

From the Faculty Editor

If you work while on vacation, is it “vacation”? Yes, if your view out the window consists of green rolling hills and tall conifers, temperatures are in the low 60s and it rains every day. I mean real rain for four days straight and counting. Two nights ago, an electrical storm sent lightning into my daughter’s apartment and fried the motor in her aquarium. Nothing else was touched. I’m in Colorado, where 90-degree temperatures are gone, air conditioners aren’t needed, you need real shoes if you’re going out, not mesh sneakers or flimsy sandals, and a bowl of hot zucchini soup sounds perfect for lunch.



My student editor is working in Canutillo (after visiting Brazil last summer), another editor was working in the New Mexico mountains and another edits from wherever he finds himself, so maybe it depends on your attitude what “vacation” is. For me, it means I can work in my pajamas or sweats, enjoy a cup of coffee or tea anytime I want, munch on local delicacies on the dining table I have commandeered for my desk and gaze at the fat raindrops which I don’t get to see that often at home. So yes, it’s vacation!

The articles in *Borderlands* are based on research papers completed in my English 1302 classes at EPCC which concentrate on local history. As students learn research and writing skills, they also learn about people, events and culture of our El Paso Southwest, including Northern Mexico and Southern New Mexico.

We last printed *Borderlands* in 2012. In 2013, we presented our readers with a special Web Only issue on the Northwest Campus Library website. Since websites come and go, some of our “fans” suggested that we print the articles for those who prefer not to read *Borderlands* online and so that we would have an official print record of the articles. We offer two from the online issue: one on Jake Erlich, the tallest man in the world at one time and a wonderfully talented El Pasoan; and one on the Harvey Girls and the railroad phenomenon that established fine dining for much of the Southwest.

Another article features El Paso’s Holocaust Museum and Study Center and the determined man who founded it, Henry Kellen. When he passed away this summer, the city and the world lost a brave individual who fought against hate, racism and the silence of survivors who for years were unable or refused to talk about the horrors the Jews and millions of others suffered at the hands of the Nazis in World War II.

Other articles bring to light the work of Father Harold Rahm, who worked with *Segundo Barrio* residents, and at 95 is still working in Brazil. Three articles deal with what really happened to local celebrities Bobby Fuller, rock legend, and Tom Ogle, inventor of a fuel system that would have changed the oil and automobile industries, and the disappearance of American writer Ambrose Bierce, supposedly in the El Paso-Juárez area. The theme of tolerance — or the lack of it — runs throughout all of the articles.

Many helped produce this issue. I thank Isabel Hernandez, student editor for the past two years, for her excellent work and wish her great success as she continues her education at UTEP this fall. Thanks go to Rachel Murphree, reference librarian who also helped in our print issue, and to Joe Old, our devoted faculty editor for his always valuable comments. Special thanks go to Monica Wong, our biggest supporter, whose library staff is always ready to help our students with their research.

Ruth E. Vise, Faculty Advisor & Editor



Isabel Hernandez, student editor

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Cover Photos: bottom left, Henry Kellen, courtesy of the El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center; top center, Holocaust Museum sign by Isabel Hernandez; top right, portrait of Padre Haroldo J. Rahm, S.J., courtesy of Instituto Padre Haroldo, Campinas, São Paulo, Brasil; center right, El Paso street sign by Isabel Hernandez; bottom right, side view of Sacred Heart Church by Isabel Hernandez. Cover design by Isabel Hernandez, Ruth Vise and Beatriz Garcia.

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From The Student Editor

As many of you may know, our previous issue was online and consisted of articles about noteworthy men and women from our beautiful Border City. In this publication, we will be featuring two of the stories from the web issue. Along with these two articles, you will be reading about mysteries, about tolerance and intolerance, and about how one can change El Paso with perseverance and faith.

I have had the pleasure of working with a great person, Ms. Vise. After having been a student in her English 1302 class two years ago, I was asked to be a part of *Borderlands*. I was very excited that I would become a student editor. I will forever remember the people I worked with and the stories of those who contributed to our city. Thank you, Ms. Vise, I will miss you.

I would also like to thank everyone who makes *Borderlands* possible. Special thanks to the staff at the El Paso Public Library, Downtown Branch, especially the Border Heritage Center. Thanks also to the Special Collections Department at the University of Texas at El Paso Library.

One of our stories is about Father Harold J. Rahm, who spent several years in El Paso and is still working in Brazil. I would like to thank him for his cooperation and generosity during my research. As I read his e-mails and his books, it was as if we were conversing in person. He is such an amazing person — thank you, Father Rahm.

In Brazil, Father Rahm continues his work with the youth. Speaking of youth and Brazil, I went to Brazil for World Youth Day last July. I did not even know Father Rahm existed, and that is another reason why I love *Borderlands*: I learn about people.

World Youth Day, initiated by Pope John Paul II, is an international event organized by the Catholic Church where youth of all ages, countries and beliefs can have a spiritual encounter with Christ.

My favorite place in Brazil is the Iguaçu Falls in the state of Paraná. Even though the waterfalls were very loud, it was peaceful to feel the mist from the distance. Aside from the beauty of the waterfalls, the abundance of plants and trees produced a sensational scent. Another of my favorite places is Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, where I went to see the sunrise. The ocean water may not be clear, but the views from the beach were incredible. It was really strange to see nature’s beauty right across from Rio, a city filled with millions of people.

The joy I feel travelling is the same one I feel when I learn about the remarkable people we feature in this issue. Even though Henry Kellen passed away recently, he will always be remembered for having survived the Holocaust and the persistence he had to establish the Holocaust Museum in El Paso.

If you are into mysteries, we have two for you. Bobby Fuller, a musician, died inexplicably after becoming famous. Tom Ogle, an inventor of a fuel-saving device, also died under strange circumstances. See if you can solve the mystery.

You may not travel outside the country often, but you can also find adventure by travelling in your mind. I believe in having fun outdoors and in visiting the many intriguing landmarks of El Paso. Nonetheless, I can also take a journey by reading. Grab this issue of *Borderlands* and some snacks. Even though some people think of El Paso as a small town, they might be surprised to learn about the extraordinary individuals who live and work here.

Isabel Hernandez, Student Editor