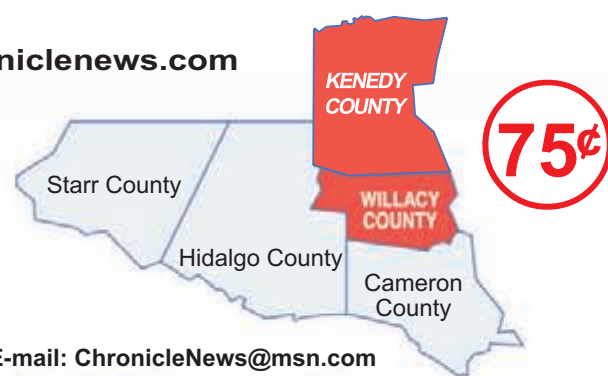


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**Local Weather**

Week ending June 28, 2009

Temp:	Max.	Min.	Rain
Monday	99	77	
Tuesday	97	76	
Wednesday	89	77	.001
Thursday	94	73	.31
Friday	98	73	
Saturday	99	74	
Sunday	100	76	

U.S. Weather Observer  
Dickey Caldwell

*This is our 89th year, thanks to you!*

# Raymondville Chronicle

# Willacy County News

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TWELVE PAGES IN ONE SECTION

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## “Drop a ball from the top of City Hall,” local resident suggests News Year's event

Robert Gonzales told Raymondville City Commissioners last week that he wants to see us "bring pride back to Raymondville." One way to do that, he suggests, is to drop a large electric ball down the corner of city hall as a New Year's celebration.

Said Gonzales, "We have been given a lot of negative publicity in the last few years and this might be one way of getting some good publicity."

Gonzales praised the appearance of the newly remodeled city hall and made other comments concerning traffic on South 16 St., asking for police in the area to monitor kids racing. There are lots of kids there and we need more stop signs," he said.

Gonzales is a former school

teacher and prepares income tax returns at his business. He told commissioners, "I still hope for a first class science institute in Raymondville."

Mayor Orlando "Lonnie" Correa thanked Gonzales for his comments and agreed that "Yogi (city manager Eleazar Garcia, Jr.) and his staff as well as Chamber of Commerce manager Elma Chavez are doing a "great job for the city," citing the Fourth of July celebration coming up on Saturday.

"Yes, our fireworks show is becoming well known around the Valley," said Commissioner Yolanda Alexandre.

Gonzales' idea about the New Years Eve ball reminded the editor of former mayor C.M. "Mike" Crowell who

wanted to put a giant red & white Santa cap on top of the Smiley Face water tower at Eddie Starck Little League Park. Maybe we could do both.

### IN OTHER BUSINESS:

Only one bid was received to be the bank depository for city funds. That bid came from Frost Bank. Vice-president Mary Casillas said, "We would like to continue our four year relationship with the city." The matter was tabled for a vote at the next city meeting.

Chief of Police Uvaldo Zamora reported that his officers have cleared 9 of 15 burglaries with arrests recently. The police also issued 10 citations for loitering around "O'Reilly's, Auto Zone, and the Movie Gallery after hours."



**NEW OFFICERS INSTALLED** - 2009 - 2010 Raymondville Rotary Club officers were installed Wednesday evening at the Casa Blanca Restaurant. Shown left to right are Frank Torres, immediate past president, Dolores Salinas, installing officer, Vilma Cervantes, new club president, Terry Wolfe, vice president and secretary and Geary Berkman, treasurer. Dolores Salinas is the Rotary Club's assistant district governor for District 5930.

## Sebastian man sentenced to 11 years in prison for armed robbery & burglary

Jose Feliciano Mata, 18, of Sebastian pled guilty in 197th State District Court on June 24 to aggravated robbery and to burglary of a home.

Mata was sentenced to serve 11 years on each of the two charges by Judge Migdalia Lopez but the sentences will be served concurrently.

He was convicted for a February 27, home invasion where the victims were robbed at gunpoint. He was also convicted of an April 19 burglary of a habitation, while the victim was present.

As the result of his plea a charge of assault pending against Mata was dismissed. Punishment range for aggravated robbery is from probation to confinement for 5 to 99 years and the punishment range for burglary of a habitation is from probation to confinement in prison from 2 to 20 years. In both instances a \$10,000 fine may be levied by the judge.

Mata is a suspect in a number of other Sebastian area burglaries.

Due to his age and with good behavior in prison, Mata could

be released in as few as three or four years said Willacy County and District Attorney Bernard Ammerman.

Ammerman said his office will aggressively prosecute crimes involving theft and burglary and would like to thank Sheriff's Investigator Guillermo Salinas, Jr., and Raymondville Police Detective David Robles for their help on these two cases.

The cases were prosecuted by Ammerman and First Asst. County and District Attorney Scott Greenbaum.

## County meeting focus on grant applications

Willacy County Commissioners focused on approving state grant applications at their special meeting Monday afternoon, and on how to spend grant funds already approved.

The first grant considered was a \$20,000 Youth Grant from Michael Harling, of Municipal Capital Markets Group, Inc. of Dallas, Texas. Harling is the bond manager

on the 3000-bed ICE detention center in Raymondville.

A citizens advisory committee considered various projects that could use the money to benefit youth, including the Raymondville golf course, a skateboard park, and improvements to the riding & roping arena but none were picked.

Instead, the county divided the funds three ways with \$6,666 going to each, Sebastian Pony League, Willacy County Little League, and Raymondville Sports Foundation (Pony League). The awards were based on the committee's recommendations.

Next the commissioners

approved an application for \$412,500 from Texas Dept. of Housing & Community Affairs. The grant will pay for roof repairs for homes damaged by Hurricane Dolly last summer. If home owners are disabled or elderly, mold damage from the same storm can also be taken care of.

"There are a lot of roofs that have not been repaired and that is what we are going after," said grantsman Carlos Mondragon.

Commissioners also approved a grant application for \$480,000 from the Coastal Impact Assist. Program. The grant will also pay for an administrator to oversee the

See **County meeting...** on Page 4

## County earns high marks for 2008 Financial Report

By Paul Whitworth

Willacy County Auditor Ida C. Martinez got good marks for her 2008 Annual Financial Report, maybe a B+, or possibly an A-. The financial report was dissected for county commissioners at a special meeting Monday afternoon.

Quintan Anderson of Long Chilton, LLP said the county's assets exceeded its liabilities on Sept. 30, 2008 by \$7.2 million. And for the same period the county's net assets increased by \$2 million.

The county's total assets for the year were \$15.4 million an increase of \$4 million over 2007. Meanwhile, liabilities were \$8.2 million an increase of \$1.3 million over 2007.

When liabilities are subtracted from assets the county's total net assets are \$7.1 million an increase of \$2.6 million over 2007.

The biggest share of this

increase is attributable to revenues from the prison contracts above budget by \$133,000 and a reimbursement of attorney fees for capital murder trials of \$105,000, and expenditure decreases of \$600,000.

The biggest part of county revenue comes from \$17.6 million in charges for services (prison income) and \$4.1 million from taxes. Total revenue for 2008 was \$24 million while total expenditures were \$22.1 million.

Anderson said that the county's revenues were \$470 thousand above budget while expenditures were \$700 thousand below budget.

Willacy County's economy remains disadvantage compared to the national economy with our unemployment rate currently at 10.8 percent,

above the state and national average.

The 2008-2009 tax rate is \$.6228 per \$100 a decrease from last year's rate of \$.6888. Tax revenues are expected to grow 7.6 percent this year, or \$336,000 over last year at a lower tax rate.

Anderson said the county has no substantial long term debt.

Largest tax payers in the county are: Exxon, \$511,713;

Citation 2002 Investments Ltd. \$427,398; Suemaur Expl & Prod LLC \$426,246; XTO Energy Inc. \$348,022; Pinnell Trust \$143,215; Cody Energy LLC \$123,817; Sebastian Cotton \$95,209; AEP Texas Central Co. \$92,107; Apache Corp. \$90,238 and Wal-Mart Stores Texas L.P. \$85,607. Together these 10 taxpayers account for 14.62% of the county's total tax revenue.

## Fourth of July Celebration

The Raymondville Chamber of Commerce and the City of Raymondville will be hosting the fifth Annual Fourth of July Celebration and Fireworks Show on Saturday, July 4th. A morning parade will kick off the festivities followed by a flag raising ceremony coordinated by American Legion Post 390 under Commander George Solis. The parade will include State Representative Tara Rios Ybarra, County officials, City officials and employees and their families and other organizations. Participants are still encouraged to register.

The festivities will continue at Eddie Stark Park throughout the day with musical entertainment by DJ Frog; Los Bandoleros del Valle and a variety of contests and food of all types, A softball tournament will continue throughout the day ending prior to the fireworks show. For more information on the day's events, please call the Chamber at 956-689-3171.



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