

**BUSINESS**  
Texas firms focusing on data collected in space. **B1**

**S.A. LIFE**  
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF KIDDIE PARK. **E1**



**SPORTS**  
Visit by Spurs lifts spirits in hard-hit Hill Country. **C1**

# San Antonio Express-News

EXPRESSNEWS.COM    SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025    VOL. 160, NO. 353    \$4.00

## How would arena benefit Bexar?

No firm commitments from Spurs, city to boost E. Side area team now calls home

**By Madison Iszler**  
STAFF WRITER

The last time the Spurs were pushing for a new arena, the leaders of the city of San Antonio and Bexar County were locked in a battle over who would build it and where.

Then-Mayor Howard Peak wanted to use sales tax dollars to pay for a facility near the Alamo-dome, while then-County Judge Cyndi Taylor Krier proposed using taxes on hotels and rental cars for an arena next to the Freeman Coliseum farther east.

The county ultimately prevailed. Spurs Sports & Entertainment picked its plan, which polling indicated voters were more likely to support, and what's now the Frost Bank Center was built — a coup for Krier and the rest of the Commissioners Court at a time when the city had long been the dominant local force.

The move “was the county's shot over the mast of City Hall, signaling that it was about to emerge as a power player,” former County Judge Nelson Wolff wrote in his 2008 book “Trans-forming San Antonio.” “No lon-

ger could people easily dismiss the county as a second-rate governmental entity.”

Fast-forward more than two decades, and the tables have turned.

In July 2023, more than six months after starting his first term as county judge, Peter Sakai found out from reporting by the San Antonio Express-News that city officials and SS&E executives had been talking behind his back for months about possibly leaving the county-owned Frost Bank Center for a new arena downtown.

The arena's marquee tenant was itching to leave, and the East Side facility the team had called

**Arenas continues on A16**



San Antonio Express-News file photo  
**Officials formally open the SBC Center, now the Frost Bank Center, in 2002, the year the Spurs started playing there.**

## Fortifying the border

Federal plan calls for 17-mile-long buoy barrier, new military zone



Ivan Pierre Aguirre/For the San Antonio Express-News  
**The first National Defense Area was established in New Mexico. The latest was designated in Cameron and Hidalgo counties.**

**By Brandon Lingle and Sig Christenson**  
STAFF WRITERS

The federal government is clamping down on the border along the southern tip of Texas with a new, Air Force-managed military zone and 17-mile-long buoy barrier in the Rio Grande River that could cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars.

The costly security measures along a 250-mile stretch in Cameron and Hidalgo counties are part of a campaign by President Donald Trump to militarize the border. The effort so far has mainly created photo opportunities for the military and lawmakers, caught local officials off guard and raised new concerns



Christopher Lee/San Antonio Express-News  
**SpaceX's Starbase and company town touches the new military zone and could benefit from the beefed-up security.**

about public access to areas around Boca Chica Beach — which could soon be patrolled by soldiers controlling access to land along the border.

“We won't speculate on how the (military zone) will affect citizens in the Rio Grande Valley,” an Air Force spokesman said in a statement. “However, as with any military installation, the Department (of Defense) is preventing unauthorized access to the area through an appropriately identified, controlled perimeter and will deny unauthorized or unlawful entry, disrupt threats, and deter criminal activities.”

One entity poised to benefit is Elon Musk's SpaceX.

**Border continues on A14**

## OT pay for border op costs state millions

**By Benjamin Wermund and Matt Zdun**  
STAFF WRITERS

Border crossings in Texas have fallen to record lows this year. But even as demand for enforcement has dropped, state troopers dispatched to Gov. Greg Abbott's border crackdown, Operation Lone Star, continue to rake in millions in overtime.

The Department of Public Safety is on track to spend about \$77 million on Lone Star overtime this year, according to data obtained by Hearst Newspapers. That would surpass what it spent in 2023, when crossings peaked and troopers were arresting thousands of migrants on trespassing and other state charges.

As of June, roughly 1 in 10 troopers were on track to double their annual pay through overtime. Ten brought home \$10,000 or more on average in overtime each month, and 124 pulled in at least one monthly overtime payment of \$10,000. While not all of that was from OLS, the crackdown now accounts for about a third of the agency's total overtime spending annually.

Some DPS officers are racking up so much overtime that they're on duty nearly every day for weeks on end — a trend that experts warn can be dangerous and affect a person's judgment in sensitive situations.

Working long shifts for days on end “can impact all kinds of things — physical and mental health, anger and other types of challenges in the field,” said Karen Amendola, the chief behavioral scientist at National Policing Institute who has studied overtime and its effect on officer health and performance.

More than a dozen troopers made over \$200,000 last year when factoring in overtime, roughly equal to the starting salary.

**Overtime continues on A17**



Up to

4.10%

APY<sup>1</sup>

7-Month Certificate

Up to

3.90%

APY<sup>2</sup>

15-Month Certificate

Open at [ssfcu.org](https://ssfcu.org)

or 1-855-712-1155

Insured by NCUA

**SECURITY SERVICE**  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

APY=Annual percentage yield. APY is effective as of September 4, 2025 and is subject to change without notice. These are Share Certificates, and different rates apply to different deposit levels. Certificates may be subject to early withdrawal penalty. Membership eligibility required. Visit [ssfcu.org](https://ssfcu.org) for complete details. IRA funds cannot be co-mingled at any time with regular savings or non-IRA funds. 1) This certificate rate is fixed for a 7-month term. This APY requires a minimum deposit of \$50,000. 2) This certificate rate is fixed for a 15-month term. This APY requires a minimum deposit of \$50,000. Fees may reduce earnings on your account.