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BROWNSVILLE AND THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY

► COMMUNITY A4  
 ► LAGUNA MADRE A5  
 ► NATION A6

## AROUND THE VALLEY

### 'Most Wanted' fugitive captured in Edinburg

► EDINBURG — Fugitive Steven Lee Kirkley's flight from a Mississippi jail began in the air ducts above his cell but ended just short of the border Wednesday morning.

Edinburg police, who recognized Kirkley from a photograph on the "America's Most Wanted" Web site, arrested him at the Speedy Stop at 1415 E. University Drive while he was using a pay phone to talk to his mother.

Wednesday's arrest — on the charge of theft — came nearly a month after Kirkley and two other inmates at the Marion County jail escaped under the nose of guards exhausted from keeping watch during Hurricane Katrina.

On Labor Day, Sept. 5, Kirkley and fellow inmates John C. Stringer and Curtis Dickson executed the jailbreak, the fourth since the jail opened in 1998.

Stringer, accused of receiving stolen property, and Dickson, an accused kidnaper and murderer who claimed to be a storm evacuee to gain access to a Red Cross shelter have also been recaptured.

Kirkley is awaiting trial for the October 2004 murder of real estate agent Janell Hatton.

In the Edinburg Municipal Court, he was charged with theft, a state jail felony punishable by up to two years in a state jail.

### Immigrants dial 911 for help

► LA GLORIA — The Border Patrol used helicopters Wednesday evening to help find five people believed to be undocumented immigrants lost in the brush.

"We received a 911 call to the Rio Grande City station. The caller was frantically asking for help. He said his wife was in serious condition, two people were very serious," Customs and Border Protection spokesman Roy Cervantes said.

Cervantes said the cell phone signal was traced to an expanse of desolate brush land between La Gloria and the inland checkpoint and Hebbronville. Details on the rescue were not immediately available Wednesday night.

The agents had told the man to build a fire to help agents spot them. Cervantes said Border Patrol Search, Trauma, and Rescue (BORSTAR) teams were deployed along with the helicopters.

## LOTTO

### ► TEXAS LOTTERY RESULTS

Winning numbers, Wednesday, September 29:  
**Lotto Texas: 4-11-15-40-44 BB 40**  
**Cash Five: 8-15-27-33-34**  
**Pick Three: 3-7-6(day)3-6-3(night)**

Find past winning numbers at  
[www.txlottery.org](http://www.txlottery.org)

## GETTING IT RIGHT

► CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS  
 Due to a reporting error, Tuesday's edition of *The Brownsville Herald* misstated the professional position of Bari Siddique, administrative secretary of Association of Asian Americans.

Siddique is an assistant professor of computer science at the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College.

*The Herald* apologizes for the error.

It is the policy of *The Brownsville Herald* to correct errors in a timely manner. Corrections and clarifications will be published in this space. To inquire about corrections, readers may call an editor.

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## Suspected Gulf Cartel member enters court in stun belt

Judge, jurors in fear after defendant said to order lawyers, witnesses killed

BY SERGIO CHAPA  
 THE BROWNSVILLE HERALD

A lengthy drug trafficking trial for an alleged Gulf Cartel member opened Wednesday in Houston.

Noel Exinia of La Feria and two other men were arrested on Jan. 26 and charged with federal cocaine trafficking charges.

Exinia, 35, is also believed to have plotted the deaths of prosecutors and witnesses related to the case and cast spells to shield his illegal operations.

He has been held without bond since his arrest but U.S. District

Judge Andrew Hanen moved the 10-day trial to Houston because of safety concerns. Exinia wore a stun belt in court Wednesday.

Prosecutors contend that he is a violent member of the Matamoros-based Gulf Cartel, that he allegedly solicited the murder of a prosecutor in February and asked associates to have witnesses in another case against him killed.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Charlie Lewis alleged in a trial brief that Exinia told his attorney on Sept. 1 that he was going to make some phone calls to have the prosecutors and key witnesses killed.

It was not clear if Exinia would face charges for the alleged threats, but court records show that he will remain in the stun belt while in court to protect the judge, prosecutors, jurors and others.

Florida Department of

Corrections records show that Exinia was sentenced to four years in prison for a brutal drug homicide that took place on April 29, 1994 in Manatee County.

He was released from prison in March 1999 and moved home to La Feria where he completed a five-year probation sentence.

Exinia's attorney William May of Corpus Christi could not be reached for comment at press time Wednesday, but in a previous interview McAllen attorney Al Alvarez described his former client as "just a truck driver."

A federal criminal complaint filed in January shows that Exinia is believed to have moved an average of 275 pounds of cocaine a week from Mexico to several northeastern states over the last several years.

Court records reveal that Exinia's brother, Carlos, used magic dolls and believed that they would protect the family's

illegal operations.

Records show that authorities seized extensive photographic, audio and physical evidence against Exinia, including more than \$1.2 million in cash that was meant to be laundered in December and January.

Although Exinia is not facing terrorism charges, prosecutors contend that the Gulf Cartel member solicited the services of a pilot in December to smuggle 20 "terrorists" from Mexico into the United States. Exinia allegedly told the pilot in January that his boss had asked him to find transportation for the group.

Court records show that co-defendant Cesario Nuñez, 33, of San Benito entered into a plea agreement on Sept. 8 while Jesus Nuñez became a material witness in the case.

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## History of Rebozo



BRAD DOHERTY/THE BROWNSVILLE HERALD

Monica de la Vega and Marcela Arguelles Lawler paint background scenes that will be featured in tonight's History of the Rebozo, a "living history lesson" and fashion show featuring a large collection of Mexican dresses and rebozos. The event takes place at 7 p.m. at the Jacob Brown Auditorium. The \$75 per person fee will benefit a scholarship fund for UTB-

TSC international students and the construction of a human value complex in Matamoros. The rebozos are part of a collection owned by Silvia Rojo Lugo of Mexico City, who lent them to the college in hopes of spreading knowledge and awareness of the traditional Mexican clothing item, according to information from the university.

## Former county legal counsel receives additional time on probation

BY SERGIO CHAPA  
 THE BROWNSVILLE HERALD

Former Commissioner's Court legal counsel Doug Wright on Wednesday received nine months more of probation for violating the terms of sentencing for a November auto accident.

Wright, 56, appeared Wednesday before County Court-at-Law No. 3 Judge Daniel Robles and pleaded true to violating the terms of a six-month deferred adjudication sentence he had received for a duty upon striking a fixed object charge.

Under the terms of his deferred adjudication agreement, Wright had agreed not to drink alcohol or break any laws.

The former county attorney admitted to Robles on Wednesday that he violated the terms of the agreement on Aug. 13 when South Padre Island police arrested him for public intoxication and disorderly conduct.

Court records show that Wright has since completed a 30-day alcohol abuse program at the Starlite Recovery Center in Center Point and is continuing his treatment.

Although the public intoxication and disorderly conduct cases have not gone to trial, Robles gave Wright nine months probation, a \$300 fine and probation fees on Wednesday for violating the agreement.

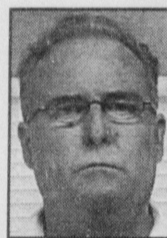
South Padre Island police arrested Wright on Nov. 20, 2004 and charged him in the accident and for DWI and unlawfully carrying a weapon after they found a handgun inside his SUV.

Robles gave Wright six months probation for the accident and acquitted him of the DWI and weapons charges in March, after the former county attorney pleaded no contest to all three charges.

Cameron County District Attorney Armando Villalobos refiled the weapons charge against Wright, for which he is expected to appear in court in November.

Prosecutors filed a motion to revoke probation for Wright, who spent at least one day in jail until he was given a \$1,000 bond.

Wright resigned from his position as legal counsel for Cameron County on Aug. 23.



WRIGHT

Although the public intoxication and disorderly conduct cases have not gone to trial, Robles gave Doug Wright nine months probation, a \$300 fine and probation fees on Wednesday for violating the agreement.

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## Woman complains that gas attendant flashed her at Sam's Club

THE BROWNSVILLE HERALD

A 27-year-old woman told police that a gas station employee exposed himself while she was pumping gas at a north Brownsville station Tuesday afternoon.

According to a Brownsville police report, the woman was fueling her car at 5:35 p.m. Tuesday at the gas station at Sam's Club, 3570 W. Alton Gloor Blvd.

The woman said a gas attendant came up to her and made casual conversation but started to make her nervous when he started asking overly personal questions.

The woman then noticed that the attendant's pants were unzipped and that his erect penis was visible, prompting her to flee the station.

According to the report, the woman later spoke with

the Sam's Club manager who reviewed security camera tapes and promised an investigation. Brownsville Police Lt. James Paschall said the case remains under investigation.

### Naked man refuses to leave woman's couch

Police arrested a 58-year-old man after he was walking naked on a downtown street and refused to leave a woman's home Tuesday evening.

According to a Brownsville police report, neighbors on the 200 block of East Jefferson Street saw a nude Jose Fernandez walking shortly before 6 p.m. Tuesday. Fernandez allegedly

walked into a woman's house, sat on her couch and refused to leave when police arrived.

He allegedly fought with police officers and spit on them when they tried to remove him from the home.

According to the report, an officer injured his wrist during the incident and was taken to a hospital with Fernandez, who had unspecified injuries.

Jail records show that Fernandez remained in custody Wednesday afternoon under \$18,000 in bonds on charges of indecent exposure, resisting arrest and assault of a police officer.

Although an exact motive for the behavior was not clear Wednesday, Brownsville Police Lt. James Paschall said Fernandez told jailers that he had been taking medication for depression.

Police briefs compiled by Sergio Chapa.



FERNANDEZ

## The Herald

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## DON PEDRO SAYS

"Today's suicide bomber in Iraq was a woman," Don Pedro said as he entered the newsroom.

"They say it's the first successful suicide attack by a woman," the city editor noted.

"I'm no expert on Islam," The Don mused.

"But this makes me wonder: since she did the same thing the men do, does she still get 72 virgins when she gets to heaven?"

And out he went.