

FREE



Magazine

November 2023

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November 2023



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Blenders



Smoothies



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From The Editor

Holiday Time is Here

This is Lisa from Explore Harlingen. Welcome to the second issue of the Explore Harlingen Magazine: A Local's Guide to Harlingen, an entertainment magazine about Harlingen, Texas!

I was born and raised in Harlingen but lived in bigger cities in Texas for college and career. I moved back to Harlingen from Austin in October 2013 when my daughter was born.

I just celebrated my 10-year anniversary of blogging about my hometown of Harlingen, Texas. Over the past decade, I have been informing locals and visitors about current events, activities, and family-owned businesses in

Harlingen primarily on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ExploreHarlingen). But I also have an online presence with my website, www.exploreharlingenblog.com, and social media accounts on Instagram (www.instagram.com/ExploreHarlingen), TikTok (www.tiktok.com/ExploreHarlingen), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/ExploreHarlingen).

This time of year is so exciting to me, with temperatures dropping a bit and the promise of the holidays around the corner. In this issue, I am highlighting the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, Veteran's Day, the Lighting of the Arroyo, the state



election, and more.

The Explore Harlingen Magazine is available digitally on my website at www.exploreharlingenblog.com/magazine. Or you can pick up a copy at the first of every month

locally around town. ♦
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Rio Grande Valley **Birding Festival**



Gray Hawk
Buteo plagiatus

30th Anniversary
November 8-12, 2023
Harlingen, Texas

Field Trips | Seminars | Kids Activities
Free Family Fun
Live Birds of Prey | Trade Show

HARLINGEN CONVENTION CENTER
701 HARLINGEN HEIGHTS DRIVE - HARLINGEN, TEXAS

On The Cover

Birders Flock to Harlingen Each November

By Lisa Campos

The 30th Annual Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival (RGVBF) is a five-day festival that celebrates birding in Harlingen. The Harlingen Convention Center hosts the RGVBF, a non-profit festival, which begins on November 8, 2023, and runs through November 12, 2023.

The RGVBF is run by more than 100 volunteers, highlights more than 60 vendors, and brings in approximately \$3 million to the local economy annually.

"I think a lot of people

who live here don't even realize that we have the second largest bird festival in the entire country right here in Harlingen. The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) is one of the top birding destinations in all of North America. Our festival is an avenue for hundreds of birders from out of state, as well as locals from the RGV, to enjoy and learn about the birds here. We're always expanding things for our RGV locals to take advantage of, including trips to new places that birders aren't always allowed, a new fancy



Photo: RGVBF

Legends of Conservation Gala, and loads of family fun, from our art shows and contests to the live 'birds of prey' shows where you can interact with some amazing birds from just feet away," stated Justin LeClaire, Field Trip Chair of the RGVBF.

More than 500 participants from all over the world flock to Harlingen to attend the RGVBF for a chance to see millions of migratory and resident birds. RGVBF activities include the Birder's Bazaar tradeshow, keynote speakers, workshops, and more than 100 field trips by bus, van, or boat.

Field trips are held throughout the RGV, including the following locations:

- Cactus Creek Ranch in

Rio Hondo, TX

- Estero Llano Grande State Park in Weslaco, TX
- Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge in Los Fresnos, TX
- National Butterfly Center in Mission, TX
- Quinta Mazatlan in McAllen, TX
- Resaca de la Palma State Park in Brownsville, TX
- Sabal Palm Sanctuary in Brownsville, TX
- Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge in Alamo, TX
- South Padre Island Bird and Nature Center in South Padre Island, TX
- And dozens more

My daughter and I attended the RGVBF for the first time last year in 2022. We were blown away by the size of the festival, number of



Photo: Lisa Campos



Photo: Lisa Campos
attendees, and quality of the programming. We took the Parrot Palooza evening field trip and found some red-crowned parrots and green parakeets here in Harlingen. I also took the Masterclass Birding

tour led by Jon Dunn, field guide author, at the Frontera Audubon in Weslaco, TX.

Registration is \$50 for the full event, or you may purchase an individual pass for \$10 per day for



Photo: Lisa Campos
November 2023

Saturday, November 11, 2023 or Sunday, November 12, 2023. Attendees must be registered to sign up for field trips, workshops, keynote speakers, or seminars, which are priced separately. Visitors who want to attend the tradeshow or free family/children's activities such as the Birds of Prey Flight Show or Children's Nature Nook, do not need to register.

The festival team is a nonprofit group, with nearly all its supporters being volunteers. More help is always needed to keep the 2nd biggest bird festival in the United States running well. RGVBF has a variety of potential ways to help in either the planning or execution phases of the festival,

including tech work, children's art, hospitality/housekeeping, and many others. Volunteers are given free access to many festival events! For questions about how you can help or sign up to be a volunteer, please email Sylvia at volunteers@rgvbf.org.

The RGVBF starts on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, and ends on Sunday, November 12, 2023. Most of the events (aside from the field trips) occur at the Harlingen Convention Center located at 701 Harlingen Heights Drive in Harlingen. For more information, you can contact Justin LeClaire, RGVBF Field Trip Chair, at fieldtrips@rgvbf.org. Or you can visit their website, www.rgvbf.org. ♦



Photo: Lisa Campos

Concluding a Chapter of Valor and Loss with Honors for Harlingen's Fallen Hero



Courtesy Photo: Defense POW MIA Accounting Agency

By Lisa Campos

This past November, the Defense Personnel POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced that Army Air Corps 2nd Lt. Porter M. Pile, 24, of Harlingen, killed during World War II, finally had been accounted for. Pile, previously categorized

as MIA, was laid to rest on American soil with full military honors, including a flyover by his old squadron, at Arlington National Cemetery on October 31, 2023, 79 years after he paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Pile served with the 700th Bombardment Squadron (now the 700th

Airlift Squadron, Dobbins ARB, Georgia), 445th Bombardment Group. He was navigator on a B-24H Liberator bomber on his 23rd mission over Germany on September 27, 1944, when his aircraft was shot down in what would become, to this day, the largest single-day loss of aircraft by American combat forces. For his family and friends, the loss of Pile was made worse since his body was not recovered, and the Germans never reported him as a prisoner of war. Human remains found at the crash site in later years remained unidentified until scientists from DPAA used anthropological information, DNA analysis, and dental records to make a positive identification in late 2022. DPAA immediately identified the family by contacting Pile's oldest living relative, Randy Fleuriet of Harlingen.

Following the interment of Pile at Arlington National Cemetery on October 31, the Harlingen community will honor Pile with a concluding ceremony on November 9, 2023, at 11 a.m. at

the Greater Chamber of Harlingen. Chamber President Javier De Leon will make introductory remarks with Mr. Fleuriet as the featured speaker. Both the Harlingen Police Department and Harlingen Fire Department will form the Honor Guard, with the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) units from both Harlingen high schools also in attendance. The event will conclude with Assistant Choir Director of Harlingen High School, Alfonso Gonzalez, singing "You Raise Me Up," followed by the sounding of "Taps" by Marine Military Academy (MMA) cadets as a final tribute to Pile.

Harlingen residents are encouraged to show support for their hometown airman, missing in action for 79 years, either by attending the concluding ceremony on November 9 at 11 a.m. at the Greater Chamber of Harlingen, 311 E. Tyler, in Harlingen, or by taking a moment to reflect on the valor and courage of Pile and his entire generation of military heroes. ♦



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FRIDAY @ 7 PM

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2023

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Texas State Elections: What You Need to Know

By **Lisa Campos**

On Election Day, November 7, 2023, Texans who have registered to vote by October 10, 2023, will have the opportunity to vote on 14 propositions to amend the Texas Constitution.

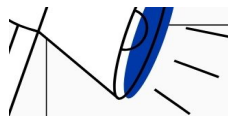
Early voting began on October 23, 2023 and ends on November 3, 2023. Early voting polling locations in Harlingen include the Harlingen County Annex Building, 3302 Wilson Road and the Harlingen Cultural Arts Center, 576 "76" Drive. For a full list of early voting polling locations in Cameron County, visit the Cameron County Elections & Voter Registration website, www.cameroncountytexas.gov/elections/index.php/locations.

Polls will be open on Election Day, November 7, 2023, from 7 am to 7 pm. Election Day polling

locations are specific to your address. The same Cameron County Elections & Voter Registration website listed above will have a complete list of Election Day polling locations.

Be sure to bring a form of acceptable identification with you to vote, such as:

- Texas Driver License issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas Personal Identification Card issued by DPS
- Texas Handgun License issued by DPS
- United States Military Identification Card containing the person's photograph
- United States Citizenship Certificate containing the person's photograph
- United States Passport (book or card)



GET READY TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION



Read all the proposed Texas Constitutional Amendments before casting your vote. They are listed in this article.



Research all the candidates and their platforms before casting your vote. Don't just rely on what you hear in the news or on social media.



Don't forget to bring your ID and proof of address with you to the polling station. You won't be able to vote without them!



Don't be afraid to ask for assistance if you need it. Poll workers are available to help you and ensure that everyone can vote.



Remember that every vote counts! Your voice matters and can make a difference in the outcome of the election.

**ELECTION DAY IS
NOVEMBER 7, 2023**

Mail-in ballots by mail must be received by November 7, 2023.

Here's a summary of each proposition:

No.	Proposition	Description, per ballotpedia.org
1	HJR 126 "The constitutional amendment protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management."	Establishes a right to farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management in the state constitution
2	SJR 64 "The constitutional amendment authorizing a local option exemption from ad valorem taxation by a county or municipality of all or part of the appraised value of real property used to operate a child-care facility."	Allows local governments to exempt childcare facilities from property taxes
3	HJR 132 "The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual wealth or net worth tax, including a tax on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family."	Prohibits a wealth or net worth tax

5	HJR 3 "The constitutional amendment relating to the Texas University Fund, which provides funding to certain institutions of higher education to achieve national prominence as major research universities and drive the state economy."	Renames the National Research University Fund to the Texas University Fund and establishes an ongoing revenue source from the accrued interest of the economic stabilization fund
6	SJR 75 "The constitutional amendment creating the Texas water fund to assist in financing water projects in this state."	Creates the Texas Water Fund to finance water projects
7	SJR 93 "The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities."	Creates the Texas Energy Fund and authorizes funding to modernize electric generation facilities
8	HJR 125 "The constitutional amendment creating the broadband infrastructure fund to expand high-speed broadband access and assist in the financing of connectivity projects."	Creates the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund to finance high-speed broadband access
9	HJR 2, regular session "The constitutional amendment authorizing the 88th Legislature to provide a cost-of-living adjustment to certain annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas."	Authorizes the state legislature to make cost-of-living adjustments or other benefit enhancements to eligible annuitants of the teacher retirement system
10	SJR 87 "The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation equipment or inventory held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products to protect the Texas healthcare network and strengthen our medical supply chain."	Authorizes an ad valorem tax exemption on equipment and inventory manufactured by medical or biomedical companies
11	SJR 32 "The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by ad valorem taxes to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities."	Authorizes the state legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to allow the county to issue bonds to fund parks and recreational facilities
12	HJR 134 "The constitutional amendment providing for the abolition of the office of county treasurer in Galveston County."	Abolishes the Galveston County treasurer
13	HJR 107 "The constitutional amendment to increase the mandatory age of retirement for state justices and judges."	Increases the mandatory retirement age for state judges from 75 to 79
14	SJR 74 "The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the centennial parks conservation fund to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks."	Creates the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund ♦



The poster features a rustic wooden background with festive holiday items: a red napkin with silverware tied with a ribbon in the top left, a whole pie in the bottom left, and another red napkin with silverware in the bottom right. The H-E-B logo is in the top center. The text is centered and reads:

FEAST OF SHARING

You're invited to the

30th Annual Holiday Dinner

Thursday, November 16th
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Harlingen Convention Center
701 Harlingen Hts. Dr., Harlingen TX 78552

Learn more about your Feast of Sharing dinner at heb.com/feast

HARLINGEN CONCERT ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

Bennie & The Jets
Elton John Tribute



November 14, 2023

2023 / 2024

LIVE CONCERTS

HCA Christmas Concert
"Jingle Belles"

feat. Vocalist Leslie Blasing & Cellist Jen Mulhern



December 5, 2023

Sounds of Silence Tribute

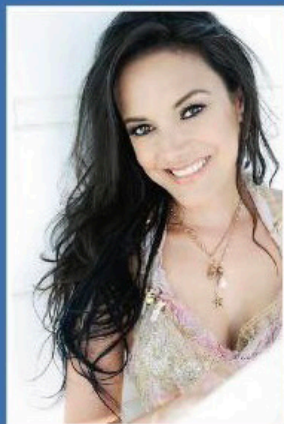
feat. Burlap to Cashmere Guitar / Vocal Duo



January 11, 2024

Barbara Padilla

Operatic / Pop Vocal Superstar



January 30, 2024

Key of G Live!
Garth Brooks Tribute



March 5, 2024

**For tickets and more information
visit www.HarlingenConcert.com
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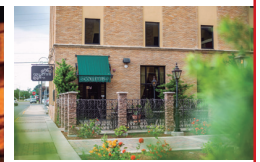
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to us. She doesn't know us
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wonderful & greet us
whether they're serving us
or not. They treat you like
family. That's what makes
Colletti's so awesome!!
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like I'm eating at home in my
dining room. There's so
much love there
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BUSINESS HOURS

SUNDAY & MONDAY	CLOSED
TUESDAY - THURSDAY	11 AM - 8 PM
FRIDAY	11 AM - 9 PM
SATURDAY	5 - 9 PM

Local Flavors

Keepin' It (Just) Fresh

prepared with the freshest ingredients. As Mrs. Leija-

Mondays from 4 pm to 6:30 pm. Keto meal preps are

available for an additional fee. I have also eaten many of their weekly prep meals, with some of my favorites being the Cajun shrimp boil, turkey lasagna, and turkey zucchini boats.

Beyond chicken salad and meal preps, Just Fresh offers a revolving menu with such customer favorites as turkey plates, pancit, birria tacos, pasta salad, homemade daily soups, juices, and more. Charcuterie trays are available upon special request.

Just Fresh welcomes catering orders for local businesses and schools. Recent catering orders



Photo: Just Fresh

By Lisa Campos

Just Fresh is a family-owned restaurant in Harlingen that serves both healthy and delicious homemade dishes. Founded in 2018, they were known as GoodEats RGV and FueledbyFaith RGV before they changed their name to Just Fresh. They relocated from La Feria to Harlingen in January 2020.

Janie Leija-Perez, with her roots in a migrant family, harbors a deep enthusiasm for utilizing ingredients that are fresh. She runs the restaurant along with her husband Art and sisters/daughters. Their meals are homemade and

Perez says, "Just Fresh is all about bringing wholesome and fresh, flavorful food to the community."

Some people think eating healthy means they are stuck with salads, but Just Fresh offers much more. They are best known for their chicken salad. They offer four types of chicken salad: grape almond (my personal favorite), cranberry pecan, chipotle, and traditional (mayo and mustard).

Just Fresh is also well known for their weekly low-calorie and portioned meal preps. Meal prep menus are usually released on Sundays for preorder and available for pickup on



Photo: Just Fresh



Photo: Just Fresh

included the Rio Grande Valley Chapter Associated General Contractors, Lower Valley Cotillion Club, Valley Children's Clinic, La Feria Lions Football, and Harlingen High School South Lady Hawks Volleyball and Softball. "Catering is the art of creating lasting memories through the language of food," Mrs. Leija-Perez stated.

Hours of operation for Just Fresh are Mondays,

11 am to 6:30 pm, and Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 am to 3 pm. They are closed on some Saturdays for caterings, Sundays for church/family time, holidays, and three weeks out of the year to vacation with their children.

Just Fresh is located at 1501 S H Street in Harlingen, Texas. You can contact them at 956-230-5379 or on their website, <https://justfreshhgn.square.site>. ♦



Photo: Just Fresh

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EXPLORE HARLINGEN

Reoccurring Events

Women Empowering Women
First Thursday (November 2), 12 pm to 1 pm
Greater Chamber of Harlingen

The Market at Wild August Nursery and Flower Farm
Every Friday night (November 3, 10, 17, and 24), 6 pm to 9 pm
16802 Garrett Road

Market Days
First Saturday (November 4), 9 am to 3 pm
Jackson Street and Centennial Plaza

Harlingen Farmers Market
Every Saturday (November 4, 11, 18, and 25), 3 pm to 4:30 pm
2nd Street and Tyler

Harlingen Elks Lodge Indoor Market
Every 3rd Saturday (November 18), 9 am to 1 pm
1426 S. Commerce

Downtown at Sundown
Every 3rd Saturday (November 18), 7 pm to 10 pm
Jackson Street

Harlingen Art Night
Last Friday (November 24), 7 pm to 10 pm
“A” Street and Jackson

November Special Events

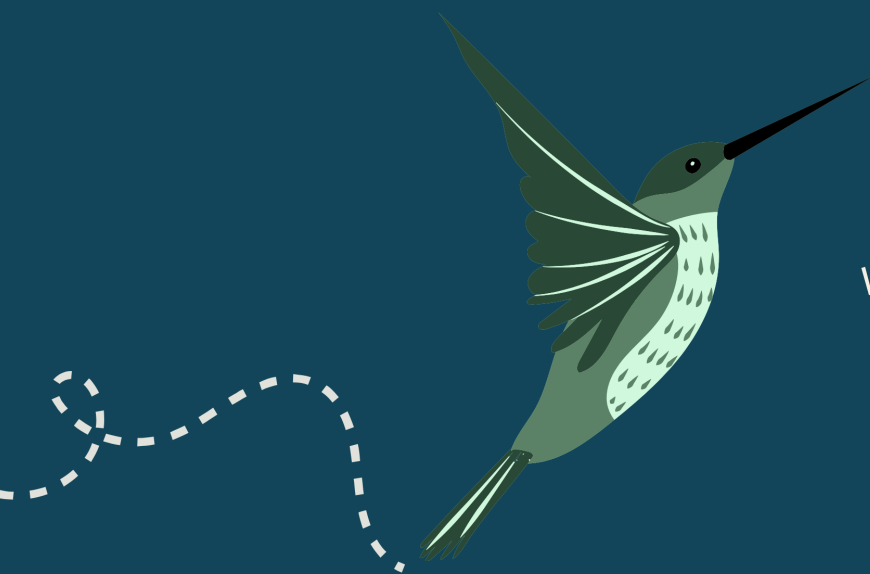
Fall Festival at the HCISD Clothing Closet
November 2, 5 pm to 7 pm
216 N. 21st Street

Dia de los Muertos Exhibit Reception
November 2, 6 pm to 8 pm
Exhibit runs October 10 through November 15

Harlingen Arts & Heritage Museum
Santa Arrives at Bass Pro
November 4, 5 pm to 7 pm

Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival
November 8-12, all day
Harlingen Convention Center





H-E-B Feast of Sharing
November 16, 11 am to 3 pm
Harlingen Convention Center

Welcome Back Winter Texans Fiesta
November 17, 10 am to 2 pm
Golden Palms Courtyard

Harlingen Social Bike Ride
November 25, 8 am
Bicycle World Harlingen

37th Annual Lighting of the Arroyo
November 30, 6 pm to 9 pm
McKelvey Park

Riofest
November 10, 6 pm to 11 pm
November 11, 12 pm to 11 pm
Harlingen Baseball Field/Lon C. Hill
Destination Park

Loaves & Fishes 18th Annual
Charity Dinner
November 30, 6 pm to 9 pm
TSTC Cultural Arts Center

Riofest 5K Run
November 10, 7 pm to 9 pm
Harlingen Baseball Field

Veterans Day Ceremony at the
Veterans Memorial
November 11, 11 am
Pendleton Park

Harlingen Concert Association
presents: Bennie & The Jets, Elton
John Tribute
November 14, 7:30 pm
Christian Fellowship Church
Auditorium

Beyond Harlingen

The T-Ranch Pumpkin Patch
November 2-3 and 9-10, 5 to 8 pm
November 4-5 and 11-12, 2 to 8 pm
25492 N FM 2556, La Feria

Let's get out there



THE HARLINGEN ARTS & HERITAGE MUSEUM
THE RGV MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
invite you to the exhibit

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS



Dia de Los Muertos Quilt Exhibit
By: Corina C. Ybarra

Opening Reception
Thursday, November 2, 2023
6:00 - 8:00 pm

Exhibit runs
October 10 - November 15, 2023



Harlingen Arts and Heritage Museum
2425 Boxwood St. Harlingen, TX 78550



LOAVES & FISHES
18TH ANNUAL
CHARITY DINNER

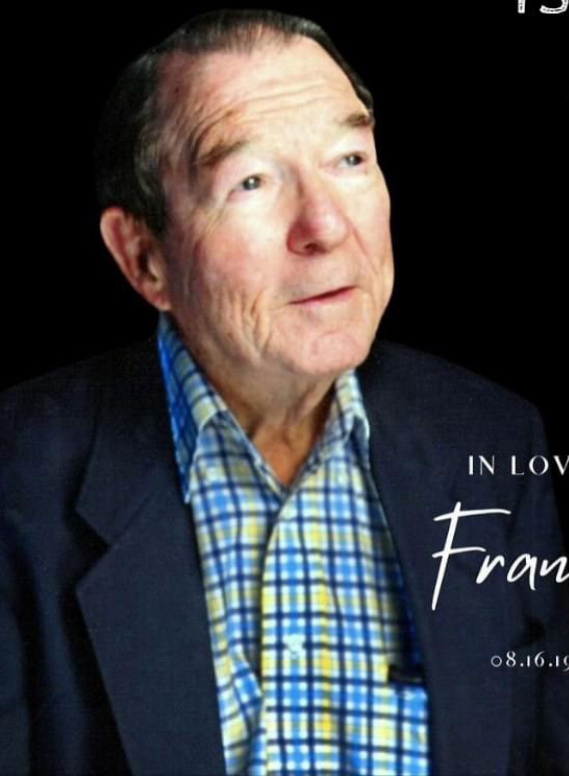
A NIGHT OF HELP, HOPE &
APPRECIATION



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30

6 - 9 PM

TSTC Cultural Arts Center
1825 N. Loop 499
Harlingen, TX 78550



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Frank Zoggus

08.16.1928 - 02.04.2023

LOAVES
&
FISHES

Introducing: Ask The Life Coach

Are you dealing with life transition challenges such as divorce, marriage, a big move, retirement, or the passing of a loved one and need some guidance? Or are you stuck in a rut with your career and need some inspiration to help you get motivated to either improve in your current job or find a new one that better suits you? Submit your questions to Coach Remi and each month, she will answer a couple of questions to be posted in the next edition of Explore Harlingen Magazine.

Submit your questions to remi@renovatedrealities.com by November 10, 2023 for a chance to be included in the December issue. Be sure to put "Explore Harlingen Magazine" in the subject line.

Remi Gibbs



is a Certified Life Coach and Positive Psychology Practitioner with a master's degree in organizational management. She is a co-host of the podcast Conversations on Life, Work, and Love. Remi runs workshops and retreats, and coaches people 1:1 both in Harlingen and online. Her goal is to help as many people as she can live their best lives. She uses a science-based, holistic approach to coaching. ♦

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Riofest

2023

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NOV 10TH & 11TH

FRI 05PM - 10PM **SAT** 12PM - 10PM ★ **HARLINGEN**
BASEBALL FIELD

WWW.HARLINGENRIOFEST.COM

Just Fresh

We specialize in chicken salad, prepped meals & catering.

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Decades of Celebration



Courtesy Photo: John Combs, committee member for Veterans' Memorial Project Committee.

By Steven Hughes

Cities in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) will blast empty bullets and wave the United States and Texas flags in continuing over seven decades of honoring veterans.

"It's the right thing to do," George Rice, Veterans Land Board On-Site representative for the Rio Grande Valley State Veterans Cemetery in Mission, said over the phone. "If you look at the warrior cultures, honoring veterans who served in wars has been a key part of those empires and military-based societies."

According to Rice, approximately 58,000 veterans call the Valley home and the RGV State Veterans Cemetery is the resting place for approximately 3,400 veterans.

From city parades to ceremonies featuring a color guard, RGV cities collaborate with local veteran-supporting organizations to ensure legacies.

One of these organizations is the Veterans' Memorial Project Committee at Pendleton Park in Harlingen.

The committee worked for several years to create

their memorial for its 2012 dedication ceremony in honor of Darrell Shipp, a Harlingen local, who died bravely in Iraq in 2007. Since then, the committee has hosted three annual events to reflect its mission for veterans.

The committee will host its annual Veterans Day program at 11 a.m. on November 11 in collaboration with the Harlingen Police Department, Boy Scouts Troop 1701, and invited local veterans.

"I am proud to have something to do that we started up and get it ready for people to enjoy," Lenore Combs, the secretary for the Veterans' Memorial Project Committee, said over the phone. "The other side of me is disappointed when we don't get many people out [in attendance]. We used to have 200 seats; now, we're lucky if we fill 100."

The committee will also host its upcoming Wreaths Across America Day at 11 a.m. on December 16 and a sunset Memorial Day program in May.

For more information, visit the Veterans' Memorial Project Committee's website, www.harlingenveterans.net. ♦



Photo: Steven Hughes

Lighting the Way to Christmas Day



Photo: Harlingen Parks and Recreation

By Lisa Campos

The City of Harlingen Parks and Recreation's Christmas event, the 37th Annual Lighting of the Arroyo, marks the start of the Christmas season in Harlingen. McKelvey Park is transformed into a Christmas wonderland, with more than 100,000 lights on 10-15 displays, beginning on November 30, 2023. The Christmas parade in downtown

Harlingen always occurs on the following night, which will be on December 1 this year.

The lights in the park will remain lit until the first week of January, but it's when the park is initially lit that makes it a unique experience. "This is a special occasion for the community of Harlingen. The Lighting of the Arroyo ushers in the holiday spirit, declaring it's officially

Christmas in Harlingen," said Christina Mendiola, Recreation Supervisor of the City of Harlingen Parks and Recreation Department.

In addition to the lighting of the park, families can expect to enjoy the following free features and activities at this event:

- Performances by Harlingen High School Cheer Squad, Harlingen High School

Cardettes, In Hymn Choir, Step by Step Dance Studio and many more

- Food vendors, which include Aguas Frescas Victoria, Cameron County Public Health, El Katracho Toys, Harlingen Water Works, Kona Ice, La Estacion, La Jeepeta, La Playita Snack, La Reyna Del Elote, Minnie's Sugar Bites, Patricia Neri,

Pupuseria Betania, Snack El Chavito, Something Sweet, and Southern Rose Coffee

- Appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus
- Snow in the park (snow machine)

Ms. Mendiola stated, “This is one of the best events the City of Harlingen puts on and is a true Harlingen experience that we encourage not only our community, but surrounding areas, to come out and see.”

For parking, if you are coming from Tyler Ave., take a right on S. Commerce towards 77

Sunshine Strip. Take a right at Worthwood (side street running in front of Pizza Hut and the former Valley Morning Star building), just past the Taft intersection. Proceed on Worthwood, past the Elks Lodge, toward the gate entrance that leads to the parking lot area. At the bottom of the hill, take a left. Parking will be on your right-hand side.

The Lighting of the Arroyo will occur on Thursday, November 30, 2023, from 6 pm to 9 pm, at McKelvey Park, located at 1325 S. 77 Sunshine Strip in Harlingen. For more information, you



Photo: Harlingen Parks and Recreation

can contact Christina Mendiola with the City of Harlingen Parks and

Recreation Department at 956-245-1222. ♦




Photo: Memorable Moments Photography



37TH ANNUAL LIGHTING OF THE ARROYO

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Sunny Glen: Changing the Trajectory of a Child's Life



Photo: Sunny Glen Children's Home

By Lisa Campos

For nearly 88 years, Sunny Glen Children's Home (Sunny Glen) has been a refuge for abused, neglected, and forgotten children. Sunny Glen provides loving homes and several professional services to meet the needs of children and families in our community, with the support of churches and community partners. These children often face severe emotional or behavioral issues due to their circumstances. Sunny Glen's job is to love them and provide

for their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs.

Over the span of their existence, Sunny Glen has helped more than 18,000 children in south Texas. Sunny Glen Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer Chase Palmer stated, "But with our expansion and the shelters we operate now, those numbers are just going to continue to escalate exponentially so it's great that we're able to have that kind of impact. To go from where we were serving 50 to 100 children a year to now, we are up to



Photo: Sunny Glen Children's Home

potentially 5,000 to 6,000 a year."

For young adults who have aged out of the foster care system, Sunny Glen can provide them with the life skills needed in the real world. They provide access to community resources, cooking classes, seminars on finances, and even free housing with the Supervised Independent Living (SIL) Center. The SIL is in a two-story historic building in downtown Harlingen. Vintage on Jackson, Sunny Glen's thrift store, which helps fund its mission, is on the first floor, while the second-floor apartment houses up to 10 young adults.

Mr. Palmer said, "Our goal is to change the trajectory of a child's life. From being abused, neglected, without hope, to

understanding their value. We want them to know they are loved by us, but most importantly, that they are loved by God."

Dr. Rosalinda Mercado, Chief Operations Officer for Sunny Glen, spoke from her personal experience as a previous foster child in the Sunny Glen family. "I think a lot of times, the stigma of being fostered would often play a role in kids' lives as if it was something to bear or carry in a negative way. And what we have done at Sunny Glen is to let them be proud of their home. It is a place that they can call home because they are so well taken care of. They have now experienced true care and compassion that they hadn't experienced before. Without even knowing it, they are growing academically, emotionally, and spiritually because of the foundation that has been set for them. Providing them that place of hope has given them the change that they don't even realize is to a different trajectory."

Sunny Glen welcomes volunteers and community participation in their events, such as the annual



Photo: Sunny Glen Children's Home

Incredible Kidz 5K/1 Mile Color Fun Run in April and the Trivia Night in August. For Giving Tuesday this November 28, Sunny Glen will be challenging fundraising teams to compete and raise funds for Sunny Glen children.

The Sunny Glen campus is located at 2385 W. Expressway 83, San Benito, TX 78586. Their

operating hours are Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm. For more information, you can reach them at 956-399-5356, on Facebook, www.facebook.com/sunnyglenchildrenshome, on Instagram @sunnyglenchildrens, or on their website, <http://sunnyglen.org>. ♦



Photo: Sunny Glen Children's Home



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Football and Volleyball Seasons Wrapping Up

*By Ruben Rodriguez
La Feria News*

Harlingen High: On The Gridiron (Football)

As we near the end of the 2023 Texas High School Football Season, both Harlingen Programs look to finish strong. The Harlingen Cardinals look to punch their ticket to the 6A Region 4 Playoffs. While it has not been the smoothest of years, Manny Gomez's Cardinals have fought week in and week out. Here is what has transpired for the Cardinals.

After a 4-1 finish to Non-District Play, Harlingen was gearing up for a very competitive round of District Football in 32-6A. After opening up District with a loss to unbeaten Weslaco, the Cardinals bounced back with a 27-10 victory over Brownsville Hanna. Harlingen would then fall to unbeaten rival San Benito as the Greyhounds would win their first Battle of the Arroyo in four years. With the loss, Harlingen has lost three of their last four games.

With two more games left on the 32-6A Schedule, the Cardinals currently hold a 1-2

District record and a 5-3 overall record. Sitting in fourth place, Harlingen looks to finish strong by winning out their last two games, as well as clinch a Playoff Berth.

Harlingen South: On the Gridiron (Football)

Across town, Harlingen South has been dominant so far in District 16-5A DI. In their second season in 5A Classification, as well as their third season under Head Coach Israel Gonzalez, the Hawks have found their groove and continue to fly high. However, Harlingen South hasn't had it all that easy.

In what was a nearly identical start to the 2022 season, the Hawks began 2023 by going 2-2 in Non-District Play. But once District Play began, the Hawks have truly been the team to look out for. On a 4-0 Start to District, Harlingen South has outscored their opponents 205-23, scoring an average of 51 points per game.

With two more games on the Horizon, Harlingen South looks to bring home a third straight District Title under Israel Gonzalez. The Hawks previously brought home

the 32-6A District Title in 2021, then shared a piece of the 16-5A DI title as part of a three-way tie with Brownsville Veterans and Weslaco East in 2022.

Harlingen High: On the Court (Volleyball)

With October all wrapped up, that can only mean one thing: Volleyball Playoffs. The 2023 UIL State Volleyball Playoffs are officially here, and it could not have come at a better time as both schools are in the final chapters of a long Volleyball Season.

The Harlingen Lady Cardinals, who have been the queens of the 32-6A hardwood, had a completely different season in 2023. After capturing District for the last two seasons under Joslynn Torres, the Lady Cardinals had a lot of expectations coming into 2023. After losing multiple key members due to graduation, the Lady Cardinals entered a rebuilding period. Despite battling hard every game night, Harlingen finished District with a 2-8 record, missing the postseason for the first time since 2018.

Harlingen South: On the Court (Volleyball)

Meanwhile, in 5A competition, the Harlingen South Lady Hawks certainly had quite the turnaround in 2023. From struggling to thriving, Harlingen South "flipped the script" and found the rhythm in the 2023 Texas High School Volleyball Season.

Last season, in their first year in 5A under first-year Head Coach Doryann Perez, Harlingen South would go 9-9 in District and miss the playoffs. Fast forward a year later, the Lady Hawks are on a tear in District 32-5A, holding a 15-3 District record and currently sit in second.

In what is arguably one of the most competitive District, the Lady Hawks find themselves as the two seed of District 32-5A, behind District Champion Brownsville Pace, and ahead of third seed Brownsville Veterans.

Without a doubt one of the most impressive turnarounds in RGV Volleyball History, the Hawks look to keep the momentum going as they make their return to the playoffs for the first time since 2021. ♦

2023 SCHEDULE



HARLINGEN CARDINALS

DATE	DAY	OPPONENT	TIME
Aug 11	Friday	PSJA North (Scrimmage)	7:00 pm
Aug 17	Thursday	Sharyland (Scrimmage)	7:00 pm
Aug 25	Friday	Harlingen South	7:00 pm
Sept. 1	Friday	Mercedes (Parent's Night)	7:30 pm
Sept. 8	Friday	Mission Veterans	7:00 pm
Sept. 14	Thursday	Laredo United South @ Roma	7:00 pm
Sept. 22	Friday	Laredo United @ Roma	7:00 pm
Sept. 29	Friday	Open	
Oct. 6	Friday	*Weslaco	7:00 pm
Oct. 13	Friday	*Brownsville Hanna (Homecoming)	7:00 pm
Oct. 20	Friday	*San Benito	7:00 pm
Oct. 27	Friday	*Brownsville Rivera	7:00 pm
Nov. 3	Friday	*Los Fresnos	7:00 pm

■ HOME GAMES
 ■ AWAY GAMES
 ■ *DISTRICT GAMES

SOUTH HAWKS

“A STEP ABOVE”

HARLINGEN SOUTH HAWK 2023 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	DAY	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
8/10	Friday	Sharyland*	Boggus	7:00 pm
8/18	Friday	PSJA High*	Away	7:00 pm
8/25	Friday	Harlingen	Away	7:00 pm
9/1	Friday	Weslaco	Away	7:00 pm
9/8	Thursday	Brownsville Hanna (Senior Parent's Night)	Boggus	7:00 pm
9/15	Friday	Brownsville Rivera	Boggus	7:00 pm
9/22	Friday	Weslaco East**	Boggus	7:30 pm
9/29	Friday	Brownsville Pace**	Away	7:30 pm
10/6	Friday	Donna North** (Homecoming)	Boggus	7:30 pm
10/13	Friday	Bye		
10/20	Thursday	Brownsville Lopez**	Away	7:30 pm
10/27	Friday	Brownsville Veterans**	Boggus	7:30 pm
11/3	Friday	Donna**	Away	7:30 pm

Head Coach: Israel Gonzalez
 Superintendent: Dr. Veronica Kortan
 Athletic Director: Robert Davies
 Assistant Athletic Director: Luis Solorio
 Principal: Dr. Fernando Reyes
 * Scrimmage
 ** District 16-5A I

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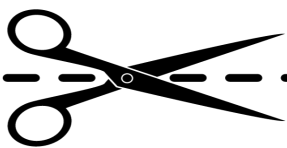
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