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Laredo Morning Times

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LOCAL

Morning shooting claims 3 victims

BY ROBERT GARCIA
Times city editor

Three Laredo residents including a 15-year-old boy suffered "non-fatal" gunshot wounds Wednesday morning after a suspect opened fire with a 9-mm weapon.

The victims were identified as Martin Salinas, 22, Samuel Garcia, 17, and Daniel Garcia, 15. Officials said Salinas was extremely lucky because a bullet only grazed his head and did not cause major injury. He also sustained injuries to his feet.

Samuel was shot on the right leg and lower back while Daniel sustained bullet wounds to the back.

Doctors told police that the injuries were not life threatening, explained

Assistant Chief F. San Miguel.

The victims were shot at the 1900 block of Lee, but managed to drive to Salinas' home at the 3300 block of San Agustín, where they called police and were picked up by Laredo Fire Department rescue units.

Police received the 911 emergency call at 5:53 a.m. Investigators recovered a 1995 green Mazda that had bullet holes to the backside of the vehicle.

The victim's clothing was also confiscated. San Miguel said investigators had a possible suspect on the shooting and were expecting to make an arrest sometime before the end of the week.

(City editor Robert Garcia can be reached at 728-2585 or by e-mail at robert@lmtonline.com.)

Garcia eyes council seat

Times staff reports

Hector "Tito" Garcia, the registrar and varsity football coach at Alexander High School, has announced his candidacy for City Council, District 2. The seat is being vacated by Councilman Louis Bruni.

Garcia, 39, said he would have an open door policy for all District 2 residents.

"I believe I can make a difference in my district and communicate effectively with the people in my district," Garcia said.

A 1981 graduate of Nixon High School, Garcia has worked for the United Independent School District for the past 12 years.

Prior to that, he worked for his family business, Modern Construction, which builds 90 percent of all city warehouses and is a major developer of Laredo's industrial parks.

His platform includes:

- no new taxes;
- create a one-stop shop for builders by consolidating all city departments that relate to builders in one building;
- improve neighborhood protection by working for a police substation on Hwy. 359;
- improve and upgrade neighborhood lighting;
- assist both school districts to address the drug and gang problem;
- ensure Laredo fire and



HECTOR TITO GARCIA

police departments are adequately staffed and equipped to serve a fast-growing city. Specifically, Garcia will work to build a new fire station in south Laredo and increase the number of police officers on the street;

- address the city's environmental concerns by enforcing illegal dumping and pollution laws and converting creeks and ponds into nice neighborhood parks;
- improve city infrastructure by connecting more streets to Loop 20 and constructing an exit for Hwy. 59 residents;
- complete the ongoing District 2 sidewalk project; and
- install more residential speed bumps for safety and improve traffic lighting.

Vela files for LCC board

Guillermo (Memo) Vela has filed for election for position 9 on the LCC Board of Trustees.

A Laredo native and graduate of St. Joseph's Academy (1960), Memo led the St. Joseph's football team to its only undefeated season (1999), as quarterback.

He graduated from Texas A&M in 1964 with a BBA in insurance. While at A&M, he was a Ross Volunteer and received his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army-CM Corp. A Vietnam veteran, Vela received the Vietnam Service and National Defense Medals.

Before relocating to his hometown of Laredo, Vela owned and operated an insurance agency in the Houston area for 34 years. Still active in the business, he continues to service Laredo, specializing in group medical insurance plans.

While in the Houston area, Vela was active in civic and community affairs. He served on the board of trustees at Alvin Community College from 1992 to 2001. During this time, he served as chairman of the curriculum committee vice chair of the building, facilities and finance

committee. He also served a term as chairman of the policy committee.

Vela was involved in the establishment of a second campus for ACC in 1999 in Pearland. This campus now has approximately 500 students and is self-sufficient.

He was a founding member on the board of directors for the Alvin ISD Education Foundation. Vela also served on the board of directors at union Planners Bank (formerly Alvin State Bank) from 1988 until 2001. He was past president of the Alvin-Manvel Area Chamber of Commerce, the Alvin Rotary Club and the city of Manvel Parks Board.

Vela is the recipient of the Paul Harris Award. His service also includes chairing the Alvin Community Hospital Governing Board and community representative on the Alvin ISD Campus Improvement Council.

While living in the Manvel-Alvin area, Vela established the Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Vela Memorial Rotary Scholarship in honor of his beloved parents.

Memo's two brothers, Carlos Vela Jr., DDS, and Arturo Vela, both reside in Laredo.

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