



A life-long tradition

LIFE Fair provides memories, experiences for children
FOCUS

WET OLYMPICS

Record 7-3 high jump highlight
SPORTS | 1B

Wetlands' potential

Laredo's ancient past could help future
ART OF LIVING

Laredo Morning Times

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MEXICO | HOMICIDES

Man on bike kills 2 near downtown NL

By VICENTE RANGEL
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

NUEVO LAREDO - The city's 17th and 18th homicides were recorded late Friday in a shooting that left two men dead near the downtown area.

The incident took place 27 hours after a woman was killed outside her residence.

One man died at the scene in the late Friday shooting while the other died in a hospital emergency room, officials said.

A third man, standing nearby, was wounded in the left arm and was treated at General Hospital.

Police said the shooting took place at 11:50 p.m. at the corner of 20 de Noviembre and Victoria streets near the downtown area.

Witnesses told police the bicycle-riding gunman pedaled up to a group of men sitting in a car at the 1600 block of Victoria and fired into the face, neck and left arm of the driver, a 24-year-old man, who died immediately. A second man, who police said was between 50-55, was shot twice in the chest and died while being treated at General Hospital.

See KILLS | PAGE 15A

LAREDO | COUNCIL

City to look at permits for trash haulers

By ERICA CORDOVA
LAREDO MORNING TIMES

Those who haul trash to the landfills frequently for other people and are considered to be self-haulers may have to get a permit soon, if the city council amends an ordinance requiring a franchise agreement or self hauler permit from all persons who haul trash to the landfills regularly.

The Laredo City Council held a public hearing on this subject last week and a long discussion was hashed out. In the end, council decided to postpone the hearing to get more public comment.

At least one self hauler, who isn't franchised with the city, presented his views, asking the council to look deeper into the matter before they require that everyone who hauls trash to the landfills on a regular basis for commercial reasons get a permit.

"I am strictly opposed to this ordinance. There is a bunch of flaws in it," said Pedro Gonzalez III, who has been a solid waste hauler for the past 30 years. "This council has the power

See TRASH | PAGE 15A

MIDDLE EAST | POLITICS

Syria announces pullback

By BASSEM MROUE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Assad ignores Bush's demand for withdrawal

DAMASCUS, Syria - President Bashar Assad on Saturday announced a two-stage pullback of Syrian forces to the Lebanese border, but failed to address broad international demands that he completely withdraw Syria's 15,000 troops after nearly 30 years in the country.

Assad also did not respond to President Bush's demand just a day earlier that Syria withdraw all its troops and intelligence agents from



ASSAD

"By carrying out this measure, Syria will have fulfilled requirements

of the Taif agreement and implemented U.N. Resolution 1559," the Syrian leader said in a rare address to parliament.

Assad said his plan would put Syria in full compliance with international agreements and U.N. demands.

Assad was vague about the pullback, leaving it unclear if Syrian forces would eventually leave Lebanon or remain inside the country near the Syrian frontier. He said Syrian and Lebanese authorities would negotiate this week.

Later Saturday, however, Syrian

Immigrant Affairs Minister Buthaina Shaaban told Lebanese Broadcast Corp. television that withdrawal would be complete. "The matter is very clear. When an army withdraws it withdraws to inside the country's border."

The United States issued a strong statement of dissatisfaction with Assad's most recent comments, which came after four weeks of political turmoil in Lebanon set off by the assassination of a popular former

See SYRIA | PAGE 16A

CULTURE | TRADITION SHOWCASED



Photos by Guillermo Sosa | Laredo Morning Times

The Duran family, seated at left, gets a close-up view of the Lion Dance Saturday afternoon during the grand opening of the White Swan Restaurant, 1920 Saunders St. At right is the dragon, which also performed.

Lions, dragons dance

Colorful costumes mark Chinese restaurant's opening

By CELINA ALVARADO
LAREDO MORNING TIMES

The rhythm of the drums, dancing, martial arts, acrobatics and a colorful display of costumes marked the grand opening of the White Swan Restaurant, 1920 Saunders, Saturday.

A crowd of awed spectators witnessed the display as more

than 50 lion and dragon dancers from Houston's "Lee's Golden Dragon" dance troupe entertained crowds in two shows.

The dancers engaged in a spiritual dance posing as spiritual beings in the ceremonial grand opening.

The Chinese Lion Dance and a Chinese Dragon Dance promised a prosperous beginning for the establishment.

"The Chinese are very symbolic and traditional people," said Willy Le, the Vietnamese group director, a participant since 1994. "We hold on to those values of the past and they give us strength and tradition."

"The lion dance is a festive cultural dance that teaches us how to tackle challenges without

See DANCE | PAGE 15A



IT'S IN THE HOOVES



Photo by Guillermo Sosa | Laredo Morning Times

A rider hangs on during a Professional Bull Riders event Friday at the Laredo Entertainment Center. Points earned count toward the PBR qualifier standings and a shot at the finals in Las Vegas. See story, Page 5A.

RADIO | ON-AIR PERSONALITY

Legendary radio announcer back again

By TRICIA CORTEZ
LAREDO MORNING TIMES

For more than 60 years, Laredoans have grown used to the soothing voice and style of radio personality Luciano Duarte whose long-running program "Serenata Nocturna" has brought the best of traditional and contemporary Spanish music to listeners.

The legendary radio host held the No. 1 spot for much of the two years he was based at the Tejano radio station Z-95, so when management changed the radio format in late February and pulled Duarte off air, fans were surprised and upset.

"They didn't even give him a chance to say good-bye," long-time fan Maria Ayala said last week. "Every night, I would turn on the radio, start ironing and call in to request a song. He always played it."

Dora Rios, another fan, said she didn't understand why Z-95 would pull "Serenata Nocturna" off the air given Duarte's popularity. Like the name of his show suggests in

"He is pioneer in our industry...we're going to nominate him for a big Tejano music award when we bring the Tejano Music Awards to Laredo later this year."

RADIO STATION OWNER BELINDA GUERRA

English, "nightly serenade," Duarte would play the songs his listeners requested and dedicated from rancheras, to polkas, huapangos, musica romantica, trio music, conjunto and even the occasional Tejano tune.

Ayala and Rios said his show provided a welcome break from the station's daylong Tejano programming.

"Since I was young, I would always listen to that program," Rios said. "Mr. Duarte would play new songs, but I really liked listening to the old pretty songs, *las canciones de los recuerdos*, that we requested."

Belinda Guerra, station owner, assured fans that Duarte would be back on the air later this month even though he won't occupy the same evening slot, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. every Monday through Thursday.

Instead, Duarte's "Serenata Nocturna" will probably air every Sunday, following the morning conjunto program, Guerra said.

"We go into ratings late March, so we're doing a lot new things to move our show in different areas," Guerra said, explaining format

See ANNOUNCER | PAGE 15A