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Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson has been vocal about his opposition to actual steel wall infrastructure.

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COUNTY JUDGE						Curtis Evans *	296	48.60%
						Lane “Buster” Mills	313	51.40%
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS								
Precinct 2:						Roy Hurley *		
Precinct 4:	Albert Miller	39	100%			Tommy Vick *^a		
COUNTY CLERK								
						Jennifer Wright*		
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE								
						Mary Ann Luedecke *		
COUNTY TREASURER								
						Dawn Kitts *	298	50.42%
						Brittany Escobedo	293	49.58%
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‘The only thing that will stop them is a dinosaur’

Continued from page 1

Sheriff Thaddeus Cleveland, Presidio County Sheriff Danny Dominguez and Hudspeth County Sheriff Arvin West urging federal authorities to consult with them before building physical infrastructure.

The *Sentinel* sat down with Dodson and Cleveland last week to talk about their long careers in law enforcement—and their long-term fears for the future of the region.

“The only thing that will stop them is a dinosaur”

Dodson is just as much in the dark about the border wall project brewing in South Brewster County as anyone else, including Congressman Tony Gonzales, who had a direct role in carving out \$46.5 billion for wall construction last summer as a member of the House Appropriations Committee. The two men texted back and forth last week about the meaning of the term “Smart Wall”—which has been thrown around in the press since Trump took office in January 2025.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) touts the “Smart Wall” as a holistic approach to border security that includes “a steel bollard wall or waterborne barrier, along with roads, detection technology, cameras and lighting and in some cases a secondary wall.” (No one in Washington has yet clarified where or to what degree any of these projects will break ground in Texas.)

Back in October, DHS Secretary Kristi Noem filed the first of two waivers aimed at fast-tracking wall construction and border security upgrades in Customs and Border Protection’s Big Bend Sector, a giant area that includes the Permian Basin, Texas Panhandle and the entire state of Oklahoma. Noem’s posting in the Federal Register waived a laundry list of laws requiring the government go out for bids and negotiate with contractors with transparency.

By the time a second waiver was published on February 17—this time flouting more than two dozen environmental and cultural resource protection laws—many landowners along the river in Presidio County had been contacted by a swarm of engineers and contractors, but no requests for proposals or contracts were posted online through the typical public channels.

As a result, the only people who appear to have any information from top brass at DHS about the project are the contractors themselves, which Dodson realized by happenstance by the side of the road. “I made a traffic stop on some of the engineers that are here for [the wall], and I asked them about it,” he recalled. “Nobody’s been able to tell me what a ‘Smart Wall’ actually is.”

The engineers confirmed that they were working on a physical wall, backed up by a giant purchase order for steel to El Paso the day before a draft of Noem’s latest environmental waiver was publicly released. Dodson started

to suspect that the “Smart Wall” was doublespeak for a good-old-fashioned steel-bollard wall—in other words, a “dumb wall.”

The contractor left him with a chilling message. “He said the only thing that will stop them is a dinosaur—if they find a dinosaur or gravesites, they can’t build there,” Dodson said.

A first-hand look at walls

In 2012, Dodson and Presidio County Sheriff Danny Dominguez toured the wall in Naco, Arizona—where the border cuts a straight line across open desert—as part of a conference for law enforcement in the borderlands. The two also got to visit with ranchers in Cochise County, one of the few places outside the state of Texas where land along the border is privately owned. A rancher took them to see a curious sight: drag marks that seemed to come out from underneath the wall. “The cartel guys had cut that wall and when they needed to get stuff through, they took a floor jack and pushed the wall up,” he explained. “The Border Patrol didn’t even know about it.”

As a lawman, that was all Dodson needed to see. Walls made sense to him in urban environments, but it was clear that out in the middle of nowhere they were an expensive theater prop that did little to actually make the border a safer place to live and work.

Something else that radicalized him: even where the border was a line and not a wild river, the wall was not built directly on the border. Because it is entirely maintained and paid for by the United States government, crews need legal access to service the south-facing side of the wall on American soil, effectively ceding a hundreds-of-miles-long skinny strip of land to the Republic of Mexico. If the wall came to Brewster County, which experiences flooding events almost every summer, they’d have to build it even farther away from the actual border.

Dodson was especially perplexed by the government’s insistence on building a physical wall in the Big Bend, given the technology available to law enforcement. “I have 250 cameras out in the field, and I catch things you wouldn’t believe,” he said. “I wasn’t a fan of Big Brother until I became sheriff, but Big Brother is here.”

Still using our God-given skills

Big Brother is big money in Brewster County. The Brewster County Sheriff’s Office is a long-time participant in the federal Operation Stonegarden, a border security grant program first launched by the Bush administration in 2005. The steady stream of cash has made even the poorest and most remote counties attractive markets for defense contractors offering a dizzying array of dystopian technology from robotic K-9 Border Patrol agents to unmanned surveillance aircraft that can track would-be border-

crossers for hours. Dodson has been sheriff for 25 years, so he’s had a front row seat to major migration waves over the past several presidential administrations, including a large influx of migrant traffic in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic. At the time, he felt frustrated by what felt like a lack of support from the federal government. “We were getting hammered,” he said. “I’m talking groups of a hundred or more at a time.”

During the peak of this migration event, the BSCO was apprehending upwards of 200 migrants a month. Now, that number is down to virtually zero—Dodson told NBC News last week that he’d only caught one smuggler in the past three months. Those record low numbers are thanks in part to deployment of over 500 active duty military personnel to the Big Bend, the region’s first since a Presidio High School senior was killed in Redford by a Marine in 1997. The vast majority of military keeping watch over the border are not deputized as law enforcement and instead serve in “support and intelligence roles” alongside the Border Patrol.

Dodson has a unique perspective on the anger many folks are feeling about the seizure of their property because of his family history. Last month, he spoke at the Big Bend Natural History Association’s annual Pioneer Days celebration, which celebrates the stories of the ranchers who were kicked out of what is now Big Bend National Park during World War II.

Avid hikers may recognize his last name as the namesake of the Dodson Trail, which winds through the desert below the iconic South Rim of the Chisos. Every year, hundreds of people who brave the park’s premiere backpacking route stop and rest in the shade at the ruins of the old Dodson Ranch—likely unaware that the Dodsons are still very much a part of local life.

As opposition to the wall mounts, he worries about having to turn against his own people, whose anger reminds him of his great-grandparents, Harve and Minnie, who along with their 12 children were forced to leave the Sierra Quemada and move to Fort Stockton by the federal government. “We’re not trying to get our local people in trouble for anything,” he said. “But once it goes up, there’s not much they can do beyond taking a cutting torch to it.”

“We’re still using our God-given skills”

Dodson isn’t alone in his quest to get the Trump administration to reconsider their wall project. Next door in Terrell County, Air Force veteran, former Border Patrol agent-in-charge and current Sheriff Thaddeus Cleveland has set up his office to be an ad-hoc TV studio. He feels a little undignified being a 52-year-old man concerned with things like ring lights and camera angles—“I despise social media,” he professes,

though he has 44,000 followers on Facebook—but he thinks it’s important to be a voice for a region and a line of work few people in the United States really understand. (His kids frequently call him and tell him to turn his comments off.)

Over the past three years, Cleveland has become a frequent guest on FOX News, offering his thoughts on everything from the killing of Alex Pretti in the streets of Minneapolis to the ouster of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro by U.S. special forces. He’s spent much of his life in the tiny town of Sanderson, but a national audience seems to find his insight on global issues fascinating.

Now, he’s facing one of the trickiest communication challenges of his career: explaining to millions of staunch conservatives how a man whose political beliefs generally line up with President Trump’s could vehemently oppose his big beautiful wall. “This should not be a partisan issue,” Cleveland wrote in an online statement to his followers. “A wall accompanied by stadium lighting and an extensive road network would permanently alter one of the last truly unspoiled stretches of borderland in the country.”

Cleveland is something of a collector, and his office is decked out with piles of challenge coins and arrowheads. His walls display photos and memorabilia from his long career with the Mean Green, commemorating tough days on the job and fallen buddies. As a younger man he served out of the notorious Nogales Station in Arizona, which at that time was “Ground Zero” for the Border Patrol. “We were catching a thousand people a day and leading the nation in drug seizures,” he said. “But like every Texan, I had to get back home.”

Origins in the Border Patrol

Cleveland joined the Border Patrol in 1996, on the cusp of an important generational shift. Operation Hold the Line had just kicked off a few years prior in El Paso, changing the institutional goal of the Border Patrol from law enforcement to “prevention through deterrence.” The first steel bollards went up in the border city around the same time—the first in Texas—which pushed migrant traffic deeper into the desert. “When I first started, [the wall] was just a barbed wire fence, so people could easily cross it or drive vehicles through it,” he explained.

After 9/11, the Border Patrol was folded into the brand-new Department of Homeland Security, and with it massive amounts of money that fundamentally changed how most agents experienced their jobs. “We were kind of like the stepchildren of the Department of Justice,” Cleveland said of the good old days. “We did the most with less.”

In the new DHS era of Predator drones and Flock cameras, the

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PRESIDIO INTERNATIONAL

La oposición al muro se intensifica



SAM KARAS

El sheriff del condado de Terrell, Thaddeus Cleveland, analiza dónde se ubicarán segmentos del muro en la frontera.

Sheriffs locales de la frontera se manifiestan contra el muro

Estos sheriffs fronterizos se sintieron abandonados por Biden. Ahora Trump quiere derribar un muro en su patio trasero. Lea la historia completa de Sam Karas sobre los sheriffs Ronny Dodson y Thaddeus Cleveland para conocer sus opiniones sobre el muro fronterizo en bigbendsentinel.com/espanol.

La oposición al muro fronterizo aumenta la presión política

La oposición al muro fronterizo propuesto se ha organizado con una rapidez sorprendente. Una segunda reunión abarrotada se celebró el lunes en el Teatro Cinnabar de Terlingua, una semana después de la primera. Varios grupos se han unido en uno solo, el grupo "No al Muro Fronterizo Big Bend", que se ha dividido en subcomités centrados en asuntos legales, comunicación, acción directa y apoyo a las partes interesadas.

"El grupo es imparcial y no violento", enfatizó David Keller, arqueólogo en la región con más de 25 años de experiencia, quien fue uno de los principales oradores de la velada.

Keller señaló que el grupo está atrayendo grandes donaciones de todo el estado y acelerando la obtención de la categoría 501(c)(3) como organización sin fines de lucro, mientras se prepara para una larga lucha. El grupo tiene motivos para creer que tiene la oportunidad de detener la construcción.

"La propia retórica del gobierno demuestra que esto no es



KATE BUBACZ.

Una multitud llena el Teatro Cinnabar en Terlingua el lunes por la noche para escuchar los planes de resistencia al muro fronterizo.

una crisis, ya que los cruces fronterizos han disminuido", declaró Billy Bartko, propietario del Centro de Actividades al Aire Libre Far Flung.

La presión aumenta en ambos lados. Más de 40 legisladores texanos firmaron una petición al gobernador Greg Abbott para detener la construcción del muro fronterizo en la zona. Los negocios locales han informado haber recibido noticias de contratistas que buscan espacio para trabajadores, agua para el concreto y otras señales de un gran proyecto de construcción.

"El muro es insignificante comparado con todo lo que conlleva. La infraestructura para construir y mantener un muro es su propia fuerza", afirmó John Jorgenson, arqueólogo que trabajó como inspector ambiental durante la construcción del muro fronterizo en Bisbee, Arizona.

Describió una pesadilla ecológi-

ca de equipos de voladuras y derames de materiales peligrosos con una actitud desproporcionada ante la preocupación ambiental. "A nadie le importaba reducir el impacto ambiental", afirmó. "Los equipos de construcción preferían 20 multas al día antes que solucionar cualquier problema".

Muchos consideran absurda la idea de una gran construcción, dada la realidad logística del terreno remoto y accidentado, y la relativa falta de recursos. Los residentes expresaron su preocupación sobre cómo los contratistas accederían a la atención médica durante los inevitables accidentes, cuando el hospital de traumatología más cercano está a más de tres horas de distancia.

Otros señalaron que la Carretera 170, la única ruta pavimentada a lo largo de gran parte del muro propuesto, es una carretera de dos carriles que no está diseñada para soportar el tráfico

industrial pesado.

Keller animó a la gente a canalizar sus emociones hacia acciones disciplinadas. A pesar de las reiteradas solicitudes y las posibles ganancias, varios empresarios se niegan a cooperar con los contratistas, y los residentes están decididos a que sus estancias no sean bienvenidas.

Empresarios y residentes intentan difundir el movimiento entre los visitantes pasados y futuros. No Big Bend Border tiene carteles, hojas informativas y guiones para llamar a los representantes en su sitio web. Se fomentan múltiples llamadas a funcionarios electos para mantener la presión política.

Bartko, el propietario de Far Flung, apeló directamente al orgullo texano. "¿Dónde están todos los que dicen 'Ven y llévate'lo?" preguntó. "Este es tu momento, porque están apareciendo y están intentando arrebátártelo".

—KATE BUBACZ

Contrato de acero indica la construcción de un muro físico

¿Cuánto muro fronterizo se podría comprar con hasta 2.200 millones de dólares en acero? Es incierto, pero una empresa de Tennessee ganó recientemente un contrato por esa cantidad para "acero a granel para proyectos de construcción de barreras en la frontera suroeste", según los registros de gastos federales.

El Proyecto Frontera Suroeste es la iniciativa del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS por sus siglas en inglés) de 46.500 millones de dólares para construir "muros inteligentes", que, según la definición de la CBP, podrían incluir una combinación de muros de bolardos de acero, sensores, luces, cámaras y carretas de patrullaje.

Esta combinación podría usarse en cualquier lugar, desde el bajo Valle del Río Grande hasta San Diego, por lo que no está claro cuánto de este acero se utilizará en el Big Bend, donde documentos recientes de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza muestran que se están planeando unos 460 kilómetros de muros inteligentes.

La semana pasada, AMI Metals, Inc., una subsidiaria de Reliance, Inc., ganó el contrato del DHS, cuyo costo oscila entre 1.500 y 2.200 millones de dólares, para suministrar acero a granel.

No está claro si el acero se fabricará según las especificaciones de los bolardos.

Lo que está claro es que se están construyendo muros físicos en algún lugar. Un mapa del DHS que indica los "muros primarios" lo hace posible en Big Bend.

—SAM KARAS y ROB D'AMICO.

Locales critican duramente a los contratistas del muro

Los residentes y negocios locales no están muy dispuestos a recibir con los brazos abiertos a los contratistas del muro fronterizo en la zona.

Un electricista local de Terlingua, Josh Flack, fue contactado la semana pasada para solicitar su ayuda en el suministro de energía a los campamentos de trabajadores de la construcción, a lo cual se negó y luego publicó el número de teléfono del hombre en Facebook, preguntando a los comentaristas si alguien sabía quién era.

El rastreo del número de teléfono reveló que quien llamó trabaja como ingeniero de proyectos para Barnard Construction Co., una empresa de Montana que ha construido muros fronterizos físicos en Texas y Nuevo México.

Flack declaró a la Radio Pública de Marfa que quien llamó desde Barnard estaba buscando propiedades en Lajitas. "Básicamente, le dije que tenía la obligación con mis hijos de no involucrarme en nada de eso, y eso es probablemente lo que obtendrá de la mayoría de los negocios locales", declaró Flack a la radio.

Otra fuente en Terlingua habló con un geólogo que trabaja con Rizzo International, una empresa de ingeniería que ha trabajado en proyectos del muro fronterizo. La semana pasada, los clientes del Teatro Starlight le pidieron al geólogo que abandonara el restaurante tras revelar su cargo.

Los agentes inmobiliarios de la zona, que han informado al Big Bend Sentinel sobre numerosas solicitudes de adquisición de propiedades, no tienen la opción de rechazar a los federales ni a los contratistas, ya que están obligados a presentar todas las ofertas a los clientes.

—SAM KARAS y ROB D'AMICO.

Students come out on top at cowboy poetry contest

Fifteen students from the Big Bend area gathered with family and friends at the the Museum of the Big Bend to recite original poems they entered in the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering Youth Cowboy Poetry Contest.

Poems in the number of 190 were entered in the contest from as far away as Ohio.

The West of the Pecos Cattle Women sponsored plaques for first, second and third place winners of the contest. President Sharon Gentry, with Vice President Adele Coffey, presented the plaques to winners along with Certificates of Participation to all the contestants who spoke, Saturday, February 21.

Masters of Ceremony at the youth session were directors of the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Elizabeth Baize and Karen McGuire. Baize opened the session with the winning poem from the high school level called “A Cowboy’s Life” written by Reese Jenkins, a student at Uvalde Classical Academy.

Students from Presidio County who recited their poems were as follows:

Dalleigh Mellard, a first grader, won Third Place in Level 1 with her poem “I Love Peppy.” This poem was written in special memory of a family horse that died.

*Peppy was my best horse
We went a long way together
She lovingly nipped the baby calves
We rode through the creek water
She was first to carry me in a lope
She put her head down so I could love on her.*

Micah Baize, a fifth grade student won Third Place in Level 3 with his poem “The Calf that was Gonna Kill Us All.” The poem tells of a firsthand experience when Micah and his friends were driving cattle.

*Early one crisp morning
We were gathering for branding,
We were going through a lot of brush
And the cows were in a bit of a rush,
When Thomas, a buddy of mine,
Noticed a calf hanging back in line,
We kept pushing him up,
But he wouldn’t stop stalling up.
Well, that buddy of mine,
He just waited till the right time,
Then he threw his twine
And caught that little bovine.
His brother Aiden jumped off his frisky horse*

*And grabbed that little calf with force.
That calf started kicking and bawling,
His mama started calling,
That mama she was mad,
And things looked pretty bad.
She started kicking dirt up like a bull
And I thought we might not get out whole.
Aiden gave a loud call,
“Be quiet, or you’re gonna kill us all!”
He held its mouth shut,
Then he took a short cut.
He swung the calf on his horse
Then jumped aboard with a show of force.
That mama finally calmed down,
And that’s where I’ll wind down.*

Lyla Luppino, a Marfa ISD seventh-grader, wrote the poem “Three Barrels One Chance” and received an Honorable Mention in Level 4. When judges read her poem they knew that she had first-hand experience with barrel racing.

*Three barrels, one chance
Hear the crowd roaring in the stands
The pressures on—cowgirl make it worth
Show them proof of your hard work
Just you and your stallion’s breath—steady
The arena is waiting—get ready
Hold those reins up tight as they call out your name
Release those reins and give that stallion slack
Make sure to race that barrel path
First barrel pick up those reins and hold that saddle horn tight
Sharp and clean around—do it right
Don’t knock it down, push in those stirrups
First barrel—clean... don’t stay low—GET UP!
Spur! Spur! Kick! Kick! Here comes the second one—don’t slip!
Wow! You did it the same
Looks like your still in your pace
But wait! Time is ticking, you can’t get a slow time or lose without winning
Last barrel—don’t knock it Or that’s a five second penalty and no more rounds
Pick up, get low, sharp turns, push in, around!
You did it! Final strive to the gate
Whip! Whip! Kick, kick! Spur! Spur!
Give it all you got!*



Marfa ISD 7th grader Lyla Luppino read her poetry at the festival and earned an honorable mention.

*Race that stallion how he was taught
Crowd loud, fans proud, heart pounds
You did it cowgirl thirteen seconds flat
You won the championship now listen to the fans clap.*

Third Place winner in Level 5 was Kaela Baize with her poem, “Moonlight Desert Ride.” She was inspired to write this poem by living on Ryan Flat and her love of working cattle on local ranches.

*As the sun sets behind tall, jagged mountains,
Cowboys tired after a good branding day
Put out the fire, let the cattle out of the pens,
And head towards the ranch house, a few miles away.
The full moon is rising over the hills to the east
As they head carefully down the*

*rocky two-track.
“If we’d brought the truck we would sure have been creased,”
Says the boss. “But it still takes a while getting back.”*

*As the well washed-out road winds through thick ocotillo,
The ranch hands see a band of javelinas trot by.
And from a high ridge they catch a glimpse of the Rio,
Winding on out of view like a ribbon of sky.*

*Then as everyone turns down a draw with steep sides,
They spot a band of wild horses bedded down for the night.
One cowboy sees a nice one and away he rides!
All follow his lead, though the chance of success is slight.*

Swinging his rope, one quick man closes in,

*Holds his breath, throws the loop—he won’t get to try again—
Dallies down, pulls up short, then shouts “Yeah! I got him!”
It’s a little bay colt with a short, scruffy mane.*

*He’s a strong little mustang, not too old to train.
The rest of the herd has by now slipped from sight.
Scrawny mesquite trees, roots washed bare by the rain,
Lean over the draw as the cowboys ride on in the night.*

*A million stars and a bright, full moon
Cover everything in silvery light.
From a few yards ahead some ground owls croon,
Then when the group comes too close, take flight.*

*The creek bed fans out in a wide gravelly wash,
And the cowboys now ride up*

*and over the bank.
When finally they come to an old water trough, the wild hoss Comes up with the rest; it’s been a while since he last drank.*

*The cowboys swap yarns as the house comes in view;
A coyote somewhere yip-howls the alarm, and a dozen more take up the cry.
“They’ve seen us,” someone laughs as the dogs join in too.
Soon they ride through the gate beneath the star-sprinkled sky.*

Well-known performer in the West, 14-year-old Maggie Rose Hedges, delighted the crowd with her fiddle, autoharp and songs, accompanied by her dad, Andy Hedges.

The Youth Session was a delight and inspiration. All look forward to what these talented young people will come up with next year.

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Border wall opposition

Continued from page 1

He described an ecological nightmare of blasting crews and hazmat spills with a dog-and-pony-show approach to environmental concern. “No one cared about reducing environmental impact,” he said. “The construction crews would rather 20 citations a day than fix any issues.”

The idea of major construction is seen by many as absurd, given the logistical reality of the remote, rugged terrain and relative lack of resources. Concerns were raised by residents about how contractors would access medical care during the inevitable accidents when the nearest trauma hospital is more than three hours away. Others pointed out that Highway 170, the only paved route along much of the proposed wall, is a two-lane road not built to withstand heavy industrial traffic.

Keller encouraged people to channel their emotions into disciplined action. Despite the repeated calls for requests and potential profit, multiple business owners are declining to cooperate with contractors, and residents are determined to make their stays unwelcome.

Business owners and residents are trying to get the word out to past and future visitors about the movement. No Big Bend Border has posters, fact sheets and scripts for calls to representatives on its site. Multiple calls to elected officials are encouraged to maintain political pressure.

Bartko, the Far Flung owner, appealed directly to Texas pride. “Where are all the ‘Come and Take It’ guys?” he asked. “This is your moment, because they are showing up, and they are trying to take it.”

Colorful West Texas sheriffs speak their minds about the wall

Continued from page 2

Big Bend Sector is one of the few places the majority of agents still do the kind of fieldwork they’ve done since the Prohibition era. “We’re still using our God-given skills to do the job—that’s looking for signs, looking for tracks, looking for broken branches,” he explained. “When you’re out in the brush tracking people, there’s times you can’t find them because they’re hidden, but you’ll start smelling them.”

In an age of \$50,000 signing bonuses, record-high funding for DHS hasn’t made much of an impact on the day-to-day experiences of Border Patrol agents in Cleveland’s neck of the woods. Being stationed in a place like Sanderson has its drawbacks. “If you come here as a single man or woman, you’re probably not going to meet your future spouse here,” he explained. “We don’t even have a grocery store. You can get the bare essentials, but it’s a tough place to live.”

Despite the drawbacks of isolation, that kind of on-the-ground work provides a rush like no other for those who are inclined toward the outdoors. “I’ve been shot at, I’ve been in fights, I’ve been in pursuit. That’s the fun stuff,” he said. “The hard stuff is when you have to catch women or children or you go to recover somebody’s remains.”

Cleveland was born to teenage parents who struggled with addiction. Legally speaking, he was raised by his grandmother, but he considers the entire town of Sanderson responsible for raising him right. “Every family treated me as if I was one of their own,” he said.

So when he got the news that former Terrell County Sheriff and

fellow ex-BPA Santiago Gonzalez had suddenly passed away from a heart attack, he knew he had to step up. “I like to say that I really should still be a Border Patrol agent, but God had different plans,” he said. “It was time for me to take care of my community in a different way.”

Though President Trump has claimed that there have been zero illegal border crossings during his tenure, Cleveland is still catching folks—and posting their unblurred photos online, a controversial practice he says he does to help families across Latin America find missing loved ones.

Few can make it through his county without a guide or a smuggler, and those still attempting to cash in on crossing the border during Trump’s second term might as well be characters in a millennial reimagining of Les Misérables—one of Cleveland’s few human smuggling arrests last year was a 24-year-old father of three with no permanent address who reported to the Lone Star Defendants Office that he worked 72 hours a week for DoorDash in Dallas.

In a county as small as his, every agency has to pull their weight. Just a few weeks ago, Cleveland and his team assisted BORSTAR (a special unit of the Border Patrol dedicated to search and rescue), Texas Parks and Wildlife game wardens and several small-town emergency departments in a daring cave rescue after a scientist studying an underground river was struck in the head by a falling rock, fracturing her skull.

Terrell County is remote and rugged in a way that few Americans elsewhere can conceptualize. Cleveland is concerned that the wall could slow glacial emergency

response times down even further—if folks are somehow still able to access the river but have to contend with finding and unlocking gates to get out in an emergency, that could spell trouble.

One of the few reasons anyone ever books a trip to Dryden, Texas—an unincorporated town of around a dozen people in Terrell County—is because it is the take-out point for the Lower Canyons, an 83-mile trip down the Rio Grande widely considered bucket-list boating and one of America’s premiere floats.

In 2013, Cleveland spent five days in the Lower Canyons on a river trip that included former National Park Service River Ranger Michael Ryan and Liz Rogers, one of the Big Bend’s most beloved lawyers. “She was a public defender at the time, and I’d never met her before—I thought, ‘Man, I’m being set up,’” Cleveland quipped.

The crew hit it off so well that Cleveland still raves about the trip to anyone who will listen years later. Seeing the canyon country of his own backyard for the first time from the river—in the company of strangers with interesting perspectives—changed his life. “We’re American citizens, you know—we have freedom to do what we want, and certainly one of those freedoms is to be able to put a canoe in the water and float down the river,” he said. “Every American should have that opportunity if they want to take it.”

He can’t imagine what it would feel like to look up at a giant steel wall next to the river on the Texas side. “When you take the trip now, you can admire both sides,” he said. “When the wall gets built, you’ll only be able to admire Mexico.”

Five days of school: ‘It’s all about the grades’

Continued from page 1

“One of them is instructional days, and the reason for it is just because we are under school improvement, and because of school improvement, we have to amp up our instructional days to 175. With that said, without having a DOI designation, we can’t start school until August 24. Working with the admin, we provided our staff with two calendars and this is the one that has been proposed.”

Texas Education Agency’s School Improvement Division intervenes with campuses and districts that earn a D or F through the State Accountability System. When a district earns a D or F for three consecutive years, districts lose their District of Innovation (DOI) status and must work with the School Improvement Division to develop a School Improvement Plan. As previously reported, Marfa ISD earned an overall “D” rating in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

The new calendar, according

to Alferez, starts August 24 and ends May 28, 2027. By adopting this calendar, the district increases the instructional minutes from the state required 75,600 to 77,525.

With instructional minutes spread out over more days in the school year, the school can shave off time in the mornings and afternoons.

“So we’re looking at a bell schedule coming in at 8, 8:05 in the morning, and ending school at 3:45 for everybody,” Alferez said. He later clarified that the bell schedule is for the junior high/high school campus; the elementary schedule will end at 3:15 p.m. Junior high and high school students currently attend school from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The other calendar option offered to teachers maintained a four-day school week but didn’t end until well into June and continued the long days. “The teachers got to see two options and the

majority of teachers voted for this one,” Alferez said.

Board Member Teresa Nunez questioned how teachers feel about going back to a five-day work week.

Elementary School Principal Rosie Martinez suggested that a return to a five-day week would be easier for those teaching Bluebonnet Learning, the curriculum developed by TEA that Marfa ISD implemented this school year. Bluebonnet utilizes detailed, structured lesson plans in each classroom. “I think we did a really good job of letting the teachers know that because we are in the School Improvement Plan, we could possibly go to a five-day work week,” she said. “For the teachers teaching Bluebonnet, looking at a five-day week is comforting for them.”

Athletic Director and Dean of Students Linda Ojeda added, “The other thing that they did say, was that they were happy

about not leaving at 5 o’clock.”

Before a vote was taken, Nunez expressed the need to promote the revised calendar to the school community, specifically parents and guardians, and encourage everyone to take ownership of pulling the district out of school improvement.

“Going forward with this calendar, I really think we really need to push it out early to the parents and make the community understand, or at least the parents understand, why we’re going from four days to five days and say it’s all about the grades. It really is,” Nunez said. “We need to get the community’s involvement in and make the parents understand how important it is to get your kids to school, to sit there and get the education ... It takes the moms, dads, grandmas, grandpas to get these kids to school on time to make them understand how important it is and why we’re in the position we’re in.”

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BIG BEND

Sentinel

Published by Sentinel News Project, a Texas non-profit organization

AROUND
THE BIG BEND

Thursday March 5



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

Miles of Stars

8:00pm-9:00pm
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX

Friday March 6

Live Music:

The Wildflowers
6:30pm-9:30pm
Alpine, TX



Spring on 90 Series:

Sarah Burton
9:00pm
Gage Hotel, 102 NW 1st St,
Highway 90
Marathon, TX

Saturday March 7

Park 2 Park Hike

9:00am-11:30am
Davis Mountains State Park
Park Rd 3
Fort Davis, TX



Live Music:

Igor & The Red Elvises
8:00pm-11:00pm
Granada Theatre
207 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

Sunday March 8

Boxing at Maintenant

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

Sunday Slow Stretch

with Bailey
4:00pm-5:00pm
La Sala Studio, 207 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX



Spring on 90 Series:

Chris Beall
9:00pm
Gage Hotel
102 NW 1st St, Highway 90
Marathon, TX

Tuesday March 10



Ojito Adentro Hike

9:00am-10:30am
Big Bend Ranch State Park
Terlingua, TX

Commissioner's Court

Regular Meeting
9:30am-12:00am
Alpine, TX

Regular Commissioners' Court Meeting

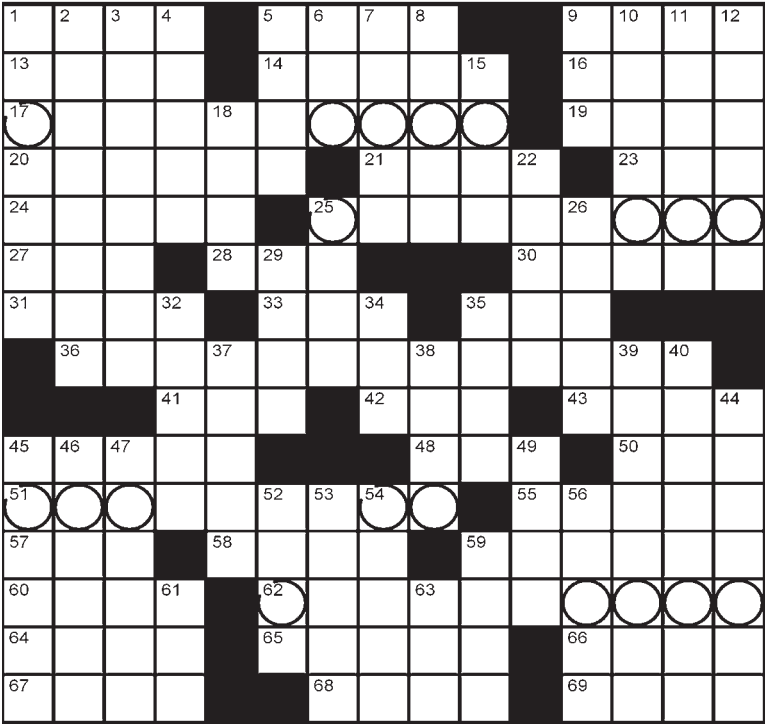
10:00am-11:00am
Fort Davis, TX

CROSSWORD

Do the Math

By Patrick Maher

3/05



Edited by David Steinberg

ACROSS

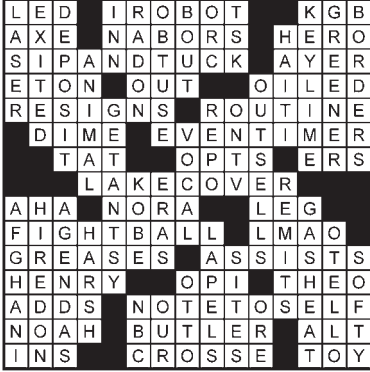
- 1 Wally ____
("Famous" cookie maker)
5 In a bit
9 Thrift store caveat
13 Cheerful tune
14 Place for a clip-on mic
16 Pop-up shop worker, maybe
17 *2013 Wimbledon men's singles champion (In this answer, note the first letter and the last 4 letters)
19 ____ check (reading of the room's mood)
20 Pink, purple and blue symbol of pride, informally
21 Molecule part
23 Tic-toe connector
24 More fit for the task
25 *Connection spot for a landline (... the first letter and the last 3 letters)
27 (I'm a goat!)
28 Barnyard mama
30 Sleeveless tops, informally
31 They're exposed by sleeveless tops

- 33 Minecraft resource
35 Room that might have a TV
36 Establish personal limits ... or a hint to this puzzle's theme
41 Snitch
42 Cartoon "devil," for short
43 Blinds part
45 Map collection
48 Rx item
50 Cyclops feature
51 *Maturing (... the first 3 letters and the last 2 letters)
55 Variety show
57 ____-al-Fitr
58 Biceps exercise
59 Renter
60 Infatuated
62 *Get through a whole season in one sitting, say (... the first letter and the last 4 letters)
64 Yemeni port
65 Rocks, in slang
66 Nat King ____
67 (Hey!)
68 Future J.D.'s exam
69 Uno + dos
DOWN
1 Selma's state
2 Small hotel refrigerators
3 Former lover
4 Panache

- 5 Slimy crawler
6 Rowing blade
7 Billionaire Winfrey
8 "Nifty!"
9 Off-roader: Abbr.
10 Vegan meat substitute
11 "It's me again!"
12 Little bits
15 French silk city
18 Barnyard female
22 Poetic rhythm
25 Machu Picchu's country
26 Rock legend
29 Gamer's "Heck yeah!"
32 Paper ____ (eco-friendly drink insert)
34 Sinus doc
35 Stun
37 No-frills

- 38 Moist
39 Skyscraper amenity with many buttons
40 Call for mercy
44 Acquires canines, say
45 Feature of a May-December romance
46 Threesomes
47 Ski resort shelters
49 Sketched
52 Worn-down pencils
53 Interrogate
54 Arm bones
56 Put into law
59 The "T" in 68-Across
61 ____Man (nickname for NBA star Anthony Edwards)
63 Transcript fig.

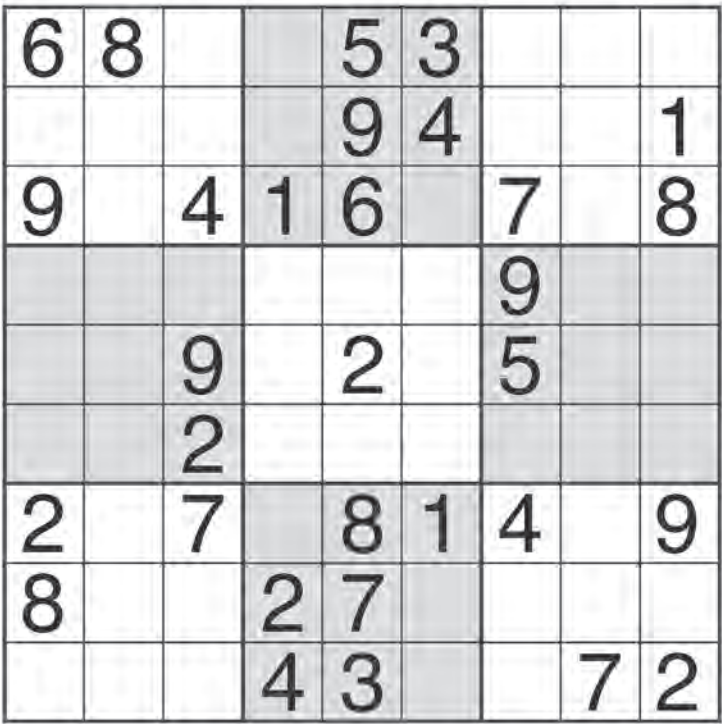
PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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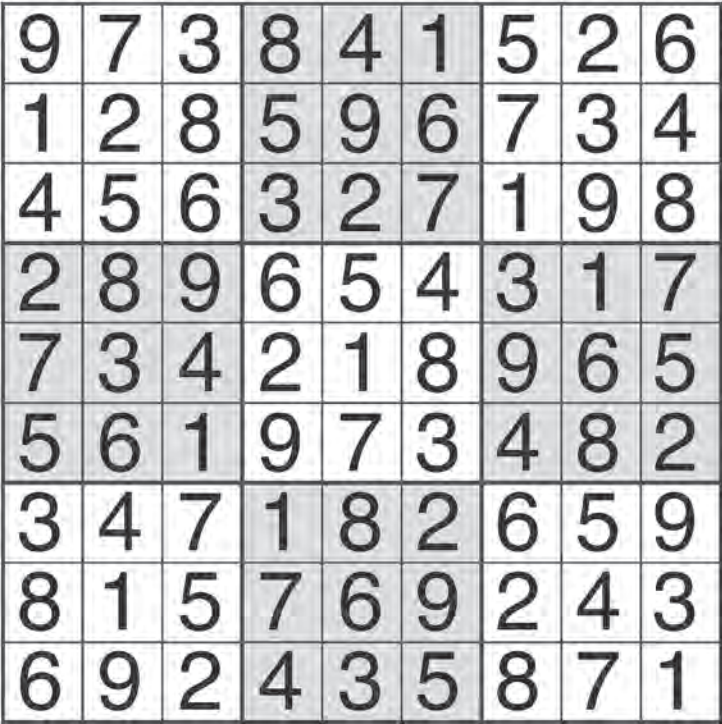
SUDUKO

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



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

SOLUTION:



OBIT

Vietnam sergeant worked for Presidio TxDOT for 22 years

IN LOVING MEMORY of Jose "Joe" Luis Zubiata. Jose "Joe"

Luis Zubiata was born on December 7, 1940, in Shafter, Texas, to Salvador Zubiata and Luz Mendoza Zubiata. He passed away on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, in Odessa, Texas.

Joe was drafted into the United States Army in November 1963 and proudly served his country during the Vietnam War. During his time in the Army, he achieved the rank of sergeant. He earned the designation of expert sharpshooter and was awarded the Good Conduct Medal and the Vietnam Service Medal.

After completing his military service, Joe attended Sul Ross State University, where he earned a degree in business and accounting. He went on to serve as maintenance supervisor for the Texas Department of Transportation in Presidio for 22 years. In recognition of his dedication and pride in his work, he received a beautification award from Austin, Texas. Joe retired in 2006 after a long



and faithful career.

Joe was preceded in death by his parents. He made his home in Presidio with his beloved wife, Bertha Zubiata.

He is survived by his siblings, Raymond Zubiata and Rosario Baeza (Leroy). Joe was the proud father of nine children: Michelle Cabezuela, Andrea Camacho, Jose Luis Zubiata Jr. (Danielle), John Razo (Estrella), Luz Zubiata (Jesse), Yvette Zubiata (Alejandra), Ivan Grajeda, Jose Grajeda (Elena), and Bertha Grajeda (Ed-

ward). He was also blessed with 22 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren, who will continue to carry his legacy forward.

Services will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 14, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Marfa with the recitation of the most Holy Rosary. The funeral Mass begins at 11 a.m. with burial immediately to follow at the Marfa Cemetery. Friends and family are invited to join the family for lunch at St. Mary's Catholic Church Hall following the burial.

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

To publish an obituary in Sentinel, send by email to: editor@bigbendsentinel.com. Please accompany your message with a photograph. There is no charge. Copy received by the end of the day Friday will appear in the following week's paper.

CLASSIFIEDS AND PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC AWARENESS

LEGAL NOTICE

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit with Food and Beverage Certificate by Bockellan LLC dba Jacko's, to be located at 203 E San Antonio St, Marfa, Presidio County, Texas. Partners of said corporation are Rebecca Bockelie, Managing Member and Jean-Marc Ruellan, Managing Member.

Kelly y South Abbot. Las personas discapacitadas interesadas en atender a la audiencia pública que requieren de acomodaciones o servicios especiales, deben comunicarse con la ciudad a 432-729-4315 no menos de dos días antes de la junta para hacer arreglos necesarios. Residentes que necesiten un intérprete deben comunicarse con la ciudad por lo menos 24 horas antes de la audiencia pública.

Sealed Proposals will be opened on March 23, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. in the Casner Room at Marfa City Hall (address above). The engineering firm will be chosen at the Regular Marfa City Council Meeting on March 26, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the same location. The Marfa City Council will use a qualifications-based selection process in accordance with the Professional Services Procurement Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 2254). Selection is contingent upon proof of professional liability coverage for errors and omissions.

CITY OF MARFA REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES 2026 MARFA STREETS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The City of Marfa, Texas seeks a qualified engineering firm for the 2026 Marfa Streets Improvement Project. The scope of the project is removal and replacement of select existing roadways. Services include preparation of detailed engineering plans, specifications, cost estimates, assistance with the bidding process, construction oversight, and final project certification. The project will be accomplished with current funds. The entire RFQ can be found at cityofmarfa.com under the Administration tab.

Interested individual(s) or firms should submit a written statement of qualifications to Mayor Manuel Baeza via email, regular mail, delivery service, or hand delivery to City Hall (including mail slot). The submittal should include a proposed contract, along with a list of current and former clients in far west Texas. Sealed submittals must be received at the following address no later than 4:00 pm (CST) on March 19, 2026:

City of Marfa
RFQ Engineering Services
2026 Marfa Streets Improvement Project
Attn: Mayor Manuel Baeza
mbaeza@cityofmarfa.com
113 S. Highland Avenue
P.O. Box 787 (USPS address)
Marfa, TX 79843

The City of Marfa reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive any irregularities in the process. The City will not be responsible in the event the U.S. Postal Service or any other carrier system fails to deliver the proposal to the City by the given deadline above, or for any delays in delivery. The City of Marfa is an equal-opportunity employer.

ESTATE SALE PART 2

March 7/8, 9am-3pm, Sat/Sun
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AVISO PÚBLICO

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

La ciudad de Marfa invita a todos sus ciudadanos a una audiencia pública el día10 de marzo del 2026, a las 6:00 p.m. en la sala municipal localizada en 113 S. Highland en Marfa, para evaluar el desempeño y obtener comentarios sobre el contrato CDBG del 2023, numero CDV23-0408 proyecto de mejor de calles para las callas West Madrid, Spoth

LEGAL NOTICE

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit with Food and Beverage Certificate by Awesome Street LLC dba Awesome St. Beverage Lounge, to be located at 201 E Dallas St Unit#3, Marfa, Presidio County, Texas.



Seeking entrepreneurial seller for advertising in the Big Bend Sentinel. Commission-only, part time. If you love the local community and helping businesses solve problems, this is a gig for you. Please send resume to mike@orrenand.co.

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Marfa, TX 79843
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TDD: 711
Apartamento de 1,2 dormitorios
Alquiler basado en ingresos

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer
www.jlgray.com

Trump, your wall would destroy our economy

Dear President Trump,

I'M WRITING TODAY with a simple plea: Please do not hand over the Rio Grande River to Mexico. When I was 14 years old, I traveled to the Big Bend region of West Texas for the first time. As a suburban kid from Philadelphia, I'd never seen anything quite like it. Counties nearly the size of New Jersey held no more than a couple thousand permanent residents. Mountains, rivers, desert arroyos, cattle ranches—miles and miles of wild, untouched land stretched out in every direction, mostly unobstructed. In this region I learned to shoot guns, ride horses, drink beer, operate a forklift, and put in a hard day's work. As an adult, I decided to buy land here—just a few miles from the border—to build a home for my family and, I hoped, for my son to inherit. I worked hard for it, and I fulfilled my American dream.

Now, though, that dream and the entire region is at risk because of plans to construct a border wall here. This wall would be unnecessary; it would destroy jobs, hand over a critical natural resource to Mexico, and not actually improve border security. Mr. President: This is a bad deal.

All you need to know is the simple math: The Big Bend Sector of West Texas accounts for over 500 miles of the border with Mexico, roughly 25% of the entire U.S.-Mexico border. Yet, in 2024, it accounted for 0.32% of all border encounters, according to DHS data. For years, this part of the border has been kept secure by the Border Patrol, cameras, technology, and—of course—nature. While plans are in place for a 30-foot border wall, the region is covered in thousand-foot tall mountains, cliffs, and arroyos. It is over 100 degrees here most days in the summer, and freezing in the winter. The dry, waterless land is full of cactus, snakes, scorpions, spiders, and all manner of predators. There is no need for a border wall; it is already, in many ways, impassable.

Worse yet, a border wall here would destroy a critical part of West Texas's economy: Tourism. In Brewster County—where I built my home and where Big Bend National Park is located—about 20% of all employment is tied to tourism, which drove \$60 million in revenue in 2025. Most of that tourism consists of activities like river guiding, horseback riding, and other outfitting experiences (such as guided fishing trips, park stays, hikes, or off-road experiences). Most of the other employment opportunities support the tourism industry (shuttle driving, office admin work, restaurants, lodging and hotels, park jobs, etc). All of this would be at risk if Americans were cut off from the river, or a wall tore through the parks, and tourists stopped coming.

Here along the border in Big Bend, there is nearly unanimous opposition to the wall. Republican representatives, judges, sheriffs, and local leaders here all oppose construction of a border wall. They know we don't need it because the border here is already secure under your leadership. If you doubt this, you should come visit and tour the area—people would be glad to show you what an incredible part of the country it is, and why a wall is so unnecessary.

On Tuesday night, in your State of the Union address, you assured me and my fellow Americans that from “the rugged border towns of Texas to heartland villages of Michigan,” the golden age of America “was upon us.” You paid homage to the brave Americans who “ventured out across the daunting and dangerous continent,” and “carved through an unforgiving wilderness, settled a boundless frontier and tamed the beautiful but very, very dangerous Wild West.”

Your mistake was speaking about these rugged borderlands and tamers of the Wild West in the past tense, as if we were dead and left



ISAAC SAUL

Saul spent much of his youth in the Big Bend, returning to build a house.

in some bygone era. We're not. We're still there, chasing your golden era vision, taming the wild lands of our nation, living off its pristine and rugged offerings, and welcoming visitors from across the world to experience it themselves. We're trying to make a living and preserve this great land, which is supposed to be American land. However, Mr. President, your initiative here puts all that frontier at risk—all for the sake of an unnecessary, expensive, and useless wall.

Please consider the West Texans on the front line of the border who do not want any wall here. If you don't believe it, you should come see for yourself.

Sincerely,
—ISAAC SAUL

Saul is the founder and editor of Tangle, which covers the biggest politics stories in the U.S. by summarizing arguments from the right, left, and center (then “Tangle’s take”). You can read the full version of Saul’s take on the wall at readtangle.com/trump-border-wall-big-bend-region/.

Science and engagement needed on border security

AS THE PRESIDENT of Friends of Big Bend Ranch State Park, and on behalf of our Board of Directors, we issue the following statement concerning the proposed construction of a physical border wall in the Big Bend region of Texas.

Friends of Big Bend Ranch State Park is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the protection, preservation, and responsible stewardship of Big Bend Ranch State Park through conservation, education, and sustainable recreation initiatives. Our mission centers on safeguarding the park's natural resources, enhancing visitor experiences, and promoting the long-term ecological and economic vitality of the region.

We recognize and respect the importance of public safety and border security in the Big Bend region. The well-being of residents, visitors, park staff, and law enforcement personnel is essential. At the same time, we believe that any infrastructure decisions in this uniquely remote and ecologically significant landscape must carefully consider long-term environmental and economic impacts.

Big Bend Ranch State Park encompasses more than 300,000 acres of Chihuahuan Desert ecosystem, supporting diverse wildlife species, fragile riparian corridors along the Rio Grande, and internationally recognized dark skies. The region's ecological integrity depends on wildlife movement corridors, watershed connectivity, and uninterrupted desert landscapes. Large-scale physical barriers have the potential to disrupt animal migration patterns, fragment habitats, alter hydrology, and affect sensitive

desert and river ecosystems.

From an economic standpoint, eco-tourism plays a significant role in sustaining local communities throughout Presidio County, Brewster County and the broader Big Bend region. Visitors travel from across Texas the United States, and internationally to experience the park's rugged landscapes, river access, backcountry trails, cultural history, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Outdoor recreation supports local outfitters, lodging providers, restaurants, and small businesses. Protecting the park's natural character is directly tied to sustaining this economic engine.

The Big Bend region contributes to the greater good of Texas not only through tourism revenue but also through ecosystem services that benefit the state as a whole, including biodiversity conservation, watershed protection, carbon storage, and preservation of open lands.

Our position is grounded not in politics, but in stewardship. We respectfully urge that any decisions regarding border infrastructure in the Big Bend region prioritize science-based environmental assessments, collaboration with state park leadership, and meaningful engagement with local communities and conservation stakeholders.

We remain committed to our mission: preserving the natural resources, scenic beauty, and ecological integrity of Big Bend Ranch State Park for present and future generations—while acknowledging the importance of safety and thoughtful policy solutions in this extraordinary part of Texas.

MARTHA STAFFORD
Friends of Big Bend Ranch

BIG BEND

Sentinel

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ART
Sentinel

A ‘three-quarter view of the future’

Dim Zayan’s first solo exhibit engages questions about time, erosion, and human intervention.

ENVISIONING the future, we stare directly into the past. Zim Dayan’s debut solo exhibition, *A Three-Quarter View of the Future*, on view at Do Right Hall, presents a new collection of multimedia works—gypsum sheet layered with oil, acrylic, epoxy, and shellac—which engage the observer in questions about time, erosion, and human intervention.

The exhibition is curated by Jean-hee Yu. Yu and Zayan are co-founders of MarfaMUST (Marfa Untitled Studio Tour), an artist-led initiative that produces biannual sculpture gardens at Lannan Park and site-specific group exhibitions highlighting Marfa-based artists.

“Engaging both structure and surface, Zayan constructs layered compositions through iterative

processes of pouring, staining, sanding and sealing,” writes Yu. By way of layering paint, epoxy and sanding techniques, the artist engages in a form of archaeology or excavation, alternating between adding material and removing it to create depth, history, and texture. The terrain-like compositions deploy earthen hues and raised contours to evoke topographical scenes shaped by erosion, rather than carved by hand. “The form emerges through excavation as much as construction, with each work retaining visible traces of process and material condition,” such as manufacturer markings.

The impetus behind *A Three-Quarter View* is “somewhat spiritual, or metaphysical at least. . . . If tomorrow we are gone and only the stones



Dim Zayan, Texture 003, Oil, epoxy on gypsum, 10.5x13,” 2025

Dim Zayan, Acclivity I, (left) Oil, epoxy on gypsum, 24x48,” 2026

The artist, whose studio is in Marfa, engages in a form of artistic archaeology or excavation

remain, erosion is the outstanding story. It will transcend us. It’s that form of communication I’m interested in . . . It is a humbling process,” Zayan says.

These new and ongoing works, in which he utilizes building materials from local hardware stores as well as power tools, such as an orbital sander and grinder, were initiated by meditative walks and conversations shared with the land, some revealing each gust of wind as a once-oceanic wave. Though interested in the conversation between cryptocurrency, finance, and art while living in New York and Connecticut (at a time when crypto “felt more promising or adaptive”), Zayan felt a strong pull to work with the natural elements once he arrived in Marfa.

Before the desert, water

Before living in the desert, Zayan spent time filming bodies of water, creating a whole “bank” of water’s movement, recalling that each one possessed an innate personality. Although he believes the artist’s role is to “absorb whatever the environment is willing to give you,” he maintains his interest in water’s elemental timelessness, a force that came long before us and will surely outlive us. Walking along the barren land with recorded sounds of waves reverberating in his ears, he gained a deeper understanding that this entire region was once a body of water. “It was as if these waves were talking to me through the landscape. There was this sudden compression of time and space . . . this

blur between the wind, the sea, the landscape. In the sciences there is the Theory of Everything, where everything is bound by the same laws . . . You want to understand what binds things together.” In conceptualizing his new works, Zayan realized he was “doing a projection through time.”

While building materials may “seem un noble,” as raw elements extracted from the earth, they have much to express. Early on, a desire to transform the ground for his paintings beget the shift from standard canvas to drywall sheet. Gypsum’s solidity produced a more tactile encounter with oil sticks—its inelastic nature allowed him to press with more force, forging a stronger, almost electric, connection between medium and surface. This developed into a greater curiosity about the material itself, and an interest in its ability to crumble and divest into organic, broken shapes in attempts to reveal the porous intricacies of material beneath its superficial face. For the most part, Zayan prefers to work with the “softer” or less durable backs of the gypsum sheets, as opposed to the fronts.

The title, *A Three-quarter View of the Future*, is borrowed from a vintage National Geographic magazine article, which Zayan found useful in encapsulating the sort of “sideways” looking required by the works, the observer’s glance oscillating between a direct front view and a side profile, resulting from the reliefs and curved contours that depart from a flat canvas.

“Whether you are looking at the sea or the dry land, there’s a place out there that, once all the humans and buildings are gone, you will have this barren soil,” Zayan says. “It is probably a vision of what would be there no matter what we do or how stupid we can be with our politics or choices as a civilization . . . Whether we save this planet or destroy it, it will outlive us.”

The opening of *Dim Zayan: A Three-Quarter View of the Future* will take place on Thursday, March 5, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Do Right Hall. The exhibition will be on view through March 15. —ALEXIS WOLFE

