

BIG BEND Sentinel

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Marfa blocks AEP substation

Company will look for a new site

Marfans packing City Hall Monday night leapt to their feet, clapping and cheering, with one woman near tears, as they heard the final votes on the proposed AEP electric substation. “Ok, it’s 3-2. The motion does not pass,” said Councilmember Mark Morrison, who was sitting in to run the meeting for Mayor Manny Baeza, who recused himself as an AEP employee.

Voting against a special use permit for the substation were Travis Acreman, Mark Cash and Raul Lara. Voting in favor of it were Morrison and Eddie Pallarez. Since the substation was an industrial project proposed for lots zoned residential, AEP needed the special use permit to move forward.

It was clear from past comments that Acreman and Lara were likely to vote against the substation. But Cash had never commented other than to say he was considering the proposal, and his “no” vote clearly surprised many of the people in the room.

“In our comprehensive plan, it is very clear that this area is meant to be designated for housing, for beautification, for nature trails,” Acreman said in a brief discussion before the vote. “If we are unwilling to consider those facts, then I don’t believe that we have done what is necessary to fully ground this decision in what we are obliged to follow.”

Countering him was Pallarez, a former AEP employee, who said the utility “has made all the right moves” for 80 years. “The substation that is currently there has been there for 80, 90 years,” he said. “I have not ever heard anybody complain about the aesthetics or the concern about an explosion. I never have. I’ve been here for 38 years.”

“The decision to vote against the proposed AEP substation was not made lightly,” Cash said in a statement Tuesday morning. “I fully recognize the importance and necessity of this infrastructure, and I remain supportive of efforts to bring a new substation to our community—however, not

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KATE BUBACZ—SENTINEL

Presidio demonstrators point to dangers to animals with new border measures.

Protestors push to stop razor wire barriers along the Rio Grande

By KATE BUBACZ

Presidio

Nearly two dozen people showed up in Presidio Thursday to protest the concertina wire, which the U.S. Army and Border Patrol strung for miles along the Rio Grande, after widespread concerns that flooding could wash the wire downriver. The group, mostly from Terlingua, was galvanized by a recent International Boundary Water Commission (IBWC) reminder about flood risks before the anticipated start of monsoon season.

Concertina wire, also known as razor wire, has been installed along 100 miles of the riverbank in Texas in the name of border security. Its use has been entangled in controversy due to its ability to cause severe injuries. Safe handling usually requires long gloves and teamwork to navigate the high tension. The razor wire has been in place along nearly 14 miles of riverfront in Presidio for several months.

“A lot of Terlinguans are really upset about this. Even if it’s upstream, the concertina wire is really scary for boaters and wildlife,” said Ashley Mahaney, a self-described river enthusiast from Terlingua. She was involved in making the creative signs that many protestors carried depicting local wildlife tangled in wire.

Crystal Albright, a longtime resident of Terlingua and member of NoWall 79852, says that

she quickly organized the protest after seeing a public notice from the IBWC in the April 23 edition of *Big Bend Sentinel*. It advised that the river was prone to flooding, and further instructed landowners, the general public and “users of the land” to contact the IBWC before making any use or improvements of the land along the river in order to protect life and property.

This routine notice comes at a sensitive time as Presidio faces possible construction of a border wall along the river. The city has not received any guidance from either the Army Corps of Engi-

neers or the IBWC about what protections, if any, would be put in place to mitigate flood impact caused by the wall. John Kennedy of the Presidio Municipal Development District is working on commissioning a flood impact report for the city in the absence of federal guidance.

Albright sent and hand-delivered a letter to Customs and Border Patrol and the IBWC detailing concerns about the T-posts used to install the wire becoming overwhelmed and dislodged by floodwaters and posing a risk downstream. The letter was co-

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Presidio man rents RV slots to wall contractors

Activists angry and disappointed at collaboration

The first confirmed case of a Presidio County landowner working with border wall contractors surfaced this week after more than 20 Fisher Sand & Gravel trailers were recently spotted in the Loma Paloma RV park owned by Presidio resident Terry Bishop. The sightings did not sit well with anti-border wall activ-

ists who have long considered Bishop a friend and who have called for no one to collaborate or do business with contractors.

Fisher Sand & Gravel has the \$1.2 billion Department of Homeland Security grant for construction of the border wall from the state park up river to Candelaria, although it’s unclear what role the RV park renters are playing in the project.

Anti-wall activist and Redford landowner Charlie Angell was quick to call out Bishop for helping facilitate the wall construction, and he said he’s concerned other people may follow Bishop’s misguided lead. “People may say, ‘Well, f— it. If Terry can do it, I can do it,’” Angell said. “That’s just how it works. That’s human nature.” Angell noted that last year contractors came to him to lease his land on West Highway 170 for \$10,000 a month—before the wall project was reported on in the fall. They contacted him again afterwards and he turned them down.

Bishop is one of the more prominent members of various communities in Presidio. He owns a farm east of town and land where he worked tirelessly to create a wetland for birds with treated wastewater. He also is a board member

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Police kill man after home invasion and car theft



VANESSA ORNELAS

SUV stolen by suspect remains parked on FM 505 while officers investigate.

Suspect fatally shot after high-speed chase

By ROB D’AMICO

Valentine

Police shot and killed a man outside of Valentine Monday morning after he invaded a home and held the residents at gunpoint, stole a school district employee’s car and led officers on a high-speed chase, according to a witness’s account. Valentine is a small Far West Texas community west of Marfa on Highway 90.

Vanessa Ornelas, a Valentine native, said she was reading her phone messages in her mobile home just after 8 a.m. when she heard three loud bangs—which she attributed to neighbors who worked with heavy equipment. “When I started walking down the hallway, I was met by this man that had a gun,” she said. “He had it on a strap, like across his chest.”

Ornelas said she began questioning the man. “I put my hands up,” she said. “I asked him what

is it that he wanted? What did he need? He didn’t respond to me. All he was doing was mumbling.”

“I started yelling at him,” Ornelas recalled. “I stopped in the hallway because I have two sons’ bedrooms that are right across the hall from each other. So my oldest, who is 18, was still asleep. He sprung out of bed, poked his head out and saw [the man] and got back into his room. I started screaming for my other two kids, who are 10 and 12, to go lock themselves up in a room, stay together, lock themselves up until somebody comes to get them for help. I could hear my little 10-year-old screaming in the background.”

Suddenly, the situation changed after the man dropped his gun. Ornelas said she could tell the gun was no longer in his hands, and she made a move. “I made two large lunges at him, and I told him, ‘Leave, leave, leave.’ He turns around, starts apologizing and makes his way out the side door, which he broke into.”

But then he returned, Ornelas said, and began trying to force his way back in. “I heard him coming up the ramp again. I was like, ‘Oh my God.’ I got a folding chair and tried to prop it up against the door, and I felt him pushing on the door to try to come back in again. I threw all my weight from my shoulder against the door. I saw him twitching the doorknob, so I stopped the doorknob from twitching, and when he felt my resistance on it, I heard him back off the door, go down the steps.”

The man then sat outside the mobile home in a white work pickup with a shell. Terrified,

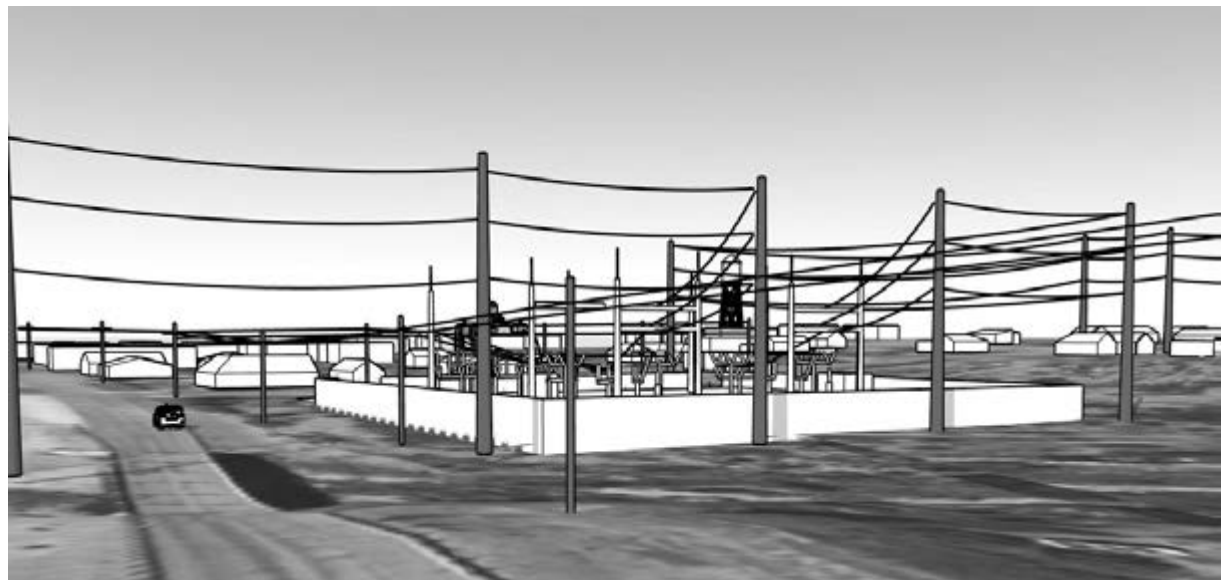
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Western bronzes for Shafter—page 8

Sentinel News Project



Rendering by Planning & Zoning Commission Chair Stephen “Click” Rabourn shows proposed substation.

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Alpine well dig could cost \$1 million

Rates could go up \$5

By GINA VERA

Alpine
Water rates for Alpine residents are not going up this week, but could go up in two weeks. The City Council voted on May 5 to use money from the city's general fund to kickstart work on a new municipal water well. The council will take up further funding and a possible rate increase at the May 19 meeting.

The city had instituted a water emergency after a well failed last week. “The loss of this well places additional strain on the city's water distribution system, creating potential risks to system pressure, fire flow capacity, and overall water supply reliability, thereby constituting an imminent threat to public health and safety,” city officials said.

The council took the action, saying it would allow work to start immediately on the new well, allow the city to research interest rates and other details with potential lenders, and give city staff time to provide council members with more information on how a rate in-

crease could best be implemented. “We need to start John Skinner [of Skinner Drilling] turned on right now,” said Councilmember Rick Stephens, “Then start talking about how much we need to borrow.”

The original resolution, presented to the city council as an emergency addendum added just hours before the regular meeting, called for an increase of \$5 per month to Alpine's base water rate.

The city declared a water emergency on May 1 and has been under Stage 3 water restrictions since the Roberts 3 municipal well dropped to below 25% capacity last Wednesday, April 29.

At that time, city staff had hoped the problem could be solved with mechanical repairs to the well's pump, but further investigation showed there was more significant damage to the more than 50-year-old well.

“The well casing is rotting out,” said Councilmember Robert Ruckes, and city staff described holes larger than a fist.

The new well is set to be drilled next to the old Roberts 3 well. This will help workers move more



Workers examine a failed pump and discover other problems with the aging well.

quickly, since they already know the area has a good water supply and that some of the connections are still usable, said Michael Maciaz, Alpine director of utilities.

The project also calls for permanently plugging the Roberts 3 well and for the city's other wells

to make up the difference for the six weeks it is expected to take to bring the new well online, Maciaz said. He estimated the project's cost, including bringing in equipment, at \$1 million.

City staff and council members stressed how this should be considered a temporary situation and that residents, businesses, and schools should work to conserve water and follow Stage 3 restrictions.

Stage 3 Water Restrictions include:

- Outdoor watering is limited to handheld hoses or watering cans.
- Watering is permitted only between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.
- All irrigation systems, including sprinklers and automated systems, are prohibited.
- Washing sidewalks, driveways, and other paved surfaces is prohibited.
- Filling or refilling of swimming pools, spas, or similar features is prohibited.
- Vehicle washing is prohibited, except at commercial car washing facilities, and only between 12 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Suspect steals a car from the local school

Continued from page 1

Ornelas said her family waited until he pulled away, and then she gathered the kids and her dog and took off to the Valentine Post Office, where her sister works as the postmaster. The family and postmaster locked themselves in the post office and then heard from Valentine resident John Maloney, who had encountered the man earlier. Ornelas said Maloney then recounted that the man arrived at the former gas station he owns and asked for gas. He only spoke Spanish.

Maloney told *Big Bend Sentinel* he gave the man all the gas he had, half a gallon, which wouldn't be enough for him to get to the closest stations in Marfa or Van Horn. The man then kept asking to use the bathroom inside, but Maloney said he told him it was broken. The man was disheveled and nervous, Maloney said, but he added that he never saw a gun.

By now, Ornelas said she was in regular contact with a Jeff Davis County deputy who was on his way to Valentine. Then an unusual call came in from the school district—the man had ditched his work truck in the parking lot at the school, found keys left in the ignition of the assistant principal's SUV and took off with it.

Ornelas said most bizarre was the man then drove slowly back through Valentine, where a crowd had gathered outside the post office. She said she could clearly see him again, and that he was about 5'7", Hispanic, and medium-set in weight. A Department of Public Safety trooper then arrived, and hearing that the man had driven



VANESSA ORNELAS

A man killed by officers Monday morning ditches a white work truck he stole (far right in first row of lot) to steal a school employee's SUV.

toward Marfa, sped off after him.

Somewhere on the way to Marfa, the man turned around and headed back to Valentine with police in pursuit. The man turned on FM 505. The stolen SUV then stopped, and at least one officer shot and killed him. It's not confirmed who shot the suspect.

Jeff Davis County Sheriff Victor Lopez and Presidio County Sheriff Danny Dominguez could not be reached for comment. But in a Facebook post from Jeff Davis County Sheriff's Office around 10 a.m, the office stated that a previous lockdown of Valentine had been lifted and then stated: “An officer-involved shooting has since occurred. The suspect has been located and the threat has been eliminated. The pursuit ended on RM 505, and the Texas Rangers will be conducting the investigation into



VANESSA ORNELAS

After repelling a home invasion, Valentine native Vanessa Ornelas watches nervously out her window as the invader sits in a work truck he stole.

the officer-involved shooting.” The Texas Rangers are involved in the investigation, the post said.

A Presidio County Sheriff's Office Facebook post stated: “During

the pursuit, the suspect discharged several rounds at law enforcement officers, which ultimately resulted in the suspect being fatally wounded by law enforcement.”

Ornelas said a trooper told her: “We don't even know who he is. I just know that he's been shot and killed, and he's in our custody. And I can tell you that the work vehicle that you saw here comes out of Presidio. It was stolen in Presidio.”

Jeff Davis County Justice of the Peace Mary Ann Luedeke said Monday that she did a death inquest at 10:38 and has ordered an autopsy. Luedeke said she still do know the identity of the man.

Ornelas was left rattled, as were her kids. “My poor son is just terrified, and [he told me], ‘Mom, I'm not sleeping here. We need to get a door.’ So I'm trying to figure that out.”



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PRESIDIO INTERNATIONAL

Los manifestantes se proponen retirar el alambre de concertina de las orillas del río fronterizo

Protesta para retirar alambrada fronteriza

Por KATE BUBACZ

Presidio
Casi dos docenas de personas se congregaron el jueves en Presidio para protestar contra el alambre de concertina —que el Ejército de los EE. UU. y la Patrulla Fronteriza han tendido a lo largo de varias millas por el Río Grande—, tras surgir una preocupación generalizada de que las inundaciones pudieran arrastrar el alambre río abajo. El grupo, compuesto mayoritariamente por residentes de Terlingua, se movilizó a raíz de un reciente recordatorio de la Comisión Internacional de Límites y Aguas (CILA por sus siglas en inglés) sobre los riesgos de inundación, emitido antes del inicio previsto de la temporada de monzones.

El alambre de concertina —también conocido como alambre de púas o de cuchillas— ha sido instalado a lo largo de 100 millas de la orilla del río en Texas en nombre de la seguridad fronteriza. Su uso se ha visto envuelto en la polémica debido a su capacidad para causar lesiones graves. Su manipulación segura suele requerir guantes largos y trabajo en equipo para gestionar la alta tensión del material. Este alambre de cuchillas ha permanecido instalado a lo largo de casi 11 millas de la ribera del río en Presidio durante varios meses.

“Muchos habitantes de Terlingua están realmente molestos por esto. Aunque se encuentre río arriba, el alambre de concertina resulta verdaderamente aterrador tanto para los navegantes como para la vida silvestre”, afirmó Ashley Mahaney, quien se describe a sí misma como una entusiasta del río y residente de Terlingua. Ella participó en la elaboración de las creativas pancartas que portaban muchos de los manifestantes, las cuales representaban a la fauna local enredada en el alambre.

Crystal Albright, residente de Terlingua desde hace mucho tiempo y miembro del grupo “NoWall 79852”, relata que organizó la protesta con rapidez tras ver un aviso público de la CILA en la edición del 23 de abril del “*Big Bend Sentinel*”. Dicho aviso advertía que el río era propenso a sufrir inundaciones e instruí, además, a los propietarios de ter-

renos, al público en general y a los “usuarios del terreno” a ponerse en contacto con la CILA antes de realizar cualquier uso o mejora en los terrenos situados a lo largo del río, con el fin de proteger tanto la vida como la propiedad.

Este aviso rutinario llega en un momento delicado, dado que Presidio se enfrenta a la posible construcción de un muro fronterizo a lo largo del río. La ciudad no ha recibido ninguna orientación, ni por parte del Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército ni de la CILA, sobre qué medidas de protección —si es que se implementará alguna— se pondrían en marcha para mitigar el impacto de las inundaciones provocado por el muro. John Kennedy, del Distrito de Desarrollo Municipal de Presidio, está gestionando la elaboración de un informe sobre el impacto de las inundaciones para la ciudad, ante la ausencia de directrices por parte de las autoridades federales. Albright envió —y entregó personalmente— una carta a la Oficina de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza (CBP por sus siglas en inglés) y a la CILA, en la que detallaba sus inquietudes respecto a que los postes en forma de T utilizados para instalar el alambre pudieran ceder y desprenderse a causa de las aguas de las inundaciones, generando así un riesgo río abajo. La carta fue firmada conjuntamente por Charlie Angell, de Angell Expeditions, y Joselyn Fenstermacher, de la Big Bend Citizens Alliance.

La CILA remitió las consultas a la CBP, la cual emitió un comunicado en el que afirmaba que “están comprometidos a cumplir con los requisitos establecidos en la Orden Ejecutiva 14165, “Asegurando nuestras fronteras” (*Securing Our Borders*), y que instalarán infraestructura para asegurar la frontera dondequiera que se considere operativamente necesario. Esto incluye alambre de concertina en ciertas áreas a lo largo del Río Grande, donde este se encuentra debidamente asegurado para resistir las inundaciones estacionales y otros fenómenos naturales”.

Tan recientemente como en 2024, la Corte Suprema dictaminó que los agentes de la Patrulla Fronteriza podían retirar el alambre de concertina que obstruyera el Río Grande, en respuesta a una demanda presentada por el Fiscal General de Texas, Ken Paxton.

Un hombre alquila espacios para autocaravanas a contratistas de muros

Activistas expresan decepción y enojo ante la colaboración

Por ROB D’AMICO

Presidio
Esta semana salió a la luz el primer caso confirmado de un terrateniente del condado de Presidio que colabora con los contratistas del muro fronterizo, después de que recientemente se avistaran más de 20 remolques de la empresa Fisher Sand & Gravel en el parque de caravanas Loma Paloma, propiedad del residente de Presidio, Terry Bishop. Estos avistamientos no fueron bien recibidos por los activistas contrarios al muro fronterizo, quienes desde hace mucho tiempo han considerado a Bishop como un amigo y han hecho un llamado para que nadie colabore ni haga negocios con los contratistas.

Fisher Sand & Gravel posee la subvención de 1.200 millones de dólares del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional para la construcción del muro fronterizo, abarcando desde el parque estatal río arriba hasta Candelaria; sin embargo, no está claro qué papel desempeñan en el proyecto los inquilinos del parque de caravanas.

Charlie Angell, activista contra el muro y terrateniente de Redford, no tardó en recriminar a Bishop por ayudar a facilitar la construcción del muro, y expresó su preocupación de que otras personas puedan seguir el desafortunado ejemplo de Bishop. La gente podría decir: “Bueno, a la mierda. Si Terry puede hacerlo, yo también puedo”, comentó Angell. “Así es como funcionan las cosas. Es la naturaleza humana”. Angell señaló que el año pasado unos contratistas se le acercaron para alquilarle su terreno en la carretera West Highway 170 por 10.000 dólares al mes, esto ocurrió antes de que se informara sobre el proyecto del muro en el otoño. Volvieron a contactarlo posteriormente, pero él rechazó su oferta.

Bishop es uno de los miembros más destacados de diversas comunidades en Presidio. Es propietario de una granja al este del pueblo y de un terreno donde trabajó incansablemente para crear un humedal para aves utilizando aguas residuales tratadas. También es miembro de la junta directiva de la Comisión Histórica del Condado de Presidio, y en su terreno se encuentra un proyecto en el que ha participado durante años: un marcador histórico que conmemora “La Junta”, el punto donde confluyen el río Conchos y el río Grande. Anteriormente



Remolques con los emblemas de Fisher Sand & Gravel se alinean en el parque de caravanas Loma Paloma, al este de Presidio.

formó parte del Distrito de Desarrollo Municipal de Presidio y, a lo largo de los años, ha participado en numerosos proyectos cívicos y medioambientales.

Contactado por teléfono el sábado, Bishop declaró que su parque de caravanas ha alojado desde hace mucho tiempo a diversas cuadrillas de construcción que trabajan, por ejemplo, en los puentes de River Road y en los diques que rodean Presidio. Afirmó que no ve ninguna diferencia entre permitir esa actividad en su negocio y cualquier otra relacionada con el muro fronterizo. “No estoy haciendo esa distinción. No la estoy haciendo”, dijo.

“Tampoco estoy diciendo que apoye la construcción de un muro. No lo quiero aquí abajo, en mi granja, pero lo voy a tener. No hay nada que pueda hacer al respecto”.

Bishop ha asistido a reuniones de propietarios de tierras diseñadas para ayudarles a gestionar las solicitudes del Servicio de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza y del Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército, entidades que envían cartas y organizan reuniones para acceder a sus terrenos con fines de topografía y, posiblemente, para futuros arrendamientos, compras o —en caso de no llegar a un acuerdo— la expropiación de sus tierras mediante el dominio eminente.

No se sabe con certeza qué acuerdo se ha pactado con la empresa Fisher Sand & Gravel; sin embargo, según las tarifas publicadas en el sitio web de Loma Paloma, a 20 remolques se les cobraría una suma aproximada de 5.500 dólares al mes.

Angell también envió un correo electrónico encendido a los coordinadores de la coalición

“No Big Bend Wall” y a los miembros de la junta directiva de “Friends of the Ruidosa Church” —un grupo de preservación que trabaja en la restauración de una histórica iglesia de adobe situada en la frontera—, pidiéndoles que se pusieran en contacto con Bishop y le solicitaran que cambiara de opinión respecto a colaborar con los contratistas. Bishop formaba parte de la junta directiva de la organización sin fines de lucro “Friends of the Ruidosa Church”, pero presentó su renuncia el domingo.

“Friends of the Church” figura como demandante en una querrela judicial contra la construcción del muro, interpuesta el mes pasado por el Centro para la Diversidad Biológica. A “Friends of the Ruidosa Church” le preocupa que las vibraciones generadas por la maquinaria pesada y los camiones que transitan por Ruidosa —o incluso una colisión directa con la iglesia, la cual se encuentra situada en una curva cerrada de la carretera— puedan causar daños a la estructura del templo.

“Como organización sin fines de lucro que ha demandado al gobierno para detener la construcción del muro, me resulta inconcebible que Terry Bishop siga gozando de su beneplácito y mantenga vínculos con su organización”, expresó Angell en su correo electrónico del sábado, antes de que Bishop presentara su renuncia.

Mike Green, presidente de la junta directiva de “Friends of the Ruidosa Church”, se mostró sorprendido al enterarse del alquiler de los vehículos recreativos (RV) cuando fue contactado telefónicamente el sábado. “Lo único que puedo decir en este momento

es que me siento profundamente decepcionado”, declaró.

Posteriormente, el correo electrónico de Angell dirigió sus críticas hacia la organización sin fines de lucro “No Big Bend Wall.” En su calidad de organización independiente sin fines de lucro, cuya misión consiste en detener la construcción del muro, ejercer presión sobre el Sr. Bishop para que revoque su decisión de alquilar los terrenos debería ser una tarea sumamente sencilla”, escribió. “Si su coalición y sus miembros individuales le exigen rendir cuentas, tienen buenas probabilidades de lograr que cambie. Como mínimo, debería dedicarse cierto esfuerzo a ello. De lo contrario, ¿cuál es su propósito?”

Clara Bensen, quien se desempeña como coordinadora de campaña en la organización No Big Bend Wall, afirmó que su coalición prefería emitir una declaración general en nombre de todos los propietarios de tierras. “Creemos que cada persona tiene un papel que desempeñar para mantener la línea de defensa y proteger a nuestra comunidad”, dijo Bensen. “La única manera de ganar es si permanecemos unidos”.

Angell añadió que confrontaría públicamente a Bishop si llegara a verlo. “Espero con ansias ese momento; será la última vez que le dirija la palabra, a menos que cambie su actitud”, dijo. “Por lo tanto, si los demás no adoptan esta misma postura, habrán fracasado como organizaciones y como líderes. Aquí no caben las medias tintas ni las actitudes pusilánimes. Terry se embolsa miles de dólares al mes y, aun así, intenta encajar en la comunidad mientras activamente nos jode”.



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CLASSIFIEDS AND PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Mixed Beverage permit by El Paisano Beverage LLC d/b/a The Hotel Paisano, to be located at 207 N Highland Ave, Marfa, Presidio County, 79843. The Manager of said company is Railroad Dreamers LLC. The Managers of Railroad Dreamers LLC are Harrison King, Buck Buczkowski, and Lauren Werner King.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PROCUREMENT OF ENGINEERING RFQ #26-02 FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS HB500 – TWDB WATER SUPPLY AND INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS (WSIG) Presidio County is requesting Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) from qualified engineering firms to provide professional engineering services for water infrastructure projects to be funded through the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Water Supply and Infrastructure Grants (WSIG) program authorized under House Bill 500 (HB500).

The County is seeking engineering services to assist with the planning, design, and construction of water system improvements, including water supply, treatment, storage, and distribution infrastructure. Experience with Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) funded projects or similar state or federally funded water infrastructure programs will be evaluated based on the firm's demonstrated knowledge of applicable funding requirements, regulatory compliance, reporting procedures, and successful project delivery. This is a qualifications-based procurement in accordance with Texas Government Code Chapter 2254. No pricing or cost information shall be submitted. Interested firms may obtain a copy of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) by contacting the Presidio County Auditor to countyauditor@co.presidio.tx.us, or submit 5 copies to: Presidio County Auditor Attn: Alicia V Sanchez P.O.BOX 423 Marfa, TX 79843 Proposals shall be received by the County no later than 4:00 pm on

05/21/2026. The County reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit proposals, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, Veteran Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit proposals. Presidio County is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – SUNSHINE HOUSE, INC. (ALPINE, TX) Sunshine House, Inc. is seeking a dynamic Executive Director to lead our senior center and Meals on Wheels program. This position focuses on fundraising, community engagement, and strategic leadership. Full job description available at SunshineHouseAlpine.com. Submit resume and cover letter to Board President Katy Williams at kfw22yh@gmail.com.

Far Out West
.. PROPERTIES ..
CLEAT L. STEPHENS, BROKER
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CITY OF MARFA FREE SCRAP TIRE RECYCLING
May 2 – May 16, 2026 • 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
LOCATION
Marfa Recycling Center
43520 Golf Course Rd, Marfa, Texas 79843
ACCEPTED MATERIAL
Passenger & Light Truck Tires • (Tires only – no wheels or rims)
RESTRICTIONS
No drop-offs from commercial businesses
This free event is for residents only – help keep Marfa clean!

Be a part of
BIG BEND
Sentinel
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.

Property Tax Protest and Appeal Procedures

Property owners have the right to protest actions concerning their property tax appraisals. You may follow these appeal procedures if you have a concern about:

- your property’s appraised (market) value
- the unequal value of your property compared with other properties;
- your property’s inclusion on the appraisal records;
- any exemptions that may apply to you;
- qualification for an agricultural or timber appraisal;
- the taxing units taxing your property;
- the property’s ownership;
- the change of use of land receiving special appraisal;
- failure of the chief appraiser or appraisal review board (ARB) to send a required notice;
- the denial, modification or cancellation of the circuit breaker limitation on appraised value;
- the determination of incorrect appraised value and allocation of value of a structure, archaeological site and land necessary for access under a historic site exemption; or
- any action taken by the appraisal district or ARB that applies to and adversely affects you.

Informal Review
(Insert description of appraisal district’s informal review process and give name and telephone number of person taxpayer should contact.)

PRESIDIO COUNTY APPRAISAL DIST.
P O BOX 879
MARFA, TEXAS 79843
(432)729-3431/(432)229-3963

Review by the ARB
If you cannot resolve your problem informally with the appraisal district, you have the right to have your case heard by the ARB.

The ARB is an independent board of citizens that hears and determines protests regarding property appraisals or other concerns listed above. It has the power to order the appraisal district to make the necessary changes based on evidence heard during the ARB hearing.

If you file a written request for an ARB hearing (notice of protest) before the deadline, the ARB will set your case for a hearing and send you written notice of the hearing’s time, date, place and subject. If necessary, you may request an evening of Saturday hearing. You may use Comptroller Form 50-132, *Property Appraisal - Notice of Protest*, to file your written request for an ARB hearing.

Prior to your hearing, you may request a copy of the evidence the appraisal district plans to introduce at the hearing to establish any matter at issue. Before a protest hearing or immediately after the hearing begins, you or your authorized representative and the appraisal district are required to provide each other with a copy of any materials (evidence) intended to be offered or submitted to the ARB at the hearing. You may submit evidence for any hearing type either in paper or on a small portable electronic device (such as a CD, USB flash drive or thumb drive) which the ARB will keep. Do NOT bring evidence on a smart phone. Review the ARB’s hearing procedures regarding all the requirements to properly submit evidence on a small portable electronic device.

To the greatest extent practicable, the hearing will be informal. You or your authorized representative may appear in person, by telephone conference or videoconference call or by submitting a written affidavit to present your evidence, facts and argument. You must indicate the type of hearing you request on your written notice. You must file the notice with the ARB not later than the fifth day before the hearing date

Deadline for Filing Protests with the ARB*

Usual Deadline
Not later than May 15 (or within 30 days after the appraisal district mailed a notice of appraised value to you, whichever is later).

Late protests are allowed for good cause if you miss the usual deadline. The ARB decides whether you have good cause. Late protests are not allowed after the ARB approves the appraisal records for the year.

Special Deadlines
For change of use (the appraisal district informed you that you are losing agricultural appraisal because you changed the use of your land), the deadline is not later than the 30th day after the notice of the determination was delivered to you.

If you have not designated an agent under Tax Code Section 1.111, or 10 days before the hearing date if you have designated an agent under Tax Code Section 1.111 to represent you at the hearing. You must provide your evidence and written affidavit before the hearing begins. You may use Comptroller Form 50-283, *Property Owner’s Affidavit of Evidence to the Appraisal Review Board*, to submit evidence for your telephone or video conference call hearing or for hearing by affidavit.

You and the appraisal district representative have the opportunity to present evidence about your case. In most cases, the appraisal district has the burden of establishing the property’s value by a preponderance of the evidence presented.

In certain protests, the chief appraiser has the burden of proving the property’s value by clear and convincing evidence. You should review ARB hearing procedures to learn more about evidence and related matters.

You should not try to contact ARB members outside of the hearing. ARB members are required to sign an affidavit saying that they have not talked about your case before the ARB hears it.

If you believe that the ARB or chief appraiser failed to comply with an ARB procedural requirement, you may file a complaint with the local taxpayer liaison officer. If the ARB or chief appraiser do not resolve it, you can request limited binding arbitration to compel the ARB or the chief appraiser to comply.

Review by the District Court, an Arbitrator or SOAH
After it decides your case, the ARB must send you a copy of its order by certified mail. If you are not satisfied with the ARB’s decision, you have the right to appeal to district court. As an alternative to district court, you may appeal through regular binding arbitration or the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) if you meet the qualifying criteria.

If you choose to go to district court, you must start the process by filing a petition with the district court within 60 days of the date you receive the ARB’s order. If you choose to appeal through regular binding arbitration, you must file a request for regular binding arbitration not later than the 60th day after you receive notice of the ARB order. Additional information on how to appeal through regular binding arbitration will be included with the ARB’s order of determination. If you choose to appeal to SOAH, you must file an appeal with the appraisal district not later than the 30th day after you receive notice of the ARB’s order. Appeals to district court, regular binding arbitration or SOAH all require payment of certain fees or deposits.

Tax Payment
You must pay the amount of taxes due on the portion of the taxable value not in dispute, the amount of taxes due on the property under the order from which the appeal is taken or the amount of taxes due in the previous year.

More Information
You can get more information by contacting your appraisal district at (insert appraisal district name, address, telephone number).

PRESIDIO COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
P O BOX 879
MARFA, TEXAS 79843
(432)729-3431/(432)229-3963

You can get Comptroller forms and additional information on how to prepare a protest from the Comptroller’s website at: comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.

For ARB changes (the ARB has informed you of a change that increases your tax liability and the change did not result from a protest you filed), the deadline is not later than the 30th day after the notice of the change was delivered to you.

(You may insert deadline for protests concerning omitted property if doing so would avoid taxpayer confusion.)

JUNE 10, 2026

If you believe the appraisal district or ARB should have sent you a notice and did not, you may file a protest until the day before taxes become delinquent (usually Feb. 1) or no later than the 125th day after the date you claim you received a tax bill from one or more of the taxing units that tax your property. The ARB decides whether it will hear your case based on evidence about whether a required notice was mailed to you.

* The deadline is postponed to the next business day if it falls on a weekend or legal, state or national holiday.



JENNIFER PITTINGER— SENTINEL

Congressional candidate Brandon Herrera greets a crowd at a forum on the border wall Thursday in Alpine.

Congressional candidate hosts border wall forum

By JENNIFER PITTINGER

Alpine River enthusiasts and locals came out in force for a border wall forum in Alpine last Thursday—an event with a decidedly non-partisan atmosphere. The forum was hosted by Brandon Herrera, the Republican candidate for U.S. House District 23, which covers much of the Big Bend, but many Democrats were in attendance. “Tonight’s forum was an opportunity to hear directly from those impacted by this wall,” Herrera said. “I remain committed to seeking solutions that keep our border secure while protecting Big Bend. Most importantly, I want the people in this district to know their concerns matter to me and I am listening.”

Several panelists spoke in support of a tech-only invisible wall. One panelist suggested beefing up the Texas State Guard to incorporate mobile and foot patrols along the Texas and Mexico border. Many river outfitters in attendance expressed concern about the miles of concertina wire lining the Rio Grande on either side of the International Port of Entry in Presidio. With the monsoon season looming, they sounded an alarm, worried about the river and their livelihoods. South County resident Joan Escamillia said she hasn’t missed a border wall community meeting yet. “I have no children, and I have nothing to lose,” she said of her advocacy against a wall. “I am not going down without a fight.”



JENNIFER PITTINGER— SENTINEL

Writer Ben English of Alpine greets former Texas Republican Party Chair Allen West at the forum.

Procedimientos para la protesta y apelación de los impuestos de propiedad

Los propietarios tienen el derecho a protestar las acciones acerca de sus tasaciones de impuesto de propiedad. Puede seguir estos procedimientos de apelación si tiene alguna inquietud acerca de:

- el valor de tasación (mercado) de su propiedad;
- el valor desigual de su propiedad en comparación con otras propiedades;
- la inclusión de su propiedad en los registros de tasación;
- cualquier exención que se puede aplicar a usted;
- calificación para una evaluación agrícola o maderera;
- las unidades de impuestos que están gravando su propiedad;
- la titularidad de la propiedad;
- el cambio de uso del terreno recibiendo una tasación especial;
- la falla del jefe de tasaciones o de la junta de revisión de tasaciones (ARB por sus siglas en inglés) para enviar una notificación requerida;
- la denegación, modificación o cancelación de la limitación del disyuntor sobre el valor de tasación;
- el valor de tasación y distribución de valor incorrecto de una estructura, sitio arqueológico y terreno necesario para el acceso bajo una exención de sitio histórico; o
- cualquier acción tomada por el distrito de tasación o ARB que se aplique y lo afecte negativamente.

Revisión Informal
(Inserte descripción del proceso de revisión informal del distrito de tasación y dar el nombre y número de teléfono de la persona que el contribuyente debe contactar.)

PRESIDIO COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
P O BOX 879
MARFA, TEXAS 79843
(432)729-3431/(432)229-3963
INFO@PRESIDIOCAD.ORG

Revisión por el ARB
Si no puede resolver su problema de manera informal con el distrito de tasación, tiene derecho a que su caso sea escuchado por el ARB. El ARB es una junta independiente de ciudadanos que escucha y determina las protestas sobre las tasaciones de propiedad y otras inquietudes listadas arriba. Tiene el poder de ordenar al distrito de tasación que realice los cambios necesarios basados en la evidencia escuchada durante la audiencia de la ARB. Si presenta una solicitud por escrito para una audiencia de ARB (aviso de protesta) antes de la fecha de límite, el ARB establecerá su caso para una audiencia y le enviará un aviso por escrito de la hora, fecha, lugar y tema de la audiencia. Si es necesario, puede solicitar una audiencia por la tarde o un sábado. Usted puede usar el formulario del Contralor 50-132, *Property Appraisal - Notice of Protest*, para presentar su solicitud por escrito para una audiencia de ARB. Antes de su audiencia, puede solicitar una copia de la evidencia que el distrito de tasación planea presentar en la audiencia para establecer cualquier asunto en cuestión. Antes de una audiencia sobre una protesta o inmediatamente después de que comience la audiencia, usted o su representante autorizado y el distrito de tasación deben proporcionarse mutuamente una copia de cualquier material (evidencia) destinado a ser ofrecido o presentado a la ARB en la audiencia. La evidencia se puede presentar para cualquier tipo de audiencia ya sea en papel o en un pequeño dispositivo electrónico portátil (sea un CD o memoria USB) que será guardado por el ARB. No traiga la evidencia en un teléfono. Revise los procedimientos de audiencia del ARB con respeto a todos los requisitos para presentar adecuadamente evidencia sobre un pequeño dispositivo electrónico portátil. En la mayor medida posible, la audiencia será informal. Usted o su agente designado pueden aparecer en persona, por conferencia telefónica o videoconferencia o mediante la presentación de una declaración jurada por escrito para presentar su evidencia, hechos y argumentos. Debe presentar el aviso ante la ARB a más tardar el quinto día antes de la fecha de la audiencia si no ha designado un

agente según la Sección 1.111 del Código Tributario, o 10 días antes de la fecha de la audiencia si ha designado un agente según la Sección 1.111 del Código Tributario para representarlo en la audiencia. Debe proporcionar su evidencia y declaración jurada por escrito antes de que comience la audiencia. Puede usar el Formulario 50-283 del Contralor, *Property Owner’s Affidavit of Evidence to the Appraisal Review Board*, para presentar evidencia para su audiencia por teléfono o videoconferencia o para una audiencia por declaración jurada. Usted y el representante del distrito de tasación tienen la oportunidad de presentar evidencia sobre su caso. En la mayoría de los casos, el distrito de tasación tiene la carga de establecer el valor de la propiedad por preponderancia de la evidencia presentada. En ciertas protestas, el jefe de tasaciones tiene la carga de probar el valor de la propiedad por evidencia clara y convincente. Usted debe revisar los procedimientos de audiencia de ARB para aprender más sobre la evidencia y asuntos relacionados. No debe tratar de contactar a los miembros del ARB fuera de la audiencia. Los miembros del ARB están obligados a firmar una declaración jurada diciendo que no han hablado de su caso antes de que el ARB lo oiga. Si cree que el ARB o el tasador principal no cumplió con un requisito de procedimiento de el ARB, puede presentar una queja ante el oficial de enlace con el contribuyente local. Si el ARB o el jefe de tasación no lo resuelven, puede solicitar un arbitraje vinculante limitado para obligar a el ARB o el jefe de tasación a cumplir. **Revisión por Corte del Distrito, Árbitro o SOAH** Después de decidir su caso, el ARB debe enviarle una copia de su orden por correo certificado. Si no está satisfecho con la decisión del ARB, tiene el derecho a apelar ante la corte de distrito. Como alternativa al tribunal de distrito, puede apelar a través de un arbitraje vinculante regular o de la Oficina Estatal de Audiencias Administrativas (SOAH, por sus siglas en inglés) si cumple con los criterios de calificación. Si decide ir a la corte de distrito, debe iniciar el proceso presentando una petición ante la corte de distrito dentro de los 60 días siguiendo la fecha en que reciba la orden del ARB. Si opta por apelar a través de un arbitraje vinculante regular, debe presentar una solicitud de arbitraje vinculante regular antes del 60 día después de recibir la notificación de la orden de la ARB. Se incluirá información adicional sobre cómo apelar a través de un arbitraje vinculante regular con la orden de determinación de la ARB. Si opta por apelar ante SOAH, debe presentar una apelación ante el distrito de tasación antes de 30 días después de recibir la notificación de la orden de la ARB. Las apelaciones ante el tribunal de distrito, el arbitraje vinculante regular o la SOAH requieren el pago de ciertas tarifas o depósitos. **El Pago de los Impuestos** Usted debe pagar la cantidad de impuestos debido por la parte del valor imponible no disputado, la cantidad de impuestos debido sobre la propiedad bajo la orden de que se han adoptado la apelación o la cantidad de impuestos debido en el año anterior.

Información Adicional
Puede obtener más información comunicándose con su distrito de tasación al (inserte el nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del distrito de tasación).

PRESIDIO COUNTY APPRAISAL DIST.
P O BOX 879
MARFA, TEXAS 79843
(432)729-3431/(432)229-3963

Puede obtener formularios del Contralor e información adicional sobre cómo preparar una protesta en el sitio web del Contralor en comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.

Fecha de vencimiento para presentar protestas al ARB*

Fecha de Vencimiento Común
No puede ser más tarde del 15 de mayo (o dentro de 30 días después de que el distrito de tasación envió por correo un aviso del valor de tasación a usted, cualquier es más tarde). Las protestas tardes son permitidas si usted falla de cumplir la fecha de vencimiento común por causa justa. El ARB decide si usted tiene una buena causa. Las protestas tardes no son permitidas después de que el ARB apruebe las evaluaciones de tasación por el año. **Fechas de Vencimiento Especiales** Para el cambio de uso (el distrito de tasación le informó que está cambiando la tasación agrícola porque cambió el uso de su propiedad), la fecha no es más tarde que el trigésimo día después de que el aviso de la determinación fue entregado a usted.

Para los cambios de ARB (el ARB le ha informado de un cambio que aumenta su obligación de impuestos y el cambio no resultó de una protesta que usted presentó), la fecha no es más tarde que el trigésimo día después de que el aviso del cambio fue entregado a usted. (Puede insertar una fecha límite para las protestas relacionadas con propiedad omitida si hacerlo evitaría la confusión de los contribuyentes.)

JUNE 10, 2026

Si cree que el distrito de tasación o ARB le deberían haber enviado un aviso y no lo hicieron, puede presentar una protesta hasta el día antes de que los impuestos se vuelvan delinquentes (usualmente el 1ero de febrero) o no más tarde del 125º día después de la fecha en que usted afirma que recibió una factura de impuestos de una o más entidades que gravan su propiedad. El ARB decide si escuchan su caso basado en la evidencia sobre si un aviso requerido fue enviado a usted.

* La fecha de límite se pospone al siguiente día laborable si cae en un fin de semana o día de festivo legal, estatal o nacional.

Juarez withdraws from commissioner runoff

Presidio

Fernando Juarez, who was in a May 26 runoff with Jesus “Junie” Herrera for Precinct 2 Presidio County Commissioner, has withdrawn from the race after discovering it is prohibited by law for a federal law enforcement employee to run for a partisan office. Juarez said that when first ran for the seat in the Democratic primary he was not employed by the federal government. A retired Border Patrol officer, he went back to work with the Homeland Security Investigations and didn’t realize that the U.S. Hatch Act does not allow federal officers to run in partisan races, including for Commissioners Court. Anyone can file a complaint with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel for violations of the act. Typically, the office will go to the employee and give them the choice of withdrawing from races or being terminated.

Herrera had defeated Juarez in the March primary 211-167, but since neither candidate achieved more than 50% of the votes (with incumbent Margarito Hernandez also in the race), the two were set for a runoff. Juarez, who serves on the Presidio City Council, is married to the new Presidio County Democratic Party chair, Irma Juarez.

Since ballots have already been printed and mail-in ballots may have gone out to those requesting them, it’s unclear what the ramifications will be for the actual election process. *Big Bend Sentinel* reached out to local election officials but did not immediately get a response to a request for comments.

Contacted by phone on Tuesday, Herrera had not “officially” received word that Juarez withdrew, so he said he would continue on with his campaign until hearing what may happen next.

Flood could send wire down river

Continued from page 1

signed by Charlie Angell of Angell Expeditions, and Joselyn Fenstermacher of the Big Bend Citizens Alliance.

The IBWC referred questions to CBP, which sent a statement that “[ADD: they are “committed to fulfilling the requirements laid out in the “Securing Our Borders” Executive Order 14165 and will place infrastructure to secure the border wherever it is deemed operationally necessary. This includes concertina wire in certain areas along the Rio Grande, where it is appropriately secured to withstand seasonal flooding and other natural events.”

As recently as 2024, the Supreme Court ruled that Border Patrol agents could remove concertina wire that impeded the Rio Grande in response to a lawsuit brought by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton.

Centennial celebration set for Sentinel

Get ready to celebrate a century of independent local news at the *Big Bend Sentinel Centennial*, a week-end of music, art, conversation, and parties—Friday, June 19, 2026, through Sunday, June 21, 2026.

The peak event is a Centennial Concert on Saturday, June 20, at 8 p.m. in Marfa, with musical legend Jimmie Dale Gilmore and friends. Venue and ticket information coming soon.

We’re planning for Saturday a Stop-the-wall-art sale at the Sentinel Cafe. Posters, books and merch from *Sentinel* and wall groups. If you’re interested in participating, send an email to publisher@bigbendsentinel.com

Sign up at bigbendsentinel.com/centennial to get updates as soon as we have them!



Jimmie Dale Gilmore



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CAPITOL HIGHLIGHTS

High gas prices eating into Texans’ budgets

The average price for a gallon of gasoline in Texas has risen from \$2.55 in early February to \$3.91 as of Sunday, according to AAA. Diesel prices hover around \$5 a gallon. The average Texan now spends \$233 a month on gasoline, according to a study reported in The Texas Tribune.

“It’s all crazy,” Victor Cortez, a 40-year-old Austin construction worker, said while filling up his pickup truck. “It depends on the day; some days I’m moving to three or four buildings and spending 100 bucks a day.”

The steep climb in prices comes as a result of the war with Iran, which began in February. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of the world’s oil passes, has caused a sharp increase in oil prices. The price of a barrel of Brent crude, the world benchmark, was \$114 on Sunday, up from about \$70 a barrel before the war began.

The rise in diesel prices, which averaged \$3.30 a gallon in early February, is affecting everything from shipping costs to farming operations. About half the truckers in Texas are independent operators who buy diesel at gas stations and truck stops and don’t receive the discount that large companies with their own trucking yards get for buying in bulk.

Camp Mystic will not reopen this summer

Camp Mystic announced last week that it had withdrawn its application for a camp license for this summer, according to the *Austin American-Statesman*. The decision followed a week of hearings before a joint Senate-House committee, which heard testimony from the loved ones of last summer’s flood victims. The July 4 flooding along the Gua-

dalupe River killed 25 children, two counselors and the camp’s longtime owner, Richard “Dick” Eastland.

“No administrative process or summer season should move forward while families continue to grieve, while investigations continue, and while so many Texans still carry the pain of last July’s tragedy,” the camp wrote in a statement.

The Texas Department of State Health Services, which is responsible for issuing camp licenses, conducted investigations. The camp has been planning to reopen its Cypress Lake campus, which was not damaged by the flash floods. More than 850 children have already registered to attend that camp.

Camp Mystic said it would continue to “fully cooperate with all ongoing investigations.”

Talarico leads Cornyn, Paxton in latest polls

A poll shows Democrat James Talarico leading both the Republicans who are locked in a fierce runoff to determine who will face him in November, the Houston Chronicle reported. Talarico led U.S. Sen. John Cornyn 40% to 33%, according to the University of Texas at Austin Politics Project survey. He holds a 42% to 34% advantage over Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. In both scenarios, 19% of voters said they were still undecided.

“While the Democratic candidate leading two established Republicans in these matchups is sure to raise some eyebrows,” the pollsters wrote, the results “reveal a Republican electorate still registering the effects of the months-long, bruising, negative campaigning by Paxton and Cornyn, and the GOP divisions the race has exacerbated.”

Paxton and Cornyn face each other in a May 26 runoff because

neither secured a majority in the March primary. Early voting runs from May 18 to May 22. Voters who cast ballots in the Democratic primary cannot vote in the GOP runoff. Only voters who participated in the GOP primary or did not vote at all can vote in the GOP runoff.

\$56 million in fed funding for rural healthcare

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission is making \$56 million in federal funding available to rural health care providers. The “Infrastructure and Capital Investments for Rural Texas” initiative will support modernization of rural health care delivery by funding new equipment and minor facility renovations.

Health care providers can use the funds to “update lab, CT scan, ultrasound, or mammography equipment; stretchers, wheelchairs, patient beds, telemetry units, nurse call systems, generators, defibrillators, crash carts, medication dispensing units, sleep labs, vital sign monitors, oxygen tanks and other allowable equipment,” according to the HHSC news release.

The state is expected to receive about \$1.4 billion in federal funding over the next five years through the program supporting rural health care.

Patrick aims to close loophole for prediction markets

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has directed state senators to explore ways to close gambling loopholes that allow online prediction markets to operate in Texas, according to *The Texas Tribune*. He is concerned that state elections and sporting events could be manipulated for profit.

Prediction markets allow users to bet on outcomes of everything from sporting events to election winners, and even the weather. The Trump administration has blocked attempts by other states to regulate the prediction markets, such as Kalshi, claiming oversight belongs to federal agencies, not the states.

“We are regulated at the federal level, but of course, given now the popularity of prediction markets, we are doing a lot of educating on the state level,” said Sara Slane of Kalshi. “That’s the dialogue that we’ll envision having, certainly, in the state of Texas.”

While 39 state attorneys general signed on to a legal brief arguing the Commodity Futures Trading Commission doesn’t have sole authority to regulate the prediction markets, Paxton declined to do so.

Texas cities dominate another ‘best’ list

Several Texas cities dominated the top spots in Livability’s new ranking of the most affordable, desirable cities to live in the U.S., according to the *Austin American-Statesman*. The list includes only cities with populations between 75,000 and 500,000 and median home values of \$500,000 or less.

Factors considered included economy and housing; amenities and environment; safety, health and education; and transportation.

Texas cities in the top 10 were Sugar Land at No. 3; Plano at No. 5; Round Rock at No. 9; and New Braunfels at No. 10.

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



IRAM MARQUEZ

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BIG BEND

Sentinel

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

AROUND THE BIG BEND

Thursday May 7

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

Meditation Classes
6:00pm, free and open to all
Marfa Public Library
Community Room
Marfa, TX

Miles of Stars
9:00pm-10:00pm
Davis Mountains State Park
Park Rd 3
Fort Davis, TX

Friday May 8

Master Naturalist Hike
9:00am-11:00am
Davis Mountains State Park
Park Rd 3
Fort Davis, TX



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

Live Music: Tom Andes
6:30pm-9:30pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

Saturday May 9

Spring Blooms Nature Walk
9:00am-11:00am
Davis Mountains State Park
Park Rd 3
Fort Davis, TX

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

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

Night Hike at the Hoodoos
9:00pm-10:00pm
Big Bend Ranch State Park
Terlingua, TX

Sunday May 10

Morning Bird Walk
9:00am-11:00am
Davis Mountains State Park
Park Rd 3
Fort Davis, TX



Open Mic Night: Music
5:00pm-8:00pm
Alcove Social, 211 E Holland Ave
Alpine, TX

Tuesday May 12

Too-Early Tuesdays Sunrise Hiking at CDRI
8:00am, \$6.50
Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center & Botanical Gardens
43869 State Highway 118
Fort Davis, TX

Nature’s Classroom - Home School Program
10:00am-3:00pm
Davis Mountains State Park
Fort Davis, TX

Meditation Classes
6:00pm, free and open to all
Marfa Public Library
Community Room
Marfa, TX

CROSSWORD

Three of a Kind
By Sala Wanetick

5/7

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20					21					22				
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48					49			50			51		52	53
					54					55				
57	58	59						60				61		
62								63				64		
65								66				67		

Edited by Taylor Johnson

ACROSS

1 Gentle throw
5 Canned meat with a gochujang flavor
9 Sectionals, e.g.
14 Honolulu’s island
15 Marine apex predator
16 Grown-up
17 Stair
18 Indian flatbread
19 Areas
20 *Seller of Gruyere or Camembert
23 Houston
24 MLB player
25 Select from a menu
25 (This is a library!)
28 Sombreros, e.g.
30 Messenger molecule
31 “Look Who’s Talking” (1990 movie sequel)
32 Emmy winner
35 Gordon-Levitt
35 “Unhappy circus performer”
37 “The Kite Runner” protagonist
38 Old enough
40 Luyendyk Jr. (2018 Bachelor)
41 *Left-leaning person, typically
43 Wine and dine, for example?

45 Freudian concept
46 Slithery fish
47 Aspiring atty.’s exam
48 “SNL” alum
49 Rodeo rope
51 Standards
55 Performance group starring a bald trio ... or what you might call the trio of answers to the starred clues?

57 Warm winter drink
60 “SNL” alum
61 Fey
61 Currency in France
62 Garden shelter
63 Three, in Tijuana
64 Christmas tree topper
65 Exams
66 Gumbo vegetable
67 Prefix for “health” or “novela”

8 Broadway in Nashville, e.g.
9 New Orleans cocktail
10 Bad smell
11 “Exciting!”
12 Draft option
13 GPS screen lines
21 Dove product
22 What F, M and X can represent
25 Hurricane or tornado
26 Backstreet Boys member
27 Dorrough
27 Fine-tunes
29 “Walden” writer Henry David
32 Bored of it all
33 Last Greek letter
34 Says (kids’ game)
35 Used a bench
36 Settle once and for all

39 High vocal register
42 Places to store wine
44 Put up, as wall art
47 Temporary car
50 Sneaky grin
52 Path for a road trip
53 Big wall art, perhaps
54 Fern’s reproductive structure
55 Kick out
56 Org. that launched Artemis II on April Fools’ Day, 2026
57 “That Dam ...” (1965 film about a mischievous feline)
58 Mine lode
59 “The Price Is Right” network

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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

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SUDUKO

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

4/23

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	9			3	4			
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

SOLUTION:

4/16

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

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Officials join for flood assessment

Agencies have not responded to formal inquiries

The Presidio Municipal Development District (PMDD), in partnership with the City of Presidio, is moving forward with an independent flood risk and geomorphology assessment of the Presidio corridor.

“We’re taking direct action to protect the public safety of a community of approximately 4,000 people in the absence of any visible engineering or regulatory review by the federal agencies whose duty it is to perform that work, said PMDD Executive Director John Kennedy.

Kennedy is accepting bids and considering a few different approaches for proposals. He hopes to work with an organization that can have preliminary results to share with the city and the public within the next few weeks.

A more formal study would be expected later this year. The project is scoped to include hydraulic models of the Rio Grande and surrounding creeks at levels that mirror historical events like the 2008 flood. Kennedy hopes to use satellite imagery and other data to look at erosion over time and explore how the sediment shift would impact infrastructure.

“The City of Presidio is partnering with PMDD on this study because protecting the people who live here, on both sides of the river, is our job, and right now no one else is doing it,” said Presidio Mayor John Ferguson. “We have asked the federal agencies responsible for this levee for straight answers about what is being proposed, and we have not gotten them.”

The Presidio Valley Flood Con-



Much of Presidio and Ojinaga, Mexico, flooded in 2008.

trol Project—a 15.2-mile federally authorized civil works levee system owned and maintained by the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission—is the sole flood protection for the City of Presidio and roughly 52 square miles of urban and agricultural land at the confluence of the Rio Grande, the Rio Conchos, Cibolo Creek, and Alamito Creek. The system was overtopped in September 2008 at flows that exceeded its design capacity by approximately 26%. Reconstruction completed in 2014 restored structural integrity but did not increase the system’s design conveyance.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has now contracted Fisher Sand & Gravel for con- struction of a reinforced concrete border-barrier wall, with 30-foot steel bollards on top, on and adjacent to that levee. Kennedy said that to date, no federal agency has produced any publicly available hydrologic, hydraulic, geomor- phic or engineering analysis dem- onstrating that the proposed con- struction is safe, consistent with applicable federal civil-works re-

quirements or compliant with the bilateral treaty framework that governs the Rio Grande.

“The federal government is required to study and certify projects in this floodplain, and to review modifications to the Presi- dio Flood Control Project, before any such modifications proceed,” Kennedy said.

Kennedy said the independent assessment will analyze the hy- drology, geomorphology, and en- gineering implications of the pro- posed border-wall construction for the Presidio corridor. The work is modeled on an assess- ment framework developed for the downstream Webb-Zapata corridor by Dr. Mark R. Tomp- kins, Ph.D., P.E. (FlowWest), released in March 2026. A pre- liminary technical memorandum is targeted for release in the com- ing weeks, with a more detailed hydraulic and hydrologic study to follow.

Disclaimer: Kate Bubacz’s partner, a hydrologist by training, has been consulted by Kennedy on possible approaches for the study.

Activists worry others will follow Presidio man’s lead

Continued from page 1

of the Presidio County Historical Commission, and his land holds a project he has been involved with for years—a historical marker commemorating “La Junta,” where the Conchos River and Rio Grande join. He previously served on the Presidio Municipal Development District and has been involved in numerous environmental and civic projects through the years.

Contacted by phone on Saturday, Bishop said his RV park has long played host to various construction crews working, for example, on River Road bridges and the levees around Presidio. He said he doesn’t see a difference between allowing that with his business and anything related to the border wall. “I’m not making that distinction. I’m not,” he said. “I’m also not saying that I support a wall. I don’t want it down here on my farm, but I’m gonna get it. I can’t do anything about it.”

Bishop has attended land-owner meetings designed to help them navigate requests from the Customs and Border Protection and Army Corps of Engineers sending letters and arranging meetings to access their land for surveys and possible eventual leases, purchase, or if they don’t, a taking of their land with eminent domain.

It’s not certain what deal has been worked out with Fisher Sand & Gravel, but at rates posted on the Loma Paloma website, 20 trailers would be charged about \$5,500 a month.

Angell also sent a fiery email to the members of the No Big Bend Wall coalition coordinators and board members of the Friends of the Ruidosa Church—a preserva- tion group working to restore a historic adobe church on the border—asking them to reach out to Bishop and ask him to change his mind about collaborating with contractors. Bishop served on the board of the nonprofit Friends of the Ruidosa Church, but resigned on Sunday.

The Friends of the Church is a plaintiff in a lawsuit against wall construction launched by the

Center for Biological Diversity last month. The Friends of the Ruidosa Church is concerned that vibrations from heavy machinery and trucks going through Ruidosa—or an outright collision with the church, which sits on a tight bend in the highway—could damage the church.

“As a non-profit who is suing the government to stop a wall, it is mind-blowing to me that Terry Bishop is still in good graces and affiliated with your organization,” Angell said in his Saturday email, before Bishop resigned.

Friends of the Ruidosa Church Board President Mike Green was surprised to hear about the RV rentals when reached by phone Saturday. “All I can say right now is that I’m very disappointed,” he said.

Angell’s email then took aim at the nonprofit No Big Bend Wall. “As a separate non-profit, whose mission is to stop the wall, pressuring Mr. Bishop to reverse his decision to rent seems to be an easy chore,” he wrote. “If your coalition and individual members take him to task, you stand a good chance of getting him to change. If nothing else, some effort should be expended on this. Otherwise, what is your purpose?”

Clara Bensen, who serves as a campaign coordinator with the No Big Bend Wall, said their coalition preferred to make an overall statement for all landowners. “We believe that every person has a role to play with holding the line and protecting our community,” Bensen said. “The only way we win is if we stand together.”

Angell added that he would call Bishop out in public if he sees him. “I’m looking forward to that moment, and that’ll be the last time I ever speak to him unless he changes his way,” he said. “So, if everybody else doesn’t have this attitude, they are failures as organizations and leaders. There should be no awe shucks about this. Terry sucks in thousands of dollars a month and is still trying to fit in with the community while he f— us over actively.”

— ROB D’AMICO

3-2 vote kills substation

Continued from page 1

at the location that was proposed ... Please know that my vote was not cast in favor of one group over another, but rather was based on careful consideration of what I believe to be in the best long-term interest of the City of Marfa.”

AEP’s proposal involved purchasing an approximately four-acre lot at the corner of Oak and Aparejo streets and erecting a new substation—eight times larger than the existing Oak Street station near Sal Si Puentes and triple the capacity, increasing from 5 MVA to 15 MVA (megavolt-amperes)—an estimated \$7 million to \$10 million endeavor. The increase in capacity is cited by the company as crucial to meeting both existing and future needs for Marfa’s electricity usage.

Acreman proposed creating a task force to work jointly with AEP in evaluating different sites. Fred Guerrero, AEP’s external affairs manager for the region, said the next steps for the utility are to look for another property. “We’re going to keep looking for a viable property until we find a location that is deemed a fit for a substation that we critically need,” he said Tuesday.

Some 20 Marfa residents spoke against the plan at Monday’s public hearing, with one person seeming to support the project with comments that rejected the importance of “aesthetics” for the substation.

Those objecting to the plan laid out many of the same arguments as in more than a year of hearings—the Planning & Zoning Commission twice recommend- ing not to approve it, the bad precedent set by overruling residen- tial zoning, the negative impacts on the adjoining neighborhoods and what they say is a failure for AEP to evaluate alternatives.

Several speakers added a new objection: Saturday’s election saw two substation opponents, Katherine Kowal and Emily Kolb, elected to replace two incumbent supporters—Morrison and Pallarez. Speakers argued that the lame duck council members shouldn’t be voting on an issue in which voters clearly stated their position to deny the substation.

— ROB D’AMICO



The Law Remembers



ART
Sentinel

GHOST TOWN BRONZE

New sculptures in Shafter capture early ranch life

WHEN JOHN POINDEXTER, Cibolo Creek Ranch owner, and Tom Davis, the ranch manager, set out to restore a series of buildings in the Shafter Ghost Town, they also decided to add touches of the past—1920s cars, wagons, farm and ranch equipment—that surround structures like the old Howell Store, the historic church and the post office. The ultimate vision is to create a walking museum of sorts open to the public in the town on Highway 67, 40 miles south of Marfa.

In the past few weeks, a new series of installations—bronze sculptures depicting a wild side of the West in the late 1800s by Utah artist Scott Rogers—have arrived, further enhancing the town as a place for tourists to stop. With the historic buildings and the towering Cienega Mountains as their background, the bronzes include a stern lawman, a trail boss, a vaquero, a roundup cowboy, and a “man of his word.”

Rogers says his sculptures, including these pieces, are about 80% of life size, although a larger-than-life-size Chiricahua Apache is set to arrive in Shafter this week.

Rogers also created about 20 Old-West sculptures that adorn the grounds of the Cibolo Creek Ranch resort to the northwest of Shafter. The artist, who works from a studio in Paradise, Utah, says he had a rather unusual career shift that launched him into sculpture 36 years ago. After working in the financial world with his father raising venture capital for several years, he was inspired by a visit to his uncle.

“My uncle was one of the greatest sculptors that ever lived, and his name was Grant Speed,” Rogers recalls. “I bought a sculpture of Grant’s in the spring of 1990 ... I came home from work one day, and my heart just leapt through my chest, and I went and bought clay and started that night. Four years later, I was making my living at it.”

Rogers says it’s hard to define how long he sculpts each piece, although in general it’s about three to four months. “The longer I have, the better they are,” he says. “So, it’s really not a matter of how long it takes. It’s a matter of when they’re finished. And so, I’ll work on a piece for a month, and then I won’t look at it for a month, and then I’ll work on it for a month, and then I won’t look at it for a month, and then I come back and visit it fresh.”

Shafter was a silver mining town throughout the late 1800s and up to the 1940s when declining silver prices forced the mine to close. At its heyday in the 1920s and 1930s, up to 4,000 people lived in the area, but throughout time and between mine startups and shutdowns, Shafter’s population of about 25 people are scattered through the hills. Four people live in the heart of the ghost town, now neighbors of the sculptures.

Rogers has visited Shafter and Cibolo Creek Ranch in the past, but is looking forward to seeing his work accompany all of the historic renovation. “I haven’t seen any of the renovation yet, except on the Internet,” he says. I would really enjoy coming out there and seeing what [Poindexter] has done in Shafter.” —**ROB D’AMICO**



Sculptor Scott Rogers finishes off details on Chiricahua Apache, which will be installed in Shafter this week.

Shafter photographs by ROB D’AMICO

Trail Boss