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Arts is an anagram for rats at UTRGV

Staff Editorial
 THE RIDER

From the living nightmare that is course registration to the terrible class schedules students manage to hodgepodge together, the pursuit of an art degree at UTRGV is riddled with tragedies.

It is embarrassing that students and staff have to deal with a rodent infestation, droppings and having their work ruined from the conditions of Rusteberg Hall. The School of Art and Design is being overlooked and it is hard to believe that solutions are actually in the works.

Empty promises are all anybody hears at this point. It is also unfortunate to hear about class schedules for students based in Brownsville.

Before the university administration asks where the funding for the School of Art and Design will come from, they should remember how they were willing to ask the University of Texas System Board of Regents for money, consistently request donations and come up with various ways to raise funds for a football team. They sure as hell can figure out where to find the funds to clean the mess that has been ignored for several years now.

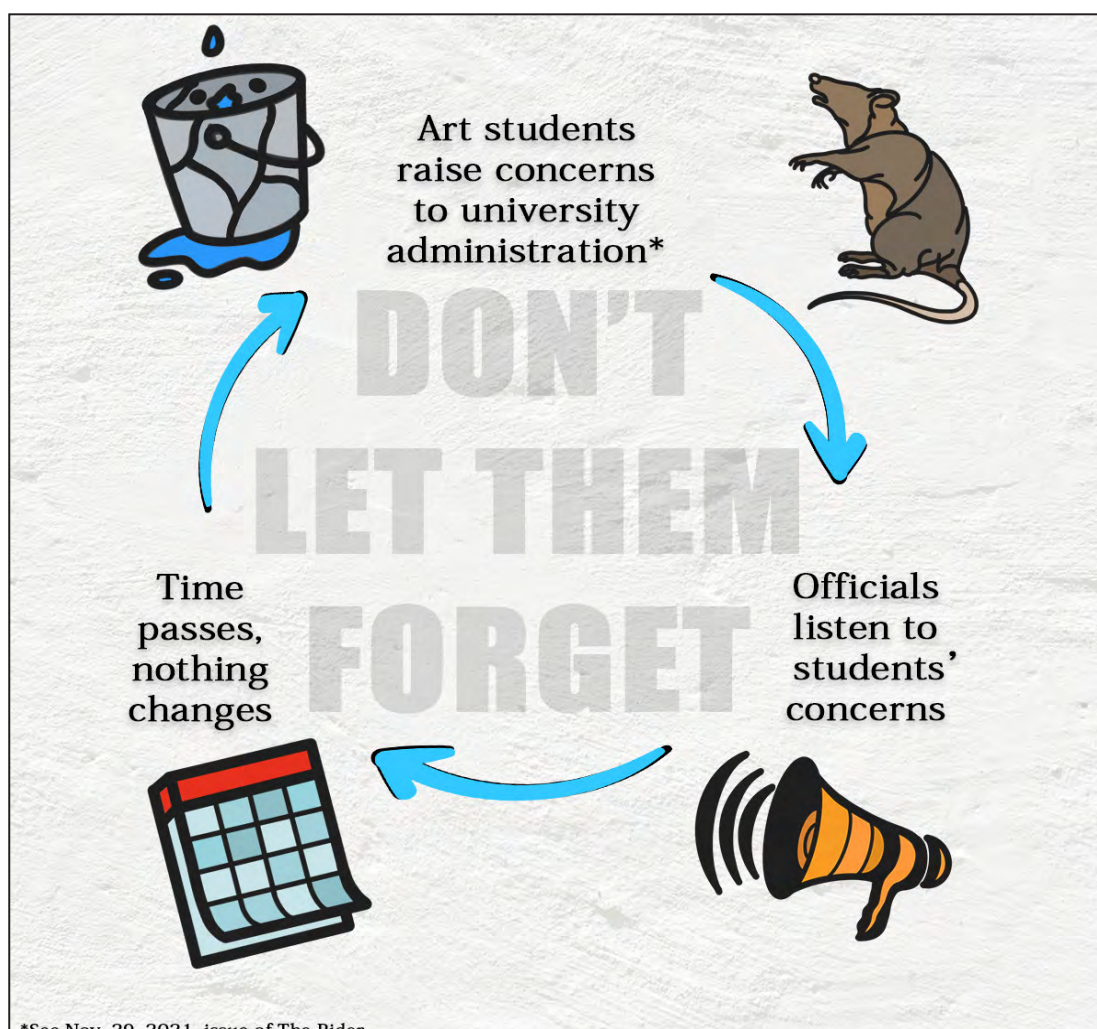
Stop acting like any of the art students' problems brought to your attention at the April 12 town hall are new. On top of that, it doesn't seem like the same funding is aimed toward the women's swimming and diving teams or the expansion of the spirit program.

So who is the football team really for?

There is no reason art students should be paying thousands of dollars to a university that doesn't give enough of a crap about them to try to actually fix problems in the facilities it rents.

Throughout the years, we have seen the university expand and grow, not only in enrollment but in buildings, but sadly this is not the case for the School of Art and Design. Maybe you will see growth on the Edinburg campus, but the Brownsville campus is far from it.

Rusteberg Hall is in horrible condition with rats, broken restrooms, poor plumbing and



Daniela Martinez Salazar/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

a shortage of proper equipment. Why should professors and students surround themselves with rat poop and nails jutting from the ceiling?

The university says it cannot

Does the health and well-being of these individuals stop mattering simply because UTRGV doesn't own the facility?

It's still UTRGV's responsibility to protect its

The art program in Brownsville deserves a new building, just like music majors received one in 2018. Stop using our student services fee to pay for sports and instead use it to give art students

"There is no reason art students should be paying thousands of dollars to a university that doesn't give enough of a crap about them to try to actually fix problems in the facilities it rents."

make renovations to the building because it's owned by Texas Southmost College. It is startling to know that these issues prevail, even when both the owner and renter realize the dangers and discomforts they cause.

TSC should be held accountable for the state of the building. As owner, it is its responsibility to ensure that conditions in Rusteberg Hall meet the appropriate safety standards. Art students and faculty are spending long periods of time there.

students, faculty and staff, especially if this is the location they have allotted for these individuals. These conditions don't promote learning and, especially, don't promote health. Vaqueros deserve their health to be a top priority when it comes to budgeting different departments.

UTRGV will have a \$45 million sports facility and will soon have a beer to generate additional revenue for Athletics to spread our "Vaquero Pride." But art students don't feel that pride.

proper facilities and more classes in Brownsville.

It's not fun traveling to another campus at 7:30 a.m. and not getting home until 10 p.m., all because it was the only way the schedule would work.

Log in to ASSIST, go to course registration for Fall 2023 and input "ARTS" and "Brownsville." You'll find 33 classes. Then search for classes in Edinburg, and you'll find 79.

The Visual Arts Complex in Edinburg has its issues as well. Most of the students in that

building are there from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., day in and day out.

There are students taking naps on extremely uncomfortable ottomans in the hallways to catch up on sleep from staying up late to do homework since that is the only time that they can really work on their assignments.

This is a situation that affects all UTRGV students, not just art majors. If they have let this problem go on for literal years, good luck bringing up other concerns that you may have. With no "solution" in sight, it's as though the university hopes that students forget. Is it too much to ask for transparency?

After countless hours and dollars poured into building the reputation of the school, we are finally able to show everyone just how great the Rio Grande Valley can be. This display of negligence, however, is starting to tarnish the reputation that has been carefully cultivated by members of the community.

It seems like every year, issues are brought up, new students are exposed to the problems, they voice their concerns to university administration and all gets forgotten in the long run.

We only get bandages to fix problems in Rusteberg Hall. Is this what UTRGV is shaping for the future of Texas?

Today it's the art students rallying and supporting one another for change, but tomorrow, it could be a different college doing the same.

Let's make it clear we are not trying to sound ungrateful for the recent discussion with top administrators.

We want to thank Ed Pogue, director of the School of Art and Design; Jeffrey Ward, dean of the College of Fine Arts; and Janna Arney, executive vice president and provost, for creating a safe space for art students to voice their concerns and experiences earlier this month.

However, this progress, though slow and small, needs to continue. We ask that in the coming semesters, these issues aren't forgotten and that every social media post, flyer and voice raised doesn't go to waste.

To the art students calling for change, we see you, we support you and ask one thing of you: Don't let them forget.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Today Free Iced Coffee

The **Baptist Student Ministry** will provide **free coffee** from 12:30 to 2 p.m. outside the Interdisciplinary Academic Building on the Brownsville campus.

Biology Club Meeting

The **Biology Club** will host a meeting for anyone interested in the field from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in Performing Arts Complex B on the Edinburg campus.

Information Session

The **Young Life College RGV** will host an informational session from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the University Library lobby on the Edinburg campus.

Tuesday Mass Celebration

The **Catholic Student Association** celebrates **Mass** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the the University Chapel on the Edinburg campus and from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. in the Student Union's Salón Gardenia on the Brownsville campus.

Wednesday Jenga Tournament

The **Student Union** will host a **Jenga tournament** with a chance of **winning VBucks** from 2 to 4 p.m. Wednesday in Student Union Game Room on the Brownsville campus and at the same time Thursday in Student Union Game Room on the Edinburg campus.

Graphic Thoughts

The **University Library** will host a **comic book discussion** from 5 to 6 p.m. online. RSVP through V Link.

Therapy Student Q&A

The **Exercise Science Club** will host a meeting where students present their experiences on applying to, interviewing for and being accepted into the **occupational therapy program** from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Life and Health Sciences Building Room 2.314 on the Brownsville campus.

Carnival Funfair

The **Campus Activities Board** will hold a **Carnival Funfair** with **games** and **attractions** from 4 to 7 p.m. on the

Chapel Lawn on the Edinburg campus. There will be **free food**.

Thursday Fashion Show

The **House of Fashion** will host a **fashion show** focused around sustainability from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre on the Edinburg campus.

V-Gala

The **Campus Activities Board** will host a showing of **"Ocean's 8"** at a Met Gala-themed event from 5 to 8 p.m. in the Student Union PlainsCapital Bank El Gran Salón on the Brownsville campus. There will be **riddles** and **trivia** as well as **snacks** and **drinks**. Dressing formally in the theme of heist is encouraged but not required.

Game Developer Meeting

The **International Game Developer Association** will hold a general meeting from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Interdisciplinary Engineering & Academic Building Room 1.206 on the Edinburg campus.

Law School Info Session

The **Pre-Law Society** will host **Texas A&M University School of Law** for an information session about the admissions process from 4 to 5 p.m. in Liberal Arts Building North Room 110 on the Edinburg campus.

Friday Student Senate Meeting

The **Student Government Association** will meet from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in Student Academic Center Room 2.130 on the Edinburg campus.

Art Workshop

The **International Game Developer Association** will host a **pixel art workshop** using **Krita** from 6 to 8 p.m. in Interdisciplinary Engineering & Academic Building Room 1.206 on the Edinburg campus.

Recognition Ceremony

The **Center for Student Involvement** will host the **Student Leader Recognition Ceremony** from 6:30 to 9 p.m. in the University Ballroom on the Edinburg campus.

--Compiled by Silvana Villarreal

POLICE REPORTS

The following are among the incidents reported to University Police between April 12 and 17.



April 12

8:31 a.m.: A contractor reported that a backpack was stolen from his parked truck while he was making a delivery on the Brownsville campus. The case is under investigation.

3:08 p.m.: An officer responded to a request to assist the U.S. Border Patrol in apprehending several individuals by the former Fort Brown Memorial Golf Course area in Brownsville. Sixty-one individuals who were living in or entering the U.S. illegally were detained. The nationalities of those detained were not immediately available.

April 13

12:35 a.m.: Officers were dispatched to the area west of Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus to assist the U.S. Border Patrol with the apprehension of 12 individuals who were living in or entering the U.S. illegally. Information on their nationalities was not immediately available. All individuals remained in the custody of Border Patrol.

4:04 a.m.: A UTRGV Police Department dispatcher observed a man and woman crossing the border fence behind the Interdisciplinary Academic Building on the Brownsville

campus via closed-circuit TV cameras. An officer located and detained both individuals, who were entering the U.S. illegally, and released them to the U.S. Border Patrol. The nationality of the individuals was not immediately available.

3:28 p.m.: A male student reported being sexually assaulted by a man in Edcouch. The student does not wish to pursue criminal charges.

10:28 p.m.: Officers met with a staff member who reported a male staff member was following her around campus on multiple occasions in Edinburg. The case is under investigation, but the elements to a criminal offense have not been met. The case will be referred for administrative disciplinary review.

April 14

9:06 a.m.: An officer responded to the Life and Health Sciences Building on the Brownsville campus in reference to a disturbance. An employee reported that a male student was upset over financial aid issues. No crime occurred.

12:54 p.m.: An officer made contact with a male juvenile visitor from McAllen Independent School District who reported being assaulted by another male juvenile visitor on the Edinburg campus. The guardians of the McAllen School District students were contacted and advised of the

incident. The legal guardian of the victim declined to press criminal charges.

6:36 p.m.: Officers responded to the Liberal Arts Building South on the Edinburg campus in reference to three men contacting several students. It was determined that no threats were made, and no crime had occurred. The surrounding areas were checked but the men were not located.

April 15

2:36 a.m.: A UTRGV Police Department dispatcher observed four men climbing the border fence behind the Interdisciplinary Academic Building in Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus via closed-circuit TV cameras. The men were detained by the U.S. Border Patrol. One man was identified as being from the Dominican Republic, one from El Salvador and two were Mexican nationals.

4:45 p.m.: A UTRGV Police Department dispatcher observed four subjects standing by the border fence behind the Interdisciplinary Academic Building in Lot B-1 on the Brownsville campus via closed-circuit TV cameras. A UTRGV officer responded and discovered the four subjects attempting to conceal themselves near the building. The subjects were subsequently released to the U.S. Border Patrol and identified

as one Colombian national and three Venezuelan nationals.

April 16

3:39 p.m.: An officer observed a group of about 40 to 50 subjects walking on the river levee, south of the border fence behind the Facilities Complex on the Brownsville campus. The U.S. Border Patrol was aware and had set up a processing area south of the border fence to process about 100 subjects. Officers assisted by providing extra patrol in the area.

10:40 p.m.: An officer responded to Unity Hall on the Edinburg campus in reference to a female student reporting an unknown man approaching her and asking her concerning questions. The case is under investigation.

April 17

11:31 a.m.: An employee on the Edinburg campus reported that a university-owned computer was being sold online. The case is under investigation.

4:57 p.m.: An employee at the UHealth Houston, School of Public Health campus in Brownsville reported that a woman entered a secured building without consent and used the shower in the women's restroom. The woman was located outside the building and was issued a criminal trespass warning at the request of the employee.

--Compiled by Arisbeth Rodriguez



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THE RIDER

The Rider is the official, award-winning student newspaper of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The newspaper is widely distributed on and off campus in Brownsville and Edinburg, Texas. Views presented are those of the writers and do not reflect those of the newspaper or university.

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SGA welcomes new members, event proposals in the works



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER PHOTOS

College of Education Senator Ximena Larios (from left), College of Fine Arts Senator Victoria Lynn Rivera, School of Nursing Senator Rensanali Dela Cruz and College of Liberal Arts Senator Alexa Desiree Alvarez are shown during the 2023-2024 Student Government Association Inauguration Ceremony last Tuesday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

Aleena Acosta THE RIDER

The Student Government Association's newly elected executive officers and senators took the oath of office during the inauguration ceremony last Tuesday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

The new executive team is composed of Odalys Anahi Saenz, who will serve as president, alongside Ihssan Omar Al-Qudah and Juana Elena Jimenez L., who were elected as internal and external vice presidents, respectively, for the 2023-2024 term.

The new term will begin at noon May 1.

Saenz thanked everyone who attended the inauguration and who voted for the executive team before directing her speech to the

newly elected senators.

"I encourage you to embrace your roles with purpose, passion and dedication, but let's work together to create that bright future for our UTRGV community by leading with example in everything we do," Saenz said. "The student body has elected you to represent them by speaking on issues that affect students' everyday lives. Together, we will create a stronger voice for the student body."

Senate meeting

During the April 14 SGA meeting, Kimberly Escalante, vice president for Internal Affairs, said there are 30 new SGA members who are being ushered in for the upcoming ninth legislative season.

"Currently, we're just working on transitioning the new executives to the new roles, duties and responsibilities," Escalante said in her president's report.

Elijah Gonzalez, senator-at-large for Edinburg, announced during the meeting that the Financial Affairs Standing Committee

no longer has spring funds but summer funds are still available. The committee is also waiting on approval for its \$3,625 summer fund application.

"There are still opportunities for students to travel during their summer semester," Gonzalez said regarding SGA funds.

Joselyn Rodriguez, senator for the College of Sciences, spoke on behalf of Julianna Castillo, chair of the Campus Life and Community Affairs Standing Committee and senator for the College of Health Professions.

Rodriguez said the committee is working on three proposal drafts, which are a Pet Picnic in association with the Athletics Department, an Entrepreneur Fair and a Health Fair.

The last Campus Life and Community Affairs Standing Committee meeting for the term will be at 5:15 p.m. Wednesday.

During the March 31 SGA meeting, Sergeant-at-Arms Omar Salgado gave the Internal Affairs Standing Committee report. The committee also discussed updating the senators' training.

The last Internal Affairs Standing Committee meeting for the term will be at 11 a.m. April 21.

The SGA's next meeting is at 2:30 p.m. Friday in Student Academic Center Room 2.130 on the Edinburg campus.



Student Government Association Vice President Ihssan Omar Al-Qudah (from left), President Odalys Anahi Saenz and Vice President Juana Elena Jimenez are shown during the 2023-2024 Student Government Association Inauguration Ceremony last Tuesday in the Performing Arts Complex on the Edinburg campus.

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Autism Awareness Month!



VAQUERO VOICE

Are there any life hacks you use?



Roberto Rodriguez
history freshman

"For classes, there's this thing. ... It's [a website] called Chegg. [It] really helps me out. Though I'm not the best and not the brightest student, it does help out with me just understanding the formulas and the curriculum a little bit more than anything."



Jesus Garcia Jr.
computer engineering sophomore

"Just really focus on one thing at a time and that's just how you get things done. Just take it in little pieces. Everything in little pieces."



Richard Rich
computer science junior

"I use a lot of [the website] Symbolab for calculus."

"Si, yo digo que lo que me sirve más es ir a la biblioteca y ponerme mis audífonos, y así no tengo que oír a nadie más y me puedo enfocar mejor".



Sofia Garcia Lopez
estudiante de segundo año de ciencia biomédica

--Compiled and photos by Landon Burns

Let trans girls play sports



Viviana Infante
MARKETING SPECIALIST

her performance during her time on the women's team was not so different from when she had previously competed in the men's category.

The people who argue that transgender athletes have a significant advantage over athletes who identify with their assigned gender at birth forget that different factors contribute to wins. Hormone balances, muscle mass, and strength differs from person to person. Athleticism and

over cisgender women.

Another argument brought up by those who oppose transgender women playing in women's sports is that their participation will only hurt cisgender women. Yet, this only causes more policing of women's bodies, especially cisgender women. Allowing officials and lawmakers to enact restrictions in women's sports will only allow for gender policing and invasive tests that work to determine whether someone is too "masculine."

This type of policing stems from the racism and stereotype that some minority groups, such as Black women, are inherently more "manly" than women of other races. Just take a look at what happened with Serena Williams, who was constantly body shamed by the media for her physique and mocked by other

players for it. In the case of the transgender ban implemented by World Athletics, this also barred some cisgender women, such as Caster Semenya, a South African middle-distance runner and two-time Olympic gold medalist, from participating in certain races.

This policing in sports does nothing but enforce the binary, ignore the existence

See **ATHLETES**, Page 11

This policing in sports does nothing but enforce the binary, ignore the existence of gender non-conforming people and those who are intersex, and poses a threat to women and minorities who are deemed not "feminine" enough.

luck also play a big role in an athlete's performance.

Determining that someone will perform better in a competition solely based on their biological sex and physiology ignores the fact that it takes years of training to become successful.

This is why so many transphobic bans are being enacted: to promote the false narrative that transgender women have a clear advantage

There is this constant argument of "unfairness" when it comes to allowing transgender girls and women to participate in sports teams that match their gender identity.

However, I think the same side that argues transgender people bring about this "unfairness" disregard the dangers and harm their uneducated argument has on the transgender community.

Lia Catherine Thomas, a former University of Pennsylvania competitive swimmer, for instance, sparked controversy for being the first transgender woman to win an NCAA Division I national championship in March 2022. Critics who targeted her argued the trophy was stolen from the cisgender women who competed in the competition, claiming that her biological sex provided an unfair advantage. However,

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The Rider encourages letters but does not guarantee publication. We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar and content. Letters for The Rider may be sent to therider@utrgv.edu. All letters must be typed and no longer than 400 words. Letters must include the name, classification and phone number of letter's author or the letter cannot be published. Opinions expressed in The Rider are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rider or UTRGV administrators.

BPUB amendments on the ballot

**City of Brownsville May 6 General Election
Early Voting Schedule**

Locations

- Main Office of the Cameron County Courthouse Judicial Complex
- Brownsville Public Library Main Branch
- Brownsville Public Library Southmost Branch
- UTRGV Interdisciplinary Academic Building
- New Horizon Medical Center
- Good Shepherd Community Church

Dates and Times

- April 24 to April 28
9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- April 29
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- May 1 to May 2
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dates and times are the same for every location.

For more information, visit: cameroncountytexas.gov

Daniela Martinez Salazar/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

Silvana Villarreal
THE RIDER

As the May 6 municipal election in Brownsville approaches, two UTRGV political science professors said it might be difficult to find information about the propositions on the ballot.

Early voting for the May 6 General Election begins today and will run until May 2. Eligible voters will cast ballots for a new mayor, three commissioners and six amendments to the city charter, three of which are regarding the Brownsville Public Utilities Board.

Candidates for mayor are Erasmo Castro, a former member of the Brownsville Independent School District Board of Trustees; Jessica Tetreau, the current

District 2 city commissioner; John Cowen Jr., the current city commissioner At-Large “A”; and business owner Jennifer Stanton.

In the Commissioner At-Large “A” race, Susan Ruvalcaba, owner of Nurses at Mesquite Home Health; William A. Garza, a hotel night auditor; and Tino Villarreal, athletic director and head football coach at Saint Joseph Academy, are vying to be elected.

Incumbent District 1 City Commissioner Nurith Galonsky Pizaña is being challenged by Bryan Martinez, chief of staff for District 3 City Commissioner Roy De los Santos.

Running for District 2 City Commissioner is U.S. Army veteran Ernesto Lopez; Realtor Caty Presas-Garcia, and Linda

Macias, a licensed professional counselor.

Charter Amendment Proposition A proposes the mayor’s annual pay to be set at the rate of \$40,000 and city commissioners annual pay to be set at the rate of \$25,000. Currently, each member of the commission and the mayor receives \$10 per hour when they attend a meeting.

Charter Amendment Proposition B proposes to increase the city manager’s maximum contract length from two to three years.

Charter Amendment Proposition C proposes the appointment of a city attorney to define the duties and powers of the office of the city attorney by adding section 21-A to Article V.

Charter Amendment Proposition D would allow a two-thirds supermajority of the city commission to appoint members to the Brownsville Public Utilities Board, having each city commissioner make a nomination to appoint to the board when a vacancy exists by virtue of a term-limit, resignation, death or other incapacity, according to the ballot.

Charter Amendment Proposition E proposes allowing a two-thirds supermajority of the city commission to remove three board members of the Brownsville Public Utilities Board in any 12-month period.

Alvaro Corral, an assistant professor of political science at UTRGV, said he is curious why Proposition E seeks to remove three members of the BPUB board.

“Why three?” Corral said. “... That’s close to being almost half of the board, so that’s a way to kind of really reshape the composition of the board in a particular way.”

Charter Amendment Proposition F proposes to declare a Brownsville Public Utilities Board member’s position, other than the mayor, who serves as a voting member of the board, vacant after continuously being absent four times from any regular meeting in a calendar year.

Mark Kaswan, an associate professor of political science at UTRGV, said the task of trying to find further information on the Brownsville charter amendments was impossible, which will most likely result in low voter turnout.

Kaswan said there are videos

of the city commission debating and deciding proposed charter amendments.

“I mean, the city, the Charter Review Commission, videos alone are like 10 hours of videos,” he said. “I don’t have time to watch that. I don’t think the average voter has time to watch that. So it’s very, very frustrating in other places, cities and counties and states that do this kind of thing.”

Kaswan said the State of Texas produces “thorough and detailed analysis of constitutional amendment proposals along with arguments in favor and against and information about their fiscal impact.”

“But the city doesn’t do that,” he said. “... [The] government [is] just not providing information, basic information, to voters about what they’re voting on.”

He said it is the responsibility of the state to give voters the basic information they need to make good decisions.

“Unfortunately, there’s a lot of misinformation out there, as there seems to be in every election, so be cautious about who you get your information from, and that it is coming from an unbiased source,” he said.

Corral said he recommends people to get informed by watching mayoral candidate forums.

Early voting locations will be available throughout the City of Brownsville from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. today until Friday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. May 1 and 2.

–Rider Spanish Editor Fatima Gamez Lopez contributed to this report.

Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 proposing a \$195M bond issue

Fatima Gamez Lopez
SPANISH EDITOR

With May 6 elections in local entities less than three weeks away, early voting begins today and ends May 2, with 24 polling sites across Hidalgo County.

The Annex Room located at 317 N. Closner Blvd. in Edinburg is the main early voting location in Hidalgo County.

This election, the UTRGV campus in Edinburg will not be used as a voting location.

“For this election, we do have a total of nine local entities elections that we will be administering,” said Hilda Salinas, elections administrator for the Hidalgo County Elections Department. “They include McAllen ISD, Progreso ISD, Sharyland ISD, as well as the [cities] of Alton, La Villa, Mercedes, Peñitas, San Juan, and we also have a special election for the Hidalgo County drainage district.”

On the ballot, voters will have the opportunity to address drainage issues.

The Proposed 2023 Drainage Bond Program presentation states, “To address critical drainage infrastructure

improvements and expansions of these arteries and channels to mitigate potential threats from catastrophic flooding and protect lives and property, the Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 is proposing a bond in the amount of \$195 million for drainage infrastructure improvements in regional main arteries that serve our communities.”

The proposed countywide projects would positively affect more than 81,095 structures in Hidalgo County, helping to protect more than \$17.8 billion in assessed property values, according to the presentation.

“The District has strategically worked closely with partnering cities within the County to identify and prioritize those projects that would have the greatest impact in expanding drainage capacity and addressing the most critical infrastructure improvements needed in the County’s drainage system,” the presentation states.

There will be a zero tax rate impact to Hidalgo County taxpayers, according to the presentation.

Early voting sites are open

**Early Voting for May 6 Hidalgo County
Local Entities Elections**

Dates	Hours
April 24	7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
April 25 - 28	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
April 29	7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
April 30	CLOSED
May 1	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
May 2	7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

FOR MORE INFO ABOUT EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS, VISIT:
www.hidalgocounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/62549

Isabel Morales/THE RIDER GRAPHIC

from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. today, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. May 1 and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. May 2. On Sunday, the early polling locations are closed.

To request a mail-in ballot,

voters must be 65 years or older, have a disability, be confined in prison or jail with the right to vote, be out of the county during early voting or Election Day or if expected to give birth within three weeks of Election Day.

The deadline to request a mail-in ballot is Tuesday.

The Hidalgo County election website has links to see what is on the ballot before heading to the polls.

To vote, there are seven See **VOTING**, Page 1



Nombre: Ruth Angeli Tomada

Carrera: Actuación de piano

Clasificación: Estudiante de posgrado

Fecha de graduación: Primavera 2024

Ciudad natal: Cebú, Filipinas



Isabel Morales / FOTO RIDER

Actividades extracurriculares:

“No, pero no creo que tenga tiempo para [actividades] extracurriculares porque también soy asistente de posgrado. Así que para mí asistente, estoy acompañando al coro ... en Brownsville. Y luego también estoy dando algunas clases de piano para estudiantes universitarios. Y sí, aparte de eso, mis clases, mis otras clases, así que no creo que tenga tiempo para actividades extracurriculares”.

¿Cuáles son las diferencias entre tu ciudad natal y los Estados Unidos?

“Cuando llegué aquí, lo primero que noté fue que cuando estaba en la carretera, no podía ver a mucha gente caminando. En Filipinas, se podía ver a mucha gente, como, caminando afuera. Así que creo que fue una de las primeras cosas que noté que es diferente. ... Hay muchas similitudes con la comida aquí. Como el picadillo, también tenemos una versión de eso allí. También tenemos menudo. Sí, muchas similitudes. Así que ... no siento demasiada nostalgia por la comida”.

¿Qué hay en tu lista de deseos?

“Me gustaría viajar fuera de Texas. ... Me gustaría explorar más. Así que como ya estoy aquí en los EE. UU., me gustaría ir probablemente a New York o a algún lugar [en] Colorado donde haya montañas. Porque todo aquí es un poco plano. Así que también me gustaría explorar un tipo diferente de terreno o entorno. De hecho, fui a México, a Matamoros. Fue una experiencia diferente, porque nunca esperé entrar en México. ... La comida allí, los tacos, es realmente genial”.

¿Por qué elegiste la carrera en la que estás?

“Ha sido mi camino desde la universidad. Elegí la música porque quería enseñar piano profesionalmente. Y ahora mismo, estoy haciendo interpretación de piano. Porque también quiero seguir desarrollando mis habilidades, como, técnicamente y otras habilidades, para poder enseñar mejor. Ese fue mi objetivo desde el principio”.

¿Qué consejo le darías a otros estudiantes internacionales?

“Aconsejaría realmente tratar de salir de su caparazón. Relacionarse con otras personas y no tener miedo de pedir ayuda o preguntas porque solía ser muy tímida. ... Así que creo que realmente me ayudó. Especialmente si vienes de un lugar y una cultura diferentes, te ayudará”.

--Recopilada por Fatima Gamez Lopez

Starship despegó, explota



Blanca Castillo / FOTO RIDER

El cohete de SpaceX, Starship, se encuentra en la plataforma de lanzamiento el martes pasado. Estaba programado para ser lanzado el día anterior, pero experimentó problemas técnicos. SpaceX lanzó el cohete el jueves por la mañana, pero el vehículo explotó en el aire unos cuatro minutos después del despegue.

Teresita Dominguez

THE RIDER

El jueves pasado, personas de todo el país acamparon cerca de Texas Highway 48 y la Isla del Padre en previsión del lanzamiento reprogramado de Starship de SpaceX.

Habiendo cancelado su lanzamiento del 17 de abril debido a un problema de presurización, muchos tenían la esperanza de que este lanzamiento tuviera éxito.

Después del despegue, Starship experimentó complicaciones al separarse de los propulsores. La transmisión en vivo de SpaceX mostró que el cohete giraba y luego explotaba después de volar durante unos cuatro minutos.

“El vehículo experimentó varios motores apagados durante la prueba de vuelo, perdió altitud y comenzó a dar vueltas. El sistema de terminación de vuelo se comandó tanto en el propulsor como en el barco”, según el sitio web SpaceX.com.

“Como si la prueba de vuelo no fuera lo suficientemente emocionante, Starship experimentó un rápido desmontaje no programado antes de la separación de la etapa”, tuiteó SpaceX.

A pesar de la explosión, SpaceX y su fundador, Elon Musk, reaccionaron positivamente, y SpaceX tuiteó, “Con una prueba como esta, el éxito proviene de lo que aprendemos, y la prueba de hoy nos ayudará a mejorar la confiabilidad de Starship mientras SpaceX busca hacer que la vida sea multiplanetaria”.

Musk tuiteó, “¡Felicitaciones al equipo de @SpaceX por un emocionante lanzamiento de prueba de Starship! Aprendí mucho para el

próximo lanzamiento de prueba en unos meses”.

Fue el primer vuelo de prueba totalmente integrado con la Starship y el propulsor.

Los comentaristas de SpaceX consideraron un despegue desde la plataforma como exitoso, afirmando que cualquier información que aprendan ayudará a mejorar las construcciones futuras de Starship.

The Rider envió correos electrónicos a las relaciones con los medios de SpaceX para solicitar una entrevista, pero hasta el momento de prensa, no han respondido.

SpaceX continuó con un ensayo general húmedo.

Un ensayo general húmedo pone el cohete a través de cada paso de un lanzamiento sin lanzar el cohete.

El lanzamiento se reprogramó para el jueves pasado, y la ventana de lanzamiento de 62 minutos se abrió a las 8:28 a.m.

Ryan Lopez, capitán del equipo de UTRGV Rocket Launchers, ha estado siguiendo a SpaceX durante unos cuatro o cinco años y dijo que este lanzamiento es diferente de todos los anteriores.

“Este es el primer intento completo de lanzar Starship, que es la mitad superior, y luego el propulsor, que es la separación inferior y más poderosa del cohete”, dijo Lopez en una entrevista de Zoom el 18 de abril. “El refuerzo podría llevarme a la órbita de la Tierra, y luego eso volvería a bajar e idealmente podrías reutilizarlo”.

Lopez dijo que esta es la primera prueba para el propulsor y Starship cuando antes solo había sido Starship.

“Para este lanzamiento en particular, quieren priorizar la puesta en órbita”, dijo.

El cohete es un sistema de transporte totalmente reutilizable diseñado para transportar tripulación y carga a la

órbita terrestre, regresar a la luna y viajar a Marte y más allá, según el sitio web de SpaceX.

“Starship será el vehículo de lanzamiento más poderoso del mundo jamás desarrollado y podrá transportar hasta 10 personas en vuelos interplanetarios de larga duración”, según SpaceX.com. “Starship también ayudará a habilitar la entrega de satélites, el desarrollo de una base lunar y el transporte punto a punto en la Tierra”.

“¡Felicitaciones al equipo de @SpaceX por un emocionante lanzamiento de prueba de Starship! Aprendí mucho para el próximo lanzamiento de prueba en unos meses”

-- Elon Musk
fundador de SpaceX tuiteó

El 17 de abril, cientos de espectadores y espectadores de transmisión en vivo se sintieron decepcionados después de que SpaceX canceló el lanzamiento de Starship, que estaba programada para despegar de Boca Chica a partir de las 8 a.m., debido a una válvula de presurización congelada, tuiteó Musk.

A las 8:11 a.m., Musk tuiteó, “Parece que una válvula de presión está congelada, así que, a menos que comience a funcionar pronto, no hay lanzamiento hoy”. Después del lavado,

¿Tienes una historia que contar?
Cuéntanos que te gustaría ver en THE RIDER
882-5143 or 665-2541

AYUDE A MEJORAR LA ATENCIÓN DE SALUD MENTAL PARA LOS NIÑOS DE TEXAS

El Consorcio de Atención de Salud Mental Infantil de Texas está reclutando participantes de investigación de entre 8 y 20 años de edad que han experimentado eventos de vida dolorosos o estresantes.

Esto puede incluir: una enfermedad o lesión médica grave, la pérdida de un ser querido, presenciar o experimentar violencia, amenazas físicas o emocionales, un accidente automovilístico, desastre natural, ataque de animales, negligencia, agresión sexual, separación familiar, experiencias de terrorismo, estatus de refugiado o solicitante de asilo.

Los participantes elegibles serán compensados hasta \$400.

Los padres / tutores de menores de 18 años deben dar su consentimiento para la participación de sus hijos.



tcmhcc

Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium

UTRGV



UT Health
Rio Grande Valley



Para obtener más información cómo puede participar, llámenos o mandenós un correo electrónico:

CTR@UTRGV.edu

Catherine Hernandez (956) 296-1530

Environmental consciousness in self-expression

Omar E. Zapata

A&E EDITOR

“The Future of Fashion,” the annual end-of-semester showcase by the UTRGV House of Fashion Club, explores the past, present and future all with the central theme of sustainability.

In collaboration with the Edinburg Cultural Arts division, the fashion show starts at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Dustin Michael Sekula Memorial Library as part of the *Día de los Niños, Día de los Libros* festival. Admission is free.

HOF is a student-based collective of art, fashion, music and culture for which student leaders organize fashion shows at the end of every semester, according to its website. The club regularly holds thrift sales on campus.

Maria Regina Montemayor, a business administration senior and HOF president, told The Rider the whole concept of “The Future of Fashion” show is about sustainability.

“We want to raise awareness for slow fashion and more sustainable fashion practices,” Montemayor said. “We believe that you ... can have a lot of self-expression while still being very conscious about the planet. You don’t necessarily have to buy the trendiest, newest thing all the time.”

The fashion show is separated into three phases: the past, present and future. Each phase has outfits that depict what the future might look like to people during that time period.

“If you go back in time and if you were to have this conversation with somebody that was raised in the ‘60s, and you ask them, ‘Hey, what does the future look like to you?’ They’re probably going to say, ‘I see flying cars; I see innovative homes and robots and AI and PVC dresses,’” Montemayor said. “... If you time travel to our present and ... you ask your friends, ‘Hey, what does the future look like to you?’ [They’re] probably gonna say, ‘Oh, it looks scary. It looks post-apocalyptic. It looks like gas masks and chemical spills and war and famine.’”

She said the present phase of the fashion show is more about what people can do today to help tomorrow.



PHOTO COURTESY UTRGV HOUSE OF FASHION

The UTRGV House of Fashion Club will host its show “The Future of Fashion” at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Dustin Michael Sekula Memorial Library in Edinburg. Shown (from left) are business administration student Paola De Leon, mass communication student Valeria Davila (top), marine biology student Brianna Rebekah Pino and interdisciplinary studies student Cassandra Robledo. The HOF will be a part of the *Día de los Niños, Día de los Libros* Festival during the 2023 National Library Week at Edinburg Cultural Arts Division.

“We’re going to have our fashion designers bring out some models with designs that they have created out of unconventional materials,” Montemayor said. “So, there’s this one dress that’s made out of bottle caps. There’s another one that’s made out of, like, smashed

metal. Just, like, all these recycled materials to create these really cool reworked outfits, which is kind of where we’re at today.”

The show has 37 people helping and more than 20 models will be featured. Most of the models have an outfit in the three phases.

English junior and HOF creative director Zaiach Treviño told The Rider he is excited to show audience members the outfits, theme of the fashion show and also the message that it conveys.

“It’s not only about the clothes and the fashion ... but it’s also about the message we’re trying to, like, put across about sustainability,” Treviño said.

Describing the past phase of the fashion show as nostalgic, vintage and colorful and the future phase as melodramatic and neutral colored, Treviño said his favorite is the present phase since he has two outfits featured in it.

Treviño said one of the outfits he designed pulls inspiration from the Disney Channel show “Wizards of Waverly Place.”

“The comic book dress that [Selena Gomez] wears, well, I’m doing, like, an interpretation of that but, like, with Vogue magazines,” he said.

Joel Angel Garza, a civil engineering junior and model in “The Future of Fashion,” is participating in two phases, the past and the future.

“I think [the fashion show] will be fantastic,” Garza said. “Everyone [in HOF] has been putting in so much hard work ... and I can tell that the people putting it together are very dedicated.”

Taking part in the show for the first time, Garza said he thinks diversifying his experiences is great for growing as a person and encourages students from all kinds of disciplines to do so as well.

“A lot of people think that engineers are unstylish or not good in the arts,” he said. “But I want to change that point of view, and [show] that engineers can be stylish and they can be well-invested in the arts.”

For updates on the fashion show or the club, follow its Instagram @utrgvhof.

Astrology Rider: Weekly Horoscopes

Danielle Perez
ONLINE EDITOR

Aries-Although love is an important factor in your life, you prefer to allow relationships to come naturally to you. Therefore, spend your time doing things you love that help your energy. Sooner than later, you’ll attract what’s right for you and will match you.

Leo-Once in a while, a doctor’s visit can help clear up some concerns. Find time in your schedule to get in contact with one. Checking up on your health should be a priority. It is always good to stay informed.

Sagittarius-Avoid feeling afraid to express your emotions that are within. By doing this, you’re allowing yourself to grow in ways you did not know of. It’s important for people to recognize themselves in order to heal from trauma, so don’t keep everything inside.

Libra-Doing our best at work is important but so is networking and socializing. Sometimes you tend to get so caught up in work that all your energy is drained by the time you’re home. So, find a balance between your work and home life to better yourself and your future.

Gemini-There is an opportunity for you to earn extra money this week. Instead of feeling like it is extra work, reflect on your finances and how it can benefit you. Go out and work for what you need. It will pay off in the end.

Aquarius-Turn off your phone and relax, Aquarius. Too much energy and attention have been shared with others. Take this time to do things you want. Pour that energy into your own self rather than with those who aren’t worthy of it. Soon, you’ll see the change.

Scorpio-Being judgmental is an easy perspective to have when talking about others. Despite the gossip you may want to chat about, spread positivity and kindness. Remind yourself that we are all individuals with different life stories and emotions so we may not know what people are going through.

Pisces-It can be hard to maintain a healthy routine, but it is all up to one’s true self if you’re determined. Try to join online communities or pages that can help with tips and blogs. Remember, if you really want it you can have it. Don’t give up, Pisces!

Cancer-Finding the right people in life is a difficult challenge, so don’t be too hard on yourself. Whether it be friendships or relationships, be open about what you look for in a friend or partner. Don’t carry people on your back if you don’t find them beneficial. Cut off any loose ends, Cancer.

Taurus-Instead of daydreaming about all the vacations you’d have if you could, attempt to make them happen. Start off by doing research and then start saving up. Don’t feel pressured to make it happen soon, take it one step at a time. What is important is to take that first step.

Virgo-Keep an eye out on spending too much money on frivolous things. If you want to see a change in your financial security, it is crucial to set limits on certain costs. For extra help, create a budget planner and jot down your monthly expenses to stay on track.

Capricorn-Refrain from giving up so quickly when things get tough. Push through the hardships in order to achieve success. Instead of running away, recenter yourself by speaking to a friend, journaling or meditating. There is always a better solution than to surrender.

SUDOKU



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

Last week’s puzzle answer key:

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

DIBBLE DABBLES

by Alejandro Peña





Aisha Gay



Jose Medina/THE RIDER

Postgraduate student Aisha Gay is a sprinter for the UTRGV Women's Track and Field Team. Transferring from Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut, Gay brings with her five gold medals from the Metro Atlantic Championships and a personal best of 7.81 seconds in the 60-meter dash. Gay is pursuing her second bachelor's degree in rehabilitation services and counseling.

Q: What do you like to do for fun besides your sport?

A: "I like to braid hair for fun. I feel like I just do it [because] it's just a stress reliever. It just kinda gets my mind off of school, track, just being a student athlete for a while."

Q: Do you have any shows you really like, or are watching right now?

A: "Yes, I think a show I really like right now that I'm watching is ['Power Book II: Ghost'] with Tariq. That's one of my favorite shows. I love the series of 'Power'; it's on STARZ. It's amazing. It always catches my attention."

Q: Is there anything you're looking forward to soon?

A: "I'm looking forward to the last three meets. I'm ready for championships. I'm ready to run that. Great time to get me into the NCAA Regionals. I'm trying to qualify and go as far as I can this semester."

Q: In the future, are you looking to be a pro runner?

A: "Yes, I would love to be a pro runner. I think coach [Shareese] Hicks has the mechanics and the expertise to get me there 'cause she was a pro runner, so I'm just really excited. I think that after this year, I'll definitely be able to go semi-pro, if not, fully pro."

Q: How did you start getting into running?

A: "I got into running when I was around 10 years old. I just went out for a summer track program. I tried cross-country. It wasn't for me, but the coach looked at me and he was like 'You have legs. You have the body for doing sprints,' and I went out there. I did sprints. And in high school, I took it more seriously. I started the [200- and 400-meter dash] and I just became a master at it."

Q: Do you have any role models?

A: "Yes, I definitely would say, not trying to be cliché, but my role model definitely has to be coach Hicks. She's an amazing coach. I've never had a coach that just puts so much detail into everything I do. I came here and said 'I need to work on these things' and she actually helped me work on those things. And she just, I don't know, to me she's just an all around amazing person and she just happens to be one of my new role models of my track career."

Q: How does UTRGV compare to other track teams that you have run for?

A: "UTRGV compared to the last college I went to, it was a family there, but I feel more welcomed here. I feel like this is such a family and such a unit. We always lift each other up. We always put each other on pedestals. When someone does good, we all do good. We always cheer each other on, and I just love the support and the family behind the team."

--Compiled by Julien Juarez

UTRGV Athletics expands branding to beer



PHOTO COURTESY UTRGV ATHLETICS

The UTRGV Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and 5x5 Brewing Co. have unveiled the rendering of the UTRGV Los Vaqueros beer can. 5x5 Brewing Co. will host a tailgate party to introduce the new beer to fans before the UTRGV Baseball Team's final home series May 12-14 against Grand Canyon University at the UTRGV Baseball Stadium on the Edinburg campus.

Jose Medina

SPORTS REPORTER

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Department of Intercollegiate Athletics has announced a new UTRGV-branded drink called Los Vaqueros beer.

The drink will be available at the UTRGV baseball final home series starting May 12 and in most Rio Grande Valley H-E-B food stores, Spec's, El Tigre and Total Wine & More locations, according to an Athletics news release issued April 12.

The drink will be served at restaurants and future UTRGV Athletics events where alcohol is sold.

Jonah Goldberg, senior associate athletic director of Communications & Championships, said in an interview April 17 the idea for a college-branded drink had been on their minds for a while.

"There were about 25 universities who had their own branded beer," Goldberg said. "And now it's in the 30 to 40 range. ... There just seemed to be a lot of potential to turn that into both a strong marketing and a strong revenue line."

He said as of right now, there is no projected revenue for the beer sales.

Goldberg said UTRGV is the first school in the University of Texas System to have its own branded beer.

"I like to look at New Mexico State, because they've been in the Western Athletic Conference with us the last few years," He said. "... Their initial sales were actually slow and the beer was only available by keg. That's not going to be an issue here, where we have it available by can as well as it will be on tap at some

restaurants."

Goldberg said such products expand the brand of the university as well as give UTRGV more exposure.

Seth Jones, associate athletic director of Revenue Generation, said they encourage responsible drinking.

"We're going to partner with L&F [Distributors] to provide Uber codes to all that are involved with the launch," Jones said. "Our messaging throughout will always be to drink responsibly."

"This was a collaborative effort, pretty much everyone that had their hands in it were either alumni, or affiliated or worked for UTRGV."

--George Rice, co-owner of 5x5 Brewing Co.

He said the drink would allow UTRGV to be present in ways it might not have been without it.

"Let's say we're at Walk On's [Sports Bistreaux] and they see this product and all of a sudden it's like, 'Hey what's going on with UTRGV?'"

UTRGV is partnering with a Mission brewery to create the beverage.

In an April 17 interview, George Rice, co-owner of 5x5 Brewing Co., said it started with him calling UTRGV

about 18 months ago to thank them for supporting them by having their beer available at their games. That is when the idea for a UTRGV-branded beer was first mentioned between them.

5x5 Brewing Co. is owned by six U.S. military veterans: George Rice (Army), Ray Franklin (Army), Marine Corps veteran and state Sen. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen), Jorge Gonzalez (Marine Corps), Sean Downey (Marine Corps) and Alex Gelman (Navy).

Rice described the beer as a blood orange Kölsch, saying it is a light beer with a citrus flavor to represent the Valley's history with citrus.

He said the alcohol content for the beer will range from 5.1% to 6.2%.

Rice said the can was designed by Sara Longoria, their graphics design artist who earned her degree from UTRGV.

"It was helped and assisted by people from UTRGV," he said. "This was a collaborative effort, pretty much everyone that had their hands in it were either alumni or affiliated or worked for UTRGV."

Rice said there are a lot of Easter eggs in the overall design of the beer.

"From the final product of the beer, from the intent of the beer, to the flavor profile, from the color of the beer, everything was [with] UTRGV in mind," he said.

The beer will debut during a tailgate, scheduled at 4 p.m. May 12, before the UTRGV baseball game against Grand Canyon University. The beer will also be available at concessions during the game.



THIS WEEK IN SPORTS

Baseball

6:30 p.m. Tuesday vs. University of the Incarnate Word

AT THE UTRGV BASEBALL STADIUM

Starship takes off, explodes



Blanca Castillo/THE RIDER

The SpaceX Starship rocket sits on the launchpad last Tuesday at Boca Chica Beach. It was scheduled to be launched the day before but experienced technical problems. SpaceX launched the rocket last Thursday, but the vehicle exploded in midair about four minutes after takeoff.

Teresita Dominguez THE RIDER

Last Thursday, people from across the country camped out near Texas Highway 48 and South Padre Island in anticipation of the SpaceX Starship's rescheduled launch. Having scrubbed its April 17 launch due to a pressurization issue, many were hopeful that this launch would succeed. After takeoff, Starship experienced complications separating from the boosters. The SpaceX livestream showed the rocket spinning and then exploding after flying for about four minutes. "The vehicle experienced multiple engines out during the flight test, lost altitude, and began to tumble. The

flight termination system was commanded on both the booster and ship," according to the SpaceX.com website.

"As if the flight test was not exciting enough, Starship experienced a rapid unscheduled disassembly before stage separation," SpaceX tweeted.

Despite the explosion, SpaceX and its founder Elon Musk reacted positively, with SpaceX tweeting, "With a test like this, success comes from what we learn, and today's test will help us improve Starship's reliability as SpaceX seeks to make life multi-planetary."

Musk tweeted, "Congrats @SpaceX team on an exciting test launch of Starship! Learned a lot for the next test launch in a few months."

It was the first fully integrated test flight with both the Starship and the booster.

SpaceX commentators considered a liftoff from the pad as successful, claiming any information that they learn will help improve future builds of Starship.

The Rider sent emails to SpaceX media relations to request an interview but as of press time, they had not responded.

On April 17, hundreds of spectators and livestream viewers were disappointed after SpaceX scrubbed the Starship launch, which was scheduled to take off from Boca Chica Beach beginning at 8 a.m., due to a frozen pressurization valve, Musk tweeted.

See **STARSHIP**, Page 11

Road improvement plans raise frustrations within city commission

Natalie Lapsley THE RIDER

Frustrations surfaced during last Tuesday's city meeting when Brownsville District 1 City Commissioner Nurith Galonsky Pizaña raised concerns about traffic and lane closure in her district during a public hearing presentation from the Multimodal Transportation Department.

Edmund Haas, vice president and transportation planning manager for Freese and Nichols Inc., an engineering, planning and consulting firm, presented on the department's Land Use Assumptions and the city's Road Capital Improvement Plan, both of which require approval from the commission in order to move on with developing Capital Recovery Fees.

This would require one-time payments from new developers to fund the specific capital improvements, such as the construction or widening of roads.

After the presentation, Galonsky Pizaña said she represents a densely populated district, which encompasses the Southmost area, and it is difficult to access Expy. 77/83.

Last Thursday, the commissioner told The Rider that lane closure on Boca Chica Boulevard to extend water lines to the new water tower on Owens Street causes a lot of traffic congestion.

"Repairs in that area will continue for a while because then [the Texas Department of Transportation] is going to put raised medians, the same that you have right now on Boca Chica between Four Corners and the Frontage

See **BROWNSVILLE**, Page 13



Verilu Infante/THE RIDER

District 1 Commissioner Nurith Galonsky Pizaña (left) voices her concerns about traffic and lane closure in her district during a public hearing presentation from the Multimodal Transportation Department during last Tuesday's Brownsville City Commission meeting. Also shown are District 2 Commissioner Jessica Tetreau and Commissioner At-Large "A" John Cowen Jr.

Edinburg City Council approves federal fund amendment



Aurora Acevedo/THE RIDER

Marissa Garza, director of Grants Administration, presents a proposed budget amendment in the American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program during last Tuesday's Edinburg City Council meeting.

Andrea Flores THE RIDER

The Edinburg City Council has approved a resolution amending a proposed budget in the American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program of 2021, which granted the city \$27 million. The April 18 city council agenda

packet states that the city received the funds in two allocations of \$13 million, one in September 2021 and the second in August 2022. At the April 4 city council meeting, the budget list was tabled for further review.

Marissa Garza, director of the Grants Administration department, provided a presentation explaining the two budget changes. The first was

a reduction of \$750,000 from the last amended budget of \$1 million on improvements to City Hall, which is a current project. The \$750,000 will be moved to a newly added project, the emergency ambulance service.

Improvements to City Hall include modifications to existing offices to provide more space for additional staff. The timeline for City Hall improvements is April 2024. The timeline for all ARPA projects is 2026.

Mayor Ramiro Garza Jr. asked if the projects in the budget list are flexible for allocations.

"Since we already have the funds, we do have to report on a quarterly basis," Assistant City Manager Tom Reyna said. "We have one coming up this month that we do have to show each expenditure [to the U.S. Treasury Department] expended."

Marissa Garza clarified that if there is a project, which the city is not able to do on time, the expenses can be reallocated to or for another project as long as it is recorded in the budget list.

"Let's say we want to apply for a grant related to any of these projects, are we able to use some of these funds as a match?" Mayor Garza asked.

Marissa Garza replied yes. In response to a call for greater

accessibility for people with disabilities to new city buildings, Mayor Garza called for a task force at the April 4 city council meeting.

"The purpose ... is to advise the city of different methods to appropriately address accessibility issues and recommend changes to provide accessibility to people with disabilities who live, work and visit the city," City Manager Myra L. Ayala said during the last city council meeting.

City Secretary Clarice Yvette Balderas will be reaching out to local stakeholders, such as disability related organizations and self-advocates, UTRGV, Hidalgo County and school districts for recommendations on how to address the accessibility issues.

Ayala said the city has already reached out to some stakeholders.

The city will also have a task force to conduct a Utilities Rate Study in which the community will be able to provide their input in its process.

"The task force was created with the purpose of being transparent and allow the community to have input in the process of developing and implementing any proposed utility rates," Ayala said. "The ... study is to assist in all operating costs in any projected future growth and

See **EDINBURG**, Page 13

ATHLETES
Continued from Page 4

of gender non-conforming people and those who are intersex, and poses a threat to women and minorities who are deemed not “feminine” enough.

I believe these attacks on transgender girls and women are used to disregard the discrimination and violence they continue to face.

On top of this, those who claim to be “protecting women’s sports” do not work to stop the sexual harassment and abuse within women’s sports teams and to close the gender pay gap. Trans athletes make up a very small percentage of the total number of student and professional athletes, so why come after a vulnerable group while ignoring an already vulnerable one?

VOTING
Continued from Page 5

acceptable forms of photo ID to present at the polling location: a Texas driver’s license, Texas ID, Texas election ID certificate, Texas handgun license, U.S. citizenship certificate with photo, U.S. military ID card with photo and U.S. passport. For the full list of early voting locations and more information on the election, visit www.hidalgocounty.us.

“Now, if they don’t have one of the seven approved IDs in the state of Texas, like if they do not possess or they cannot reasonably obtain one of these photo IDs ... people still can vote,” Salinas said. “They will just simply fill out a reasonable impediment declaration. And they do need to show a copy or original ... of the following IDs: It could be the

certified domestic birth certificate or court admissible birth document.”

It could also be the current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or it could be a government document with your name and address, including your voter registration certificate, she said.

To be eligible to register in Texas, voters must be U.S. citizens, be a resident of the county, be 18 years old, not a convicted felon and not be declared mentally incapacitated by a court of law.

Mark Kaswan, an associate professor in the UTRGV Political Science department, said voting is important.

“If we don’t vote, then we have a political system that is controlled by the few,” Kaswan said. “And the people who do vote, generally are people who are more privileged in our society. And they will vote in a way that defends their

privilege. So people need to vote in order to help ensure that their interests are reflected.”

He said all votes matter. “Nobody’s vote matters,” he said. They all matter together. ... It’s not about any one vote. It’s all of the votes coming together is what matters.”

Kaswan encourages voters to do their research before voting.

The countywide polling location program will be used during Election Day.

“So, that means that if you find yourself in Edinburg and you reside in Weslaco ... you can vote at any polling location in Edinburg,” Salinas said. “You can find your nearest polling location head straight to that poll and your ballot will be there. So it offers the convenience ... where they can vote at any polling location. Election days [are] the same way.”



Blanca Castillo/THE RIDER

The SpaceX rocket, Starship, sits on the launchpad at Boca Chica Beach last Tuesday. The rocket was launched last Thursday but exploded in midair.

STARSHIP
Continued from Page 10

At 8:11 a.m., Musk tweeted, “A pressurant valve appears to be frozen, so unless it starts operating soon, no launch today.” After the scrub, SpaceX continued with a wet dress rehearsal.

A wet dress rehearsal puts the rocket through each step of a launch without launching the rocket.

The launch was rescheduled for last Thursday, with the 62-minute launch window opening at 8:28 a.m.

Ryan Lopez, team captain for the UTRGV Rocket Launchers has been following SpaceX for around four or five years and said this launch is different from all the others before it.

“This is the first full attempt at launching the Starship, which is the upper half, and then the booster, which is the lower, more powerful separation of the rocket,” Lopez said in an April 18 Zoom interview. “The booster would

be able to take you out into Earth’s orbit, and then that would come back down and ideally you would be able to reuse it.”

Lopez said this is the first test for the booster and Starship when before it had just been the Starship.

“For this launch, in particular, they want to prioritize going into orbit,” he said.

The rocket is a fully reusable transportation system designed to carry crew and cargo to Earth orbit, return to the moon, and travel to Mars and beyond, according to the SpaceX website.

“Starship will be the world’s most powerful launch vehicle ever developed and will be able to carry up to 10 people on long-duration, interplanetary flights,” according to SpaceX.com. “Starship will also help enable satellite delivery, the development of a Moon base, and point-to-point transport on Earth.”



**May 6, 2023 Special
& General Elections
Early Voting**

April 24 - May 2

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GAMES

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TUES. MAY 2

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10:00 AM

10:00 AM

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STUDENT UNION**

**EDINBURG
STUDENT UNION**

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BROWNSVILLE
Continued from Page 10

Road. Pretty soon, they're going to start and put one in also from the Four Corners to the airport," Galonsky Pizaña said.

During the meeting, she said she did not see anything in the Thoroughfares Plan that would help alleviate traffic.

"The only thing you're adding there, in terms of the new capacity or the widening, expansion, is in Boca Chica towards the east to benefit SpaceX," Galonsky Pizaña said during the public hearing's discussion period. "Yeah, they're important and stuff, but what about all of the residents who have lived here for a very long time?"

City Manager Helen Ramirez replied to the commissioner's concerns, saying that the plan in question is in response to new construction and capacity. Ramirez said the Mobility Plan will look at improving existing conditions.

However, Galonsky Pizaña replied that District 1 has "new subdivisions popping up" and that nothing is being addressed.

"How are we ever going to plan for

this density that's coming because we already see it coming," she said.

Ramirez and Mayor Trey Mendez asked that officials from the Multimodal Transportation Department meet with Galonsky Pizaña to discuss density and the Mobility Plan, which would accommodate not only thoroughfares, or streets, but pedestrians, cyclists and transit as well.

To ensure that future commissions use the money as intended, City Commissioner At-Large "B" Rose Gowen said it should be written down that funds should be used not only for roads, but for bike lanes and sidewalks as well.

"I like that we're talking about what the future growth is going to look like but one of the things that concerns me is it looks like we're still using the old maps," said Roy De Los Santos, District 3 city commissioner. "I know there are areas we already annexed ... but it doesn't look like we're showing that as inside the city limits yet."

Haas agreed, saying the department should show the "latest" set of city limits.

The commission voted to approve the Land Use Assumptions and Road

Capital Improvement Plan for the city. Galonsky Pizaña cast the sole "nay" vote. She said a more comprehensive outlook is required, after which De Los Santos said he believes the plan does take into account the "historic growth we've seen in these areas."

"I don't think we've made any missteps here," he said. "I think we're right on track."

In other business, residents spoke during public comment in support of Rebekah Hinojosa, who was arrested Feb. 16, 2022, and charged with a class B misdemeanor for allegedly spray painting "gentrified" and "stop SpaceX" on the BTX mural downtown, which was paid for by Elon Musk, the company's founder.

"Once again, your constituents are here urging you to write a letter to [Cameron County] District Attorney [Luis V.] Saenz to drop the class B misdemeanor against me," Hinojosa said. "To make it easier, we have a draft letter for the city commissioners to review—not Trey Mendez—to review, sign your names and email it to the district attorney's office to drop the charge."

As previously reported by The Rider, Hinojosa said Mendez "publicly attacked" her by publishing her mugshot and employment information on his official Facebook page.

On Feb. 7, residents in support of Hinojosa delivered over 1,700 petitions asking for the city to immediately drop the charges against her and to investigate the mayor for abuse of power. At the April 4 meeting, over 200 additional petitions were delivered.

Mendez and the rest of the commission watched silently as Hinojosa handed the letter to City Attorney Will Treviño.

The commission does not take action or respond during meetings to public comments, so no response was given during the meeting.

The Rider called Mendez for a statement regarding the draft letter, but he declined to give a statement.

"I'm not interested in talking anything about that," he said. "There's way better stories to tell than that."

--Rider Editor-in-Chief Verilu Infante contributed to this report.

EDINBURG
Continued from Page 10

expansion to the water and sewer system of the city."

The last rate study was conducted 10 years ago. Ayala added that the city will provide a timeline of the study to keep the city updated on any implementations.

There will be an agenda item in the May 2 city council meeting to appoint the chairs of each task force. Ayala added that the city is looking to have its first task force meeting in the first week of May.

Those interested in giving feedback

or participating in any of the task forces may contact the city secretary office at 388-8204.

In other city news, Daniel Vera, director of Information Technology, said the city began providing public high-speed internet access last Wednesday in the Dustin Michael Sekula Memorial Library, Janet Vackar Park, Sergeant Jacob De La Garza North Park and South Park.

In an interview with The Rider last Thursday, Vera said the city library already provides internet; however, there will now be broader coverage extending to the parking lot so visitors can access the internet in their cars.

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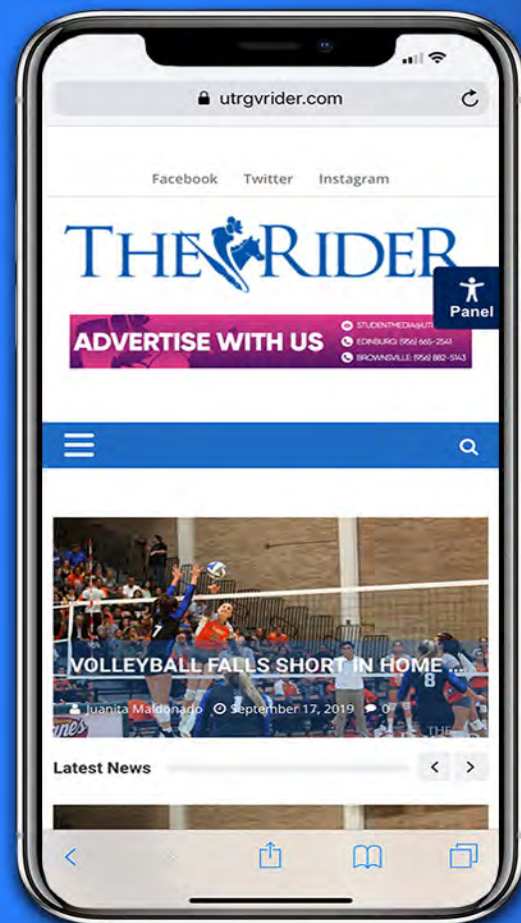
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EARLY VOTING GOING ON NOW!

LOCATION	ADDRESS	DATES	TIMES
Main Office	Cameron County Courthouse Judicial Complex 954 E. Harrison St. Brownsville, Texas	Monday, April 24 -Friday, April 28	9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
		Saturday, April 29	10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
		Monday, May 1- Tuesday, May 2	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Brownsville Library	2600 Central Blvd. Brownsville, Texas	Monday, April 24 -Friday, April 28	9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
		Saturday, April 29	10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
		Monday, May 1- Tuesday, May 2	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Southmost Public Library	4320 Southmost Road Brownsville, Texas	Monday, April 24 -Friday, April 28	9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
		Saturday, April 29	10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
		Monday, May 1- Tuesday, May 2	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
UTRGV (BINAB)	Interdisciplinary Academic One West University Blvd. Brownsville, Texas	Monday, April 24 -Friday, April 28	9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
		Saturday, April 29	10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
		Monday, May 1- Tuesday, May 2	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
New Horizon Medical Center	191 E. Price Rd. Brownsville Texas	Monday, April 24 -Friday, April 28	9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
		Saturday, April 29	10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
		Monday, May 1- Tuesday, May 2	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Good Shepherd Community Church	300 W. Morrison Rd. Brownsville, Texas	Monday, April 24 -Friday, April 28	9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
		Saturday, April 29	10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
		Monday, May 1- Tuesday, May 2	8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Early Voting: 04/24-05/02

Election Day: 05/06/2023



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The deadline to apply for Pulse Magazine positions is 3 p.m. April 28. The deadline to apply for all other Student Media positions is 3 p.m. May 5.

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Work-Life Balance By: Mario Alliey

Joseph was driving home one night after a long day of work. He let out a heavy sigh as he remembered that he would come home to an angry wife. After having grown up poor, Joseph wanted nothing more than to ensure financial stability for him and his family. He started a business a few years ago, and due to his hard work, it became very successful. However, Joseph's inordinate commitment to the business was costing him precious time away from his family. In fact, that morning, Joseph's wife Anna had screamed at him for refusing to reduce his hours so his children could have a father in their lives. While ruminating on all this, Joseph mindlessly carried out a right turn, and he was so lost in his thoughts that he did not even hear the oncoming horn to his left. Joseph passed out on impact.

When Joseph woke up, his eyes struggled to adjust to the surprisingly bright blue sky. Confusion was the first thing he felt when he realized he had been sleeping on the sidewalk of a busy street. Many pairs of shoes appeared to be stepping through him, as if he did not exist. "There's a person down here, you know!" Joseph yelled angrily, yet nobody reacted to him. Joseph looked at his body and realized that everyone was passing right through him. Even more surprising was what he overheard from a familiar looking couple:

"I heard Joseph got in a bad wreck last night."

"Oh, the one we went to high school with?"

"Yeah, Joseph Smith." Alarm bells were ringing in Joseph's mind, and his heart started pounding faster and faster. He finally remembered about his accident last night and realized that it was impossible that he came out of it without serious injury. *Maybe, this is what it was like to be dead,* he wondered. He felt like a ghost being able to run through the crowd with ease. Then, he heard a voice whisper into one of his ears.

"I'm so sorry about yesterday morning, honey. Please wake up." It was none other than Anna's voice, yet when Joseph looked around, she was nowhere to be found! "The doctors said you're unlikely to wake up. But I believe in you."

Doctors? What doctors? Joseph kept walking around in confusion until it hit him, and he stopped dead in his tracks. He

was on the verge of dying in a hospital bed somewhere. He immediately started sprinting as fast as his ghostly legs would take him. He was losing energy quickly, but it was not from having been out of shape due to spending all of his time on work instead of exercise or any other activities. Joseph realized he had to get to the hospital as soon as possible before his body shut down once and for all. He hitched rides on cars, bicycles, buses, and trains to get to the local hospital faster, but his energy was waning too quickly. All the while, he kept hearing Anna whisper all of her regrets and apologies to him in his ear. By the time he entered the hospital, he could barely walk.

Joseph used his remaining strength to check all the hospital rooms until he finally found his. Standing next to his bed whispering in his ear was none other than Anna. Joseph fell to his knees, and he could walk no more. He slowly crawled to the bed where an unconscious, soulless Joseph was laying. It took all his might to pull himself up, and gravity had to do the rest of the work in aligning Joseph's soul with his body.

The doctor, with a grim look on his face, put his hand on Anna's shoulder. "Mrs. Smith, I am very sorry to inform you he is approaching his final moments of living." But Joseph's soul refused to allow this to happen. Joseph still had a purpose to fulfill in this world. Anna needed him to help raise their two sons. And now that Joseph experienced a journey to the hospital in which he had the time to realize how important he was to the people around him, he was determined to make this change. He realized his business was already doing extremely well, and he could certainly afford to work a reasonable number of hours per week. His family would be well off regardless; what was important was that he was there for his son and for Anna. Joseph was now ready to return to the world of the living.

"Please wake up, Joseph," Anna pleaded. She placed her hand into his externally lifeless one, feeling only its warmth but not the slightest twitch of a muscle. Sparkling tears grew from the waterlines of her eyes. Just as she was about to pick up her hand from Joseph's to wipe away her tears, she felt five warm fingers curl around hers and pull her hand back.

A Natural Miracle By: Adhira Tippur

Sophie sat in the sterile hospital room, staring blankly at the white walls. The news of her terminal illness had just settled within her mind. She had always taken her health for granted, and now it slipped from her grasp. Determined not to give up, Sophie spent her days scouring the internet for any hope of a cure. She read countless articles and studies, but nothing seemed to be the answer—until she stumbled upon a small research paper about a rare plant found deep in the Amazon rainforest. According to the paper, the plant held medicinal properties that could potentially cure her disease, but with one caveat: it was hidden in an unknown area within the Amazon rainforest.

Sophie knew that time was running out, so she had to act fast. She packed her bags and hopped on a flight, hoping to find the plant that could save her life.

It was not so long after she began her journey that she encountered some very dense terrain. As she was about to give up hope, she stumbled upon a mysterious man, who seemed to be eagerly searching for something. He claimed to know his way around the jungle. He offered to

help her obtain the plant, but Sophie was wary of his intentions.

Who is this random man? Can I even trust him? she thought. Given her lack of alternatives, she agreed to work with him.

Together, they made their way towards the plant, but they soon realized that they were not alone. They were being followed by an unknown group of people. As they made their way through the jungle, they encountered dangerous traps and obstacles. Sophie and her so-called ally were determined to obtain the plant, but they were running out of time. As they reached the location where they thought the plant was, they were ambushed. Two men, out of the eight, lunged at Sophie. BAM. WHOOSH. Right as they reached for her left arm, they plummeted into a large hole that had been concealed by some leaves. Sprinting away in fear, Sophie made it only about hundred yards away when she heard a distinct voice shouting from behind her. "Sophie, it's me, Mom!"

UTRGV MSA



Authors' Corner

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