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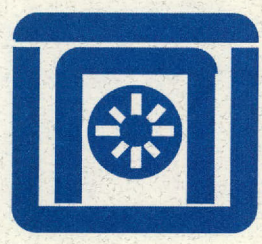
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# NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

May, 1996



## NEW PHASE FOR LLRW PROJECT

On Monday, April 1, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) released an environmental and safety analysis (E.A.) and draft license in response to the Authority's application for the proposed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility.

After a thorough review of the Authority's 28 volume application document, the TNRCC review team concluded in an executive summary to the E.A. that "issuance of a license for the proposed project will not pose an unacceptable risk to public health and safety or cause a long-term detrimental impact on the environment". The E.A. also found that "the natural characteristics of the site will contribute to the long-term stability of the waste (and)...radiation exposures to members of the public related to operation of the facility and to long-term site performance will be well below regulatory standards and as low as reasonably achievable."

*"The TNRCC expects that a preliminary hearing would take place in Sierra Blanca,"*  
-Elizabeth Bourbon,  
TNRCC Staff Attorney

Official notice of the EA and draft license was printed in the *Texas Register* and published in the *Hudspeth County Herald* on Friday, April 12. The notice provides for a 31 day public comment period. The public has the opportunity, until May 13, to review the documents, comment and/or request a public hearing on the license.

Should a public hearing be granted, it would be conducted by the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH). SOAH's Director of the Natural Resources Division will then assign an administrative law judge (hearing examiner) from any one of its divisions. Susan Prior, Docket Clerk for the SOAH's Natural Resources Division says "...it may not necessarily be a Natural Resources judge serving as the hearing examiner; (however,) all administrative law judges are trained and versed in what they do and they're all experts in their field." Following the conclusion of hearings the administrative law judge will submit a "proposal for decision" to the TNRCC based on all evidence admitted at the hearings.

If a hearing is scheduled, a preliminary hearing would be the first session in the public hearing process. "The TNRCC expects that a preliminary hearing would take place in Sierra Blanca," said TNRCC Staff Attorney Elizabeth Bourbon. At that time interested individuals may comment on the proposed project and the administrative law judge will name parties to the hearing.

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## What Is the SBCDC?

The Sierra Blanca Community Development Corporation (CDC) is a non-profit organization created in 1992 to assist Sierra Blanca in obtaining funds for the betterment of the community. "There was no public entity to look after the interest of the community of Sierra Blanca and the thoughts were that the CDC would be instrumental in administering projects for the enhancement of the community," said Bill Love, one of the original and a current CDC Board member.

Creation of the CDC was the cooperative idea of several staff members from the Governor's office, the Authority, the Rio Grande Council of Governments and then County Judge Bill Love. The idea came about some time after the Authority selected the proposed Hudspeth County low-level radioactive waste disposal site and opportunities for community development were growing rapidly.

The CDC is directed by a six member Board of Directors, to whom Executive Director Steve Gibbs reports. Board members are appointed by presiding Board members. "We try to get people who are business oriented and representative of the community," said Bill Love. "We also take recommendations from the community," he added. In addition to Bill Love, other Board members include Ms. Delma Chavez, Mr. John Elder, Mr. Lewis Rogers, Ms. Rosa Sullivan and County Commissioner Wayne West.

The CDC has been involved in providing housing development opportunities for the community. "Right now we are primarily involved in trying to arrange housing opportunities," said Gibbs. "We are putting a lot of emphasis in the renovation of existing housing, new housing and permanent financing available to the public." The CDC also has been involved in negotiating fire and emergency medical services for the community. Negotiations have not been finalized.

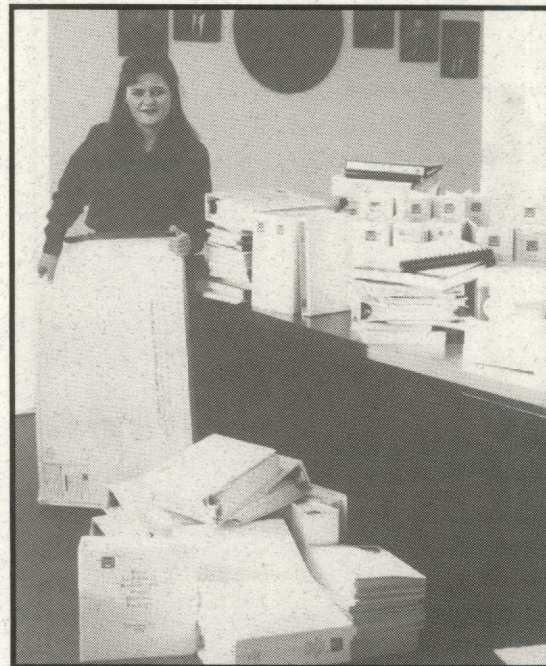
In 1993, the CDC was instrumental in bringing medical clinic service back to Sierra Blanca. The CDC

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**CONGRATULATIONS,  
GRADUATES!**  
*- from the TLLRWDA staff*

## ***A Public Hearing Is Anticipated***

*(continued from pg. 1)*



*Authority employee Jina Hebbe poses next to some of the many technical studies and reports prepared on the proposed Hudspeth County site.*

The Authority staff anticipates that a public hearing will be scheduled and expects the process to be lengthy. "It is not unheard of for a large and complex hearing to take six weeks or longer, but the administrative law judge will be the one who decides how long," TNRCC's Bourbon said. The length of the hearing often depends on the number of witnesses expected to present testimony and the number and complexity of the issues to be addressed.

The 3-person Commission of TNRCC will make the final decision based on the administrative law judge's recommendation, the requirements of the law, arguments of the parties to the hearing and other agency policies. ☺

## TO THE POINT

-- by Rick Jacobi, General Manager

Last week I attended a meeting at the Bank of Sierra Blanca to meet with local citizens, bank members and officials of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways to obtain financing for new home construction in Hudspeth County.

The HUD officials were very impressed with the energy and vision expressed by the participants from Sierra Blanca. I was impressed, too.

Plans for new homes, renovated homes, new business enterprises, and technology and infrastructure development were presented. Models of new homes were exhibited. The progress on the sewer system was explained. Plats of new housing subdivisions and plans for renovation of existing areas were discussed. A park, a library, a golf course, and softball and soccer fields can all be part of the future for Sierra Blanca. There are a lot of exciting things happening in the community.

But, the most exciting thing I came away with is how good things can happen when everybody pulls together to meet common goals. Everyone in that meeting wanted only one thing – that is, the common betterment of Sierra Blanca.

I hope you will get involved in shaping your future. Attend community meetings. Ask about development plans for Sierra Blanca. Find out how you can help.

Your ideas and efforts can make a difference.

## The CDC is for the community

(continued from pg. 2)

coordinated the remodeling and re-opening of the existing medical clinic building and recruited medical service providers from Van Horn. Recently, a contract was negotiated with a physician from Fabens who is able to offer a flexible service schedule to the community.

Visitors and guests are invited to participate in CDC Board meetings which are held every third Wednesday of every month at the Bank of Sierra Blanca, beginning at 5:00 p.m. "The CDC is willing to listen to see what we can do," encouraged Gibbs.

## Authority's Board To Meet

The next quarterly meeting of the TLLRWDA's Board of Directors will be held in Austin on Thursday, May 9, 1996, beginning at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will be held in Room 118 of the Stephen F. Austin State Office Building.

A workshop will be held on Wednesday, May 8, at 6:00 p.m. in the Brazos Room of the Radisson Hotel on Town Lake. The topic of discussion will be the status of the draft license issuance by the TNRCC.

## Thank You for Mailing List Help

In December '95 and January '96 the Authority began updating its Program Update and Neighbor To Neighbor mailing lists, respectively. Bright, yellow return postcards were sent along with each of these publications over the last four months, along with a request that the postcards be returned if respondents wished to remain on the mailing lists. State law requires state agencies to annually update all mailing lists for publications over a period of three consecutive issues. We appreciate your taking the time to respond to our update cards. We welcome any comments on our publications.

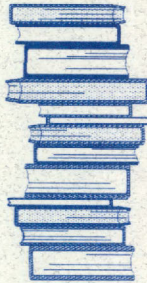
Happy Mother's Day



# COMMUNITY BITS

## School Counselor's Report

Individual conferences have been held with students in grades 7 - 12 to discuss end of the third nine weeks grades and attendance, and to prepare students for next year's class schedule. High school students seem to have adjusted well with the new block schedule. Grades have improved and this should be reflected in the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test. The TAAS will be administered to grades 3 - 8 in the next few weeks. Prior to graduation, seniors will have one additional opportunity to pass any portion of the Exit Level Exam not yet mastered. On April 25, students in grades Kindergarten through 12 took the California Achievement Test.



## Career Day

Career day has been rescheduled for Wednesday, May 8th beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the school gymnasium. The school is still recruiting community members to speak regarding their particular careers. Presentations should also address job awareness, job exploration and interpersonal skills. If you are interested in speaking to the students please contact the Sierra Blanca School at (915) 369-2781.

## New School Cafeteria & Tech Center

The school district is pleased to announce construction of a new cafeteria and technology center. Construction will begin soon after the school is closed for summer vacation. The new facilities are expected to be completed in time for the "back to school" season next August. Funds for the project were allocated to the school district by the Texas Education Agency.

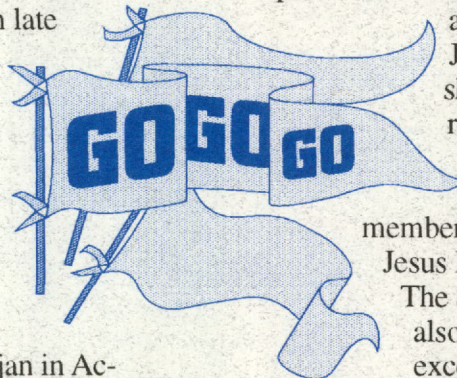
## PROM NIGHT

The Junior and Senior Prom and banquet were held on Saturday, April 13th. Seniors Salvador Ibarra and Vayle Scarbrough were crowned prom king and queen.

Justice of the Peace Bertha Ramirez was guest speaker at the banquet. Musical entertainment was provided by Wayne West and the Tejas Border Band.

## 3rd Place in UIL Competition

Sierra Blanca School congratulates the high school students who brought home a third place overall team win in the UIL Academic contests in late March. The team consisting of the following students advanced to the regional competition in Levelland: Becky Barron, Ready Writing; Jessica Dees, Prose and Informative Speaking; Chassidy Williams, Poetry; Misti Whiteaker, Feature Writing; Vayle Scarbrough, Spelling; Sharon Dickenson, Persuasive Speaking; and Grace Dickenson, Rosie Urbina and Frances Lujan in Accounting.



## Vaquero Athletics

The Vaquero golf team placed first in district competition and qualified for the regional golf meet in Levelland. Team members include Justin Torres, Japheth Dickenson, Alonso Guajardo, Victor Rodriguez and Coach Torres. In track and field, Jerry Mata advanced to the regional shot put competition. The 400 meter relay team also qualified for the regional competition after a second place district victory. Relay team members are Brian Jackson, Tarig Ibrahim, Jesus Mancillas and Marino Mascarenas. The Sierra Blanca School would like to also congratulate the girls tennis team for excellent representation in the district competition.

## MAY 1996

| SUNDAY                 | MONDAY   | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY                              |
|------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
|                        |  |   | <b>1</b> Beta Sigma Phi Mtg. 7:00 PM<br>TAAS Math (Non-mastery Sr.'s, Exit Level)<br>TAAS Reading (Grades 3 - 8) | <b>2</b> TAAS Reading (Non-mastery Sr.'s)<br><br>TAAS Soc. Studies (Grade 8)                     | <b>3</b> TAAS Science (Grade 8)   | <b>4</b> School Board Elections       |
| <b>5</b>               | <b>6</b>   | <b>7</b> School Board Meeting<br>6:00 PM                        | <b>8</b> TLLRWDA Board Workshop (Austin)<br>6:00 PM<br><br>Chamber of Commerce Meeting<br>6:00 PM                | <b>9</b> TLLRWDA Board Meeting (Austin)<br>8:30 AM   | <b>10</b>   | <b>11</b> Sophomore 3-3 BB Tournament |
| <b>12</b> Mother's Day | <b>13</b> Commissioners Court Meeting<br>9:00 AM | <b>14</b> Working Group Mtg.<br>7:00 PM (Courthouse)            | <b>15</b> Beta Sigma Phi Mtg. 7:00 PM  | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b>   | <b>18</b> Armed Forces Day            |
| <b>19</b>              | <b>20</b> SB School Awards Banquet<br>7:00 PM    | <b>21</b> Algebra 1, End-of-Course Exam<br><br>ESL Post Testing | <b>22</b> Chamber of Commerce Meeting<br>6:00 PM<br><br>Biology 1, End-of-Course Exam                            | <b>23</b> Head Start Commencement<br>10:00 AM<br><br>Spanish III, End-of-Course Exam (listening) | <b>24</b> Elementary School Field Day<br>Little Olympics                                    | <b>25</b>                             |
| <b>26</b>              | <b>27</b> Memorial Day (National Holiday)        | <b>28</b>   | <b>29</b> Semester Exams<br><br>Early Dismissal for Summer Vacation  | <b>30</b> KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION<br>10:00 AM<br><br>EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION<br>7:00 PM          | <b>31</b> Beta Sigma Phi Convention (Portales, NM)<br><br>HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION<br>7:00 PM |                                       |

### May Working Group Meeting

The recently issued Environmental and Safety Analysis and Proposed License will be the topic of discussion for the May working group meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 14. The meeting will take place at the courthouse, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Ruben Alvarado, Chief Engineer for the Authority, will make the presentation. Everyone is invited to attend.

*Neighbor To Neighbor* is published monthly by the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority (the Authority). The Authority is the State agency responsible for siting, constructing, operating and eventually closing a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility for the State. The Authority is headquartered in Austin, Texas and also has a field office in Sierra Blanca, Texas.

Please feel free to visit or contact the Authority at the following addresses and phone/fax numbers:

|                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>ATTN: P.I. Officer</b>      | <b>TLLRWDA</b>                  |
| <b>TLLRWDA</b>                 | <b>I-10 E., Mile Marker 112</b> |
| <b>7701 N. Lamar, Ste. 300</b> | <b>P.O. Box 361</b>             |
| <b>Austin, TX 78752</b>        | <b>Sierra Blanca, TX 79851</b>  |
| <b>Phone: (512) 451-5292</b>   | <b>Phone: (915) 369-3391</b>    |
| <b>Fax: (512) 451-5296</b>     | <b>Fax: (915) 369-3181</b>      |

**TELL US ABOUT IT...** 

We are working hard to provide you with the most up-to-date and accurate information pertaining to our project. Please feel free to comment, ask questions and/or make suggestions:

*Name/Nombre:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Address/Dirección:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Phone/Teléfono:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments/Comentario :**

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 **Mail To/Envíe a:**

**ATTN: Editor  
TLLRWDA  
7701 N. Lamar, #300  
Austin, TX 78752**

**COMPARTA SU COMENTARIO...** 

Deseamos ofrecerle la información mas precisa y reciente tocante a nuestro proyecto. Por favor envíenos su comentario perteneciente al proyecto y/o a este boletín de noticias.

**Texas Low-Level Radioactive  
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P.O. Box 361  
Sierra Blanca, TX 79851**

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