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They don't want 'no border wall'

By Michell Godinez
Staff Writer

Cries of "No al muro" and "We don't want no border wall, 'cause we love people one and all" could be heard a block away as a group of about 40 people neared the end of their journey from Roma to Brownsville.

A crowd of 100 people gathered in front of the Fort Brown Memorial Center on March 16 to welcome the marchers who made the 126-mile trek.

Elizabeth Stephens, a U.S. history teacher at Rivera High School, was one of the marchers who spent her Spring Break making the trip from Roma to Brownsville.

"Off and on, it's been brutal on our feet, but very uplifting for our souls," Stephens said. "A lot of people have asked us why we would choose to do something like this as opposed to being out at South Padre Island with our Spring Breaks but I honestly couldn't think of a place to have more fun and to have a more meaningful impact."

Stephens said that the walk may be over, but the fight will not be over until the government does something to stop the border fence.

"It's not over until we've stopped bulldozers from moving into our communities and stopped the wall's construction completely," she said. "This is the end of our march and a chance for us to rest our feet, but this is hopefully the beginning of a rallying cry across the Valley and across the border that we aren't going to stand for this fence."

On Wednesday afternoon, U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen dismissed the Homeland Security lawsuit against Texas Southmost College and UT System Chancellor Mark Yudof. Homeland Security was seeking access to campus for the possible construction of a border fence (see story, Page xx).

The marchers arrived at the rally around 5 p.m. with the rally already in progress.



ELIZABETH A. PEREZ/COLLEGIAN PHOTOS

Protestors walk through downtown Brownsville before ending their 126-mile walk in front of the Jacob Brown Auditorium on March 16.



The Rev. Bret Lortie from the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio gave an inspirational speech at the rally.

"This is not the frontline on the war of terror, but an assault on a lifeline between neighbors," Lortie said. "And I never thought that I would be quoting Ronald Reagan in my lifetime but I remember the words of President Reagan in 1987 ... I remember the words he spoke at the Brandenburg Gate in Germany when he said, 'General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.'"

Lortie told presidential hopefuls Senators Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John McCain to "tear down this wall!"