OPINION

Laredo Morning Times

A HEARST NEWSPAPER

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Salvation Army a beacon of hope

In the heart of Laredo, Texas there is a place where compassion meets action – The Salvation Army. More than charity, it's a lifeline for many, providing essential services, from food and clothing, to hope and renewal.

Join us as we explore how this organization is transforming lives and building a stronger community, one act of kindness at a time.

Founded in 1865 by William Booth, The Salvation Army currently serves in 133 countries. A steward of resources given by the public; they have been serving Laredo for 104 years. The Salvation Army is an international movement that is an evangelical part of the Universal Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the Love of God and to meet human needs in His

Last year, through their Social Service program The Salvation Army of Laredo provided:

- 657 persons utility and rental assistance, clothing vouches
- 44,190 pounds of food to 1473 people (Food

Pantry)

- 26,800 hot meals for breakfast and lunch (Community kitchen)
- 1,638 clothing items to individuals and families (Thrift Store)
- 456 children from 157 families and 61 Seniors with Christmas gifts (Angel Tree Program)
- Weekend church services are open to all

The Salvation Army Disaster services are managed through their Mobile Canteen Kitchen unit deployed during natural disasters. They can also utilize the canteen to serve food and snacks at events throughout the community. Monetary help has been provided to the Kerrville Disaster Fund as funds have been given to the Laredo Salvation Army.

As we reflect on the incredible impact of the Salvation Army in Laredo, it's clear that their dedication to serving others creates ripples of positive change. Whether through volunteering, donating or simply spreading the word, each of us has the power to be a part of their mission. Together let's continue to build a community where everyone thrives.

For more information, you can reach out to recently appointed Majors Candee and Gabriel Elias. The Salvation Army office is located at 408 Matamoros Street in Laredo, Texas or call them at 956.723.2349.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS VITA LAREDO: FREE TAX FILING ASSISTANCE

Don't stress about your taxes - let our qualified volunteers handle it for you! Our IRS certified preparers are ready to help you file your tax return accurately and efficiently. Call today for your appointment 956.307.8138

MYKE'S PURPOSE: 5K RUN/WALK

The 5K Run/Walk to honor lives lost to addition or drug overdose is scheduled for Saturday, August 2 at North Central Park. Race starts at 8am. Pre-registration \$25 Race Day \$35 For more information visit them on Facebook.

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS: 3RD AN-NUAL ROCK PARTY (80'S MUSIC)

You are invited to come join the fun and

support a great cause on Saturday, August 2nd at the Casa Blanca Event Center from 8pm – 1am. Featuring the Jolly Ranchers. For ticket information call CIS at 956.791.2199.

WOMAN'S CITY CLUB: STRIKE UP SOME FUN BOWL-A-THON

Come join the fun on Sunday, August 3rd from Noon to 3pm at Jet Bowl North. For more information, contact Rebecca Doyle at 956.744.0998

IMAGINARIUM OF SOUTH TEXAS: AEP LIGHT UP THE NIGHT

Join us for the AEP Light up the Night on Friday, August 8th from 4-8 pm at the Imaginarium located the main campus of Laredo College (West End Washington Street) Building P-149. For more information, please call 956.728.0404.

UNITED WAY OF LAREDO: DAY OF CARING (FILL THE BUS SCHOOL SUP-PLIES)

The United Way in partnership with Walmart #554 will be having a fill the bus drive on Saturday, August 9th from 9am to 3pm at the

Walmart on San Bernardo. They will be collecting school supplies (spiral notebooks, pencils, pens, paper, colors, markers, glue sticks construction paper, clear backpacks, rulers, safety scissors, Kleenex, and children's books (new kinder to 3rd grade); non-perishable food items (canned food items including bottle water); individual size hygiene items (shampoo, body wash, soap, tooth paste, tooth brushes); baby wipes & diapers; dog food or cat food; and cleaning supplies (Windex, Clorox wipes, Lysol spray, air freshener spray and paper towels). Items donated will go to help children and families receiving services or staying at the shelters of our member agencies.

SOUTH TEXAS FOOD BANK: LAUGH OUT HUNGER

For more information,

call 956.723.9113

The South Texas Food Bank with the HEB Hunger Relief present the Laugh Out Hunger event with special guest Steve Trevino on Friday, August 15th at the Sames Auto Arena. For more information, call 956.726.3120

IMAGINARIUM OF SOUTH TEXAS

HEB free family fun night Join us for the HEB Free Family Fun Night on Friday, August 15th from 4-8 pm at the Imaginarium located the main campus of Laredo College (West End Washington Street) Building P-149. For more information, please call 956.728.0404.

BETHANY HOUSE: SUMMER SOIREE GALA

This summer the construction of the new Bethany House Courtyard & Resource Center will be completed. To support their meal and shelter programs they will be having a Summer Gala on Friday, August 22nd at the Laredo Country Club. For more information on tickets & sponsorship opportunities visit www.Bethany-HouseGala.org

If you have an upcoming community event or information on a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization you would like to share, please email me at 956cuidandolonuestro@gmail.com.

Carolyn M. Schmies United Way of Laredo

OP-ED

Customs brokers invaluable for imports

The term "intermediary" conjures images of being stuck in the middle, but the intermediary function that customs brokers play between Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the nation's importers – both large and small - proves invaluable to ensuring compliant and facilitative commerce for our nation. In today's unpredictable trade environment, this could not hold

Besides performing the functions of processing customs import entries and ensuring their importer clients are compliant with myriad CBP rules and regulations, customs brokers educate their import clients on a regular basis about what's happening in the arena of cross-border trade and how best to manage their international business.

In late January 2025, when President Trump

started announcing what would quickly become a flurry of IEEPA and Section 232 tariffs, U.S. importers were understandably confused on how best to navigate these tariffs within their import operations. Importers immediately contacted their customs brokers for details about what to do. By April 2025, a survey of more than 1,400 customs broker member companies confirmed that 90% of their time has been spent on educating their import clients about tariff management.

While simultaneously providing this increased education to its client base, customs brokers are dealing with the surge in required data reporting as the tariffs have resulted in significant customs entry line increases which subsequently decreased the output efficiencies of the entry preparation pro-

Our nation's importers also rely heavily on customs brokers to help them comply with numerous Partner Government Agencies.

cess.

Even general business media journalists, who previously had little contact with our industry, were suddenly contacting customs brokers to gain a proper understanding of the impact of tariffs on cross-border trade.

Customs brokers have long been the experts who work tirelessly on behalf of the nation's importers to not only engage CBP but also help them through supply challenges which are caused by natural and manmade disasters.

In addition, CBP has long relied on federally licensed customs brokers to implement their import regulations and procedures with the nation's importers in a compliant and facilitative manner. CBP could not do this alone, considering there were several hundred thousand large and small importers who imported \$3.36 trillion in goods during 2024, resulting in 38.3 million import entries and \$88.07 billion in duty, taxes, and fees collected.

Our nation's importers also rely heavily on customs brokers to help them comply with numerous Partner Government Agencies (PGAs) which interact with CBP and have trade oversight, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Consumer Products Safety Commission

(CPSC), and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), just to name a few.

While automated tools, such as electronicdata-interchange (EDI), Internet, email, and now artificial intelligence (AI), have continually shaped and enhanced the operations of customs brokers, they are still just that - operational tools. Customs brokers don't fear advanced IT, and in fact, they embrace it. However, neither CBP nor the nation's importers should be lulled into a false sense of security that AI will make customs brokers obsolete in managing imports. How many panicked importers want to speak to a chatbot to find immediate answers to a customs clearance problem, when they can instead pick up a phone and speak with a knowledgeable customs broker to calmly

assist them with solving an import clearance problem?

It is evident the complexities and intricacies of customs brokerage have become unprecedented, while in other aspects the role of the customs broker has remained steadfast. This is because during challenging times to trade and supply chains, we would venture to say most importers still prefer the human touch of the customs broker who has the knowledge, skillset, and experience supported by the very best IT tools operating in the background. Essentially, customs brokers always will serve their clients and our country one entry declaration at a time.

Jose D. Gonzalez President, National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America, Inc. (NCBFAA)

GUEST EDITORIAL Dallas Morning News

Cuts to public broadcasting will hurt America

If you are a fan of public radio or public television, you are probably aware by now of the Trump administration's effort to make deep cuts to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The CPB, a private, nonprofit organization funded by the American public, could lose about \$525 million of previously allocated funding this week, in large part because Republican lawmakers perceive it as biased against conservative views.

Their concern isn't entirely unfounded. Some loyal listeners of National Public Radio bristled in recent years as NPR, the main supplier of public radio content, leaned into identity politics as the main frame of many stories. A longtime (now former) NPR journalist, Uri Berliner, made a splash with a piece that concluded NPR had a "distilled worldview of a very small segment of the U.S. population."

But the GOP plan to cut public broadcasting funding shows that neither the president nor lawmakers truly understand its purpose or operations. Or they do, and they don't care. Either way, they should leave the funding as is.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting was established by Congress in 1967. Its mission is to ensure that all Americans can access high-quality programs that "inform, educate, enlighten and enrich." It provides grants to more than 357 local public television and 1,207 public radio stations across the country.

The GOP has long complained that NPR and the Public Broad-

casting System, which receive some funding from CPB, have a pronounced liberal slant. As a result, President Donald Trump has urged Congress to rescind funding for CPB. The U.S. Senate is set to vote on the rescission package by July 18.

We understand concerns about journalistic bias, but NPR and PBS seem to be addressing it. To our ears, NPR's coverage has been markedly more even-handed in recent months.

The stations that will be hurt most are in places that often can't support commercial radio and television.

For example, High Plains Public Radio broadcasts to sparsely populated regions of five states, including the Texas Panhandle. About 14% of its budget comes from a CPB Community Service Grant, said Abby Killingsworth, High Plains radio's director of development.

The station receives another \$66,000 in inkind assistance, such as music licensing fees, website support and satellite access that allows its network of 18 broadcast towers to communicate with one another.

No source of information is perfect, and all journalists need to be ever mindful of balance. But the good public broadcasting does for our nation is too profound to see these cuts take effect.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Laredo Morning Times does not publish anonymous letters.

Letters must include the writer's first and last names as well as a phone number to verify identity. The phone number is not published; it is used solely to verify identity and to clarify content, if necessary.

When responding to another's letter, writers should focus on the topic and not on the original writer themselves. No name-calling or gratuitous abuse is allowed. Letters are edited for style, grammar, length and civility. Also, letters longer than 1,000 words will not be accepted.

Please send letters to editorial@Imtonline.com attached in a word document or in the email itself. If you cannot send an email, mail to Letters to the Editor, 5711 McPherson Rd Suite 203A, Laredo, TX 78041.