

Ghost town hopes to prosper again

Silver still lies in Texas mine

United Press International
SHAFTER — Silver prices fell and miners got discouraged, but the 30 remaining residents of an old Big Bend mining town are hoping investors will take another look at the precious metal under Cibolo Creek.

"I've never seen a ghost around here," said Guadalupe Munoz, who has been postmaster at Shafter for more than 40 years. "Sure, we look like a ghost town, but there's still a few families living here and we like the quiet."

miles away, arrives to celebrate Mass, Munoz said.

At its peak, Shafter had a population of more than 3,000, she recalls, but when the price of silver went down, miners got discouraged and left.

Like many West Texas towns suffering from economic problems, the settlers moved on to other areas, leaving their homes to deteriorate in the harsh West Texas climate.

A few families still cling to their homesteads in Shafter, Munoz said. Others have moved on to places as far away as California.

"We get a number of visitors in the winter months, when the rest of Texas is cold," she said. "They hook up their trailers in Shafter and spend the winter in the area. One retired gentleman comes all the way from Wisconsin and spends the winter in his house here."

A Texas historical marker erected

in the 1930s commemorates the efforts of Rancher Milton Favor as being the founder of Shafter, supposedly named after a U.S. Army general.

Favor was the first Anglo-American rancher in the Big Bend area, the monument reads, and was instrumental in developing a series of towns to ward off warring Apaches.

Oldtimers in the Big Bend country say the best defense against the Apaches were the haciendas built by the ranchers who owned the land when it was part of Mexico. Many of the old haciendas are now West Texas towns, historians said.

While Shafter may have been founded in the 1800s, historians said, the silver mining boom began in the '20s. Estimates of the original population vary from 3,000 to 30,000, but ruins of old homes in the area would favor the smaller number, Munoz said.

Cibolo Creek overflowed in the 1930s, filling up the mine. The mine was closed, officials said. Several recent attempts have been made to reopen the mine but the declining price of silver made the operation unprofitable.

There's always a possibility the mine will open again because of the invention of new equipment, Munoz said. Then Shafter would look like a ghost town anymore.

A federal government engineer who asked not to be quoted, said the prospect of reopening the mine depends entirely on the price of silver.

"If silver prices go up, Shafter business again," he said. "The plenty of silver under Cibolo Creek is hard-rock mining and a lot of money to get it out, but the miners are keeping their eyes on Shafter and on the silver market."

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Sept. 16	Pizza & Lecture(model service) at 6 p.m.
Sept. 25	Rosh Hashana lecture 6 p.m.
Sept. 26	Rosh Hashana 8 p.m.
Sept. 27	Rosh Hashana 10 a.m.
Sept. 28	Rosh Hashana 10 a.m.
Oct. 5	Kol Nidre 8 p.m. service
Oct. 6	Break the fast here
Oct. 10	SAMI Sukkot Picnic - time pending
Oct. 13	Match dance 8 p.m.
Oct. 18	Simchat Torah Happening 8 p.m.

Unlike most West Texas creeks — which are dry — Cibolo Creek is a clear water stream that flows by a wooded area nestled between a pass in the mountains on the highway between Marfa and Presidio in a remote area of West Texas.

A faded, decaying church, the paint from its steeple peeling in the sun, is still used occasionally when a visiting priest from Presidio, 20

Geter says he feels sorry for prosecutor

United Press International
DALLAS — Lenell Geter, the black engineer convicted and freed for a crime he said he never committed, said Wednesday he felt sorry for the man who prosecuted him — now that the wheelchair-bound man faces solicitation of prostitution charges.

"I just feel sorry for him (Kenneth Dean Carden) in that he was the assistant district attorney and held such a high esteemed office," Geter said.

In addition, Norman Kinne, who is Carden's superior in the district attorney's office, said Carden's claims

he was investigating the slaying of a pimp at the time of the arrest had "credence."

Carden was part of the team that successfully prosecuted Geter, an E-Systems engineer, and got him sentenced to life in prison on an armed robbery charge. Later disclosures about alibis and witness testimony won Geter a new trial but the DA's office dropped the charges before that trial began.

Kinne said an internal investigation has been ordered to see if Carden can be reinstated. Police reportedly were planning to give a polygraph examination.

"There is no polygraph scheduled for Carden presently," said police spokesman Bob Shaw. "That doesn't mean we won't give him one later on."

Carden, who was released Saturday after posting bond in the Friday arrest, could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

"The case is being investigated," said District Attorney Henry Wade. "He may be reinstated pending the outcome of the case."

Carden earlier said he resigned to avoid embarrassing the DA's office. "I discovered there were possibly some people I wanted to talk to who

were whores," he said. "I had overstepped my bounds on investigating this case."

"If I had to do it over again, I would have waited until next night" and alerted police he was working undercover.

The misdemeanor prostitution solicitation charge against Carden carries a maximum penalty of 180 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine on conviction.

Police said they also were investigating a weapons charge against Carden. A 45-caliber pistol and a service were found in Carden's possession, officers said.

Vietnam veteran: Salvadorans are refugees

United Press International
CORPUS CHRISTI — The defense argued Tuesday that Vietnam veteran Jack Elder had no intention of violating immigration laws when he drove two Salvadorans to a bus station last spring.

Elder, 40, director of a Roman Catholic-sponsored refugee center near the Texas Mexico border, could be sentenced up to 15 years in prison if convicted of conspiracy and two counts of transporting illegal aliens.

Attorney Steven Cooper of St. Paul, Minn., opened arguments before U.S. District Judge Hayden

Head Jr. on 25 motions he has filed to dismiss the three felony charges against Elder. Elder is a staunch supporter of the "Sanctuary Movement" network of churches offering refuge to Central Americans in defiance of Immigration and Naturalization Service policies.

He is the third Sanctuary Movement supporter arrested on immigration charges and the second to be tried. Stacey Lynn Merkt, 29, a religious layworker at the same refugee center, was sentenced to three years probation after his jury conviction in Brownsville last June.

Cooper maintained that the Salva-

dorans were fleeing "a war zone" and are entitled to refugee status under both the Geneva Convention Accord and 1980 U.S. Refugee Act.

"The defense believes if the persons are illegally here, there can be no crime because he (Elder) had no intent (to violate the law)," Cooper argued.

Under the Geneva Accords, a country has no right to send bona-fide refugees back to "a war zone."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Berg — who must show Elder "willfully and intentionally" violated the law — countered Tuesday that there was no way for Elder to have known

whether the Salvadorans were in the country legally.

Berg argued aliens must be before an immigration agent for their immigration status to be legally determined, otherwise in such a situation could determine whether they were fleeing from a war zone.

Elder contends he was motivated by religious and moral obligations because Salvadorans say they are fleeing death squads, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service in most cases deports them to El Salvador where they fear they will be killed or tortured.

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