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The 830 TIMES



Feast of Sharing a success

At H-E-B's Feast of Sharing, community members gathered as nearly 3,000 meals were served with the help of more than 300 volunteers, underscoring the event's strong turnout and community spirit. (Photo by Joel Langton.)


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Val Verde sheriff makes case for border funding in meeting with governor-elect

BY JOEL LANGTON
THE 830 TIMES



Texas Gov.-elect Gina Hinojosa poses with border sheriffs, including Val Verde County Sheriff Joe Frank Martinez, at a Nov. 19 roundtable on border security and law enforcement funding in Duval County. (Courtesy photo/Gina Hinojosa campaign)

Val Verde County Sheriff Joe Frank Martinez told Gov.-elect Gina Hinojosa that border counties could be left paying to house, transport and provide medical care for people arrested on thousands of outstanding felony warrants if a state grant tied to Operation Lone Star goes away.

Hinojosa, an Austin Democrat who has served in the Texas House since 2017, defeated three-term Republican Gov. Greg Abbott on Nov. 3, becoming the first Democrat elected Texas governor since Ann Richards in 1990.

Martinez joined sheriffs from across the Texas border region Thursday, Nov. 19, for a roundtable in Duval County. Hinojosa's office listed 16 border sheriffs in attendance.

Martinez said Hinojosa opened by telling the sheriffs she intended to keep the border secure and wanted residents along it to feel safe. Then the sheriffs went around the table, laying out their concerns.

"She was there to listen and learn," Martinez told The 830 Times on Sunday. "That was promising."

Two sources of state funding came up in the discussion. Martinez said Hinojosa asked about Senate Bill 22, which helps rural law enforcement agencies pay and retain deputies. The Texas comptroller's office says eligible sheriff's offices can also use the grants to hire additional staff and buy vehicles or safety equipment once they meet the program's salary requirements.

The sheriffs also discussed Operation Lone Star, a program Gov. Greg Abbott and the Texas Department of Public Safety launched in March 2021 to combat the smuggling of people and drugs. The state has used the initiative to fund local law enforcement and jail operations.

Martinez said the regional warrants program initially had about 8,000 felony warrants and estimated that more than 7,000 remain outstanding. He said the warrants stem from cases involving people suspected of coming to the border to smuggle migrants.

Martinez said the program received a $3.9 million grant to cover inmate housing, transportation and medical care. He identified Val Verde, Kinney, Edwards, Zavala, Dimmit and Maverick among the counties using the program. Without the grant, he said, individual counties would have to absorb those costs as people are arrested on the warrants.

Hinojosa said in a statement after the roundtable that she was committed to supporting border sheriffs and keeping border communities safe.

"Today I met with every single border sheriff about working together to maintain border security and protect our communities," said Hinojosa in a press release after the event. "Let me be clear: the border is secure and will remain secure under my leadership. There is a lot of misinformation from cartels that want to prey on vulnerable people. As Governor, I am committed to supporting our border sheriffs to keep Texans safe."

Her statement did not specify whether she would continue the warrants grant.

Martinez said he came away encouraged by the discussion and expects Hinojosa's transition team to review what the sheriffs told her.

"I think it was a breath of fresh air in having that discussion with her," he said.

The 830 TIMES
www.830times.com

Meet Our Team

JOEL LANGTON
Publisher
(618) 593-2285
joelalangton@gmail.com

KAREN GLEASON
News Editor - Senior Writer
(830) 734-3021
delriomagnoliafan@gmail.com

LOUIS ZYLKA
Staff Writer
(830) 719-6888
ljzlka8@gmail.com

JOSH GUEVARA
Business Manager
(830) 313-1199

Distribution

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Picture perfect: Chief judge's portrait celebrated in Del Rio

BY KAREN GLEASON
THE 830 TIMES

A photograph of an oil portrait of Chief U.S. District Judge Alia Moses was unveiled locally at a celebration Friday, Nov. 6, at the Gin House Jazz Club, hosted by members of the local federal bar association.

Moses is a native of the area who attended school in Eagle Pass and worked as a prosecutor in the U.S. attorney's office here before President George W. Bush nominated her to the federal bench in July 2002. The U.S. Senate confirmed her nomination later that year, and she has served as a federal district judge since then.

Before her appointment, she also served as a U.S. magistrate judge here.

In 2022, she became chief judge of the Western District of Texas and had her portrait painted. The original hangs in the federal courthouse in San Antonio, the district's headquarters.

Family members, friends and colleagues, including dozens of area attorneys who practice in federal court, attended the portrait celebration. The portrait displayed at the reception is a high-quality photograph of the original painting, which will remain in the "Hall of Chiefs" at the U.S. courthouse in San Antonio.

Moses said the painting includes items from her office that have deep meaning for her, including a flag used by John H. Wood Jr., the judge for whom the San Antonio federal courthouse is named, flowers from her mother and a chair that had been in the U.S. attorney's office since 1903. Her colleagues gave her the chair when she left.

The painting, created by Houston artist Tim Byram, was officially unveiled at a ceremony earlier this year.

Moses said the painting is Byram's first formal portrait. She said he visited her office in the courthouse and took numerous photos of her and the items included in the work.

"Then he would send different renditions," Moses said.

Asked if she was at all nervous about the final work, Moses chuckled and said, "Just because I don't consider myself a good picture subject."

Holly Pavlinski, president of the Del Rio Association of Federal Attorneys, said the event was meaningful on many levels.

"We wanted to do a portrait celebration for Chief District Judge Alia Moses. Traditionally, at certain times, judges have their portraits made, and one of those times is when they're promoted to chief judge. Alia Moses was promoted to chief judge of the Western District of Texas several years ago and began the process of having her official portrait commissioned and painted.

"We had the official unveiling in San Antonio back in June, and now we're having a celebration because we're having a copy here in the United States courthouse in Del Rio," Pavlinski added.

Pavlinski said bringing a copy of the portrait here celebrates Moses' years on the federal bench and is also a nod to her deep ties to the Del Rio and Eagle Pass communities.

"She's very dear to all our hearts. We love having her here, and, as retired Magistrate Judge Collis White said earlier, she is a judicial empire here, and it's really telling, all of the people who came out today to honor her," Pavlinski said.

The writer can be reached at delriomagnoliafan@gmail.com.



Alia Moses, chief United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas, sitting in Del Rio, poses with a photograph of an oil portrait painted of her. (Photo by Karen Gleason)

Firefighters, city declare impasse in pay talks

BY KAREN GLEASON
THE 830 TIMES

Del Rio firefighters and city administrators have reached an impasse in pay talks, with both sides walking away from a meet-and-confer session on Thursday, Nov. 19, without reaching an agreement.

Representing the city of Del Rio in the talks were City Manager Manuel Chavez and Finance Director Roxy Soto. Joining the city via video was chief negotiator Camela Sandmann, an attorney with the city's contracted firm of Denton Navarro Rodriguez Bernal Santee & Zech.

Representing firefighters were Edgar Escobedo, president of Del Rio Professional Firefighters Association Local 3662, along with association Vice President Chris Molano and member Jacob Trevino. Joining the talks via video was Rafael Torres, service director of the Texas State Association of Fire Fighters.

Sandmann opened Thursday's session, saying the groups had left the last meeting with firefighters saying they would put together a proposal for the city to consider.

Escobedo responded, "Yes, ma'am, we did. We went back, and we brought something to consider today."

Escobedo said Trevino would present the firefighters' two new proposals.

Trevino began by thanking Chavez, saying he knew how long Chavez had worked for the city, adding, "You know firsthand how hard our firefighters work to protect this community."



Del Rio firefighters, representatives of The Border Organization and members of the public, in the background, watch a meet and confer session between the Del Rio Professional Firefighters Association and city administrators on Thursday, Nov. 19. Representing the association in the talks with the city were, in foreground, from left, Edgar Escobedo, association president; Jacob Trevino and Chris Molano. (Photo by Karen Gleason)

Trevino said respondents to a city budget survey earlier this year ranked public safety first among departments they believed should get more funding.

He also said survey respondents "made clear that they do not want public safety underfunded."

Trevino said, "Even in the adopted budget, in the (city manager's) transmittal letter, it notes, 'The community survey feedback was a guide to this budget, and it set a clear goal. Citizens also had the opportunity to provide the priorities through a community survey. All feedback received was used to guide the 2026-2027 budget, the city council and community input stressed the importance of ensuring employee compensation (is) competitive and fair across the board.'"

Trevino said another comment in the transmittal letter noted the city was working to "retain top talent by providing fair compensation for all staff."

Trevino said, "Right now, our firefighters are carrying a heavier load than ever. The city reduced our four-man engine companies down to three-man companies, putting a major physical strain and safety workload on every crew member on every shift. On top of that, fire absorbed the emergency management division from police, saving the city nearly $60,000.

"Our folks are doing the work of four people with three, taking on extra city divisions and still facing a pay gap that forces a costly high turnover rate every single year. We've put together two reasonable, good-faith options, Package A and Package B, that honor the community's number one priority and fairly compensate the people carrying that workload," Trevino said.

Trevino went over the two proposals.

The first, Package A, would give firefighters a 7.5% across-the-board salary increase in fiscal year 2026-27. It would keep the current Fair Labor Standards Act work period, increase certification and education pay and retain the existing "me too" parity clause.

Trevino said the second option, Package B, was a two-year contract with a 5% base salary adjustment in fiscal year 2026-27 and a 5% base salary increase beginning Oct. 1, 2027, for fiscal year 2027-28. It would restore the 14-day work period under the Fair Labor Standards Act, with a 106-hour overtime threshold, and remove the "me too" parity clause.

After presenting the options, Trevino also went over some information he said he had gleaned from the city's filed budget documents.

"The city general fund's tax collection (revenue) grew by $1.87 million this year, which allowed a cut in enterprise (fund) transfers while still saving $576,000 in personnel costs, by eliminating 34 vacant positions. … The budget states the 2 percent (pay) raise was for non-civil service employees. Firefighters are civil service, public safety, just like the police, who got 3 percent, 3.5 percent and 4 percent (over the next three years)," Trevino said.

Going over some other budget information gleaned from documents filed by the city, Trevino said, "The city has $2.84 million in available capacity. Funding Year One, a 5 percent raise in Package B (would) cost about $287,870, which is only 10.1 percent of that available pool, leaving over $2.5 million untouched."

Following Trevino's presentation, Sandmann said she and the city team would like to caucus.

The city team returned after about 20 minutes behind closed doors, and Sandmann said, "Gentlemen, we thank you for your proposals you put across the table. At this time, the

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IMPASSE - FROM PAGE 5

city cannot honor those proposals and must decline or reject the proposals at this time."

Sandmann added, "I know from the last meeting, you guys rejected our proposal. We, again, will remind you that it is on the table, a one-year contract, and it's not even a year at this stage of the game. It would be from sometime after Dec. 1 until Sept. 30, 2027, the 2 percent raise that we offered, with the $25 increase for the certification to a maximum of $275. We're willing to throw in 24 hours, which is one shift, of bereavement leave as well, and that is where we are today."

Torres commented, "I've been listening to this, … and my question is now, as it was four years ago, why the disparity between fire and police pay raises? And why is the city unilaterally declining any kind of offer, not even a counteroffer, to what the union offered?"

Sandmann responded, "It's a budget constraint, as you well know, and it's not meant to be a disparity. It's a timing issue, too, about who files what first, and fire came to the table later, much later, after the budget process. We would like for them to come to the table, to the city, much earlier, like in May, so the budget can be reviewed with both police and fire. … That is the stance of the city right now. We don't have anything else to offer."

"This is a counteroffer because we did add bereavement leave, but that's about what we can do at this time," Sandmann added.

Torres said, "So, as I'm understanding it, is that — and these were your words, and this is how I'm taking it and that's why I'm asking — because police came to the table first, and the city offered them the 11 percent or whatever it is over the three years, they don't have any more money for the firefighters …"

Sandmann said, "It is a timing thing. … I think you're kind of putting words in my mouth. This is where we are, and what we have available to offer, in the budget, is the 2 percent. That's what I'm saying, and that's what we had to go across the table for fire."

"But you're not answering the question," Torres shot back.

"I don't have to," Sandmann retorted. "We came to meet and confer, and my answer stands the way it is. We've offered what we can offer across the table."

Torres asked, "You don't have to answer, is that what you're telling me?"

Sandmann responded, "Well, we're meeting and conferring, and I don't," adding there was no requirement for her to answer Torres' question. She reiterated the city is doing "all that we can do with the budget money that we have."

Torres replied Sandmann still hadn't answered his question and asked again about the pay disparity.

Torres said, "Why are the police officers being offered more money in their three-year deal than the firefighters? I get it's in the budget, this was the budget, but why the disparity, that's the question?"

Sandmann again said, "That is where we are in the budget at this time," adding if Torres "wanted a firm answer," he could approach the City Council. She said the city will be looking at "some other revenue things" over the next year, and all the city could offer the firefighters' association at this point is a one-year contract.

Trevino said the firefighters had "one last package" they wanted to present.

Trevino said, "It's going to be the same as what was already given to PD (the police department)." That contract, approved by the City Council, provided an immediate 2.5% pay increase, followed by increases of 0.5% on March 1, 2027, 3.5% on Oct. 1, 2027, and 4% on Oct. 1, 2028.

Sandmann thanked the firefighters and said, "We put across the best offers we could first, instead of wasting anybody's time." She asked Chavez and Soto if they wished to caucus in private, and the city team left the council chambers to speak privately.

The city team returned about 30 minutes later.

Sandmann said Soto had some questions about the budget numbers Trevino mentioned during his presentation.

Soto said she wanted to get clarification on Trevino's remarks about the "unallocated non-departmental" line item in the general fund budget.

Trevino replied it was his understanding the line item was not allocated to any specific department and could be used for cost-of-living adjustments and pay raises.

Soto explained the non-departmental fund is allocated and will be used to pay for computer services, fleet maintenance, facility maintenance and health claims from all the general fund's other funds. She said it is not a contingency or an emergency fund.

Trevino and Soto then discussed other aspects of the city's general fund, including how additional payments on bonds could bring down the city's overall debt and allow it to allocate more of its property tax rate to maintenance and operations. Soto also said the city is trying to reduce transfers from its enterprise fund into the general fund.

Trevino asked, "Now when you stated the city council's going to offset some of this deficit we have every single year to lower down our debt, it was also the city council's goals and the city manager's to give fair compensation, and the fire department is not standing with fair compensation, when we're only being offered 2 percent, and over the past few years, we've taken on that (additional) workload and hadn't seen an increase.

"So as far as that, I don't think that goal is being met, and as far as for the proposal that we gave to you, is that going to be a rejection or is there a counterproposal?" Trevino added.

Sandmann thanked Soto for her explanation and said, "We understand, and if we could, we would be offering more. And with that said, that was our best offer for you at this stage, so I believe now we're at impasse, and of course, we would be happy to come back to the table if you want to submit something in March, for the next budget cycle, to discuss again, but I believe we're at impasse at this stage."

Trevino said he wished to caucus with his team, and Torres said he would like to say something before the caucus.

Torres and Sandmann then discussed the implications of the impasse, and Trevino added that the parties may request a federal mediator.

The firefighters' team then left the council chambers to caucus privately. They returned about 10 minutes later.

When they returned, Trevino said, "I just wanted to reiterate on the record that we have provided five proposals. The first proposal was going to show how far behind we are to comparable cities, and then we were even willing to lower that comparable down to meet, in good faith, with the city at a 10 percent, a 10.5 percent, exactly what (the city) gave PD. All five (of our proposals) have been rejected, and we do agree with the city that an impasse has been reached, and after this meeting, I guess we'll return to our union and discuss further matters with the executive board."

"That concludes our meeting today. We're sorry we couldn't come to an agreement here today," Sandmann said.

The writer can be reached at delriomagnoliafan@gmail.com.

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The Border Organization leaders address council, call for information

BY KAREN GLEASON
THE 830 TIMES

About 40 area residents, half of them affiliated with The Border Organization, descended on City Hall during the Del Rio City Council's regular meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 17, many of them concerned about an increase in the city's water and sewer rates.

Nine persons signed up to speak to the council during the "Citizen Comments" portion of the agenda. Six of the nine were leaders of The Border Organization (TBO).

Ronda Hargrove was the first TBO leader to speak to the council.

Hargrove said, "We're frustrated, and this isn't the half of us. Here we are again, a year later, the holidays upon us, and water bills are out of sight. The Border Organization presented you with a very reasonable number to fix this, and nobody has reached out after all of you sitting up there, except for Mr. (J.P.) Sanchez and probably Carmen (Gutierrez), that won't speak with us, promised that you would review this."

Hargrove said each council member, in private conversations with TBO, had pledged to review the TBO's alternate water rate proposal, adding $22.21 to all residential and commercial water bills to cover the cost needed for the city to carry out what it had called emergency projects.

Hargrove went on, "We were also lied to about what we are borrowing $71 million for. Apparently, it wasn't for the emergency projects that needed to be done, as we were told. Frustrated is not the word; I can't even go there."

Hargrove also said city water customers' bills were to go up again, with the new rate charged as of Oct. 1, but she said when she recently received her bill ending on Sept. 30, she had been charged the new rate on her August through September water use.

Another TBO leader, Luz Liserio, addressed the council in Spanish, also spoke about the water bills, especially in the colonias outside the city limits served by city water.

The next TBO leader to speak was Alexia Guerrero.

Guerrero said, "I am speaking to an issue that is not on the agenda tonight, although it should be, given how severely the citizens are being affected by it. That issue is the water and sewer rates, which just went up for a second time this October.

"If the city goes along with business as usual, rates will continue to increase every year until 2030. So if you're hurting now, things are only going to get worse under the city's current plan. For over a year now, The Border Organization had been meeting with the city council and the city manager to discuss alternatives, due to these drastic rate increases.

"We developed an alternative proposal and presented it to the city way back in September 2025. The city's own financial advisor told us it was feasible, yet no action has been taken by the city to explore our proposal or better yet, implement it.

"This is despite most council members committing to work with us towards bringing the rates down and even using this promise as a campaign talking point. We expect our elected officials to follow through with the commitments they make during elections.

"So what is The Border Organization's proposal? Go back to the old water rates and add a flat fee of $22.21 to each water bill, residential and commercial alike. That would generate the revenue that the city claims is needed, as we were initially told, five emergency capital improvements projects and, as we were later told, paying off the city's old debt plus two more capital improvement projects.

"A lot has come to light in the past year. Now, several city council members are claiming that our proposal will disproportionately affect low-income earners. Well, we ran the numbers for you, and we'd be happy to present those if you put us on the agenda in December.

"It's clear that our proposal is better for all income levels, including Del Rio's poorest citizens. Every year after the first year, a flat rate is cheaper than the current rate, for every income level. Additionally, instead of getting hit with a drastic bill increase from one month to the next, like many of us experienced in October, with The Border Organization plan, you won't have to guess how much your bill will go up. If you keep the same consumption, it won't increase more than $22.21," Guerrero said.

Guerrero finished, "I firmly request for The Border Organization's proposal to be added to the December meeting agenda. Please, guys."

Marco Arreola was the next TBO leader to speak.

Arreola said, "In addition to a flat rate, we had approached the city with potential solutions to bring down the cost of capital improvement projects. . . We were initially told that the city meant to borrow $71 million for five capital improvement projects, including drilling a new water well for $18 million to $21 million, two, improving the Silverlake Sewer Treatment Plant; three, fixing the retaining wall at the East Spring; four, upgrading the (water treatment) filtration plant membranes; and five, expanding sewer capacity in north Del Rio.

"After several private meetings, we learned the city was also planning to use the money to service old debts. We were also disappointed to learn the problems started years ago when the city started taking money out of the water enterprise fund for uses unrelated to water and utilities, which should have been what happened.

"Also, we were told that the past administration and council members failed to raise rates a little at a time which led us to the situation we're in right now, needing to address issues in our water system without having sufficient funds to do so.

"Despite past mistakes, we expect the current council to move forward with greater caution and financial responsibility. Several months after the initial presentation after the five capital improvement projects, former City Manager Shawna Burkhart added two additional capital improvement projects to the list of priorities, including drilling a new, second water well, plus new water lines on the north side (of Del Rio)," Arreola said.

He further charged the city did not seek bids for any of the capital improvement projects he had mentioned. He claimed, "It doesn't take $21 million to drill a well," and said TBO member spoke with a well driller in Uvalde who said drilling such a well should not cost more than $4 million.

Arreola also asked why the city should drill a new well at all when it has an existing well, the Hamilton Well, it is not using.

Arreola said, "The city would need to purchase the water from Hamilton since they failed to purchase the water rights when they bought the property. We talked to the owner (of the Hamilton Well water rights) recently, and he is willing to sell water to the city at a cost that would actually turn the city a profit even if they went back to the old rates. Why would the city rather pay $21 million for a new well rather than profit off the one that we already have?

"Finally, I'm requesting that you place The Border Organization on the agenda for December so everyone can hear the responses to our proposed solutions," Arreola finished.

TBO leader Joe Salas spoke next.

He told the council, "Although

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COUNCIL - FROM PAGE 9

the city claimed that five capital improvement projects were urgent and needed to be addressed right away, they have only borrowed $17 million of the $71 million needed. And still they are raising water rates to generate $71 million for five years. . . Most of us are familiar with borrowing. You know when you take out a car loan, you don't pay the full amount with the interest up front. That's the whole point of borrowing.

"Yet under the city's new rate structure, they're trying to collect all this money in just five years for a 30-year loan. Why is that? Where is all this money going?

"It's also worth mentioning that the former city manager, Ms. Burkhart and some of the council told us they couldn't adopt our flat rate proposal because they had already secured a loan through the Texas Water Development Board, on the basis that they would increase water rates, so once again, when it comes to borrowing money, we know it doesn't matter how you come up with the money, as long as you're paying the bills.

"So why would this be different for the city? We know our proposal would generate the revenue necessary for the city to make the payments, so why was this excuse being used to shut down discussions?" Salas finished.

He also asked all of the TBO leaders to stand and be recognized and said, "Once again, we are requesting that you place The Border Organization on the agenda for December so everyone can hear your responses on our proposed solutions."

Sandra Fuentes, who said she works with The Border Organization, said, "In the last year, the city of Del Rio has raised water and sewer rates two times. You have raised trash rates by 23 percent for those that live within the city limits and 28 percent for those that live outside the city limits.

"People are struggling to pay their water bills. They're struggling to pay their water bills, and what did the city do in all its wisdom? If you're late in paying your water bill, it's not just $5 now. It's going to be $10 now. So you increased the late fee payment.

"Then, to add insult to injury, Mr. Quinones, you failed to notify your citizens that there isn't any fluoride in the water since 2017. You're very good about advertising there's a Halloween parade; thank you for that, it was wonderful; Christmas parade, thank you.

"But how about notifying the community and the dentists that there isn't any fluoride in the water? I spoke to a dentist today, and he said the increase of tooth decay in children is tremendous. Don't we deserve notification when there is not a service provided?

"What are we paying for? You're increasing water, but we took out a service. The irony in this is that the city cannot afford to fix the fluoride equipment or buy new or afford the chemicals, but yet you expect the citizens that cannot afford to pay the water bill and the trash bill to pay them. They don't get a bye. You guys get a bye.

"So what are we getting for all these increases? It's easier to talk about what we're not getting. We are not getting timely trash pickups. We're not getting a three-cubic-yard trash bin. They did away with that and they're forcing me to go to a (bigger) trash bin. We are not getting fluoride in the water. We're not getting notification from the city about no fluoride in the water since 2017.

"We're not getting a disposal facility for car wash operators and mom-and-pop restaurant owners to go dispose of their sludge and the grease oil. This has been going on for 15 years. You're increasing everything and taking services away.

"So, City Manager Chavez and Mayor Arreola, we are asking you. You need to put this on the agenda for December," Fuentes finished.



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Get ready for the holidays

Students of the Del Rio High School (DRHS) jazz group perform at the Student Performance Center (SPC) during the 2025 Winter SPC Concert Series. The concert series returns to SPC beginning on Tuesday, Dec. 1. (Courtesy Photo)

See page QP2

Enjoy holiday music from Del Rio's youth

BY LOUIS ZYLKA
THE 830 TIMES



Students of the Garfield Middle School (GMS) Mariachi group perform at the Student Performance Center (SPC) during the 2025 Winter SPC Concert Series. The concert series returns to SPC beginning on Tuesday, Dec. 1. (Courtesy Photo)

The San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District (SFDR CISD) annual concert series will return to the district's Student Performance Center (SPC), 315 Griner St., starting on Tuesday, Dec. 1, and ending on Tuesday, Dec. 15.

The Winter SPC Concert Series focuses on performances by students from the various music classes in Del Rio Middle School (DRMS), Garfield Middle School (GMS), San Felipe Memorial Middle School (SFMMS) and Del Rio High School (DRHS). The series includes performances from separate classes and others will combine students from different campuses.

Vanessa Martinez, the fine arts coordinator at SFDR CISD, spoke with The 830 Times about the concert series. Martinez, who has been the district's fine arts coordinator for two years, said the series has been going on for more than 16 years.

Martinez said the performances will be a mix of holiday tunes and music showcasing what the students have been working on during the fall semester. She said the concert series has been successful in giving students the opportunity to visit other schools and meet other musicians.

The series begins at SPC on Tuesday, Dec. 1, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. with a district art reception, which will include pieces of art by students from the different school campuses. Students are invited to bring their families to view their art and get a certificate at the SPC.

The rest of the series continues with the DRHS Choir group on Wednesday, Dec. 2, at 6:30 p.m., orchestra performances by DRMS, GMS and SFMMS on Thursday, Dec. 3, at 6:30 p.m., Mariachi performances from DRMS, GMS, SFMMS and DRHS students on Monday, Dec. 7, at 6 p.m., jazz performances by DRMS, GMS, SFMMS and DRHS students on Tuesday, Dec. 8, at 6 p.m., music from the DRHS orchestra group on Wednesday, Dec. 9, at 6:30 p.m., choir performances by DRMS, GMS and SFMMS students on Thursday, Dec. 10, at 6:30 p.m., and performances by the DRHS band on Tuesday. Dec. 15, at 6:30 p.m.

While most of the performances will be at SPC, Martinez said there will be additional performances held at other locations. On Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 5 p.m., the DRHS Dance Company perform at the gym at DRHS, 100 Memorial Drive. Admission will be $5 for adults and $2 for students. The Color Guard group will perform at DRMS, 720 E. De La Rosa St., on Monday, Dec. 7, at 6:30 p.m.

Martinez said a combination of sixth grade students from the middle school campuses will have music performances at DRMS on Tuesday, Dec. 15, at 6:30 p.m. She also said music performances by seventh and eighth grade students from the middle schools will be held at the DRMS on Wednesday, Dec. 16, at 6:30 p.m.

Winter SPC Concert Series

Full schedule

Dec. 1 – 6:00 pm – District Art Reception

Dec. 2 – 6:30 pm – Choir: DRHS

Dec. 3 – 6:30 pm – Orchestra: DRMS, GMS, & SFMMS

Dec. 7 – 6:00 pm – Mariachi: DRHS, DRMS, GMS, & SFMMS

Dec. 8 – 6:00 pm – Jazz: DRHS, DRMS, GMS, & SFMMS

Dec. 9 – 6:30 pm – Orchestra: DRHS

Dec. 10 – 6:30 pm – Choir: DRMS, GMS, & SFMMS

Dec. 15 – 6:30 pm – Band: DRHS



A visitor observes the behind-the-scenes photos of the 1989 "Lonesome Dove" series at the Whitehead Memorial Museum. The "Lonesome Dove" exhibit will be available to see for free on Saturday, Nov. 28, at 7 p.m. (Photo by Louis Zylka)

Whitehead showcases set photos of the Lonesome Dove miniseries

BY LOUIS ZYLKA
THE 830 TIMES

The Whitehead Memorial Museum, 1308 S. Main St., will have an exhibit of photos from a 1989 miniseries filmed in Del Rio on display till Sunday, Jan. 3, 2027.

The new traveling exhibit on display at the Whitehead presents behind-the-scenes photos of the "Lonesome Dove" miniseries, which was a western drama filmed in the Del Rio area in the late 1980s, focusing on Texas Rangers played by Tommy Lee Jones and Robert Duvall. The miniseries was based on the epic Western novel by Larry McMurtry, which became a bestseller and also won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

Michael Diaz, executive director for the Whitehead Memorial Museum, said the Whitehead staff set up the Lonesome Dove series last week, which was finished for display on Saturday, Nov. 21, and will be on display in the Big Barn building area.

Diaz said the exhibit is significant to Del Rio because the miniseries was filmed at the nearby Moody Ranch, which is located along the Rio Grande southeast of Del Rio. The exhibit will include about 50 photos with small descriptions explaining what the photo is capturing.

The "Lonesome Dove" series will be on display at the Whitehead for more than a month as part of general admission for visitors. The public can see the exhibit free of charge at a reception event on Saturday, Nov. 28, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Diaz said there will be light refreshments and snacks.

The photos are created by the Humanities Texas Exhibition Series, which Diaz added has collaborated with the Whitehead several times in the past. Diaz said the humanities organization rents out locations for its traveling exhibits and offers grants for museums.

When talking about the Humanities Texas Exhibition Series, Diaz said the Whitehead received a grant from the organization in October 2026, which covered the rental fee for the "Lonesome Dove" exhibit. He said the traveling exhibits help bring something new for people in Del Rio to see and learn.

"(The Whitehead staff) are very grateful for the grant and opportunity to bring these exhibits to Del Rio. We hope the community comes out and views these exhibits," Diaz said. "(The "Lonesome Dove" Series) is a big important part of our history."

Diaz said the Whitehead planned on having the exhibit coincide with the Smithsonian Institution's Museums on Main Street exhibition in Brackettville, Texas, while also being something for families to see when visiting during the Thanksgiving holidays.

Top 5 Things to Do

Your weekly go-to for local events

Pokémon TCG Cup

Sat., Nov. 28 • 12 p.m.
Draculina's Nerduana,
401 S. Main St.

Bring your best Standard deck, compete for top-cut prizes.

Humanities Texas Exhibition Series

Sat., Nov. 28
Whitehead Memorial Museum,
1308 S. Main St.

Behind-the-scenes images of the Lonesome Dove series.

King & Queen of Pla-Mor Bowling Tournament

Sun., Nov. 29 • 3 p.m.
Pla-Mor Del Rio,
1201 N. Bedell Ave.

Compete against local bowlers to crown the King and Queen.

Make Your Own Christmas Wreath

Sun., Nov. 29 • 2 p.m.
Gin House Jazz Club,
900 Pecan St.

Learn to create a wreath.

Winter SPC Concert Series

Starts Tues., Dec. 1 • 6 p.m.
Student Performance Center,
315 Griner St.

Support SFDR CISD student artists.

Movie Review: I PLAY ROCKY

LOUIS ZYLKA
THE 830 TIMES

Movies based on real stories are a dime a dozen. But many times, the real-life stories are better told through a documentary than through a romanticized version put together by a Hollywood screenwriter. But curiosity peaked when the newest biopic, directed by Peter Farrelly, not only focuses on the story behind the making of a movie, but of one of the most iconic movies of all time: 1976's "Rocky."

"I Play Rocky" takes place in the 1970s and follows a young Sylvester Stallone (Anthony Ippolito), who is a wannabe actor who moves to Los Angeles with his wife Sasha (Anna-Sophia Robb). After some inspiration, Stallone puts together an emotionally driven script that catches the attention of producers Irwin Winkler (P.J. Byrne) and Robert Chartoff (Toby Kebbell). In order for Winkler and Chartoff to use the script and make a movie out of it, they have to accept Stallone's offer: allow the writer to be the star of the film.

The question will arise: was this a movie that needed to be made? While not every detail and piece of dialogue may be accurate to the real-life story, "I Play Rocky" still tells an inspirational and relatable underdog story that acts as a companion piece to the "Rocky" franchise. It is fun to see the cast and crew recreating scenes from the 1976 classic, and the cast is also clearly having fun in their roles, including Byrne, Kebbell and Jay Duplass, who plays director John G. Avildsen. And Ippolito also does an incredible job portraying Stallone to the point where he looks strikingly identical to the legendary Hollywood star in several scenes.



Sylvester Stallone (Anthony Ippolito) argues with two producers to be the leading star in the film he wrote in "I Play Rocky," directed by Peter Farrelly. (Courtesy Photo)

The biopic about the making of one of the greatest movies of all time may not be the greatest movie itself, but it has enough heart and soul to bring a smile to your face as well as a tear or two. "I Play Rocky" is the feel-good movie of the year worth watching at any price.

SCAN TO SEE A VIDEO OF THIS REVIEW:

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TOP 5 THINGS TO DO

Your weekly go to source for your top events

1



POKEMON TCG CUP

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH

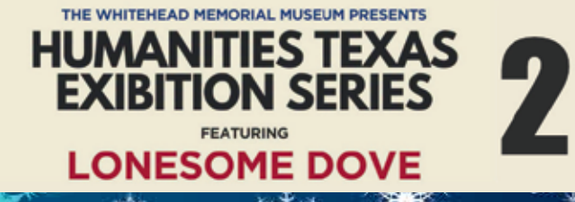
COMPETE AGAINST OTHER POKEMON PLAYERS AND WIN THE TOP PRIZE IN THE POKEMON TCG CUP AT DRACULINA'S NERDVANA, 401 S. MAIN ST., ON SATURDAY, NOV. 28, STARTING AT 12 P.M.

2

HUMANITIES TEXAS EXHIBITION SERIES

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH

SEE BEHIND-THE-SCENES IMAGES OF THE LONESOME DOVE SERIES AT THE WHITEHEAD MEMORIAL MUSEUM, 1308 S. MAIN ST., STARTING SATURDAY, NOV. 28.



3



KING & QUEEN OF PLA-MOR BOWLING TOURNAMENT

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH

COMPETE WITH LOCALS IN THE BOWLING TOURNAMENT AT PLA-MOR DEL RIO, 1201 N. BEDELL AVE, ON SUNDAY, NOV. 29, AT 3 P.M. .

4

MAKE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS WREATH

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH

LEARN TO CREATE A CHRISTMAS WREATH AT THE GIN HOUSE JAZZ CLUB, 900 PECAN ST., ON SUNDAY, NOV. 29, STARTING AT 2 P.M.



5



WINTER SPC CONCERT SERIES

STARTING TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1ST

SUPPORT THE SFDR CISD STUDENTS ART STUDENTS DURING THEIR CONCERT SERIES STARTING ON TUESDAY, DEC. 1, AT 6 P.M. AT THE STUDENT PERFORMANCE CENTER, 315 GRINER ST.

TO PLACE AN ADVERTISEMENT IN THE 830 TIMES, PLEASE CALL 618-593-2285



830 Entertainment: *Events at a glance!*

SEASON'S GREETINGS WORKSHOP

NOV. 27 - Participate in an Adult Watercolor Greeting Card workshop at Marcos Mares Art Studio & Gallery, 205 E. Ogden St., on Friday, Nov. 27, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

ONE PLACE MARKET

NOV. 28 - Shop from local vendors at the Pecan Ballroom area at the Del Rio Civic Center, 1915 Veterans Blvd, on Saturday, Nov. 28, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MARKET EVENT AND LIVE MUSIC AT MESQUITE

NOV. 28 - Mesquite Creek Outfitters, 800 S. Main St., will have a Small Business Pop-Up Market event on Saturday, Nov. 28, at 11 a.m. The Donovan Amaya Band will also play at Mesquite later in the day at 7 p.m.

HUMANITIES TEXAS EXHIBITION SERIES

NOV. 28 - The Whitehead Memorial Museum, 1308 S. Main St., will be showcasing the Lonesome Dove exhibition during a free reception on Saturday, Nov. 28, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The exhibition will be on display from Saturday, Nov. 28, through Friday, Jan. 1.

POKEMON TCG CUP

NOV. 28 - Champions unite! The Pokemon Trading-Card-Game (TCG) Cup will take place at Draculina's Nerdvana, 401 S. Main St., on Saturday, Nov. 28, at 12 p.m. The entry fee is $20, and a prize pack will be handed out per entry (a decklist is required)

.

EVENTS AT THE GIN HOUSE

NOV. 29 - Enjoy brunch and shop from local vendors at the Gin House Jazz Club, 900 Pecan St., on Sunday, Nov, 29, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. A workshop to create a Christmas wreath will also take place at the Gin House at 2 p.m.

PLA-MOR BOWLING TOURNAMENT

NOV. 29 - Pla-Mor Del Rio, 1201 N. Bedell Ave, will have a King & Queen of Pla-Mor Bowling Tournament on Sunday, Nov. 29. The first three games will take place at 3 p.m. The Entry fee will be $40 per person. The top male and female bowler will take the prize fund.

GAMES AT THE COLLEXN

NOV. 29 - The Collexn, a trading card store at 1300 Veterans Blvd Set D, will have a Beyblade Open-Play-Tournament from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Dungeons & Dragons sessions at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 29.

CHRISTMAS AT THE COLLEGE

DEC. 1 - Enjoy live music, including performances from the elementary choir groups and the Queen City Belles, family games and activities and pictures with Santa at the Southwest Texas College Del Rio campus, 207 Wildcat Dr, on Tuesday, Dec. 1, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

WINTER SPC CONCERT SERIES

DEC. 1 THROUGH DEC. 15 - The San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District's (SFDR CISD) Fine Arts Department will be featuring its concert series with performances by student musicians at 315 Griner St. starting on Tuesday, Dec. 1, at 6 p.m. The series will end on Tuesday, Dec. 15.

FANTASTIC FOX: ART WORKSHOP AT MARCOS MARES

NOV. 28 - Children are invited to draw playful foxes using warm autumn colors, color mixing and more during a workshop at Marcos Mares Art Studio & Gallery, 205 E. Ogden St., on Saturday, Nov. 28, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is $40 for the individual class.

LEGACY'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DRIVE-THRU

DEC. 3 - Legacy Realty will have its Annual Christmas Drive-Thru with cookies, conchas and coca and an appearance from Santa at 210 Kings Way on Thursday, Dec. 3, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK

DEC. 4 - Enjoy art exhibits from your local art galleries, including the Falcon Art Gallery, Lee-Bunch Studio Gallery and Del Rio Council for the Arts on Friday, Dec. 4. Stay updated with The 830 Times for more information.

CHRISTMAS PARADE

DEC. 4 - The city's annual Christmas parade will take place on Friday, Dec. 4, at 6:30 p.m. The parade will begin at the intersection of Ogden Street and Main Street and continue down downtown Del Rio ending at the intersection of Nicholson Street and Main Street.

NOISE FOR TOYS 16

DEC. 5 - The Casa del la Cultura, 302, will have its Noise for Toys fundraiser with performances by Anakin, The Code 88s, Andykandi, Bodeh, American Swine and Heatwave on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 6 p.m.

WILD GAME DINNER GUN RAFFLE & AUCTION

DEC. 5 - The 2026 Wild Game Dinner, Gun Raffle & Auction will return to the Del Rio Civic Center, 1915 Veterans Blvd, on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. Dinner tickets will be $10.

POUR TOUR

ONGONG - Visit local bars and collect stamps to receive an exclusive 2026 Pour Tour T-Shirt by supporting businesses in Del Rio's downtown area and on Veterans Boulevard. The participating Pour Tour stops include Doc Holliday's Dance Hall & Tombstone Sports Bar, Gorzugis at the Herald, White Horse Lounge, Mesquite Creek Outfitters, SoJo Cellars, Shane's Whiskey & Bourbon House and The Gin House.

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ENROLL TODAY!

More than 300 volunteers help serve nearly 3,000 meals at Del Rio's Feast of Sharing

BY JOEL LANGTON
THE 830 TIMES

More than 300 volunteers helped serve nearly 3,000 meals Saturday, Nov. 21 at Del Rio's H-E-B Feast of Sharing, according to Luis Leija, leader of H-E-B's main Del Rio store.

"It was a fantastic turnout," Leija said.

Feast of Sharing is H-E-B's annual series of free holiday meals open to the public, with 34 dinners across Texas and Mexico this year, according to the company.

H-E-B organized and paid for the event, and volunteers from across Del Rio did much of the heavy lifting. Leija said the sheriff's office, police department and Texas Department of Public Safety helped with security, while groups from local schools, the hospital and Laughlin Air Force Base turned out in force.

"I hate to single one group out because there were so many involved helping us pull this event off," Leija said.

Del Rio volunteer extraordinaire Claudia Cruz Lopez coordinated the entertainment, giving guests a reason to stick around after their turkey-and-all-the-trimmings lunch.

This year's entertainment lineup included the Heritage Academy Choir, the Queen City Belles, the All-District Elementary Choir, Ballet Folklórico Machuxotchil, Cha-Cha Macias, Casa de la Cultura guitar students, Heritage Dance Company, Beautiful Feet, the SFMMS dance team, the Garfield Middle School dance team, Dance Company and the Del Rio Middle School dance team.

Del Rio athletic director Frenchey McCrea Jr. said the Queens softball players who handed out plates of turkey and dressing got as much out of the day as the people they served.



Del Rio High School Queens softball players Amanda Muniz, left, and Janiah Ross try on headwear while volunteering at H-E-B's Feast of Sharing. Nearly 3,000 meals were served Saturday with the help of more than 300 volunteers, according to Del Rio store leader Luis Leija.

"It was a wonderful opportunity for our athletes to give back to the community, serve others and spread a little kindness," McCrea said. "We are proud of our Queens for representing our program with pride and showing that being a Queen is about more than just softball!"

One diner had his own take as he walked out rubbing his stomach.



Citizens voice complaints about automated meters, customer service

BY KAREN GLEASON
THE 830 TIMES



Citizen Loida Arellano speaks to the Del Rio City Council about an incident she said she witnessed at the city's utility billing, in which an elderly woman who said she couldn't afford her water bill was told the only options she had were making arrangements for a payment plan, paying the bill in full or having her service disconnected. (Photo by Karen Gleason)

Del Rioans addressed City Council members during the council's regular meeting Tuesday, Nov. 17, speaking out about the city's automated water meters, customer service and five-year water and sewer rate study.

The Del Rioans spoke during the "Citizen Comments" portion of the City Council's agenda.

Following the meeting's opening ceremonies and several public hearings, Mayor Al Arreola first recognized Bea Vallejo and asked her to come to the podium.

Vallejo told the council, "I was looking and found a bid (request) for a contractor, third-party vendor, for the utility billing, and it claimed that it was going to include the water and the sewer and the refuse service billing. However, it did not include the gas, and I am sure that was probably an oversight.

"On an average, companies charge between $2 and $5 (per) account, which then tells us if we have 16,000 users, and we charge $2, we would be paying $32,000, and if you charge the $5, you would be paying $80,000 a month.

"I don't know if you guys have that money. I don't understand, because you guys are giving money away like it was growing on the trees, but, oh well. That's still a lot of money," Vallejo said.

Typically, neither council members nor city staff address citizens who speak during the public comment period, but City Manager Manuel Chavez addressed Vallejo's observations about the "third-party contractor" during his informational update to the council.

Chavez told the council, "A clarification regarding the third-party billing. That is for our bills to be delivered to the residents. We've had that in place for a couple of years now. Before, you would receive the postcard billing, and we've switched over to the third-party billing, which delivers your bill in an envelope, and that's a service that is currently outsourced and contracted. Nothing to do with the internal billing."

Councilman Leno Hernandez commented, "For clarification, it's essentially like the direct mail-type process for folks to receive their bill at home in their mailbox. There's no displacement of employees or reconstruction of the (utility billing) department."

Chavez replied, "No, again, we currently have it in place, but we're just going out and putting that out again."

Since Vallejo left the chambers shortly after speaking, Hernandez added, "Unfortunately, we lost the audience that information could have been helpful for but thank you for clarifying."

Vallejo had another complaint during her three-minute address to the council, and this dealt with the city's automated utility meters.

Vallejo said, "We have a problem with the smart meters. They're still not operating to the efficiency and expectancy level that they were sold to the city on. And how many years has it been since we've had them? You forced us to invest in them, and yet you never did bring them up to par.

"Now, as we continue to pay for whatever inefficiencies the city runs into, and in essence, we could consider this a breach of trust, a slight misappropriation of data, a slight or inconvenient error, that the city has to outsource. We are still required to pay what our assigned bill is every month, whether it is correct or incorrect, you still expect our money," Vallejo said.

She also asked questions about the three tiers of water usage before her time ran out.

The council next listened to two leaders of The Border Organization, then Arreola recognized Del Rioan Loida Arellano.

Arellano told the council, "I am here today to express my deep concern and frustration regarding the excessive bills, the poor customer service and most importantly, the lack of real solutions to this ongoing problem. I am not speaking only for myself.

"I have personally been affected by these high-wa-

SEE COMPLAINTS- PAGE 24


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COMPLAINTS - FROM PAGE 22

ter bills, but I am also speaking on behalf of other members of our community, especially our senior citizens and families who simply cannot afford these unreasonable charges.

"Recently I witnessed a situation that truly broke my heart. I came to pay my water bill last week, and there was an elderly woman standing two persons in front of me, and she said it was only herself and her husband at home, and she was struggling with an extremely high water bill.

"She asked for an explanation because the charges were simply too high for them to understand or afford. What was the response that she received? She was told that the only thing that she could do were three things. She could make arrangements, she could pay the water bill as it was or get disconnected.

"I heard it for myself. Now let me ask you, do you really think that is fair? Is that the kind of treatment our residents deserve? When someone comes forward to ask for an explanation about an excessive bill, they should receive answers, not simply be told how they can arrange to pay it. A payment plan does not solve the problem. It does not explain why the bill is so high, and it certainly does not make an unfair charge fair.

"What about our senior citizens who live on a fixed income? What about families who are already struggling to pay their basic expenses? How can we expect them to keep paying bills they do not understand and believe are incorrect?

"This is not just about money. This is about fairness, accountability, respect and the well-being of our community. I want to ask each of you something. When you asked our community for our votes, didn't you make a commitment to serve the community? Didn't you promise to listen to our concerns and work for the well-being of our residents?

"So I ask you, is ignoring citizens' complaints what serving our community looks like? Is telling people simply to make payment arrangements a solution you believe we deserve?" Arellano finished.

Former Del Rio City Councilwoman Alexandra Falcon Calderon spoke next.

Calderon said, "This is just a refresher, Dec. 16, 2025, and those that are present, the new council, I recommend that you look at (the video of) that meeting … and I also recommend that you look at past meetings, not only council, but other committees, Board of Adjustment, commissions, (be)cause that will help you. Believe me, it will help you.

"I will be giving a copy to Councilwoman Gutierrez and the mayor. This is a clip that I saw that says 'revisit utility rate study within the next year, offer to revisit the five-year utility rate study again next year.' Well, that next year is next month.

"And while I'm giving that to Councilwoman Gutierrez and the mayor, I am going to direct you, because, based on the (city's) organizational chart, we, the community go first, and we can give orders to council, any council, and that is why I'm doing that, giving you the order to put that, bring it back and revisit. That's all. Thank you," Calderon said.

The writer can be reached at delriomagnoliafan@gmail.com



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PUBLIC NOTICE

400 Pecan Street
Del Rio, TX 78840

Val Verde County seeks requests for proposals (RFP) to hire a firm to carry out the administrative functions for eligible activities associated with grant agreement CFC24-0012 awarded by the Texas Department of Agriculture for the 2024 CDBG Colonia Fund Construction. Firms and/or consultants should have past experience with federally funded programs.

Please submit (1) one original and (2) two copies of your Request for Proposals/Statement of Qualifications to:

Melissa Vasquez
Val Verde County Purchasing
509 E. Gibbs Street
Del Rio, Texas 78840
ATTN: RFP 26-101 Grant Administrator CFC24-0012

Envelopes shall be addressed as written above.

Submittals for these services shall be mailed or hand delivered to Val Verde County no later than **2:00 P.M. December 18, 2026** which is at least ten (10) days after this publication.

Val Verde 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 and Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit proposals. Val Verde County is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of SOCORRO G. HERNANDEZ, Deceased, were issued on October 20, 2026, in Cause No. 6945, pending in the County Court at Law of Val Verde County, Texas, to: LEONEL G. HERNANDEZ JR.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

LEONEL G. HERNANDEZ JR.
c/o: The Law Office of Emily King, PLLC
304 E. Losoya St., Del Rio, Texas 78840

DATED the 19th day of November, 2026.

EMILY KING
SBOT No: 24050306
Law Office of Emily King, PLLC
304 E. Losoya St.
Del Rio, Texas 78840
Phone: (830) 778-1515
Email: emily@emilyking.law

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of JIMMIE LEE CRISWELL, Deceased, were issued on October 20, 2026, in Cause No. 6946, pending in the County Court at Law of Val Verde County, Texas, to: MARTHASU GAILANN NANCE CRISWELL.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

MARTHASU GAILANN NANCE CRISWELL
c/o: The Law Office of Emily King, PLLC
304 E. Losoya St., Del Rio, Texas 78840

DATED the 19th day of November, 2026.

EMILY KING
SBOT No: 24050306
Law Office of Emily King, PLLC
304 E. Losoya St.
Del Rio, Texas 78840
Phone: (830) 778-1515
Email: emily@emilyking.law

From Mom's kitchen to Del Rio markets, local entrepreneur's pancake mixes take off

BY KAREN GLEASON
THE 830 TIMES



Lindsey Walthour, creator of Wildling Cottage Pantry, stirs a batch of blueberry pancake mix just before the start of the 'Meet the Maker' event on Saturday, Oct. 31, at Conrad's Casita, 648 S. Main St. Walthour has created a line of delicious, healthy pancake mixes in an array of flavors, including Wildberry, Vanilla Bean, Pumpkin Spice, Apple Cider and more. (Photo by Karen Gleason)

There may be nothing more nostalgic and comforting than a plate stacked with fluffy, steaming pancakes studded with blueberries and dripping with real maple syrup. It's that feeling of being served breakfast in your mother's kitchen that Lindsey Walthour is trying to create.

Walthour, the creator and owner of Wildling Cottage Pantry, drew on that feeling and her desire to feed her own child a healthy, delicious meal to create a series of pancake mixes she sells at local markets and in businesses around Del Rio.

Late last month, Walthour was invited to make and share pancakes from her mixes at a "Meet the Maker" event at Conrad's Casita, 648 S. Main St. The event is the brainchild of Casita owner Antoinette "Toni" Conrad, who started it to showcase local artists and artisans.

Walthour spoke to The 830 Times about how she created her mixes and what she is doing to bring them into local kitchens.

"It's not even that I was obsessed with pancakes. I mean, I love pancakes. My mom always made them for me, and she always made me whole wheat pancakes, and my family always had real maple syrup. I was here in Del Rio, and I was missing my mom," Walthour said.

"When I was living in Florida, I got into coconut sugar and grass-fed butter, whole-fat Greek yogurt, and my son was super-picky, so I was buying a bunch of different pancake mixes, and I liked the Kodiak mix, but I didn't like some of the ingredients, and I also liked Simple Mills, this gluten-free brand, and all of the ingredients were super-simple. There's no preservatives.

"I've always been into that kind of thing. I worked in vegan restaurants, and I worked in a healthy grocery store. I was kind of a pescatarian. I was juicing for a while, and I really got into healthy stuff, and I was super hippie," Walthour said with a laugh.

She said her husband, who works at Laughlin Air Force Base, inspired more balance in her food preferences after they married.

Walthour said she was "inspired" by two commercially available pancake mixes.

Lindsey Walthour, left, creator of Wildling Cottage Pantry, sets up her table inside Conrad's Casita, 648 S. Main St., owned by Antoinette "Toni" Conrad, right, for a 'Meet the Maker' event. Conrad has been hosting these events inside her downtown Del Rio store, giving local

artisans a chance to showcase their products and reach more buyers. (Photo by Karen Gleason)

"I literally started adding what I wanted. I used to mix everything in a huge, gallon-sized plastic bag," Walthour said.

Creating her own mixes became a process of adding and testing all-natural ingredients that were nutritious and tasty.

But the Wildling Cottage Pantry pancake mixes came into focus when she began making pancakes for a neighbor.

"My neighbor came over, and I was just making my pancakes, and I didn't really think they were anything that special. They were just pancakes to me. She tried

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them, and she said, 'These are the best pancakes I've ever had in my life.' Then her husband tried them, and they kept coming back for more and telling me, 'Lindsey, I need your pancakes. I need the recipe. I'm obsessed with them.'

"I would bring them to her house, because she just kept talking about them. 'Your pancakes! Your pancakes!' I was like, really? And then I moved to Texas, didn't have a job, and I saw there were a bunch of people here doing markets and baking and stay-at-home moms doing that.

"This is such an isolated place, and I thought to myself, 'I literally already have a pancake mix in my cabinet right now.' And really, pancakes are a little bit of my roots, so I'm bringing a little bit of Maine here," said Walthour, a native of Kennebunk, Maine.

Walthour also uses ingredients closely associated with her home state, such as real maple syrup and wild blueberries.

She said she wanted her offerings for local tables to be healthy and loves when mothers buy her mixes to make for their children. She is always thinking of new flavors to add to her pancake lineup. At the time of the interview, she said she was still trying to dream up "Christmas" flavors.

Working up recipes for her pancake mixes and taking them out into the community also gives Walthour an outlet for her seemingly boundless creative energy.

Walthour said Wildling Cottage Pantry got off the ground as a business when a friend encouraged her to sign up for a community market at La Bohemia La Bohemia-Lemon Drop located at 107 Pierce St. downtown. She said she didn't feel entirely ready, but she brought packages of her vanilla pancake mix and quickly sold out.

Walthour now offers six flavors of pancake mix and said she plans to add at least two more soon.

She said she sells her mixes mainly at markets around town. They are also available at Conrad's Casita and Cottle Farmstead in Uvalde.

The writer can be reached at delriomagnoliafan@gmail.com.



Lindsey Walthour, left, creator of Wildling Cottage Pantry, sets up her table inside Conrad's Casita, 648 S. Main St., owned by Antoinette "Toni" Conrad, right, for a 'Meet the Maker' event. Conrad has been hosting these events inside her downtown Del Rio store, giving local artisans a chance to showcase their products and reach more buyers. (Photo by Karen Gleason)



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A LOOK AHEAD: WHAT'S COMING NEXT

Boys basketball — Del Rio Rams

The Rams host South San Antonio at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 28. The Queens' next scheduled varsity game is at San Angelo Central at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 1. Comstock's girls and boys are scheduled to play at Sanderson that day at 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., respectively.

Del Rio girls basketball:

- The Queens won three of four games at the Alpine Tournament, beating Monahans 50-18, New Way Christian Academy 72-39 and Alpine 70-51 before falling to Levelland 55-39. Alexa Velasco scored 21 points Monday in an 88-51 home loss to Cornerstone Christian.

Del Rio swimming:

- Del Rio finished third in a Nov. 19 tri-meet against Laredo Alexander and Laredo United, earning eight top-three finishes. Tiago Gallegos placed second in the 100-yard breaststroke and third in the 50 freestyle. The boys' 200 medley relay also took second, while both 200 freestyle relays placed third. Six Del Rio swimmers set individual personal records.

Del Rio Rams Basketball

- The Rams' two wins followed a 1-3 showing at the Harlandale Tournament. Del Rio opened with a 73-32 win over Southside before losing to Alamo Heights 92-62, McCollum 60-47 and Smithson Valley 88-46.
- The Del Rio Rams opened Thanksgiving week with back-to-back basketball wins, beating Carrizo Springs 57-42 at home Monday and Eagle Pass Winn 70-32 on the road Tuesday.

Comstock basketball:

- The Panthers beat La Pryor 62-26 on Nov. 17. La Pryor won the girls' game 59-36.

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Queens fall to Cornerstone after three-win run in Alpine

BY JOEL LANGTON
THE 830 TIMES

The Del Rio Queens lost 88-51 to San Antonio's Cornerstone Christian on Monday, two days after finishing the Alpine Tournament with three wins in four games.

Alexa Velasco scored 21 points for Del Rio. Cornerstone led 20-9 after the first quarter and 43-19 at halftime. The Queens scored 21 points in the third quarter, but the Warriors carried a 67-40 lead into the fourth.

Queens coach Marisa Soto said Del Rio played without two starters, including the team's second-leading scorer, but saw other players step into larger roles.

"We had a lot of other kids step up," Soto said. "We can't complain about the way they played. Defensively, the quit never happened."

In Alpine, Del Rio beat Monahans 50-18 and New Way Christian Academy 72-39 on Friday. The Queens defeated Alpine 70-51 on Saturday before losing 55-39 to Levelland.

Soto said the condensed tournament schedule gave more Queens playing time and helped them understand how their roles can change from one opponent to the next.

"When they understand their role and what we need from them based on the situation in the game, we're pretty effective," Soto said. "I think down the road it's going to help us."

Cornerstone, a private school that competes in the Texas Christian Athletic League, entered Monday's game 5-3 after going 30-7 last season. Its girls basketball program produced Yasmeen Schmidt, now a freshman at Grand Canyon University.

She averaged 27.5 points per game as a senior, broke the greater San Antonio single-season record with 174 three-pointers and is now on Grand Canyon University's roster, where she's scoring in double digits.

Soto said scheduling an established program such as Cornerstone helps prepare her young team for district play, which begins Dec. 8. The Queens are scheduled to host Uvalde at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday.



Del Rio's Alina Mojica shoots a free throw during the Queens' home game against Cornerstone Christian on Monday, Nov. 23. (Photo by Joel Langton)



Rams win Harlandale opener, drop final three as opponents disrupt passing lanes

BY JOEL LANGTON
THE 830 TIMES

The Del Rio Rams opened the Harlandale Tournament with a 73-32 win over Southside on Thursday before dropping their final three games to Alamo Heights, McCollum and Smithson Valley.

Rams head coach Joe Nieto said Alamo Heights used its size to disrupt Del Rio's passing lanes, and Smithson Valley created similar problems with full-court pressure.

Del Rio scored 21 points in the first quarter against Southside, led 39-21 at halftime and allowed just 11 points in the second half. Erick Barrera led the Rams with 25 points, C.J. Medina scored 10 and Braylen Lowe added eight.

Nieto said afterward that the team was still developing its defensive approach with several new varsity players.

On Friday, the Rams trailed Alamo Heights by a point after the first quarter and by eight at halftime. Alamo Heights scored 27 points in the third quarter to pull away for a 92-62 win.

Nieto said Alamo Heights' bigger defenders jumped into passing lanes against Del Rio's smaller guards.

"They really used their size advantage on us," Nieto said.

Barrera scored 16 points against Alamo Heights, according to the scorebook. Julian Dominguez added 15 and Leo Cavazos scored 13. Alamo Heights' Jack Brewer led all scorers with 26.

Later Friday, Del Rio cut a six-point first-quarter deficit against McCollum to 29-27 at halftime. McCollum stretched its lead to 50-43 after three quarters and held the Rams to four points in the fourth to win 60-47.

Barrera and Alexander Perez each scored 13 points for Del Rio, according to the scorebook.

Smithson Valley defeated Del Rio 88-46 on Saturday in the Rams' tournament finale. Individual scoring and quarter totals for that game were unavailable.

Nieto said he spent part of the weekend looking for ways to put his players in better positions to handle the kind of pressure Smithson Valley applied.

"We're going to be very competitive," Nieto said.

Del Rio hosts a basketball doubleheader Monday. The Queens face Cornerstone at 1:30 p.m., and the Rams play Carrizo Springs at 3 p.m.



Del Rio's Erick Barrera puts up a short shot in the lane. Barrera averaged 17.8 points across four games with available scoring totals this season, including a team-high 25 in the Rams' 73-32 win over Southside at the Harlandale Tournament. (Courtesy photo)

Del Rio swimmers earn eight top-three finishes at Laredo tri-meet

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Del Rio High School swim team placed third in a tri-meet against Laredo Alexander and Laredo United on Nov. 19, with several swimmers setting personal records.

Del Rio brought five girls and nine boys to the meet. The girls earned 29 points and the boys earned 46.

Tiago Gallegos led the individual finishes with second place in the boys 100-yard breaststroke in 1 minute, 14.69 seconds. He also placed third in the 50 freestyle in 26.30 seconds.

The boys 200 medley relay team of Joaquin Arredondo, Gallegos, Arturo Lopez and Jack Fooshee finished second in 1:57.83. Lopez took third in the 200 individual medley in 2:30.20.

For the girls, Kaylee Veliz placed third in the 50 freestyle in 34.88 seconds, and Sophia Cardenas finished third in the 500 freestyle in 7:38.94.

Del Rio added two third-place relay finishes. Avery Leverett, Liana Veliz, Kaylee Veliz and Cardenas swam the girls 200 freestyle relay in 2:19.81. Fooshee, Gallegos, Lopez and Arredondo completed the boys 200 freestyle relay in 1:47.73.

Four girls and two boys set personal records in individual events. The improvements came in the 50 freestyle, 100 freestyle, 100 backstroke and 500 freestyle as Del Rio's swimmers continued working to lower their times.

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Del Rio High School swimmer Avery Leverett comes up for a breath during a Nov. 19 meet in Laredo. Leverett helped the Queens place third in the 200-yard freestyle relay. (Courtesy photo)

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