

THE MONITOR



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Helping Jose Angel



Photos by Joel Martinez | jmartinez@themonitor.com

Jose Angel Rebollar sits in his living room at his home on Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2022, in Edinburg.

Christmas too costly for Edinburg family learning to care for child with diabetes

BY XAVIER ALVAREZ
STAFF WRITER

EDINBURG — To the average person, Alma Rebollar's 7-year-old son looks like your everyday kid who enjoys playing baseball and running at the park, but behind closed doors, the child follows a strict regime to keep his illness in check.

Jose Angel Rebollar was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when he was only a year old, and when it was discovered, Alma, 38, spent days at the hospital as the nurses taught her everything there is to know when taking care of a child with diabetes.

"I knew stronger forms of diabetes existed like Type 2 but I didn't know about Type 1," Alma said in Spanish. "It was difficult learning so

much. It was very difficult for us because it was something new to us.

"Because at the hospital, they weren't going to let me leave until I understood everything."

Alma learned how to inject Jose Angel with insulin, check his blood sugar levels and how to prepare his food, which comes in strict portions by counting carbohydrates. It can look like a little bit of chicken, milk, fruit and one tortilla.

Jose Angel can only have 45 carbs in each meal which sometimes leaves him hungry for more food.

Alma says her son is very good about not eating sweets given to him at school. She said he usually stuffs the



Jose Angel Rebollar walks into his home on Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2022, in Edinburg.

See JOSE | 5A

SpaceX closer to orbital launch

BY STEVE CLARK
STAFF WRITER

With SpaceX's incident-free, static-fire test of 11 of a Super Heavy booster's 33 rocket engines at Boca Chica/Starbase on Nov. 29, the company moved a step closer toward attempting the first orbital launch of Starship.

The engines were lit on Super Heavy BN7 early Tuesday afternoon for roughly 13 seconds, longer than the static-fire test of 14 of the booster's engines on Nov. 14 and the longest duration for a Super Heavy prototype static-fire test to date.

SpaceX's billionaire founder and CEO Elon Musk tweeted on Nov. 15 that the next test would involve 20 seconds, give or take, of some number of engines "firing with max oxygen fill to test autogenous pressurization, possibly one more static fire, then orbital launch attempt."

The Nov. 29 test may have been the autogenous pressurization test.

See SPACEX | 8A

Intel chief cautiously optimistic for Ukraine

BY JAMEY KEATEN
AND NOMAAN MERCHANT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KYIV, Ukraine — The head of U.S. intelligence says fighting in Russia's war in Ukraine is running at a "reduced tempo" and suggests Ukrainian forces could have brighter prospects in coming months.

JOSE

From Page 1A

candy into his pocket and asks her permission before eating a sweet.

She also volunteers at her son's elementary school in order to keep a close eye on him. It is within walking distance from where they currently live.

Jose Angel also has two older brothers, Yair and Jose Luis, who Alma says have refused to help their little brother only due to their fear of needles.

But his older sister, 11-year-old Elizabeth, has already begun learning how to check her brother's blood sugar and how to inject his insulin.

"They say it's important that every family member learns how to look after Jose Angel," Alma said. "Because if one person can't do it, then someone else could."

Alma's husband, Jose Luis Segura, 40, who works as a handyman on a ranch and cuts yards, also learned how to care for Jose Angel when he was diagnosed

over five years ago.

Jose Luis Segura is the sole breadwinner in the family and though Alma says Jose Angel's insurance covers the cost of insulin, the family is still in financial need.

Alma says they've lived in North Carolina and South Carolina as well as Florida before finally settling down in Edinburg, where they've lived for about 11 years now.

The family had moved often due to Jose Luis Segura's work.

Jose Angel says he sometimes plays catch with his dad but had recently lost his baseball at the park.

"I was playing baseball and it went into the sewer," Jose Angel said.

Asked if they wanted anything for Christmas, Jose Angel and his sister both wished for new shoes though Elizabeth added that she would really like an Apple iPad.

The family's home gets hot throughout the summer, especially when Alma is cooking food for the family, but it also gets extremely cold during

the winter.

A small, old air condition unit can be seen sticking out from their living room window, but it's not enough to cool the entire living space let alone their home.

For shoes, Jose Angel wears a size 2 in boys shoes, and Elizabeth wears a size 7 in girls while his older brothers wear a size 10 and 8 1/2.

For shirts, the older boys wear a size XL and L, a size M for Elizabeth and Jose Angel wears a size 7.

And for pants, both Yair and Jose Luis wear a size 16 while Jose Angel wears a size 7 in boy sizes and Elizabeth a size 3 in girl jeans.

To help, call the United Way of South Texas at (956) 686-6331 and inquire about this family and the Spirit of Christmas campaign. The Monitor has partnered with the United Way of South Texas to garner support for Rio Grande Valley families in need of monetary donations, or other items and gifts specified in this story.