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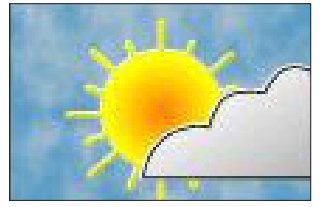


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# BIG SPRING HERALD

**MONDAY**  
**JULY 28, 2008**



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## Council meeting set; intent not clear

*Brint Ryan to address city and economic development board*

By **THOMAS JENKINS**  
Staff Writer

The Big Spring City Council will hold a special meeting Tuesday in conjunction with the Big Spring Economic Development board of directors to hear

a presentation from Brint Ryan, manager of the Settles Hotel Development Company and owner of Ryan Inc.

However, according to Big Spring EDC Executive Director Terry Wegman, the focus of Ryan's presentation — which will

be made publicly, prior to the scheduled executive session — won't be ongoing renovations to the downtown Settles Hotel.

"My understanding of this is Ryan wants to make a presentation to the council and EDC board concerning economic

development consulting services his company, Ryan Inc., does," said Wegman. "This is something Brint (Ryan) spoke to Councilman Troy Tompkins about, and Troy felt like it was something the rest of the council needed to hear."

Ryan, a Big Spring native spearheading efforts to turn the crumbling frame of the Settles Hotel into commercial and residential properties with retail space available on the first and

See **MEETING**, Page 3

## Back to the Barrio

*Reunion slated this weekend at La Verda Club*

By **BILL McCLELLAN**  
News Editor

Some entertainment idols are coming to Big Spring next weekend — sorta.

A talent show with the likes of Elvis, Selina, Marilyn Monroe, Cantiflas and others will be one of the highlights during The Amigos del Barrio Reunion, set for Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 2-3, at the La Verda Club.

"We are expecting more than 1,000 people throughout the weekend," said Libby Uribe, owner of the club and a major organizer of the reunion, which is held every two years. "People come from all over the United States and beyond. They come 'home' for the weekend."

A dance will be held Saturday from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Sunday's activities get under way at 1 p.m. with a candlelight vigil for Willie Mendoza, a strong sup-

See **BARRIO**, Page 3



AP Photo/Courtesy of Marty Racine, Ruidoso News

**Flood waters destroy yards and fences of homes at River Ranch RV Park, along Highway 70 between Glencoe and Ruidoso Downs, N.M. About 300 people — residents and tourists — were evacuated from homes, campgrounds and a recreational vehicle park as flooding hit around the resort town of Ruidoso after the remnants of Hurricane Dolly dumped an estimated six inches on the mountainous area.**

## 300-500 people evacuated as Ruidoso hit by flooding

RUIDOSO, N.M. (AP) — Some 350 people evacuated from homes and up to 500 vacationers who couldn't get back to cabins, campsites or recreational vehicles awaited word Monday on damage left by flooding in the Ruidoso area from the remnants of Hurricane Dolly. Two people were reported missing in the

water.

The state Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management said up to 9 inches of rain had fallen in the mountainous resort area since Friday. Flash flood watches were in effect across much of eastern New Mexico.

Ruidoso police took reports of the two people being swept

away Sunday in separate incidents after apparently losing their footing near the Rio Ruidoso, which spilled over its banks early Sunday, said Tom Schafer, Ruidoso's emergency management coordinator. He didn't have additional details.

See **RUIDOSO**, Page 3

## School supplies going fast

**Eligible families can apply through Friday at the Salvation Army**

By **THOMAS JENKINS**  
Staff Writer

If the initial demand is any indication, the annual Salvation Army Back-to-School program is on pace to eclipse last year's amount of school supplies provided to low-income families in the community.

"We've given out between 75 and 80 backpacks and sets of school supplies since we began taking applications last Monday," said Paula Lafler, a social worker with the local Salvation Army. "Last year, the first week of applications was especially slow, but Monday we were really busy. If things keep going this way, we're looking at a much higher demand than last year."

The program provides new school supplies — from notebook paper and folders to pencils and crayons — to area children who might not otherwise have the tools necessary to start the school year in August, and with gas prices and other expenses soaring, Lafler said it's no wonder the demand is up.

"A lot of these families are struggling just to put food on the table," said Lafler. "The gasoline to get them back and forth to work alone is putting a strain on most people's budgets."

Applications for supplies are being taken from 9 a.m. until noon and 1 p.m. until 3

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Please call 263-7331. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call (432) 263-7335 before 7 p.m. weekdays and noon Sunday.

### It's good... eely!

TOKYO (AP) — It's the hottest season of the year in Japan, and that means it's eel season. A drink called "Unagi Nobori," or "Surging Eel," made by Japan Tobacco Inc., hit the stores this month just ahead of Japan's annual eel-eating season, company spokesman Kazunori Hayashi said Monday.

"It's mainly for men who are exhausted by the summer's heat," Hayashi said. Many Japanese believe eating eel boosts stamina in hot weather.

### Veteran of the Month

Hangar 25 Air Museum has announced that James Ray Coleman has been named Veteran of the Month for July.

A reception in his honor will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday in the museum's briefing room.

Coleman served in the U.S. Army Air Corp during World War II as a B-17 pilot. He was a prisoner of war for 14 months and was stationed at Thurleigh Field, part of the 306th Bomb group in the 368th Bomb Squadron.

### Firefighters promoted

Randal Heredia and Bertha Soto, both firefighters with the Big Spring Fire Department, were recently promoted to the rank of driver/operator after passing department-mandated exams.

"We are extremely proud of their achievement and would like the citizens to join us in congratulating and showing our appreciation for their hard work and dedication in serving the people of Big Spring and Howard County," said BSFD Deputy Chief Rich Grove.



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# Fire destroys 12 homes near Yosemite National Park

By TRACIE CONE

Associated Press Writer

MARIPOSA, Calif. — Little relief from hot weather is expected this week as crews fight to contain a wildfire near an entrance to Yosemite National Park that has destroyed 12 homes and forced the evacuation of nearly 200 others.

The blaze had charred more than 26,000 acres — over a square mile — since Friday as wooded slopes ignited. Besides the homes destroyed, the fire had also engulfed 27 other buildings.

Officials ordered the evacuations of 195 homes under immediate threat, but some residents defied orders and stayed to protect their property. About 2,000 homes faced at least some danger from the fast-spreading flames, said Wayne Barringer, a state fire spokesman on the scene.

Most of the evacuated homes are in the town of Midpines, about 12 miles from the park. The southern edge of the blaze was

as little as two miles from Mariposa, a town of about 1,800 residents.

“My house is about 100 yards from some fire right now and that’s freaking me out,” said John Romero, who answered his phone Sunday evening during a break from digging trenches and clearing brush with a little tractor.

Romero said his brother, Tony Romero, has an adjoining property with a 50,000-gallon swimming pool. The brothers planned to pump water from the pool to defend their homes if the fire advanced that far.

He said the air was thick with smoke. “I feel like I’ve smoked two packs of cigarettes, and I don’t smoke,” Romero said.

Weather early this week is expected to bring little change from the hot, dry conditions that have plagued California for months. High temperatures are expected to remain in the low- to mid-90s, with low humidity and afternoon wind, National Weather Service meteorologist Dan Gudgel said



AP Photo/Gary Kazanjian

**Orange County Firefighters Tyler Johnson, left and Mike Reinhold look at fires burning across the Briceburg mountains along side the Merced River Sunday in Briceburg, Calif. An out-of-control wildfire burning near an entrance to Yosemite National Park has destroyed eight homes and threatened thousands more as flames forced authorities to cut power to the park.**

early Monday.

“It’ll be a challenging fire for them to fight,” Gudgel said.

The fire was 10 percent contained Sunday evening.

State fire officials said the blaze was ignited by sparks created from fire-arms used for target practice, but would not elaborate.

Mary Ann Porter, a nurs-

ing assistant who lives in Midpines, left her goats, chickens and dog when she evacuated Sunday morning. Porter, who lives with her daughter and grandchildren, said the fam-

ily took pictures and some computer hard drives.

“One of the blessings of living up here is that you adapt and learn to accept things,” she said at the evacuation center in Mariposa.

To protect firefighters battling flames beneath power lines, electricity was cut to a wide area fire officials said.

James Guidi Jr., a spokesman for Pacific Gas & Electric, said the transmission line that fed power to Yosemite was destroyed by the fire on Saturday. Mobile generators were being set up to restore power to the whole park and about 500 customers nearby by Monday evening. In all, about 1,000 customers in the area had lost power, Guidi said.

Farther north, in Siskiyou County, authorities reported the death of a second firefighter in as many days.

The victim died Saturday while scouting a blaze, Siskiyou County Sheriff’s Department spokeswoman Susan Gravenkamp said Sunday.

## MEETING

Continued from Page 1

second floors, announced his plans in 2006, with the project

expected to cost approximately \$12 million.

How — or if — those plans will play into Tuesday’s presentation are anyone’s guess at this point, according to Wegman.

“I honestly don’t know what

the scope of the presentation is,” said Wegman. “I’m not sure if it’s concerning economic development or business site selection. Right now it’s just an informal thing, it’s just a presentation. I suppose we’ll all find out what

it’s about at the same time.”

Also during the meeting, the council and EDC board are expected to hold their quarterly update meeting, which will be closed to the public in an executive session.

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at [citydesk@bigspringherald.com](mailto:citydesk@bigspringherald.com)

## SCHOOL

Continued from Page 1

p.m. through Friday, according to Lafler.

“We need people who are coming in to apply to bring a Social Security

card for each child,” said Lafler. “We also need to know what school the child is going to and what grade they will be in. Also bring proof of income and expenses, and a picture ID for the person applying for the program. We’ll let you know right then and there

whether you qualify for the program, and if you do, you’ll be able to take the supplies home right then.”

And while the application process is nearing its halfway mark, Lafler said its not too late for area residents and businesses to

help out with donations.

“If they would rather make a monetary donation instead of going out and buying the supplies, it actually saves a little bit of money,” said Lafler. “The Salvation Army is tax exempt, so we don’t have to pay the taxes on them. But

if they prefer to purchase the supplies and bring them to us, it’s fine as well. If they make a monetary donation, they also need to earmark it for the back-to-school supplies.”

For more information on the program, contact the Salvation Army at

267-8239.

Contact Staff Writer Thomas Jenkins at 263-7331 ext. 232 or by e-mail at [citydesk@bigspringherald.com](mailto:citydesk@bigspringherald.com)

## BARRIO

Continued from Page 1

porter of the reunion, who died last year from cancer.

A potluck dinner will be held from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., followed by a performance that will include The Continentals, a music

group that was started in the 1960s.

The afternoon and early evening will include a talent show with impersonations of well-known celebrities such as Tina Turner, Pedro Infante, Lola Beltran, Ana Gabriel, Paquita la del Barrio, the Kate Morrison Dancers, Dolly Parton, Carmen

Miranda, Michael Jackson and others.

Uribe, who handcrafted all the costumes for the show, said it should be very entertaining.

“I think everyone will enjoy it. They’ll be dressed up as singers, dancers and really get in the spirit of things,” she said. “I’m really looking forward to it.”

Prizes of \$150 for first place, \$100 for second place and \$50 for third place will be awarded.

Everybody attending the reunion from out of state will receive something special.

“We always give a gift, usually something from Texas, to show our appreciation of them traveling

so far,” said Uribe. “We give away other gifts and things, too.”

But the most important part of the reunion is not the gifts, the food or the talent show, said Uribe.

“It’s an opportunity for everyone to get together and see what everyone else has been doing for the past couple of years.

That’s what it is really all about. Just friends getting together, some of whom you may not have seen in a long, long time.”

The La Verda Club is located on the north service road of Interstate 20, west of U.S. Highway 87.

For more information about the reunion, contact Uribe at (432) 263-4260.

## RUIDOSO

Continued from Page 1

Schafer said 200 other residents in the area were not flooded but were cut off by high water and closed bridges.

State officials estimated more than 60 homes have been damaged. Nine bridges were confirmed under water and secondary roads in the area remained closed, although the main highway, U.S. 70, reopened after part of it was shut down Sunday.

The race track at nearby Ruidoso Downs flooded, canceling Sunday’s entire race card.

“The race track is a river. I’ve never seen it like this here,” said trainer Joel Marr.

Schafer said there were 25 water rescues Sunday, mostly from vehicles but a few from homes.

“A lot of people were trying to get through in deep water areas and they got stuck,” he said.

National Guard Black

Hawk helicopters rescued about two dozen campers stranded by high water, Schafer said. But he said some campers remained stranded.

“They had to hunker down last night” to await rescue Monday, he said.

About 50 people trapped by the river were rescued by Ruidoso firefighters who put a ladder across the flood and walked people across it to the other side, Schafer said.

The sun broke through Monday morning, but Schafer said isolated thunderstorms were forecast throughout the week.

Campers evacuated Sunday from Bonito Creek Campground were sent

to a nearby church. Most of the 40 or so people who showed up at Angus Hill Church of the Nazarene — a designated emergency shelter — were campers “who just came up for a nice weekend” and were flooded out, said Sue Hutchinson, a church volunteer and state-certified first responder who operates a first aid clinic at the church.

Several campers said they awakened as their tents started floating down the river, Hutchinson said.

The church offered meals, sleeping areas, laundry facilities, “entertainment for the kiddos” and the clinic, which took care of bruises and scrapes from

a few campers who had to escape quickly, she said.

Other evacuees were offered shelter at a senior citizens’ center in Ruidoso Downs, the youth center of a Methodist Church, an evacuation center at a Church of Christ and a hotel, the Swiss Chalet, Schafer said.

Dale Broyles, general manager of the Swiss Chalet, said he called police early Sunday when he heard about the flooding and offered the inn’s banquet rooms, since the hotel itself was fully booked. He said a few campers came in and waited for a friend to pick them up.

“They didn’t even have shirts on,” Broyles said.

“They had to leave their tents.”

Some hotel guests checked out, but returned and checked back in, afraid they wouldn’t be able to get back home because of road closures, he said.

Gov. Bill Richardson directed the state Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and other state agencies to help respond to the flooding, and Ruidoso’s emergency operations center was activated.

In Dona Ana County in far southern New Mexico, rains that sent water over the banks of irrigation ditches flooded seven homes and washed out at least one road north of Las Cruces.

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