

LOCAL



Courtesy photo / Laredo Housing Authority

Pictured from left is Gina Magallanes, Dr. Sergio Garza, Dr. Marisela Rodriguez, Delia Ortiz, Melissa Ortiz and Jose L. Ceballos.

LHA employee honored

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

On Dec. 9, 1974, Delia Ortiz was hired at the Laredo Housing Authority.

Gerald Ford was president, "Kung Fu Fighting" by Carl Douglas was the No. 1 song on the billboard chart, and she

began her career as a clerk typist.

Moving up the ranks, Ortiz ultimately achieved the position of CQI specialist in 2009. During her 42 years with the Laredo Housing Authority, she witnessed the development of Ana Ma. Lozano, Meadow Acres,

Meadow Elderly, South Laredo and Farm Labor.

Ortiz has been an essential part of the agency's growth and achieved certifications in public housing rent calculations and housing authority liability and safety.

Six presidents, six mayors and five executive

directors later, Ortiz is calling it a career.

"We thank Ms. Ortiz for her service, dedication, and loyalty to the Laredo Housing Authority and wish her a long life, health and happiness," the Laredo Housing Authority said in a news release.

Part of Shiloh closed for work

LAREDO MORNING TIMES

The City of Laredo Public Works Department will do street improvements at the intersection of Bob Bullock Loop and Shiloh Drive.

Shiloh between Kirby Drive and Bob Bullock Loop will be closed to all vehicular traffic. Work is scheduled to start today and will run through

Dec. 19.

Drivers are asked to find alternate routes if possible as there will be congestion and delays.

For more information call 311.

El Metro

Due to the street closure, El Metro will temporarily adjust Route 12B during the project completion beginning Mon-

day.

Route 12B Express/Shiloh 12B will be re-routed when traveling inbound on the loop (temporarily turn right on Eskimo Drive).

One bus stop will be relocated during the duration of the construction work to the Shiloh Crossing Subdivision entrance.

Passengers are en-

couraged to plan their trips accordingly and with time to avoid any route delays. El Metro apologizes for any inconvenience and ensures the safety of the passengers.

For more information, contact El Metro's Customer Service Department at 795-2280, Monday through Friday during business hours.

Manufacturing Day held

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Thanks to an initiative led by Blas Castaneda, Laredo celebrated the first Manufacturing Day proclaimed by Webb County Judge Tano Tejerina and attended by Mayor Pete Saenz, Castaneda and other dignitaries.

Castaneda says he is a firm believer that manufacturers cannot compete and sustain long-term, profitable customer relationships if the community does not support their well being. They must be responsive, improve their logistics-driven operations with dynamic systems and resources in place to maximize their ability to quickly meet rapidly changing customer requirements, Castaneda said.

"Laredo-Nuevo Laredo must respond effectively and efficiently to prepare and train the much needed workforce in critical skills and many other professional jobs to ensure they have the right workers and be able to maintain their global competitiveness," a news release states.

It adds: "We must support use of intelligent technology across manufacturing, distribution and customer communications channels, to establish strong, mutually



Courtesy photo

A number of local officials were on hand for the proclamation of Manufacturing Day in Laredo.

beneficial customer-supplier relationships along all of our communities from Laredo south to the manufacturing world in Mexico.

"We must dedicate to increasing our manufacturing depth in South Texas and Mexico if we are to weather the competition and supporting the industry in maintaining a lower cost so they can compete and of course stay in our communities."

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Businesses must be compliant with 9-1-1 law

By Andrea Castañeda
LAREDO MORNING TIMES

A new law that's now in effect requires direct access to 9-1-1 through multi-line telephone systems.

Senate Bill 788, also known as Kari's Law, was signed into law by Texas Gov. Gregg Abbott on May 2015. The new law allows callers to reach 9-1-1 service directly by changing how a caller dials 9-1-1 from inside a business or hotel room. Some multi-line telephone systems require a user to dial an extra digit, often a "9", first and then 9-1-1. People are taught to dial 9-1-1 without an additional digit or access code beforehand, thus creating a problem in the case of emergencies.

Kari's Law came into effect after Kari Hunt was murdered by her estranged husband in 2013 in Marshall, Texas. Hunt's 9-year-old daughter dialed 9-1-1 for help four times from the motel room phone. Although she dialed 9-1-1 exactly how she was taught to do in an emergency, the call never went through because this particular phone required a caller to dial "9" for an outside line before dialing 9-1-1.

With Kari's Law, the goal is to eliminate the loss of a life and ensure that anyone can get

through to 9-1-1 service when an emergency occurs. It is now required by law to have the ability to access 9-1-1 directly from multi-line telephone systems across the state. Compliance of Kari's Law began Sept. 1, 2016.

Businesses may call their telephone service providers to update office phone systems to allow a direct dial to 9-1-1. City of Laredo 9-1-1 Program Manager Amanda Tienda says it should be easy to configure if it is a current system. Yet, there are outdated phones which are unable to update due to financ-

es. "A business is responsible to make the update. However, the state has offered a waiver if a business does not have funds," Tienda said.

In the case that a business is unable to comply with the update they may request and complete a waiver. The waiver is available online and allows a business a year to become compliant (Sept. 1- Aug. 1) and must be submitted before Sept. 1 of each year.

"We are open to doing presentations for business and always available to give out information. Anything to help, we are here," Tienda said.

The waiver may be found online <http://texas911.org/KarisLaw/RequestWaiver>