAL



Katy Padilla Stout



Bruce Richardson



Gretel Enk



Santos Limon

Candidatos al Congreso exponen sus posturas

Foro en Alpine reúne a candidatos demócratas

POR GINA VERA

Alpine

Los cuatro candidatos demócratas al Distrito 23 del Congreso de los Estados Unidos se reunieron con residentes de Alpine durante un foro público celebrado el sábado en la Universidad Estatal Sul Ross. Gretel Enck, Bruce Richardson, Santos Limón y Katy Padilla Stout competirán en las primarias demócratas del 3 de marzo. El ganador de esa contienda se enfrentará al actual representante republicano, Tony Gonzales, en las elecciones generales del 3 de noviembre.

El foro permitió a los asistentes conocer las trayectorias personales, prioridades políticas y posturas de los candidatos sobre temas clave para la región, entre ellos inmigración, economía y atención médica, asuntos particularmente relevantes para un distrito que se extiende a lo largo de la frontera entre Texas y México y que incluye amplias zonas rurales.

Gretel Enck abrió su participación destacando su trayectoria de 25 años trabajando para el gobierno federal en el Servicio de Parques Nacionales. Explicó que se vio obligada a jubilarse anticipadamente tras los recortes impulsados por el Departamento de Eficiencia Gubernamental. Enck señaló que su decisión de postularse surge de su deseo de continuar sirviendo al país y a las comunidades del distrito. Dijo que su campaña se basa en el “bien común” y el “consenso”, con un énfasis particular en la equidad económica, la asequibilidad y la rendición de cuentas de las grandes corporaciones y los multimillonarios.

Enck también expresó preocupación por lo que considera un debilitamiento del sistema democrático y de los pesos y contrapesos institucionales. Afirmó que una de sus principales motivaciones es proteger la democracia y restaurar la confianza en las instituciones públicas, las cuales, según dijo, han sido erosionadas

en los últimos años.

Bruce Richardson, quien creció en Denton y ha vivido en el Distrito 23 durante la última década, compartió que conoció a fondo la región a través de su trabajo con la Oficina del Censo en 2020. Ese trabajo, dijo, le permitió interactuar con comunidades diversas y entender mejor los desafíos que enfrentan muchas personas que viven en zonas remotas. Richardson explicó que su candidatura está motivada por su preocupación ante lo que percibe como paralelismos históricos con la Guerra Fría y el discurso político actual.

Según Richardson, uno de sus principales objetivos es defender la democracia y enfrentar prácticas corporativas que, a su juicio, han contribuido al aumento del costo de vida. Señaló que la especulación de precios en sectores como la vivienda y los servicios básicos ha reducido significativamente la asequibilidad para muchas familias del distrito.

Santos Limón, residente del distrito desde hace más de 50 años, destacó sus profundas raíces familiares en la región. Es nieto y bisnieto de trabajadores que ayudaron a construir el ferrocarril Southern Pacific y ha desarrollado una carrera como ingeniero civil, actualmente vinculado a proyectos de infraestructura ferroviaria y energética en distintas partes del mundo. Limón explicó que su experiencia laboral le permitió conocer de primera mano las comunidades a lo largo del corredor ferroviario entre San Antonio y El Paso.

Durante su intervención, Limón subrayó problemas persistentes en la región, como el acceso al agua, las desigualdades económicas y la falta de inversión en infraestructura básica. Dijo que estas realidades han influido directamente en su decisión de postularse para el Congreso.

Katy Padilla Stout, originaria de San Antonio, habló de su experiencia como maestra de escuela pública durante casi una década antes de estudiar derecho. Actualmente trabaja representando a niños y familias dentro del sistema de acogida. Para Stout, la educación y el cuidado de las

personas más vulnerables son pilares centrales de su plataforma política. Compartió que su historia personal, marcada por una infancia como trabajadora agrícola migrante, así como la de su abuelo y bisabuelo, refuerza su convicción de que la educación es una de las principales herramientas para la movilidad social.

En materia de inmigración

Uno de los primeros temas abordados por la moderadora Reagan Stone fue la inmigración. Richardson explicó que su perspectiva está influenciada por los cerca de 20 años que pasó viviendo y trabajando en China, en muchos casos sin un estatus migratorio legal formal. Comparó esa experiencia con lo que observa actualmente en Estados Unidos y criticó las tácticas de aplicación migratoria que considera excesivas. Señaló la necesidad de crear vías legales que permitan a las personas integrarse plenamente a la sociedad, independientemente de cómo hayan llegado al país.

Limón aportó una visión distinta, basada en su experiencia familiar, ya que varios de sus parientes han trabajado para la Patrulla Fronteriza, el FBI y la CIA. Aun así, dijo que no está de acuerdo con muchas de las tácticas actuales y enfatizó que la Constitución protege no solo a los ciudadanos, sino también a los residentes y a las personas indocumentadas.

Stout expresó su preocupación por las deportaciones arbitrarias, el trato a los niños y las restricciones al derecho a la protesta. Señaló que teme que las medidas actuales sienten precedentes peligrosos que eventualmente podrían afectar a un espectro más amplio de la población.

Enck reconoció la complejidad del tema migratorio, pero afirmó que existen soluciones legislativas viables que deben implementarse con urgencia. Respaldó un proyecto de ley presentado por la congresista Veronica Escobar, el cual, según explicó, es de carácter bipartidista e incluye mayores recursos para la Patrulla Fronteriza, la creación de vías hacia la ciudadanía y el fortalecimiento

del sistema judicial migratorio. Enck reiteró además su postura a favor de dismantelar el ICE, argumentando que la agencia ha perdido su propósito original.

En el ámbito económico

En cuanto a la economía, los candidatos coincidieron en que los aranceles no son una solución efectiva al aumento de precios. Limón se manifestó en contra de estas medidas y propuso en su lugar una reforma al sistema tributario, así como una mayor inversión en agricultura, ganadería y manufactura nacional. Subrayó la necesidad de fortalecer la producción interna para proteger empleos bien remunerados.

Stout señaló que, como madre y a través de su trabajo con organizaciones comunitarias, ha sido testigo del impacto directo que la inflación tiene en las familias. Propuso políticas como la licencia parental remunerada, el cuidado infantil asequible y un sistema de salud universal. Enck coincidió en la importancia de fortalecer programas sociales, reconstruir agencias federales debilitadas, apoyar a los sindicatos y garantizar educación preescolar universal.

Richardson, por su parte, dijo que una de sus primeras acciones sería trabajar para derogar la Ley de Reducción de Impuestos y Empleos. Además, propuso realizar audiencias públicas para investigar la especulación de precios por parte de empresas de capital privado en sectores clave.

Finalmente, en el tema de atención médica, los cuatro candidatos coincidieron en que el acceso a servicios de salud es especialmente problemático en el oeste de Texas. Stout afirmó que la atención médica debe considerarse un derecho y abogó por ampliar Medicare o fortalecer alternativas públicas en zonas rurales. Enck y Richardson expresaron su apoyo a Medicare para todos, mientras que Limón subrayó la necesidad de invertir en infraestructura médica para atraer profesionales de la salud a la región, especialmente en comunidades rurales que enfrentan escasez de médicos, largas distancias y limitadas opciones de atención especializada.

PRESUNTO PIRÓMANO DE ALPINE HABLA

Exbombero niega haber provocado incendios

POR ROB D'AMICO

Alpine

El exbombero y técnico de emergencias médicas acusado de provocar una serie de hasta 10 incendios forestales en Alpine durante meses, y posiblemente años, dijo que vive con una sombra sobre él mientras el sistema judicial avanza a paso de tortuga.

“La verdad es que yo no lo hice”, dijo David Mathew Neet el lunes por teléfono. “Había otra persona. [Los investigadores] también estaban investigando a otra persona. La misma persona en la que yo estaba pensando”. Neet, que ahora vive en El Paso, no reveló a quién sospecha que cometió el incendio.

Si bien nadie resultó herido en ninguno de los incendios forestales —algunos de los cuales podrían haber sido provocados hasta dos años antes del arresto de Neet— al menos un incendio se produjo justo detrás de una residencia.

Los agentes del sheriff arrestaron a Neet el 5 de julio de 2024 y fue acusado formalmente el 17 de septiembre de 2024. Aunque originalmente fue acusado de 20 cargos de incendio premeditado de segundo grado, la acusación formal fue por un solo cargo. Neet finalmente se declaró no culpable en una audiencia el 14 de febrero de 2024 y fue puesto en libertad bajo fianza personal, lo que no requirió el pago de ninguna cantidad de su fianza original de \$300,000.

Neet dijo que durante los meses que estuvo encarcelado, nunca vio a un juez, lo que, según él, debería haber sucedido poco después de la acusación formal. “Estuve en la cárcel durante siete meses y medio sin tener ni idea de lo que estaba pasando”, dijo. “Una vez acusado formalmente, debería poder ver a un juez. Dicen juicio rápido, todo rápido. Eso no estaba sucediendo”.

Neet dijo que se siente igual de aislado del caso ahora, sin saber en qué estado se encuentra, y que no ha tenido noticias de sus abogados de la Defensoría Pública Regional del Oeste de Texas desde septiembre. Dijo que en un momento le ofrecieron un acuerdo de culpabilidad, pero luego los fiscales retiraron la oferta, sobre lo cual se negó a comentar más.

Una declaración jurada de causa probable para el arresto de Neet describe gran parte del caso de la fiscalía en su contra, alegando que Neet usó artefactos incendiarios para provocar incendios forestales, y luego corrió a la estación de bomberos para recoger su equipo y unirse a los

equipos para combatir los incendios. Un agente vio una camioneta blanca cerca de un incendio en la urbanización Sunny Glen Estates, y luego usó las imágenes de las cámaras de seguridad para obtener la matrícula del vehículo que resultó ser de Neet. Al revisar las cintas de seguridad, el agente reconstruyó cuándo y dónde se encontraba la camioneta cuando se produjeron varios incendios. Las imágenes mostraron la camioneta de Neet saliendo de la ciudad, solo para regresar justo cuando se reportaban incendios en varias ocasiones. Los investigadores también obtuvieron registros de un puesto de fuegos artificiales al este de la ciudad que revelaron una compra con tarjeta de crédito realizada por Neet el 29 de junio de un “Ground Bloom Flower”, un tipo de fuegos artificiales que se encontraron en uno de los incendios forestales. Las imágenes de las cámaras de seguridad también lo ubicaron en el puesto de fuegos artificiales. Un registro judicial de un registro del coche de Neet reveló los objetos encontrados, incluyendo fuegos artificiales, cerillas, una cámara GoPro, “encendedores”, cinta adhesiva y una “mochila con aparatos electrónicos”.

Neet dijo que las pruebas no demuestran nada incriminatorio. Por ejemplo, dijo que los videos de él conduciendo dentro y fuera de la ciudad son solo eso, porque le gusta conducir para calmar la ansiedad y el trastorno de estrés postraumático que padece. “Así que, diablos, conducía hasta Fort Stockton, hasta Midland-Odessa, solo para alejarme de la ansiedad”, dijo. “Y dicen: ‘Bueno, tenías fuegos artificiales’. Bueno, era el 4 de julio”.

Neet sirvió en el ejército antes de convertirse en paramédico. En Alpine, trabajó para el equipo de servicios médicos de emergencia 1st Response EMS, que proporciona transporte médico no urgente, y como bombero voluntario durante varios años.

“Sinceramente, no lo hice”, dijo Neet. “Como todos han dicho, ¿por qué iba a arruinar mi carrera, arruinarlo todo por eso? Y todos con los que he hablado me dicen lo mismo. La gente con la que trabajaba me decía: ‘De ninguna manera lo hiciste’. Mi oficial al mando en el ejército dijo: ‘De ninguna manera. De hecho, estabas conmigo, estabas con nosotros en el ejército cuando sucedió parte de esto”.

Neet dijo que está esperando en un mundo que no le permite conseguir un buen trabajo en su campo, y se ve obligado a buscar trabajos ocasionales. “Ni siquiera puedo usar mi licencia de paramédico. Mi vida militar se ha esfumado. Toda mi vida está en suspenso hasta que resuelvan esto”.



VISITA MI SITIO WEB



DAVID BEEBE
PARA JUEZ DEL CONDADO DE PRESIDIO
“LOS TIPOS IMPOSITIVOS NO AUMENTARÁN BAJO EL MANDATO DEL JUEZ BEEBE. PROMETO QUE, COMO JUEZ DEL CONDADO, NO APOYARÉ NINGUNA EMISIÓN DE BONOS O PAGARÉS FISCALES POR PARTE DEL CONDADO.”
Pol Ad Paid for by David Beebe for Presidio Co PO Box 70 Marfa, TX



la fundación the CHINATI foundation

Chinati is an art foundation created by Donald Judd and opened to the public in 1986.

Chinati is open Wednesday through Sunday. Office hours and guided tour times are seasonal. For details and reservations, please come to the Visitor Center (1 Cavalry Row) or go to chinati.org/visit.

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



PRESIDIO COUNTY DEMOCRATIC FORUM



The Presidio County Democratic Party and Big Bend Sentinel will host a local, county Candidates Forum.

All are welcome to attend either or both of the two events.
January 29, 6 - 8 p.m. USO Visitor Center – Marfa
February 5, 6 - 8 p.m., Presidio Activity Center – Presidio

Candidate Participation
Countywide candidates (Judge, Clerk/District Clerk, Treasurer, County Chair) are encouraged to attend both forums.

Precinct-based candidates attend only the forum aligned with their precinct:

Marfa: County Commissioner Precinct 4 (Susan Hays), JPI (Dina Jo Marquez)

Presidio: County Commissioner Precinct 2 (Fernando Juárez, Jesús Herrera, Margarito Hernández), JP2 (Angel Miguel Campos, Bianca Martinez Bailon, Jesseca Murillo)

Unopposed candidates may give brief statements but do not participate in debates with other candidates. They can be asked questions. (Susan Hays will be attending the Presidio forum due to a conflict with the first event.)

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THE MARFA PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

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

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND INTENT TO OBTAIN WATER QUALITY PERMIT RENEWAL
PERMIT NO. WQ0004297000

APPLICATION. JBM Project, LLC, 1501 South MoPac Expressway, Suite 220, Austin, Texas 78746, which owns Shafter Mine, an underground silver ore mining facility, has applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit No. WQ0004297000 (EPA I.D. No. TX0132624) to authorize the discharge of mine dewatering water at a volume not to exceed a daily average flow of 360,000 gallons per day. The facility is located at 97423 U.S. Highway 67, near the city of Marfa, in Presidio County, Texas 79843. The discharge route is from the plant site to an unnamed tributary, thence to Arroyo del Muerto, thence to Wilson Arroyo, thence to Rio Grande Below Riverside Diversion Dam. TCEQ received this application on December 10, 2025. The permit application will be available for viewing and copying at Presidio County Courthouse, 300 Highland Street, Marfa, in Presidio County, Texas prior to the date this notice is published in the newspaper. The application and associated notices are available electronically at the following webpage: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications>. This link to an electronic map of the site or facility's general location is provided as a public courtesy and not part of the application or notice. For the exact location, refer to the application.
<https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=-104.307222,29.817777&level=18>

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC MEETING. You may submit public comments or request a public meeting on this application. The purpose of a public meeting is to provide the opportunity to submit comments or to ask questions about the application. TCEQ will hold a public meeting if the Executive Director determines that there is a significant degree of public interest in the application or if requested by a local legislator. A public meeting is not a contested case hearing.

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

Executive Director's decision and for requesting a contested case hearing. A contested case hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial in state district court.

TO REQUEST A CONTESTED CASE HEARING, YOU MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN YOUR REQUEST: your name, address, phone number; applicant's name and proposed permit number; the location and distance of your property/activities relative to the proposed facility; a specific description of how you would be adversely affected by the facility in a way not common to the general public; a list of all disputed issues of fact that you submit during the comment period and, the statement "[I/we] request a contested case hearing." If the request for contested case hearing is filed on behalf of a group or association, the request must designate the group's representative for receiving future correspondence; identify by name and physical address an individual member of the group who would be adversely affected by the proposed facility or activity; provide the information discussed above regarding the affected member's location and distance from the facility or activity; explain how and why the member would be affected; and explain how the interests the group seeks to protect are relevant to the group's purpose.

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

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

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

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

AGENCY CONTACTS AND INFORMATION. All public comments and requests must be submitted either electronically at <https://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/>, or in writing to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Office of the Chief Clerk, MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Please be aware that any contact information you provide, including your name, phone number, email address and physical address will become part of the agency's public record. For more information about this permit application or the permitting process, please call the TCEQ Public Education Program, Toll Free, at 1-800-687-4040 or visit their website at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/pep. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.

Further information may also be obtained from JBM Project, LLC at the address stated above or by calling Ms. Jess Portmess, Attorney, Womble Bond Dickinson (US) LLP, at 720-719-1301.

Issuance Date: January 8, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

COMISIÓN DE CALIDAD AMBIENTAL DEL ESTADO DE TEXAS



AVISO DE RECIBO DE LA SOLICITUD Y EL INTENTO DE OBTENER PERMISO PARA LA CALIDAD DEL AGUA RENOVACION
PERMISO NO. WQ0004297000

SOLICITUD. JBM Project, LLC, 1501 South MoPac Expressway, Suite 220, Austin, Texas 78746, propietaria de Shafter Mine, ha solicitado a la Comisión de Calidad Ambiental del Estado de Texas (TCEQ) para renovar el Permiso No. WQ0004297000 (EPA I.D. No. TX0132624) del Sistema de Eliminación de Descargas de Contaminantes de Texas (TPDES) para autorizar la descarga de aguas residuales tratadas en un volumen que no sobrepasa un flujo promedio diario de 360,000 galones por día. La planta está ubicada 97423 U.S. Highway 67, cerca de la ciudad de Marfa en el Condado de Presidio, Texas 79843. La ruta de descarga es del sitio de la planta hacia un afluente sin nombre, luego al Arroyo del Muerto, después al Wilson Arroyo y posteriormente al Rio Grande, aguas debajo de la Presa de Desviación Riverside. La TCEQ recibió esta solicitud el 10 de diciembre de 2025. La solicitud para el permiso estará disponible para leerla y copiarla en el Palacio de Justicia del Condado de Presidio, 300 Highland Street, Marfa, Texas antes de la fecha de publicación de este aviso en el periódico. La solicitud y los avisos asociados están disponibles electrónicamente en la siguiente página web: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications>. Este enlace a un mapa electrónico de la ubicación general del sitio o de la instalación es proporcionado como una cortesía y no es parte de la solicitud o del aviso. Para la ubicación exacta, consulte la solicitud.
<https://gisweb.tceq.texas.gov/LocationMapper/?marker=-104.307222,29.817777&level=18>

AVISO DE IDIOMA ALTERNATIVO. El aviso de idioma alternativo en español está disponible en <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/pending-permits/tpdes-applications>.

AVISO ADICIONAL. El Director Ejecutivo de la TCEQ ha determinado que la solicitud es administrativamente completa y conducirá una revisión técnica de la solicitud. Después de completar la revisión técnica, el Director Ejecutivo puede preparar un borrador del permiso y emitirá una Decisión Preliminar sobre la solicitud. **TPDEI aviso de la solicitud y la decisión preliminar serán publicados y enviado a los que están en la lista de correo de las personas a lo largo del condado que desean recibir los avisos y los que están en la lista de correo que desean recibir avisos de esta solicitud. El aviso dará la fecha límite para someter comentarios públicos.**

COMENTARIO PUBLICO / REUNION PUBLICA. Usted puede presentar comentarios públicos o pedir una reunión pública sobre esta solicitud. El propósito de una reunión pública es dar oportunidad de presentar comentarios o hacer preguntas acerca de la solicitud. La TCEQ realiza una reunión pública si el Director Ejecutivo determina que hay un grado de interés público suficiente en la solicitud o si un legislador local lo pide. Una reunión pública no es una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso.

OPORTUNIDAD DE UNA AUDIENCIA ADMINISTRATIVA DE LO CONTENCIOSO. Después del plazo para presentar comentarios públicos, el Director Ejecutivo considerará todos los comentarios apropiados y preparará una respuesta a todo los comentarios públicos esenciales, pertinentes, o significativos. **A menos que la solicitud haya sido referida directamente a una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso, la respuesta a los comentarios y la decisión del Director Ejecutivo sobre la solicitud serán enviados por correo a todos los que presentaron un comentario público y a las personas que están en la lista para recibir avisos sobre esta solicitud. Si se reciben comentarios, el aviso también proveerá instrucciones para pedir una reconsideración de la decisión del Director Ejecutivo y para pedir una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso.** Una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso es un procedimiento legal similar a un procedimiento legal civil en un tribunal de distrito del estado.

PARA SOLICITAR UNA AUDIENCIA DE CASO IMPUGNADO, USTED DEBE INCLUIR EN SU SOLICITUD LOS SIGUIENTES DATOS: su nombre, dirección, y número de teléfono; el nombre del solicitante y número del permiso; la ubicación y distancia de su propiedad/actividad con respecto a la instalación; una descripción específica de la forma cómo usted sería afectado adversamente por el sitio de una manera no común al público en general; una lista de todas las cuestiones de hecho en disputa que usted presente durante el período de comentarios; y la declaración "[Yo/nosotros] solicito/solicitamos una audiencia de caso impugnado". Si presenta la petición para una audiencia de caso impugnado de parte de un grupo o asociación, debe identificar una persona que representa al grupo para recibir correspondencia en el futuro; identificar el nombre y la dirección de un miembro del grupo que sería afectado adversamente por la planta o la actividad propuesta; proveer la información indicada anteriormente con respecto a la ubicación del miembro afectado y su distancia de la planta o actividad propuesta; explicar cómo y porqué el miembro sería afectado; y explicar cómo los intereses que el grupo desea proteger son pertinentes al propósito del grupo.

Después del cierre de todos los períodos de comentarios y de petición que aplican, el Director Ejecutivo enviará la solicitud y cualquier petición para reconsideración o para una audiencia de caso impugnado a los Comisionados de la TCEQ para su consideración durante una reunión programada de la Comisión.

La Comisión sólo puede conceder una solicitud de una audiencia de caso impugnado sobre los temas que el solicitante haya presentado en sus comentarios oportunos que no fueron retirados posteriormente. **Si se concede una audiencia, el tema de la audiencia estará limitado a cuestiones de hecho en disputa o cuestiones mixtas de hecho y de derecho relacionadas a intereses pertinentes y materiales de calidad del agua que se hayan presentado durante el período de comentarios. Si ciertos criterios se cumplen, la TCEQ puede actuar sobre una solicitud para renovar un permiso sin proveer una oportunidad de una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso.**

LISTA DE CORREO. Si somete comentarios públicos, un pedido para una audiencia administrativa de lo contencioso o una reconsideración de la decisión del Director Ejecutivo, la Oficina del Secretario Principal enviará por correo los avisos públicos en relación con la solicitud. Además, puede pedir que la TCEQ ponga su nombre en una o más de las listas correos siguientes (1) la lista de correo permanente para recibir los avisos del solicitante indicado por nombre y número del permiso específico y/o (2) la lista de correo de todas las solicitudes en un condado específico. Si desea que se agregue su nombre en una de las listas designe cual lista(s) y envía por correo su pedido a la Oficina del Secretario Principal de la TCEQ.

INFORMACIÓN DISPONIBLE EN LÍNEA. Para detalles sobre el estado de la solicitud, favor de visitar la Base de Datos Integrada de los Comisionados en www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/cid. Para buscar en la base de datos, utilizar el número de permiso para esta solicitud que aparece en la parte superior de este aviso.

CONTACTOS E INFORMACIÓN A LA AGENCIA. Todos los comentarios públicos y solicitudes deben ser presentadas electrónicamente via <http://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/> o por escrito dirigidos a la Comisión de Texas de Calidad Ambiental, Oficial de la Secretaría (Office of Chief Clerk), MC-105, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Tenga en cuenta que cualquier información personal que usted proporcione, incluyendo su nombre, número de teléfono, dirección de correo electrónico y dirección física pasarán a formar parte del registro público de la Agencia. Para obtener más información acerca de esta solicitud de permiso o el proceso de permisos, llame al programa de educación pública de la TCEQ, gratis, al 1-800-687-4040. Si desea información en Español, puede llamar al 1-800-687-4040.

También se puede obtener más información de JBM Project, LLC, en la dirección indicada arriba o llamando a la Sr. Jess Portmess, abogada de Womble Bond Dickinson (US) LLP, al 720-719-1301.

Fecha de emisión: 8 de enero de 2026
Issuance Date: January 8, 2026

Marfa library offers new film-streaming service to patrons

Marfa Marfa Public Library has announced its new partnership with Kanopy—the library streaming service which offers free access to thousands of movies and shows with a library membership.

Kanopy is available to both academic and public libraries and has films, television series, educational programming and documentaries. Users need a Marfa Public Library card, available to any resident of Marfa, and their library card number (found on the back of their library card) and password (user's phone number with no dashes) to access the ad-free content. Content can be streamed on any tablet, smartphone, computer or streaming-enabled TV—you just need to sign into the Kanopy app.

Each Marfa Library cardholder has 25 tickets for the month (some films and shows require more than one ticket to view), and a rental period is anywhere from 48-72 hours for most titles. Kanopy Kids programming doesn't require any tickets.

Films and series available include *Harold and Maude*, *Clueless*, the Agnes Varda film *Faces Places*, and Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, as well as *Sesame Street* and other PBS Kids programming.

Library Director Nicki Ittner said, "We are thrilled about Kanopy! We've been considering it since 2019, but couldn't make the leap. We hope this will offer patrons inspiring new resources—plus all the kids programming is free, which is awesome."

Ittner says a patron asked the library about Kanopy seven years ago, before she took on the role of director. In the years since, other patrons inquired about the service and showed a "real sustained interest." But last year, a grantor stopped funding DVD purchases, and it felt like the time to pursue it, despite the expense (Kanopy generally partners with much larger libraries that can cover the cost more easily). The library is also still acquiring new DVDs as they are able, and has a Blu-Ray player available to check-out.

In addition to Kanopy, Ittner emphasized all of the other services and activities the library offers to the community. There are at least 20,000 volumes of books, including children's and Spanish-language books, free wi-fi and several computers to check email or research, et al. An impressive

DVD library and several periodicals and area newspapers are also available for check-out or browsing, as well as puzzles, games, and take-away craft kits.

The library also offers fax, copy and printing services; you can even print out a color poster and have it laminated!

One of the busiest sections of the library is the children's area, filled with books and toys for curious, growing minds. Make Believe Marfa, the library's beloved children's program in which librarians and talented volunteers build new immersive play environments every few months, has currently transformed the children's area into Bookworm Cafe, a restaurant and kitchen play experience featuring a cardboard brick oven, short-order cook kitchen, dress-up clothes, and more.

Story time for young children takes place at the library every Wednesday at 11 a.m.

Other weekly programs include Xbox Mondays in the theater room, movie nights on Wednesdays (email marfali-brarystaff@gmail.com to get on the list to find out what's playing),

self-led Ashtanga yoga and meditation classes in the Community Room during the week, Coffee in the Courtyard on Fridays, and citizenship classes on Saturdays.

As always, a great way to support Marfa Public Library is by browsing and buying a few gems from the Book Barn, open regular library hours—Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to noon.

If you're a Marfa resident and don't yet have a card, the librarians would love to help you register for one. All you need is a photo ID and proof of residency. Kids under 16 may apply for their own card but need a parent/guardian signature.

Marfa Public Library's annual Patron Appreciation Party will be Friday, February 13. Ittner encourages everyone to "stop by for doughnuts and coffee all day as a thank you to our wonderful community."

There will also be a special Valentine's Day story time with a make-your-own-stuffie element on Wednesday, February 11. Please email marfali-brarystaff@gmail.com to RSVP.



Martinez to wed Chavez in Midland

Mr. and Mrs. German Martinez of Midland are delighted to formally announce the union of their daughter, Briseyda Karma Martinez, to Edgar Omar Chavez. Briseyda is the granddaughter of Remijio "Primo" and Ana Maria Carrasco of Marfa. The couple will wed on January 30, 2026, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Midland, Texas.

Water in the Desert kicks off in February

Alpine The newly launched Meadows Research Institute for West Texas Water at Sul Ross State University has announced the speaker lineup for the 2026 Water in the Desert Conference, set for February 11–13 in Alpine. The three-day event will bring together elected officials, state conservation leaders, water scientists, landowners, resource managers, and community leaders to examine the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of water in Far West Texas.

The conference builds on the inaugural 2024 Water in the Desert gathering and reflects the growing regional demand for informed, practical dialogue around groundwater, surface water, infrastructure investment, and stewardship in one of the most arid regions of the state.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission Chair and West Texas landowner Paul L. Foster will open the main conference program, joined by state and local leaders from across the Trans-Pecos. The agenda also includes members of the Texas Legislature, county judges representing rural West Texas communities, and U.S. Rep. Tony Gonzales, who will offer closing remarks.

Nationally recognized water expert Brian Richter, author and president of Sustainable Waters

will deliver the keynote address, focusing on water scarcity and solutions in a drying climate. Additional sessions will explore groundwater science, produced water, data center demand, legislative action, county-level challenges, and emerging research initiatives underway in West Texas.

Conference speakers also include leadership from the Texas Water Development Board, including Ashley Morgan, director, and John Dupnik, deputy executive administrator for the Office of Water Science and Conservation. Groundwater Conservation District directors, long-time West Texas landowners, and regional practitioners will share on-the-ground perspectives from managing water in arid landscapes.

"This conference is where the big conversations about West Texas water are happening," said Billy Tarrant, interim director of the Meadows Research Institute for West Texas Water. "You'll hear directly from the people shaping water policy, managing land and infrastructure, advancing science and living with the consequences of these decisions every day. If you care about the future of water in this region, this is where you need to be."

The program begins Wednesday, February 11, with afternoon spotlight sessions designed to

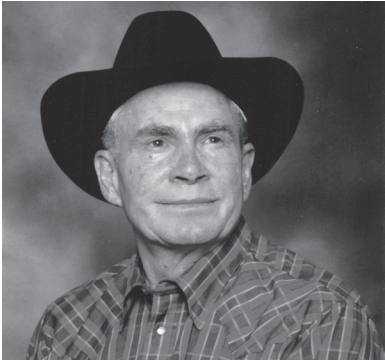
provide context on regional land, drought, and climate trends. Thursday features a full day of presentations, panel discussions, and networking, concluding with a closing reception at the Museum of the Big Bend. Optional field trips on Friday, February 13, will give participants the opportunity to visit springs, rangelands, restoration sites, and conservation projects across the region, including Balmorhea State Park.

Throughout the conference, attendees will also hear brief presentations highlighting priority research areas of the Meadows Research Institute for West Texas Water, including groundwater-surface water interactions, spring and aquatic ecosystems, and applied science supporting land and water stewardship in the Trans-Pecos.

Landowners attending the conference will have the opportunity to participate in free well water quality testing, offered in partnership with the Texas Well Owner's Network. Participants are encouraged to bring properly collected samples from household wells for analysis and consultation with water professionals.

Registration is \$95. Organizers encourage early registration, as space is limited and lodging in Alpine fills quickly. For registration and details, visit bri.sulross.edu/events/water-in-the-desert-2026.

OBITUARY



Area teacher and coach

JOHN ALLEN McFADIN was preceded in death by his wife and best friend of 55 years, Mary; his parents, C. A. and Evalée McFadin of Dryden; and brothers, Bud of Victoria and Ronnie of Del Rio.

John is survived by his son Bert McFadin and his wife Shelley of Glen Rose, Texas; and son Roy McFadin of D'Hanis. He is also survived by grandchildren Wayne, Shilah, Cooper and fiancé Courtney, Gage and wife Bailey, Kallie and Kinslie, Natalie and Franco and their son Isaiah. He is survived by sisters Patsy Tipton formally of San Angelo, Theresa Anderson of Aspermont, and several nieces and nephews.

John graduated from Iraan High School in 1964 where he played football all four years. John and Mary were married 1965 at the Sims Ranch outside of Alpine, Texas. In 1970, he graduated from Sul Ross with a bachelor's degree. He taught school and coached in Comstock, Sanderson, Brady, and Bryson. After retiring from teaching, he was a ranch manager at Tierra Linda Ranch at Kerrville for eight years.

After his wife Mary was buried in Alpine, John moved there to be near her. John became a member of the First Baptist Church of Alpine. A special thanks to his physician Dr. Nitschmann, his therapist Laura Snodgrass, and friends Jerry and MaryBelle Castellano, Don and Sherri McGinnis, and Johnny Carpenter, all of Alpine.

A visitation took place at Alpine Memorial Funeral Home in Alpine on Friday, January 16, 2026, at 1 p.m. The following day, Saturday, January 17, a graveside service was held at Elm Grove Cemetery in Alpine at 2 p.m.

Pall Bearers were Bert McFadin, Roy McFadin, Wayne McFadin, Cooper McFadin, Gage McFadin and Seth McFadin. Honorary pall bearers were Jerry Castellano, Carey Shackleford, Hugh Ward Childress, Ben Brown, and Mike Stavelly

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



Sanderson native passes

JACK MCKEE SAVAGE of Cypress, Texas, passed away on January 2, 2026.

He was born on February 25, 1935, in Sanderson, Terrell County, Texas, the son of Will and Sybil Savage. He is survived by his wife, Priscilla (Perky); and two daughters, Jennifer L. Swartz and Melinda M. Kinkel; and two stepchildren, Don Hardison and Donna Clark.

His son, Christopher Savage, died on November 14, 2015. He is also survived by many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Jack was educated in Sanderson and at Trinity University. A memorial service date will be announced.





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DAVID BEEBE

FOR PRESIDIO COUNTY JUDGE

“TAX RATES WILL NOT GO UP UNDER JUDGE BEEBE. I PROMISE I WILL NOT SUPPORT ANY TAX NOTE OR BOND ISSUANCE BY PRESIDIO COUNTY AS COUNTY JUDGE.”

Pol Ad Paid for by David Beebe for Presidio Co PO Box 70 Marfa, TX



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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

FOR RENT:
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LIVE IN BACK!



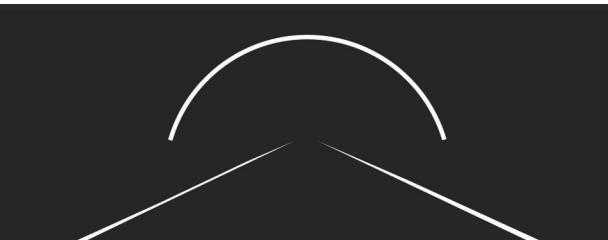
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AROUND
THE BIG BEND

Thursday January 22

Boxing at Maintenant
7:30am-9:00am
Maintenant, 1825 Rabbits Rd.
Marfa, TX



Hike with Homeless Dogs
10:00am-11:00am
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX

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

Miles of Stars
7:00pm-8:00pm
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX

Friday January 23

Master Naturalist Hike
10:00am-11:30am
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX



**HS Basketball VS Dell City
in MARFA**
6:00pm-7:00pm
Marfa, TX

**Live Music:
Lindsey Bruner Music**
6:30pm-9:30pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

Saturday January 24

Morning Ranger Hike
9:00am-10:30am
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX

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

Art in the Park
2:00pm-3:30pm
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX



Speed Dating
6:00pm-8:00pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

Live Music: Justin Upshaw
7:00pm-10:00pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

Sunday January 25



Boxing at Maintenant
9:00am-11:00am
Maintenant, 1825 Rabbits Rd.
Marfa, TX

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

**Sunday Slow Stretch with
Bailey**
4:00pm-5:00pm
Studio, 207 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

CROSSWORD

Bringing in the Pros
bv Daniel Bodly

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
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56				57							58	59	60	
61				62						63				
64				65						66				

Edited by David Steinberg

ACROSS

- 1 Enormous: Prefix
5 Like sows and does
11 The Magic School _____ (Ms. Frizzle's vehicle)
14 Voting group
15 "I've moved on"
16 Small business?
17 Verdi opera set in Egypt
18 Anatomical layer with photoreceptors
19 Grande
20 Pro billiard player's opening?
22 Statue of liturgy
23 Knee part, in brief
25 Permit
26 "How nice!"
28 Poseidon's kingdom
30 87 and 89, e.g.
32 Pro golfer's putt?
34 Greek letter shaped like Poseidon's trident
35 "I've caught you red-handed!"
36 Nintendo Switch
39 Pro baseball player's strike?
45 Sleep mask, shades, etc.
47 Steamy chai, say

DOWN

- 1 CEO's degree, commonly
2 Manning of NFL fame
3 "Take care now!"
4 Purple berry
5 Show restraint
6 Tennis star Chris who won 18 Grand Slam titles
7 Dole (out)
8 Solo such as "Habanera"
9 Provides the URL of
10 Greek H
11 It's subpar!
12 Groups that call strikes
13 Give a tongue-lashing

- 21 Pure joy
22 "My suspicions are confirmed!"
23 Bank convenience, in brief
24 British fellow
27 It was once an acorn
29 Graduate student's allowance
30 None of the above
31 Holey shoe
33 Couch
37 _____bitty
38 Slurpee relative
40 She's a sheep
41 Floral symbol of love
42 Feature of a 41-Down
43 Field for a future official, for short
44 Solo of "Star Wars"
45 Relax

- 46 Investors' returns
48 Cajun stew
49 Davis of "A League of Their Own"
53 Wiesel who wrote "Night" and later became a knight
54 Time to give someone a 41-Down, in brief
55 "Suh-weet!"
57 Liquid fuel, despite its name
58 What Princess Buttercup never said during her marriage to Prince Humperdinck
59 Barbie's bae
60 They're staffed by MDs

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

C	H	I	P		B	U	T	T	S		A	S	H	E
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SUDUKO

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

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7				8			2	3
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		6				4		
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	4	7	6	9				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

SOLUTION:

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

CLASSIFIEDS AND PUBLIC NOTICES

UPDATED
PROPERTY TAX
INFORMATION

NOW AVAILABLE FOR TEXAS
TAXPAYERS

Property owners have certain rights that may reduce their property taxes.

New and updated property tax information has just been compiled and is available to assist taxpayers. This property tax information is current and covers a wide range of topics, such as taxpayer remedies, exemptions and appraisals, and has information for select groups, such as disabled veterans and persons age 65 or older.

Whether you are a homeowner, business owner, disabled veteran or taxpayer, it's important you know your rights concerning property tax laws. You can contact us about any property tax issues with full confidence that we will provide the most complete, accurate and up-to-date information available to assist you.

This includes information about the following programs.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

Persons who own and occupy their residence during 2026, may claim their home as a residential homestead. A homestead is generally defined as the home and land used as the owner's principal residence on Jan. 1 of the tax year. A person who acquires property after Jan. 1 may receive the residence homestead exemption for the applicable portion of that tax year immediately on qualification for the exemption if the preceding owner did not receive the same exemption for that tax year. A homestead exemption reduces the home's appraised value and, as a result, lowers property taxes. Applications are submitted to the appropriate local appraisal district.

RESIDENCE HOMESTEAD
TAX DEFERRAL

Texas homeowners may postpone paying the currently delinquent property taxes due on the appreciating value of their homes by filing a tax deferral affidavit at their local appraisal district. This tax relief allows homeowners to pay the property taxes on 105 percent of the preceding year's appraised value of their homestead, plus the taxes on any new improvements to the homestead. The deferral postpones the remaining taxes, with interest accruing at 8 percent per year but does not cancel them.

DISABLED PERSONS

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

PROPERTY TAX DEFERRAL
FOR PERSONS OVER 65 YEARS
OR OLDER OR DISABLED
OR DISABLED VETERAN
HOMEOWNERS

Texans who are age 65 or older or disabled, as defined by law, or who qualify for a disabled veteran exemption may postpone paying current and delinquent property taxes on their homes by signing a tax deferral affidavit. Once the affidavit is on file, taxes are deferred, but not cancelled, as long as the owner continues to own and live in the home. Interest continues to accrue at 5 percent per year on the unpaid taxes. You may obtain a deferral affidavit at the appraisal district.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS
FOR DISABLED VETERANS

The law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by disabled veterans or surviving spouses and surviving children of deceased disabled veterans. Another partial exemption is for homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations at no cost or not more than 50 percent of the good faith estimate of the homestead's market value to disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. The exemption amount is determined according to percentage of service-connected disability. The law also provides a 100 percent homestead exemption for 100 percent disabled veterans and their surviving spouses and surviving spouses of U.S. armed service members killed or fatally injured in the line of duty.

PRODUCTIVITY APPRAISAL

Property owners who use land for timberland production, agricultural purposes or wildlife management can be granted property tax relief on their land. They may apply to their local appraisal district for an agricultural special appraisal which may result in a lower appraisal of the land based on production, versus market value. Productivity value appraisal provides tax relief on their land and is available to farms and ranches commercially raising crops or livestock or used as a wildlife habitat granted under State guidelines. An application for agricultural use value and additional information is available from your appraisal district. Refiling an application is only necessary if requested to do so by the Chief Appraiser.

RENDERING TAXABLE PROPERTY
(BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY OWNERS)

If a business owns tangible personal property that is used to produce income, the business must file a rendition with its local appraisal district by a specified date. Personal property includes inventory and equipment used by a business. Owners do not have to render exempt property such as church property or an agriculture producer's equipment used for farming. Personal property includes inventory and equipment used by a business. Failure to file the rendition by the specified date will result in a 10% penalty. If a fraudulent rendition is filed, a 50% penalty is mandated. A rendition can be obtained from the appraisal district office where the property is located. A 30-day filing extension is available by written request. Owners do not render exempt property such as church property or farming equipment. A new law on January 1, 2026, exempts

up to \$125,000 of business personal property. A rendition is required in 2026 but will not be required in future years if the total personal property value does not exceed \$125,000.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Non-profit organizations that meet statutory requirements may seek property tax exemptions and must apply to their local county appraisal district by a specific date. Child-care facilities; medical or biomedical property; businesses that receive tax abatements granted by taxing units; ship inventory out of Texas that may be eligible for the freeport exemption; store certain goods in transit in warehouses that are moved within 175 days; construct, install or acquire pollution control property; own and operate energy storage systems; convert landfill-generated gas; or store offshore drilling equipment while not in use may also be eligible for statutory exemptions.

APPRAISAL NOTICES

Normally, taxpayers receive a notice of appraised value from the appropriate local appraisal district. The city, county, school districts and other local taxing units use the appraisal district's value to set property taxes for the coming year.

TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE
PAMPHLET

This Comptroller publication explains in detail the functions of a taxpayer liaison officer, how to protest a property appraisal, what issues the county appraisal review board (ARB) can consider and what to expect during a protest hearing.

The publication also discusses the option to request limited binding arbitration to compel the ARB or chief appraiser to comply with a procedural requirement and the options of taking a taxpayer's case to district court, the State Office of Administrative Hearings or regular binding arbitration if the taxpayer is dissatisfied with the outcome of the ARB hearing.

PROTESTING PROPERTY
APPRAISAL VALUES

Property owners who disagree with the appraisal district's appraisal of their property for local taxes or for any other action that adversely affects them may protest their property value to their local appraisal district's ARB.

INFORMAL MEETINGS

Property owners can request an informal meeting with appraisal district staff to try and resolve their disputes prior to attending ARB hearings.

For more information you may contact:

PRESIDIO COUNTY APPRAISAL
DISTRICT

P. O. Box 879/107 E Texas St. Marfa, Texas 79843
(432) 729-3431 / (432) 229-3963
info@presidiocad.org

Or
PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE
DIVISION INFORMATION SERVICES
TEXAS COMPTROLLER
OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/
property-tax/

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
IN THE ESTATE OF:
BOBBY LEE DONALDSON JR.
CASE No. 2073

To all persons interested in the estate of Bobby Lee Donaldson Jr., Deceased, Docket No. 2073, County Court, Presidio County, Texas.

Application to Determine Heirship and for Letters of Administration (Intestate) was filed in the County Court of Presidio County, Texas, on the 3rd day of December, 2025.

Said application may be heard and acted upon by said Court at 10:00 o'clock A.M. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from the date of publishing this citation, at the County Courthouse in Marfa, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

All interested persons are further advised that they have the right to employ an attorney and that if they or their attorney fail to file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 a.m. on the Monday next following the expiration of ten days after the publishing of this citation, the court may enter orders with binding effects upon said persons.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT at office in Marfa, Texas, this the 6th day of January, 2026.

CAROLINA A. CATANO
Clerk of the County Court,
Presidio County, Texas



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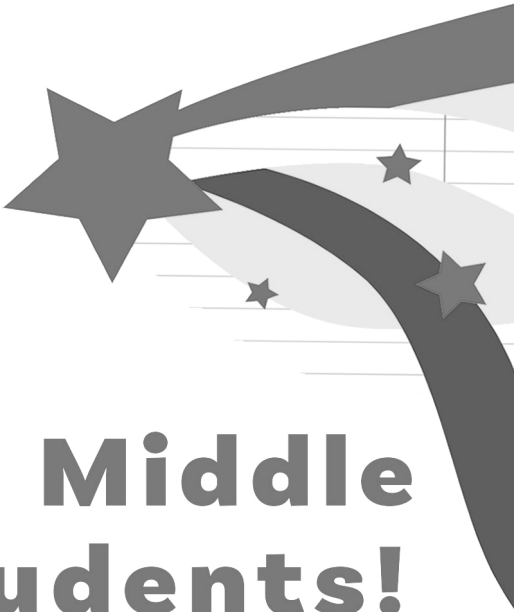
- Providing administrative support to HR
- Assisting with recruitment and new hire orientation
- Supporting employee relations activities
- Maintaining personnel files and HR Records
- Tracking attendance and assisting with benefit administration
- Supporting day-to-day business operations

Skills & Qualifications:

- Ability to handle confidential information with discretion
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Proficiency in Microsoft Excel, Word and Outlook
- Excellent interpersonal and communication Skills
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) is required
- 2 years relevant experience required

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Entry Deadline:
February 3, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. HST

odessachamber.com/national-civics-bee/



National Civics Bee
by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation



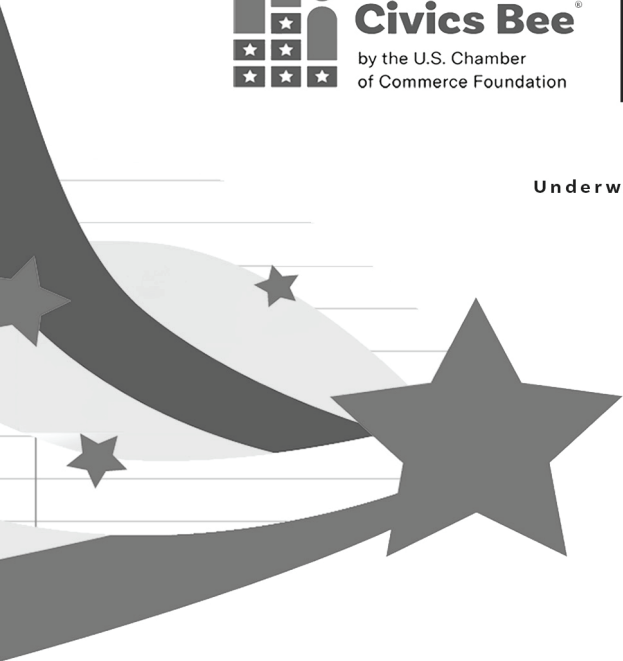
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Sentinel

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Cages from the past dot the Big Bend

RYAN REYNOLDS—TINYTEXASJAILS.COM

A strap-iron jail sits in front of the current Presidio County Jail in Marfa.

Shafter mystery brings light to the old ‘strap-iron’ jails

AFTER LAST WEEK’S article questioning a possible jail site in the Shafter ghost town, an astute Shafter resident wrote to me reminding us that the county jail in Shafter could have been made of metal and might have been relocated.

As a reminder, Shafter is a ghost town, once a thriving community of thousands because of the adjacent silver mine. Now 25 people, including me, live there, surrounded by hundreds of abandoned and decaying adobe and rock houses and buildings.

The January 15 *Sentinel* article noted that Shafter residents had long named a spot off the road behind the historic church as the jail site. All that remained for years were two crumbling adobe walls, but recent historic renovations of the town by the Tidewater Foundation revealed more walls, a floor and an entry way with steps. However, no physical or historical evidence (or photos) have surfaced to prove a jail existed there.

The Shafter reader pointed us to a TexasEscapes.com article on Candelaria—the tiny town west of Presidio on the Rio Grande—which shows a picture of a metal jail there taken by Barclay Gibson in 1968 with the caption: “Old Presidio County Jail in Candelaria. ‘It is the same one that now sits at the Presidio County Jail in Marfa.’” Candelaria is a small community on the Rio Grande, 48 miles northwest of Presidio.

However, the metal jail in Marfa adjacent to the county jail is not from Shafter, according to Presidio County Sheriff Danny Dominguez, who noted that it is from Ruidosa, another tiny community on the highway to Candelaria. These are what are called strap-iron jails—open cages really—which were popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s to hold prisoners in remote areas before they could be transported elsewhere, or sometimes likely until they sobered up. (The cells in later years were made of hardened steel.)

I admit to never even seeing the one in Marfa. The sheriff was incredulous as to how I couldn’t. “It’s in front of the jail,” Dominguez told me. “If you walk up to it it will knock you in the head if you’re not looking. It’s right by the tree by the sully port.” I’ll blame the tree for blocking a clear view.

Dominguez said the Candelaria strap-iron is still there next to the old Howard Store—another one I missed, and I was just in Candelaria two weeks ago. The sheriff said Presidio also has a calaboose, just south of the Miguel Nieto’s Department Store. Yep, haven’t seen that one either. It’s on a small section of road named Jail Street. In a short article on the structure at tinytexasjails.com, William Moore outlines a conversation he had with Brad Newton, a former City of Presidio administrator, in which Newton talked about the structure’s history with Edmund Nieto who was 97 at the time. “Mr. Nieto stated that the jail was built in the late 1920s or

BARCLAY GIBSON

The strap-iron jail in Candelaria still sits by the old Howard Store.

A Pauly Jail Building and Manufacturing Company catalogue from the early 1900s portrays steel cells. The company, making modern jails today, built hundreds of jails for counties across the nation.

early 1930s when he was a teenager,” Moore wrote. “He said that “As kids, we would watch for the lights to come on. We would go peek in to see who they had locked up.”

The strap-iron jails were sometimes put inside calaboosees, simple one-room buildings used throughout Texas counties to detain prisoners, and thus, it is possible that a strap-iron was housed in the adobe structure ruins in Shafter today. I heard that account from a couple people in Shafter.

“It very well could have been inside,” said Barclay Gibson, who took the *TracesofTexas.com* photo in Candelaria. The practice was quite common, he said.

Barclay was surprised to hear that the strap-iron in Marfa was not brought there from Candelaria. “I hadn’t compared the two,” he said. “I just assumed they were the same.” Unfortunately, Gibson—who has photographed many jails and other landmarks around the state—didn’t know any more on the subject of the Shafter jail.

The fact that towns even smaller than Shafter had strap-iron jails makes an assumption that Shafter, with thousands of residents, likely had a jail of some sort. Since there’s still no evidence defining what it was like, feel free to email me at rob@bigbendsentinel.com with any additional information.

—ROB D’AMICO