



J GONZÁLEZ

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“We at J. Gonzalez Injury Attorneys recognize, more than ever, the value of local journalism. Our community depends on steady and reliable voices to report the facts. Please join J. Gonzalez Injury Attorneys in supporting local journalism by reading The Monitor in print and at www.themonitor.com for round-the-clock Coronavirus updates. Stay safe!”

~J. GONZALEZ


BEARING WITNESS

Editor's note: This comic strip by author and cartoonist José Alaniz, Ph.D. — a 1986 graduate of Edinburg High School now residing in Seattle, and who also graduated from the University of Texas and Berkeley — is part of an ongoing series entitled Bearing Witness. In the series, the Museum of South Texas History aims to document some of the Rio Grande Valley lives lost to COVID-19. This comic strip is about Alaniz's uncle, Cruz Huijon, who died due to COVID-19 in August 2020. For more information visit MOSTHistory.org.

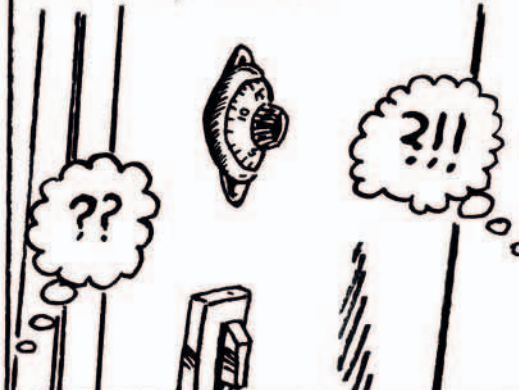
I COULD SAY A LOT ABOUT MY UNCLE CRUZ HUIJON, WHO DIED AT 59 OF COVID-19 ON AUG. 9, 2020: HIS SCHIZOTYPAL PERSONALITY TRAITS, DRUG ADDICTION AND SOCIAL ISOLATION, WHICH MADE HIM VULNERABLE.




BUT I'D RATHER GIVE YOU STORIES. CRUZ HAD A PERVERSELY CURIOUS MIND. AS A KID, INSPIRED BY A BOOK, HE CLIMBED THE EDINBURG WATER TOWER. "I WAS PROBABLY TRYING TO ALTER MY MOOD OR MY THINKING OR SOMETHING," HE TOLD ME.



IN 10TH GRADE, HE AND A FRIEND GOT THE SCHOOL LOCKER CODES AND SWITCHED THE COMBINATIONS ON DOZENS OF LOCKERS. CHAOS ENSUED. WHEN HE GOT CAUGHT, CRUZ SAID TO THE PRINCIPAL, "SIR, I'LL TELL YOU, BUT YOU GOTTA PROMISE ME YOU ALREADY KNOW."



"I KNOW THAT SOUNDS STUPID, BUT THAT'S WHAT I SAID," HE ADDED. I HOPE CRUZ KEEPS CAUSING GOOD WEIRD TROUBLE, WHEREVER HE'S GONE. I MISS HIM.



QUE DESCANSE EN PAZ CRUZ HUIJON. José Alaniz



Miguel Roberts | The Brownsville Herald

Beard Posse "Order of the Brush" member Joe Lee Rubio hands the official 84th annual Charro Days Fiesta poster Friday afternoon during a curbside free poster giveaway in front of the Charro Days Fiesta Headquarters along Elizabeth Street.

Online Charro Days aimed at preserving spirit

BY STEVE CLARK
STAFF WRITER

Charro Days has gone virtual this year as a way to maintain the spirit of the event despite the global pandemic, and maybe make it a little easier on those who can't imagine a year without the fiesta. Preceding the festivities each year is the public unveiling of the official Charro Days poster, which took place virtually Wednesday minus the public and shown on the Charro Days Fiesta Facebook page, YouTube and Brownsville TV, the city's official online video portal. Charro Days Inc. President Henry LeVrier said the virtual festivities will feature a combination of live and recorded events. A complete schedule of the fiesta's several events

during the week through the Feb. 28 Closing Ceremonies Concert can be found on the Charro Days Fiesta Facebook page and Charro Days website, he said. The children's costume contest was accepting photo submissions before the week of the festival. They'll be judged and announced on Facebook Live during the Baile del Sol. "We're just trying to mimic everything on Facebook the way it usually is in person," LeVrier said. "That's just one example of how we're doing it." Last year's Brownsville ISD Festival Folklorica and BISD Children's Parade will be shown on the BISD-KBSD ITV YouTube channel Monday and Thursday, respectively. Fiesta Dance Night is at 7 p.m. Wednesday. View-

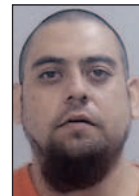
ers can call into the DJ to request songs and are encouraged to dance along at home, LeVrier said. "We're trying to make it as interactive as possible," he said. A mariachi performance by Mariachi 7 Leguas is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday and can be viewed at the Charro Days Fiesta Facebook page and on YouTube. A video of 2020's Grand International Parade will be shown on Brownsville TV at 1 p.m. Saturday. The Sombrero Festival En Casa will feature a concert at the Sombrero Festival's Facebook page at 7 p.m. Saturday, while the Closing Ceremony Concert takes place at 7 p.m. Sunday. It can be viewed on Brownsville TV. "It should be exciting," LeVrier said about the event. "We're trying to

keep the spirit living on." The public is being encouraged to dress in traditional Charro Days attire for the week even if the event itself is virtual this year and also decorate their homes and businesses in the spirit of the festivities, similar to "Yardi Gras" instead of Mardi Gras in New Orleans this year, he said. "We're hoping to build on this from year to year, for people to decorate, so when you're driving around town Charro Days is going on," LeVrier said. "I think it's something great that we can keep on doing, even when we're back to normal. Let's promote the spirit of Charro Days. ... We've got to keep on going. We can't let the spirit die."
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Mercedes man seeks bond reduction on murder charge

BY MARK REAGAN
STAFF WRITER

A 34-year-old Mercedes man is scheduled for a hearing Monday morning where his attorney will ask a judge to lower his \$1 million bond on a charge of murder. Fiden - cio Castillo Cosme has been in jail since his Sept. 28 arrest over the killing of a minor. He is charged along with his brother, Juan Jose Cosme, 37, in the case. Court records reflect that Juan has not asked for a bond reduction request. Details of the allegations against the men other than they are charged with murder are not public. At the time, The Monitor



asked former Mercedes police Chief Dagoberto "Dago" Chavez multiple times for comment on the arrests, but he ignored the newspaper. However, the former chief did tell multiple television stations that Mercedes police were investigating a stabbing. The Monitor also sought copies of the probable cause affidavits against the men from the Hidalgo County jail. The county requested an opinion from the Texas Attorney General on whether it was obligated to release the information requested because the probable cause affidavit contained information about the minor who was killed. The AG sided with the county that the information was protected from public disclosure under the Texas Family Code. Neither man has been indicted and both have remained jailed since Sept. 28 on a \$1 million bond.

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RGC man dies in single-vehicle crash in Escobares

STAFF REPORT

The Texas Department of Public Safety says a man died Saturday morning after driving off of U.S. Expressway 83 in Starr County and hitting a gate and a utility pole. The fatal crash happened at about 8:57 a.m. inside the Exxon parking lot near the intersection of Expressway and FM 648, according to DPS. "The crash occurred in the city of Escobares."

DPS said in a release. "Preliminary investigation revealed a white 2016 Ford F-150 was traveling east on US 83 when it drove off the roadway striking a gate and a utility pole. The vehicle then went into a side skid, struck and cinder block fence, and finally rolled over." The driver, Carlo Edward Marks, a 41-year-old Rio Grande City resident, died from his injuries, DPS said. The crash remains under investigation.