



Cookie recipes,
Homes &
Southwest
Living,
E9

THE LAS CRUCES Bulletin



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Police chief leading new approaches

Next year bringing big policing change

By **Todd G. Dickson**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Six months into his new role, Las Cruces Police Chief Richard Williams is close to rolling out significant changes that will affect how police are deployed and supervised in the city.

Williams said the department is close to making those changes, which should be fully in place by this time next year.

"It's in progress," he said. "It's not at any point where I want us to be, but people have to realize that it takes time to make organizational change."

Williams gave a preview of those changes at a City Council meeting in September. He noted that the department's basic organization and schedules have been relatively unchanged since 1997, even though the city has since grown.

The department works in three shifts – day, swing and graveyard – with an equal number of officers on the streets. Williams is proposing that the department change to what he calls non-conventional shifts, in which more officers are available when more of them are needed, based on statistical trends.

To make this approach work, officers will work longer shifts, but they will have more days off. Williams said he believes police union representatives are "on the same page" with him on the change, but negotiations probably won't be completed until early next year.

The other major change is taking a more geographical approach to command authority in the city. Using Interstate 25 as a dividing line, watch commanders will be in charge of either the east or west parts of the city.

Although 65 percent of the department's calls come from the west side of the city, Williams said he's trying to reorganize the department for the next five to 10 years, and the East Mesa remains where most of the future growth will happen.

The East Mesa also is an area where many complain about a lack of police coverage or slow response times. Williams

See **Police** on page A9

'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Chris Mortenson

Las Cruces Dan Wasser has been decorating his home for Christmas for the past 32 years. He started the tradition when he lived in Mesilla. He has since moved the tradition to his new home on Foothills Road. Wasser said he sees it as a way to give back to the community. An average of 500-600 cars drive by his house daily to admire the lights and decorations, he said. Wasser puts up all the lights himself and switches the theme each year. In the trees alone, there are more than 15,000 lights, he said. He uses an amplifier to accommodate the extra power the lights use and said his electric bill for the month of December ranges between \$400-\$500. Wasser puts up his lights up in mid-November and keeps them lit until Jan. 1.

State art official refutes criticisms

New Mexico artists won most commissions since 2007

By **Todd G. Dickson**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Since 2007, more than \$2 million has been awarded to New Mexico artists or galleries from a total of almost \$3.27 million in state money for public art, according to the official in charge of the state's program.

A New Mexico State University professor and a local artist are questioning how much money is going to in-state artists after two commissions worth \$447,700 for NMSU buildings were awarded to out-of-state artists. After reviewing available information about recent

awards, they said it appears New Mexican artists weren't being selected unless the projects were restricted to in-state artists.

Chuck Zimmer, Arts In Public Places (AIPP) program manager, said eight awards made up the \$2 million awarded to in-state artists since 2007. Three of those awards were restricted to in-state artists, he said, but another three were open to any U.S. artist and the remaining two were open to regional artists.

The two NMSU art projects in question are the recently renovated O'Donnell Hall – a \$170,900 commission won by Connecticut artist Tim Prentice from a field of five finalists,

all from out of state – and the Center for the Arts, which is currently under construction with a commission of \$276,800. A state law requires 1 percent of the construction budget for large, state-funded buildings be spent on art.

A selection committee of NMSU officials and community members recently selected five finalists for art at the new center and none were from New Mexico.

The NMSU Center of the Arts finalists are: Ed Carpenter of Portland, Ore.; Michio Ihara of Concord, Mass.; Ray King of Philadelphia; Albert Paley of Rochester, N.Y.; and

See **Art** on page A9

NEXT WEEK

Wilderness bill made to wait

Senate omnibus land bill withdrawal delays final decision on local federal land status



\$1



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Bulletin Christmas memories, C6



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Veterans relive journeys at the Honor Flight film screening

Photos by Todd Dickson

Dolores Archuleta, former city councillor, helps Santa give out candy canes to the veterans.



Debra Melcher gives Stuart Meerscheidt his ticket as he arrives at the movie theater.



Romolo Martinez was reunited with his guardian Linda Widbur.

Before seeing footage shot on the flights, veterans were shown a KRWG-TV news report on Honor Flight.



Eighty WWII veterans from southern New Mexico attended the screening at the Cineport 10 Thursday, Dec. 16, of videos made of the first three area Honor Flights to the national World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Also attending the show were 150 family and guardians who accompanied the veterans on their trips.

Bill Mattiace, former mayor who has been active in the Honor Flights, greets Marion Nygard.



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Opinions



From the publisher

BY DAVID MCCOLLUM

The Christmas story

The timeless story of the birth of Jesus helps us reflect on love, peace and hope

The Christmas season is a wonderful time for families and friends to gather, share gifts and enjoy traditional celebrations. Many of us will be attending special Christmas church services where we will once again hear the wonderful story of the birth of Christ.

Because the story is so powerful and important in our local culture, we are pleased to take this opportunity to share with our readers the Christmas story as related in the New King James version of the Holy Bible.

Christ Born of Mary

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

So was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Glory in the Highest

Now there were shepherds living in the same country, shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told to them.

Luke 2:1-20

As we look forward to the New Year, Jaki and I, along with the entire Bulletin team, wish each of you and your family a safe and joyous Christmas holiday.



Letters to the Editor

Pearce thanks citizens

I would like to thank everyone who came to my listening tour session in Las Cruces. These important sessions allow me to hear directly from citizens in your community about the issues facing our nation.

Citizens from across the Second Congressional District talked about the need to create jobs, control government spending and end unnecessary regulations that are crushing small businesses. There were many other local and federal issues that were brought up as well, but these seemed to be the most important to most people.

We will have many of these listening sessions in your community so that I may keep the pulse of your views close to my heart. I would like to wish you and your family Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. May all of our hopes and dreams in the New Year come true.

U.S. Rep.-elect Steve Pearce

Gay military repeal runs contrary to tradition

Now that Congress has repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and legalized sodomy in the military, I shudder to think where we as a nation are headed. No doubt this latest outrage from our 11th hour lame-duck 111th Congress will not go unnoticed by the jihadist Muslim world,

and serve as a useful recruiting tool in their campaign against "evil Satan west."

It will be interesting to see how readiness, recruitment, retention, camaraderie, unit cohesion, personal ethics, morality, values, discipline, medical standards, the Universal Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), spousal rights, survivor benefits, the chaplains and even uniform selection will be affected.

No doubt there will be a cry from the left to redress ancient "wrongs" by advancing more homosexuals through the ranks. My guess is there aren't too many of them in the service, and I doubt most are willing to "out" themselves. Hmm, if you "out" somebody against his will, will that to be a violation of the UCMJ? If you say you're gay when you aren't, can you be reprimanded or have your promotion removed?

With all the technology available to us now, from miniature camera phones to Wikileaks, I wonder how long it will take for some enterprising NCO to blackmail or destroy his leader by posting illicit photos of him engaged in off-duty (homosexual acts).

Now we have a legal contradiction: Under UCMJ Article 125, Sodomy is a punishable offense, equivalent to male rape of a female, and can result in dishonorable discharge, loss of all pay and allowances and confinement.

Charlie Revie
U.S. Army retired

The Las Cruces Bulletin invites readers to submit letters, preferably by email to editor@lascrucesbulletin.com. They can be sent in by fax at 526-4621. Letters also can be mailed or dropped off at 840 N. Telshor Blvd., Suite E., 88011. Letters should not exceed 200 words and must include the writer's name, address and telephone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters may be edited for length or content.

THE LAS CRUCES Bulletin

2010 "Community Arts Award"
Doña Ana Arts Council

2009 "Small Business of the Year"
Hispano Chamber of Commerce de Las Cruces

2008 "Spirit of Service Award"
New Mexico State University Foundation

2007 "VIVA Award"
N.M. Association of Commerce and Industry

2006 "Newspaper of the Year"
New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau

2005 "Business of the Year"
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Political appointees try to stay put

Tourism industry gets the short end of the funding stick

It is surprising how many of Gov. Bill Richardson's political appointees think they will be able to stick around for Gov. Susana Martinez's administration.

Martinez vowed often during her primary and general election campaigns to fire them all. And there was fairly general agreement that Lt. Gov. Diane Denish would have done the same to separate herself from the Richardson administration.

All of Richardson's 375 remaining political appointees were invited to a meeting two weeks ago at the State Personnel Office to receive information on how to wind up their government employment. There were nowhere near 375 employees present.

What is happening to cause this optimism? So far, I haven't heard of any transition team members giving such assurances. Are the exempt employees judging from past experience?

I haven't kept track of political appointees remaining in new administrations in the past. It hasn't been a campaign issue in the past.

It was just assumed that political appointees would be gone at the end of each administration, especially when the party in control of the governor's office changed. Logically, those who kept their jobs didn't go out and shout about it.

Blogger Joe Monahan is guessing that only 100 of the 375 remaining Richardson appointees will be dumped. He reasons that Gov. Martinez will need the rest as her eyes and ears in the bureaucracy.

Maybe so. Most of them will need the job badly enough that they will be loyal to any boss. But not every one of them will be. The woman who talked Monica Lewinsky into going public about her affair with the president was a political appointee from the George H.W. Bush administration who was retained.

Maybe the answer is that there are not 375 Republicans in Santa Fe who need a job badly enough to go to work for the government. And not enough Republicans are willing to make the commute to Santa Fe.

I'm probably wrong on those guesses, but I'll bet your farm there are less than 100 Richardson appointees who stay. And the rest of the story is that we'll never know because such information never has been released in the past

...

The state tourism industry is getting serious about how it is being treated by the state Legislature. It received the biggest percentage budget cuts of any department from the last Legislature with more cuts expected this year. In addition, the Legislature is considering moving it under the Economic Development Department.

This column often has talked about how we treat our

golden eggs, most notably the federal government, oil and gas and tourism. Those are the big three and we take them for granted.

Most New Mexicans love to complain about the federal government. If regional offices and military bases pulled out of the state, we can fold up our tent. They are our biggest employer and have the biggest payroll.

Oil and gas brings in the most for our economy from the private sector and tourism is next and is the biggest private employer. But we tell the military we don't want their planes. We over-regulate oil and gas and we ignore tourism.

In 1994, Santa Fe Mayor Sam Pick was such a supporter of tourism that our city finished first in the Conde Nast

international tourism poll. And we weren't even on the ballot.

A year later new Mayor Debbie Jaramillo let tourists know she didn't think much of them. We fell drastically in the Conde Nast poll even though we have been on the ballot since. We've never captured the first spot again.

This year, eight different tourist organizations have formed a coalition and put up a website and a social media effort to emphasize the impact of tourism on our state.

The tourism industry brings in more than \$6 billion annually into our economy and generates more than \$760 million in taxes.

Jay Miller may be contacted at insidethecapitol@hotmail.com.

Jay Miller
Inside the Capitol



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always
shine
bright*



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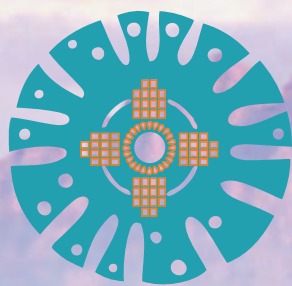
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Chiles roasting on an open fire

Big Jim nipping at your nose ...

... It's Christmas time. Red and green is everywhere. But I'm not talking about the holidays. I'm talking chile.

Christmas is the official answer to the state's official question: Red or green?

The question refers to what chile you want on your enchiladas. To answer Christmas means you want both red and green.

We New Mexicans know that already.

But there are 49 other states sadly in the dark.

A trio of Las Cruces have been working hard to change that. James Ditmore, David Lucero and Kelley Coffeen spoke passionately at the December meeting of the Advertising Federation of Las Cruces on the topic of "Christmas in Chile Country: The Marketing, the Message and the Magic of Chile."

Ditmore and David Lucero, both of the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, have spent the last couple of autumns in far-flung parts of the country educating the unenlightened on the magic of green chile.

In California, Texas or Philadelphia, you could find this dynamic duo setting up chile roasters outside of grocery stores, helping create beautiful in-store displays of the green glory, and, through food samples, informing consumers that green chile is



COFFEEN



DITMORE



LUCERO

not just for Mexican food.

On one of the Texas swings, Coffeen, cookbook author and owner of Mesilla Valley Kitchen, was a vital addition.

"It was like being in a rock band," Coffeen said of the tour, on which she would cook and share recipes. Her Green Chile Corn Chowder recipe was later a hit in Iowa.

Lucero and Ditmore's road show was born of concerns from local chile growers threatened by international competition.

But a China chile won't cut it.

"There's something special about New Mexico chile," Ditmore said. "You can take these seeds and plant them in California or New York, and it's just not the same."

But people can't understand that until they get their first taste of roasted New Mexico green chile. Once they do, you've immediately created a new market for the slices of Hatch Heaven.

The influx of cable cooking and food shows the last decade or so has created a new generation of people hyper-aware of diverse delicacies.

"We're going after the foodies," Lucero said.

"So we've positioned the New Mexico green chile as a gourmet food," Ditmore added.

"And we show them how they can adapt chile to their local flavors," Lucero said. "We're not trying to sell Mexican food. We're trying to sell chile."

As it turned out, getting the consumers hooked was the easy part.

The bigger tricks were training the out-of-state grocery stores, as well as the New Mexico growers.

For strategic reasons, Lucero and Ditmore began their mission in California at Raley's Supermarket. The reason? Raley's used to have stores in New Mexico, and still had employees who



Richard Coltharp
*That's the Way
of the World*

remembered the phenomenon of the August chile roast.

The strategy was successful, except for the time they were shut down by city officials in northern California because they didn't have the proper permit to emit roasting chile smoke in the sky.

In Chile Boot Camp 101, a comprehensive chile-training course, they introduced store staffs to proper roasting techniques and pinwheels, one of the simplest green chile recipes, which uses chile, cream cheese and tortillas.

The pinwheels were so popular, stores would sell out of cream cheese.

When grocers saw the public's reaction, and chile-complementary items flying off the shelf, they became just what Lucero and Ditmore were hoping for: committed retailers.

Then came the next strategy - "We want you to order green chile by the truckload," Lucero told supermarket managers.

This raised the eyebrows of not only out-of-state store managers, but also New Mexico green chile growers. Local farmers were used to packing chile in burlap bags for - at most - a five-hour drive to northern New Mexico. That won't work for shipping chile from Hatch to Seattle.

To solve the dilemma, outside-of-the-box thinking required getting into the box. The answer was an aerated, sturdy, stackable cardboard box that would hold chile, fit well in trucks and protect the valuable cargo for its journey.

In addition, the boxes are branded with the "New Mexico: Taste the Tradition" and "New Mexico: Grown with Tradition" logos.

The boxes have been successful in getting the chile safely across country.

After learning of this trio's travels and efforts, I was put in mind of another memorable agricultural evangelist. I asked Ditmore if anyone ever referred to him as "Jimmy Chileseed."

The white-haired Ditmore peered at me with his best James Coburn look. He pointed back to Lucero and said, "No, but these guys call me 'the Reverend.'" He said it like it wasn't a good nickname. I disagreed.

"No, the Reverend is perfect," I said. "You're spreading the gospel of green chile."

He smiled, spread his arms, and said, "That's it!"

Richard Coltharp is general manager of the Las Cruces Bulletin. His email is richard@lascrucesbulletin.com.

Green Chile Pinwheels

- 6 flour tortillas
- 1 large package cream cheese
- 4 oz. green chiles, diced
- Garlic salt to taste

Cream cheese, chiles, and garlic salt together. Spread mixture on tortillas. Roll tortillas like a jelly roll. Chill overnight. Slice and serve. (For a more Christmas-y version, add roasted and diced red bell peppers.)

A classic tale of a Christmas past

Uncle Gene's musical gift not so pleasing to everyone's ears

I too grew up with classics such as "White Christmas" and had those classic moments like singing loudly in public school, "We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." We even meant it back then when we sang, "You'd better watch out, you'd better not cry, you'd better not pout I'm telling you why, Santa Claus is coming to town."

My Christmas seasons have always been inclusionary. Anyone wanting to celebrate peace on Earth and goodwill to all was just fine with me. The whole American Christmas legal holiday good cheer on our lips does make some people angry and resentful. Me, I am calling it Christmas until Congress votes to change the name to something else. I do have to confess that the holiday season is a reason all its own and is a bonus to all I have experienced over the years from one Christmas to another with my loved ones.

My sister asked last week which Christmas I remember best. They all blur together with many that have meaning for me. I remember best the "Oh Susanna Guitar" Christmas, which would have been more appropriate now with our newly elected governor than it was back in the 1950s.

I had lobbied Santa and everyone else who would listen desperately for a drum set. My mother agreed that Santa might

bring a drum set as long as it was delivered after her death and while she lay in the doorway, which was mom-speak for "Over my dead body."

When I tore the wrapping paper off I could not believe my eyes. The tag said that it was from my Uncle Gene. As I opened the box and pulled out the guitar my mother, father and I all said at the same time, "Oh my God!"

It wasn't a real guitar, rather, it had a crank which when turned played "Oh Susanna." I turned the crank and the song was a hit. Uncle Gene had a big smile, even when my mother, while bringing him a cup of coffee, accidentally poured it on him.

I played the song again while they cleaned up the coffee. It was an easy song to play so I decided to sing along and even added some yodeling and a few high-pitched yips and yaps here and there. I was Johnny One Song all Christmas day. Upon reflection, I do remember that my parents looked a little frayed by the end of the day.

Then it was time to brush my teeth, say my prayers and go to bed. I played the song one last time for my mother and added some great yodels. What a great Christmas!

The next morning I jumped up, grabbed the guitar and

turned the crank. No sound came out. Can you believe it? The guitar simply broke while I was fast asleep. I was crestfallen. It just sat there and looked like a guitar, but no song played. My uncle felt my pain and, like me, looked glum.

I asked him hopefully, "Can you fix this?" He looked at my mother who was his older sister and reluctantly shook his head. We called him Uncle Genius, and if he couldn't fix it, heck it was broken for good since he was an electrical engineer.

I admit I suspected that one of the grown-ups had some hand in the guitar not working, so I asked my mother if she had been playing "Oh Susanna" after I was asleep.

Her expression wavered between hysteria and alarm. She firmly stated that no one had been playing "Oh Susanna" while I slept. So the guitar broke on its own. My brother Bill said Santa had broken it because he didn't like the song, but I did not believe him.

Like all of my Christmases then and now, the guitar that broke Christmas night is just part of the holiday lore. Maybe Santa really did not like the song, but I doubt it.

Michael Swickard may be contacted at michael@swickard.com.

Michael Swickard
In My Opinion



CRIME OF THE WEEK featured on page **A14**

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Memories of my old Martin

I can't remember how many songs Martin wrote, probably half of my notebook full of livin' room hits. I guess nobody knew me as well as Martin. All those sad love songs, honky tonk songs, funny ones, bluegrass, country, cowboy, even the occasional gospel song, he heard first.

I was better at the lyrics but he could come up with the oddest melodies. I spent hours trying to decipher or invent the chords that would fit his tune.

While it is true we spent most of our time together alone, there were many occasions when I would take him with me. He was especially popular during the fall cow works on the big ranches. We'd be there four or five days. It takes a while to preg-check 2,000 cows!

Martin would wait for me in the bunkhouse or in my

vet truck, but when work was over, I would take him to the cookhouse. After we'd eaten, we'd play music and tell stories. What fun it was. The cowboys liked it, too. These outfits were so far out, there was no television, and satellite TV hadn't been invented. No VHS, maybe a weak radio signal, so entertainment was at a premium.

We weren't great but we were there!

Sometimes one of the cowboys sat in and played or sang. I remember at one big outfit a prospector would show up and he played Irish songs on his mandolin. And by gosh, Martin spoke Irish! I didn't even know it. I took him to the sheep camps, too. The herders couldn't speak English but they could understand Martin.

He went with me after the divorce. I got my deer head, my

BaxterBlack 

ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE

shotgun and Martin. We moved to another life.

I became an itinerant poet and he joined me on the road. I went places with Martin, I normally wouldn't have gone without a gun. He made friends fast. We stayed up many a night together.

I confess, on more than one occasion I've had to go back and rescue him. I remember how sad he looked in the middle of a vacant parking lot one early morning. He'd spent the night there alone.

His case was pretty shabby looking. Mostly duct tape and stickers from seedy places. He'd break strings and I'd have to substitute the odd gut string or wrong one to let him finish.

He's ridden in boats, on pack mules, on top of pickups, on ski lifts, snowmobiles, wagon trains, railroad trains and training wheels.

I had taught him how to stand up. The strap button on his butt wouldn't let him stand up straight, so he had a jaunty look about him. People would marvel at his balance.

We were standing side-by-side one evening and he fell off a three-foot ledge

and broke his neck just below the tuners. I got him home, put him in a vice and with two machine bolts and nuts and some Elmer's Glue I patched him up. He could still carry a tune. I glued his back when it started gaping.

But, he's played with some wonderful pickers and singers in his day. I got him a new case, but I ran one of my old belts through his handle and around his waist to keep him from poppin' out at the wrong time.

Occasionally these days we get to pick with somebody, but mostly we just play along with XM radio or strum an old song one of us remembers.

He's aging well, getting a little mellow. Wish I could say that about myself. Oh, well, my kids are musical, so I guess he'll be around a long time, long as the machine bolts and Elmer's glue hold out.

Baxter Black may be contacted through his website at www.baxterblack.com.

“ I remember how sad he looked in the middle of a vacant parking lot. ”

The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce annually honors a citizen that goes above and beyond in service to the community and strives to make the Mesilla Valley a better place for us to live and do business. Please help us by nominating a deserving citizen for their hard work and dedication. Thank you.



Citizen of the Year

Citizen of the Year: _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____

Nominator: (No anonymous nominations will be accepted) _____

Please write brief paragraphs on the following criteria. Give specific examples for each.

1. Participation in community activities and civic enterprises _____

2. Contributions and service for the welfare and betterment of the community _____

3. Leadership within the community _____

4. Cooperation with individuals and civic organizations _____

5. Previous awards _____

6. Support of the strategic vision of the Chamber _____

Please return nominations to the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce no later than Jan. 1, 2011, by mail to P. O. Box 519, Las Cruces, NM 88004-0519 or by fax at 527-5546.

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Police

Continued from page A1

said taking a more geographical approach should also help address that, along with a stronger commitment to community policing in which people get to better know the officers assigned to their neighborhoods.

Williams said he likes to use this analogy: "Do you take better care of a car you rent or a car you own?"

Part of that geographical vision would be to have fire stations become mini-substations for officers. Also assisting these changes will be technology that will help police map crime by location to make more strategic decisions about where to send patrols.

Williams has already distinguished himself from past police chiefs by frequently checking his BlackBerry cell phone, though he admits there are others more adroit with technology than him.

Williams is focused on getting improved technology for his officers. Currently, the department is testing a Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) system – essentially computers in patrol cars. The idea is to get information to field officers faster and free up radio communications in the process. Because this requires upgrading the dispatch system, it will take a while to "work out bugs" before every officer has an MDT in their patrol car.

While those initiatives take time, training and budgetary support, Williams has already made several improvements within the force. The department's walls and fences have fresh paint, leaky skylights have been replaced, the fleet's older vehicles are getting replaced with newer vehicles. There's also new weight-training equipment, which was funded using money recovered in drug raids and other criminal activity.

These kinds of improvements are what Williams calls "intrinsic motivators" that

can have lasting effects on morale. Williams, who came to head the Las Cruces department from the local state police force, said he has found the department's officers to be dedicated to their jobs and the community.

Through a combination of grant money and the resumption of police training academies, Williams said he is aiming to bring the force up to 191 officers – currently the force is 183.

Since he started as chief in June, Williams said he has been to hundreds of events and meetings to get feedback on what the community wants and needs in police protection. Williams said he's already seeing some results – such as a citizens helping police arrest youths on a vandalism spree in the Sonoma Ranch neighborhood.

"We need those eyes and ears in the community," Williams said. "And I've found that there is really a desire by residents to have a relationship and a partnership with the police."

Another way the police are reaching out to the community is through its new Nixle service, in which notices can be sent directly to residents via cell phone text messages and electronic mail, or people can check for local alerts online.

Williams said he would like to see the department obtain New Mexico Municipal League Law Enforcement accreditation, a process he's familiar with from his time with the state police. It's a thorough process that makes sure all the department's policies and procedures are following best practices, he said, and it also will take time – at least two years.

Fortunately, Las Cruces is a relatively safe community, Williams said, which helps him focus on the organizational issues. Despite the hard economic times, most violent crime has declined, he noted, though there has been some increase in burglaries.

"Crime is kind of like the weather," he said. "It changes and moves."

Arts

Continued from page A1

Meg Saligman of Philadelphia.

NMSU business professor David Boje, who had assisted local artist George Mendoza in submitting proposals for the two NMSU projects, has written the Department of Cultural Affairs for more detailed breakdowns about how much of the 1-percent funding is going to New Mexico artists.

Besides saying that two-thirds of the funding has gone to New Mexican artists since 2007, Zimmer also disputed some other concerns raised by Boje and Mendoza.

While more than 30 New Mexican artists did apply for the O'Donnell project, Zimmer said only 19 artists from New Mexico applied for the arts center project. Boje and Mendoza said they believed that more than 30 New Mexico artists applied for both projects.

Zimmer said both projects required that the artists have experience with large-commission projects worth more than \$100,000. That narrowed the arts center field for in-state artists down to six, he said. Along with the experience requirement, the O'Donnell Hall project also required artists to have worked on projects of suspended artwork, which is how the O'Donnell Hall art will be displayed. Those two requirements narrowed the in-state artists field down to eight for

O'Donnell, he said.

Had those requirements not been put on both projects, Zimmer said his office would have been criticized for being irresponsible with taxpayer money. Zimmer said his office has a number of programs to help in-state artists, especially by giving them experience with smaller, simpler commissions so they can work their way up to qualifying for the larger and more technically complicated commissions.

"Our office tries to do as much as we can for New Mexico artists," Zimmer said.

Zimmer disputed Mendoza's claim that California's public art programs is restricted to in-state artists. Zimmer said California doesn't have a program similar to New Mexico. California does give residents an opportunity to help fund public art projects through the purchase of special license plates or by designating a portion of tax refund money for the California Arts Council, which awards grants and helps get the word out to artists about possible projects and commissions.

Zimmer said he is aware of 23 other states that have public art programs similar to New Mexico and none of those restrict awarding commissions to in-state artists.

Zimmer said his office just gives advice to the local selection committees, which decide if there should be requirements for experience or if the search for an artist will be in-state, regional or national.



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Coming Up

Progress Club card party

The GFWC Progress Club will sponsor its annual card party from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011, at the Las Cruces Country Club, 2350 N. Main St. Tickets are \$10. Guests may bring their own games, if they wish. Proceeds from the event support the club's educational program, including two scholarships for New Mexico State University students and the GFWC New Mexico Dorothy Pendleton-Harriett Donohoo State scholarship. Attendees will be treated to a light luncheon, door prizes and a chance to win raffle items. Seating is limited, so early reservations are recommended. To make a reservation, call Inge Peter at 522-5474.

Aquatic center programs set

The City of Las Cruces is offering new programs at the Las Cruces Regional Aquatic Center, 1401 E. Hadley Ave. The following is a list of programs:

- 5:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 29 – Parents Day Out. Fee: \$2 per person. The pool will be open to children ages 9 and up. Children under 8 must be accompanied by one adult for every two children.
- 5 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Dec. 28, and Jan. 4, 2011 – Teen Tuesday. Fee: \$2 per person. Pool will be open to children ages 13 to 18.
- 5 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Dec. 28, and Jan. 4, 2011 – Tuesday Lap Swim Program. Fee: \$2 per person. Participants will be given

one hour to swim laps. Each participant must sign up at the front desk. Swimming time limit will be monitored and enforced.

All swimmers must bring approved swimwear.

For more information, call the Las Cruces Regional Aquatic Center at 541-2782 or the Parks & Recreation Administration Office at 541-2550. The TTY number is 541-2661.

Women veterans will meet Dec. 28

Women veterans meet for lunch at noon Tuesday, Dec. 28, at the Oñate Greens Club House, 1625 Spruce Ave. The social group is open to active and prior military women of all services, eras and ranks who wish to share stories and receive veteran-related information.

For information call, Carol Gaines at 524-4203.

BLM announces closings in Organs

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has announced that the Dripping Springs Natural Area and Visitor Center (including La Cueva Picnic Area, Dripping Springs Trail, and Fillmore Trail) in the Organ Mountains will be closed on Dec. 25, Christmas Day and Jan. 1, 2011, New Year's Day. Dripping Springs Natural Area is open from 8 a.m. to sunset on all other days. The Dripping Springs Trail is closed at 3 p.m. during winter months to allow enough time for hikers to be out by sunset.

Other options for recreation use

in the area during these holiday closures include: Aguirre Spring Campground, Soledad Canyon Day Use Area as well as the Tortugas Mountain (A-Mountain) and Picacho Peak Recreation Areas, Sierra Vista Trail, and Baylor Pass Trail and most of the Doña Ana Mountains, which are all open year-round.

Farmers market open Friday, Dec. 24

The Las Cruces Farmers & Crafts Market will hold a special Last Minute Market from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24.

The market will not be open Christmas Day, Saturday, Dec. 25, or New Year's Day Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011.

Water safety instructor class

The City of Las Cruces is offering an American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor class for swimmers age 16 years of age or older interested in learning to teach swim lessons and water safety for all ages.

The class is 30 hours long and includes instruction on how to teach learn-to swim, preschool, parent and child, as well as basic water rescue.

A required pre-test is scheduled from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 7, 2011, at Frenger Pool, 800 Parkview Drive. The required pre-course class, fundamentals of instructor training, is scheduled from 4 to 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 10, 2011, at the Las Cruces Regional Aquatic Center, 1401 E. Hadley Ave. There is

no fee to attend the required pre-test or pre-course.

Class times are 4 to 7 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Jan. 10 through 31, 2011, and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 22, 2011. There will be no class, Monday, Jan. 17. Class size limited to six students. Qualified candidates must sign a liability release form and candidates under 18 years of age must have a signed parental consent form prior to participating in pre-course requirements. The \$165 per student fee includes class time, Red Cross Fundamentals of Instructor Training and Water Safety Instructor certifications. The fee is payable after the candidate passes pre-test and before the first class is held.

Students must purchase their own WSI Training packet (approximately \$50) from the American Red Cross Southwest New Mexico Chapter office, 1301 E. Griggs Ave., prior to the first class session. All candidates must bring approved swimwear and towels to pre-test and all classes. Goggles are allowed for some activities, but are not provided. Registration for those who pass the pre-test is from Friday, Jan. 7, through Monday, Jan. 10, 2011, at the Las Cruces Regional Aquatic Center during regular business hours.

For more information, call the Regional Aquatic Center at 541-2782 or Frenger Pool at 523-0362. The TTY number is 541-2661.

Mesilla Christmas celebration Dec. 24

The Town of Mesilla will hold its annual Christmas Eve celebration on

Mesilla Plaza from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24.

The celebration will include the lighting of the luminarias, with luminarias from both the Las Cruces High School Band and Los Leones de Mesilla. The Las Cruces High School baseball team has offered their time to light the luminarias, which will run along Avenida de Mesilla and the plaza.

The night's celebration will include an address by Mayor Nora Barraza on the plaza. A 17-foot Christmas tree was donated by El Paso Electric Co. and decorated with ornaments made by Mesilla Elementary school.

The celebration will feature carols by the Mesilla Singers. At 6 p.m. the Mesilla Fire Department will conduct a candlelight ceremony in honor of public safety and military personnel. Several Mesilla merchants and restaurants will be open late during the celebration.

For more information, call the Town of Mesilla at 524-3262, ext. 116, or email mesillaevents@comcast.net.

Park restrooms to close for holidays

All City of Las Cruces park restroom facilities will be closed to the general public now through Sunday, Dec. 26, and Friday, Dec. 31 through Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011, for the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays.

For more information, call the Parks and Recreation Administrative Office at 541-2550. The TTY number is 541-2661.

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Dancing the night away at the Filipino-American Association Christmas Party

Photos by Todd Dickson

The Las Cruces Filipino-American Association held its Christmas party Saturday, Dec. 18, at the Building Industry Association of Southern New Mexico. The party started off with a plentiful spread of food, including many traditional Filipino dishes and fiesta foods.



Al Spencer and his son George, 4, were among the many members and friends of the Filipino-American Association of Las Cruces who attended the group's annual Christmas party.

Children were treated to a visit from Santa, who handed out gifts.



Agnes and James Gonzales sit by one of the many decorated stars – a popular Christmas decoration in Filipino culture.

After children performed songs, dances and played music, the women formed a choir to sing carols.



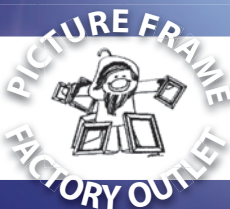
Singing was followed by dance performances.



Even the children had to dance – to the Macarena.

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Christmas transformation



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Beth Sitzler

Beginning in mid-November, Chris Heyser transformed his parent's house on Missouri Avenue into a holiday wonderland, complete with a variety of lights, inflatable characters and music. While Bob Heyser said it can be expensive to put up so many lights – costing about \$350 for last winter's electricity bill – the family still goes all out each year because “we like it.”

Bicycle safety scholarship offered

BCLM seeks to enhance education efforts in New Mexico

The Bicycle Coalition of New Mexico (BCNM) has announced the availability of the Gail Ryba Memorial Scholarship to enhance its bicycle education efforts in New Mexico.

The two-year, \$1,500 scholarship will lead to League of American Bicyclist (LAB) certification as a League Cycling Instructor (LCI). With the certification, the new LCI will teach several bicycle education courses targeted toward children and youth, within two years of receiving the award.

“As more New Mexicans take to

their bicycles to get around, these bike education courses will provide young cyclists with the tips, tools and techniques to make them confident bicycle commuters,” said BCNM President Diane Albert.

Through the program, the costs of the training to obtain LCI status will be covered, as well as the cost of resources needed to conduct the education classes.

“The LCI program is the only nationwide cyclist training and certification program in bike education and general cycling skills offered,”

Albert said. “New Mexico currently has 43 certified instructors, the majority of whom are actively teaching in the state.”

The application deadline for the scholarship is Jan. 10, 2011. Those interested may learn more about the program and download the application by clicking the “Education” tab atop the BCNM website at www.bikennm.org.

The scholarship is named for BCNM founder and lifelong bicycle advocate Gail Ryba, who died of cancer in May.

Mesquite 4-H youth get in holiday spirit

Project highlights environmental park

By Marvin Tessneer
Las Cruces Bulletin

The Go-Green 4-H Club demonstrated on Dec. 16 what it could do with its Mesquite School Environmental and Educational Park with a Christmas tree light demonstration featuring a huge pine.

The 4-H Club and Mesquite students had planned a tree decoration contest as its first event to show off the environmental park as an education means and as its first annual contest, although businesses did not take advantage of the event this year. But the school and Go-Green 4-H is planning an earlier campaign for next Christmas to encourage students and businesses to show their Christmas spirit, Mesquite kindergarten teacher Larry M. Sedillo said.

“Next year, we’re going to invite the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce to tour the environmental park before the contest,” Sedillo said. “That way, the businesses will see the opportunity to support youth activities. The businesses will be encouraged to participate in the tree-decorating contest, and, with the media coverage, make their companies well-known in southern New Mexico.”

The contest was sponsored by

the Go-Green 4-H Club, the 14th and newest 4-H club in the county. The environmental park is planted with 29 Afghan pines, and students and businesses had been invited to participate in a tree-decorating contest.

“The main idea for the environmental park was to provide an educational area that would include all aspects of plants in our area,” Sedillo said. “The environmental park is a special area where youths in our community can experience nature in a safe place. It’s an educational area where students can observe, report and write about their experiences, develop confidence to do things by themselves and develop responsibility.”

FFA and 4-H students from Las Cruces and Gadsden schools planted the pines in 2000 to establish the environmental park. The park also includes desert and native plants, shrubs, an arbor and fruit orchard. Students also had planted 200 pine seedlings, and when the pines grow to heights of four to five feet, they will sell them and donate half the trees to the community and sell the remainder, Sedillo said.

The Go-Green 4-H Club also hopes to collect money to travel to Santa Fe to thank the legislators for granting \$45,000 to establish the environmental park, Sedillo said.

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There is no time more fitting
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Airmen help Toys for Tots



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Todd Dickson
 Air Force recruiter Tech Sgt. Nathan Ullman brings out a second box for donations to the Toys for Tots program Monday, Dec. 20, in front of the recruiting office in the Arroyo Plaza. Loading the toys into the boxes are new Air Force recruits in the delayed entry program, who also gathered the donations. Toys for Tots is providing Christmas gifts to more than 3,000 children in the Mesilla Valley.

Trackways effort honored Wilderness Society praised management

Staff at the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument were among the Bureau of Land Management efforts winning a Comparative Analysis of Particular Excellence (CAPE) award by The Wilderness Society's BLM Action Center.

The Prehistoric Trackways National Monument staff won two CAPE awards for the management approach to protecting fossils in the Robledo Mountains.

Visit www.wilderness.org to see full details on all the award winners.

Traffic camera line open Answers given to common questions

The Las Cruces Police Department has dedicated an automated telephone line to help answer some of the most common questions associated with the city's photo enforcement camera system.

The telephone line, 528-4161, is operational 24 hours a day and answers several questions associated with the city's photo enforcement cameras.

The photo enforcement cameras, operational at three intersections in Las Cruces, are maintained by Reflex Traffic Systems. They capture speeding and red-light violations.

Photo enforcement cameras are located

on Lohman Avenue at Telshor Boulevard, Lohman Avenue at Walnut Street, and on Valley Drive at Avenida de Mesilla.

The cameras monitor traffic heading in both directions along Lohman and the north-bound traffic along Valley.

Some of the questions answered by the automated phone line include how to contest a Reflex citation, how to make a payment and how to forward a citation to the driver who committed the violation. The system answers more than 10 of the most common questions LCPD regularly receives pertaining to the photo enforcement cameras.

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Congress OKs defense bill

President expected to approve spending

U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman said a bill that supports the important work performed at New Mexico's military installations and two defense laboratories has cleared Congress.

The fiscal year 2011 Defense Authorization Bill awaits President Obama's signature.

"This bill is extremely important to New Mexico because our state plays such a critical role in our national security," Bingaman said. "Because of this bill, our military installations and national laboratories will have the support they need to carry out the important work they do."

The Defense Authorization Bill sets funding levels for defense-related spending, but a separate bill actually funds the programs. While this bill does not contain all of the specific funding requests Bingaman made for the labs and military installations, the senator said he will be working to ensure that all of New Mexico's base and lab needs are met.

- The bill authorizes funding for:
- Cannon Air Force Base**
 - \$14 million, 96-room dormitory
 - \$20 million, squadron ops facility
 - \$13.2 million, add/alter simulator facility for MC-130J
 - \$26 million, C-130 parking apron
 - \$12.6 million, aircraft parking apron (MC-130J)
 - \$24.6 million, hangar/AMU (MC-130J)
 - \$39.6 million, operations and training complex
 - Holloman Air Force Base**
 - \$15.4 million, alter maintenance hanger



BINGAMAN

- \$22.5 million, maintenance hangar **Kirtland Air Force Base**
- \$3.8 million, aerial delivery facility addition
- \$6.4 million, armament shop
- \$14.1 million, H/MC-130 fuel system maintenance facility
- White Sands Missile Range**
- \$29 million, barracks
- \$22.9 million, TRICARE health and dental clinics
- Army Reserves**
- \$11.4 million, Army Reserve Center/land (Las Cruces)
- Army National Guard**
- \$8.5 million, readiness center (Farmington)
- National laboratories/other**
- Stockpile Stewardship, \$7 billion, a 10 percent increase
- Non-proliferation \$2.6 billion, a 24 percent increase.
- Nuclear weapons site cleanup, \$5.588 billion, a 1 percent decrease, but enabling the funding for the president's request of WIPP (\$220 million) and LANL (\$200 million)
- Transfer authority through fiscal year 2022 for excess land at Los Alamos National Laboratory to the City of Los Alamos and other local government entities.
- Stringent cost overrun conditions on major projects greater than \$50 million when they exceed 25 percent of their baseline cost including a certification by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) that the management structure is in place to adequately manage the cost-overrun project.
- Requires the secretary of the Air Force to report to the Armed Services Committee within 90 days on measures to clean up the fuel spill around Kirtland Air Force Base.

Museum gets license plate



New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum volunteers Karen Stith and A.B. Conrad check out a 1924 Model T Monday, Dec. 20, that was used to illustrate a new state license plate that will help fund the museum. The annual fee for the plate is \$35 in addition to regular car registration, plus \$2 for administration fees. The first \$12 of the \$37 fee is retained (by statute) by the New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division to cover the costs of printing the plate and administering the program. The remaining \$25 is turned over to the museum's education department.

Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Todd Dickson

CrimeStoppers

Triple homicide

Las Cruces Crime Stoppers and the Delisle Estate are offering a total reward of \$10,000 for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons responsible for the April murders of three people at a home on Mesilla Hills Drive.

On the morning of Thursday, April 15, the bodies of Gilles L. and Helga Harries Delisle, and Peter J. Weith, were discovered inside a home at 2617 Mesilla Hills Drive. Investigators learned that the three victims had been shot to death.

The Doña Ana County Sheriff's Department continues to seek information on the triple homicide and asks for anyone with information – no matter how relevant or sig-



nificant that information is believed to be – to call Crime Stoppers. The identities of the callers can be kept confidential.

If you have any information on who may have committed this crime, you are asked to call Las Cruces Crime Stoppers at 800-222-TIPS (8477) or send a tip via text message to LCTIPS (528477).

The Crime Stoppers number and text messaging services are operational 24 hours a day and you do not have to give your name to collect a reward.

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Food and song at the Las Cruces Vet Center Christmas Party

Photos by Todd Dickson

The food ranged from traditional holiday favorites to exotic meats, including elk and bison.



The New Desert Harmony Singers entertained veterans and their families who filled American Legion Post 10 Friday, Dec. 17, for the Las Cruces Vet Center Christmas Party.



The Las Cruces High School Pom Squad was not only on hand to help serve, but also raised money to buy 100 presents for children of veterans. Taking a quick pause are Claudia Martinez, 16; Rebekah Mijares, 16; Shania Johnson, 13; Nicoy Alaniz, 14; Meghan Ontiveros, 17; and Jackie Sanchez, 16.



Lori English and her singing Chihuahua Smokey

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Waiting for history to repeat itself



Jim Hilley
Bulletin in the Zone

Aggie football after Christmas? At one time, it wasn't so unheard of. Seventy-five years ago, the New Mexico A&M Aggies under coach Jerry Hines were invited to the Sun Bowl, and on Jan. 1, 1936, the Aggies met the heavily favored Hardin-Simmons Cowboys in the first Sun Bowl to feature college teams.

The Aggies, despite being considered a three-touchdown underdog by the El Paso Times, managed to play the big, physical Cowboys to a 14-14 tie.

Up until 1935, the only major post-season college football game in the country was the Tournament of Roses game, which had been held since 1916. The name bowl wasn't added until the Rose Bowl Stadium became the site of the game in 1923.

Locally, the Sun Bowl was created in 1934 by the El Paso Kiwanis as a way to raise funds to benefit underprivileged children. The first Sun Bowl, on Jan. 1, 1935, featured the El Paso High School all-stars against a Ranger, Texas, high school team. The next year it became a college game and has been one since.

The NMSU Aggies part of bowl game history? Yup.

In the early years, the Sun Bowl traditionally pitted the Border Conference champions against the best available opponent. So 24 years after the Aggies' first bowl appearance, New Mexico State made its way back to the Sun Bowl.

Led by coach Warren Woodson, the Border Conference champion Aggies humbled North Texas 28-8 on Dec. 31, 1959.

Just one year later, the untied, undefeated Aggies led by Charley Johnson, Pervis Atkins and Bob Gaitors played the Utah State Aggies, led by the All-American defensive tackle and Outland Trophy winner Merlin Olsen.

I have been told that the old highway between Las Cruces and El Paso was bumper-to-bumper all the way that day.

The NMSU Aggies came out on top of that one, 20-13, and the 1959-60 era is still considered the golden era of Aggie football. Aggie legends Johnson and Atkins went on to play professional ball, and Johnson achieved great success there.

That was 50 years ago.

Aggie fans are still waiting for the next NMSU bowl appearance. New Mexico State owns the nation's longest streak without a bowl appearance.

Aggie fans must keep believing that at some point, all streaks come to an end, and Christmas time and New Year's will see NMSU football players on the field once again.

Let's hope it's not another 50 years.

Hoop-La looms for girls

Annual tournament a test for high school teams



Las Cruces High's Kandice Guzman handles the ball as a Cleveland defender applies defensive pressure Saturday, Dec. 18, during the Bulldawgs' win over the visiting team from Rio Rancho.

By **Craig Massey**
 Las Cruces Bulletin

Local girls' high school basketball teams are off to good starts this season, but they will learn a lot more about themselves next week in the Las Cruces Public Schools Holiday Hoop-La Tournament, hosted this year by Mayfield.

The tournament is Tuesday, Dec. 28, through Thursday, Dec. 30.

"It's definitely a great field," said Las Cruces High School coach Matt Abney. "It includes the best team in El Paso (Burgess) and four of the top eight teams in New Mexico (Sandia, Hobbs, Mayfield and Cleveland)."

Mayfield

Coach George Maya's third-ranked Mayfield Trojans are off to a 10-1 start this season.

Mayfield has only one starter returning, but has good roster depth and good speed, according to Maya. Leading the way is 5-8 senior Elena Holguin, who missed much of last season with a knee injury. Holguin can play any position and is a consistent scorer and rebounder.

Other top Mayfield players include senior point guard Veronica Hernandez, guard Jenna Banegas, wing Elena Hutchinson and 5-10 post Sherice McWhorter.

Mayfield's only loss this season was to the state's top-ranked 4A team - Roswell.

"We've made a lot of progress so far," Maya said. "But we're about to face a tough six-game test. Our next six games will tell us where we're at. We just need to learn from each game and get better."

Oñate

The Oñate Knights are off to a 7-4 start under their first-year coach Ben Trujillo. Oñate started the season 1-3, but has gone 6-1 since then, defeating two strong teams in Cleveland

See **Hoop-La** on page A21

Ags ready for rematch with Lobos

Return of Madison Spence a boost for improving team

By **Jim Hilley**
 Las Cruces Bulletin

There are some interesting parallels between the New Mexico State men's and women's basketball teams this season.

Both teams have had to deal with injuries to key players. Both teams have had to play short-handed during tough non-conference schedules. Both teams are showing improvement as conference play nears.

For Aggie women's basketball coach Darin Spence, the injury bug has bitten close to home. His daughter, starting point guard Madison Spence, suffered a concussion during the second half of the Aggies' game against Western New Mexico Nov. 22.

"It was tough," coach Darin Spence said. "She's my immediate child, but everybody else on this team is my kid while they're here. You hate to see people go through any type of injury or ailment, but you know it is part of the game."

"She's still on the road to recovery, and that

is a good thing."

Madison Spence returned to the court in a 71-59 loss to Arizona Sunday, Dec. 19. Though it wasn't a victory, the Aggies battled the tough Wildcats down to the closing minutes.

"I think we've learned a lot," coach Spence said. "We're improving each day. We've played such a difficult schedule, home and away, our road trips have been tough. It's just been a semester of learning."

The loss at Arizona dropped the Aggies to 6-5 on the season, but considering the schedule, Darin Spence is pleased with the progress the team has made. Spence said his team is starting to come together on the court and will be ready when conference play begins with a road trip to Hawai'i on Thursday, Jan. 6, and at San Jose State Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011.

"We had that bump in the road where we were without Madison (Spence) for a while. Now she's back in the mix, so other players have improved a lot in her absence," he said.

"Now that she's back we can start getting back to full strength."

After hosting Utah Thursday, Dec. 23, the players will get a break for the Christmas holiday before traveling to Albuquerque for a rematch against the Lobos on Thursday, Dec. 30.

"That's one of the fun trips we take because they get great fan support," coach Spence said. "We've been up there before where it's been 14,000 people. We've had chances to win up there three different times, but then that crowd just gets going. It's proof that your fan support can lift a team to a higher level of play."

"We proved that the two years we hosted the WAC tournament. When we had five thousand in here, we played so much better and went to the championship twice."

Coach Spence said he is looking forward to the rematch.

See **Aggies** on page A22

Want to see more?

See photos from the Aggie women's game against Utah on page A22.

NMSU prevails at Aggies vs. Ragin' Cajuns

Photos by Raul X. Ruiz Rooney



Tyrone Watson scored 10 points in the Aggies' 82-76 victory over Louisiana Tuesday, Dec. 21, in the Pan American Center.



Gordo Castillo led the Aggies with 20 points against Louisiana.



Sophomore forward Bandja Sy slams the ball through the net early in the Louisiana game.



Hernst Laroche scored 19 points and had six assists against the Ragin' Cajuns. He was also the Aggies' leading rebounder with six.

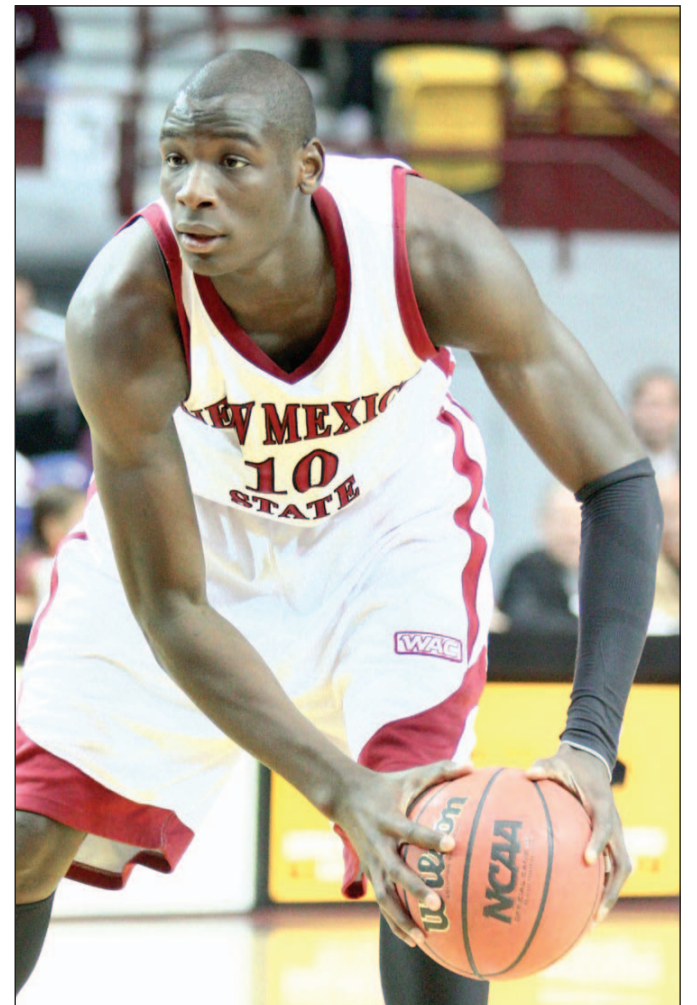


Renaldo Dixon has been a major addition for the Aggies this season.



Freshman guard Christian Kabongo scored 17 points and dished out five assists to help the Aggies get their sixth win of the season.

Sy looks for a weakness in the Louisiana defense.



Hoop-La

Continued from page A20

and Roswell.

"The players are starting to come together and believe in what we're doing," Trujillo said. "I would describe it as being all in."

Josie Morales, a 5-5 senior point guard, is a team leader, the coach said. Other key OHS players include 5-6 junior guard Kelsie Niehof; 5-7 shooting guard Jackie Lopez; 5-3 Jasmine Barnes, who leads the team in rebounds; 5-5 junior defensive standout Kiana Frank; 5-5 junior wing Alexyss Burkhartsmeier; and 5-6 senior post Marissa Polanco, who routinely has to guard players who are 6-0 and over, and does a great job, Trujillo said.

Oñate has had seven different players score 13 or more points in a game this season.

"We're still a little behind in fundamentals," Trujillo said. "But we have good depth, we have good shooters, and we play together as a team."

Las Cruces

Las Cruces High enters the tournament with a 4-6 record, but the Bulldawgs are playing well of late, defeating a ranked Cleveland team last Saturday.

The teams that defeated LCHS have a combined record of 42-7.

"We've played really good teams, and I think that's why we're starting to get better now," Abney said. "I think we've turned the corner, and we enter the tournament with some good momentum."

Sharayah Newton leads the Bulldawgs from her post position. Abney said the 6-1 Newton is "having a great year" and leads the team with 11 points per game and is grabbing about five rebounds per game.

Las Cruces also is getting strong play from Samantha Mendoza and Jasmine Muñoz.

"We have a lot of nice role players, too," Abney said. "We've

also had four freshmen get some good experience so far, so we have a nice mix."

Mesilla Valley Christian Schools

Competing at the 2A level, the Mesilla Valley Christian Schools SonBlazers are off to a 4-2 start this season.

New coach Kent Schwisow has a young, aggressive team that he hopes will improve as the season progresses.

"We're very good on defense and we're very aggressive," Schwisow said. "We need to cut down on our turnovers, but that's part of our youth. Our shooting is coming along."

Three seniors lead MVCS – point guard Geneva Hernandez, shooting guard Jessica Rhodes, and 5-11 post Riley Rice.

"We're a young team," Schwisow said. "We have two eighth-graders, one junior, the three seniors and the rest are sophomores or freshmen."

MVCS will battle in a tough district with favorites Lordsburg and Tularosa. "Hopefully, we can surprise some teams," Schwisow said.

V-ball league forms

Registration open until Jan. 7

The City of Las Cruces Parks & Recreation Section has ongoing registration for an adult co-rec indoor volleyball league through Friday, Jan. 7, 2011, at Meerscheidt Recreation Center, 1600 E. Hadley Ave. The league is open to individuals 18 and older and is limited to the first eight teams to register.

League games will begin Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011. All games will be held at the Meerscheidt Recreation Center and will be played on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The league will run through mid-March. Rosters will consist of a minimum of four players and a maximum of eight. Cost is \$200 per team. All documentation and team fees are due by Jan. 7, 2011. Coach packets can be picked up at Meerscheidt.

For more information, call Meerscheidt Recreation Center at 541-2563. The TTY number is 541-2661.

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Aggies

Continued from page A19

“Obviously with them beating us earlier, we have a chance to get one back on them. Because of our tough road trips we don’t worry about going anywhere,” he said.

One reason the Aggies have seen improvement this season is the play of 6-1 forward Tabytha Wampler. She is averaging 13.2 points and 9.2 rebounds a game, giving the Aggies a valuable inside presence – when she can stay on the floor.

“Her Achilles heel has been she was always in foul trouble,” Spence said. “This year she is a lot more aware of where she is on the floor. Except for the last two games, she’s stayed out of foul trouble. At Michigan and at Arizona she got in early foul trouble, and that hurt us because we have yet to get one of our other inside players to really step up and give us some good play.

“If she’s not on the floor, it really hurts us ’cause then they guard our guards really tight, and we can’t get any easy baskets so we have to keep her on the floor. She’s has to be a little wiser and not commit silly fouls and stay on the floor for us.”

Jasmine Lowe has also proven to be an offensive threat for the Aggies.

“She’s a pretty tough competitor, and when you need a basket, she tries to find a way to wiggle in there and get to the basket, get fouled and get free throws,” Spence said.

Spence said his team is competing well and playing some good basketball, but has some areas to improve on.

“We’re competitive, this is a scrappy group that doesn’t expect to get beat by anybody,” he said.

Utah freezes out NMSU at the Women’s last home game of 2010

Photos by Raul X. Ruiz Rooney



Jasmine Lowe pulls up for a shot at the basket. Lowe was 3 for 17 on the night and 0 for 5 from 3-point range.



Melia Magazzeni posts up a Utah Ute during the Aggies 72-62 loss to Utah Wednesday, Dec. 22, in the Pan American Center. The Aggies shot only 26.7 percent in the game and dropped to 6-6 on the season. For more, see the game recap on page A25.



Madison Spence made her first appearance in uniform at home since suffering a concussion on Nov. 22.



Tabytha Wampler continued to play well for NMSU, scoring 23 points, including 15 made free throws on 18 attempts at the line. She also pulled down nine rebounds for the home team. The Aggies’ next game is in Albuquerque against the Lobos Thursday, Dec. 30.

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Onthegreen

'Tis the season for inspiration Three classic Christmas films give us lasting lessons

My three favorite movies during the holiday season are: "It's a Wonderful Life," "Miracle on 34th Street" and "A Christmas Carol." All three are classics, all three are inspirational and all three offer lessons we all can use to be better people.

"It's a Wonderful Life" tells the story of a small-town businessman George Bailey (played by Jimmy Stewart), whose building and loan comes up short of cash on Christmas Eve after his uncle loses the deposit. Faced by a surprise bank audit, and gripped by panic, George is struck by the thought that, as far as providing for his family, he is worth more dead than alive, due to a small life insurance policy. Standing on a darkened bridge high above the freezing, roiling waters below, George's guardian angel takes over and proceeds to reveal to George how things might have been in Bedford Falls if he had never been born. As he returns home, George is met by a reception of townspeople who have all chipped in and made up the \$8,000 shortfall. It's a wonderful life.

Every year, my emotion-filled viewing of "It's a Wonderful Life" evokes feelings of joy and appreciation for all the blessings we enjoy as Americans. True, there continue to be underprivileged people, sick people, homeless folks, the poor and the hungry, all underscoring the fact that our abundance is not shared by every American. We have to work on that. But America is the safest, most bountiful place on Earth, and from day to day, we often lose awareness of that. No one was born to be a failure; there is opportunity everywhere. No one is poor who has friends, and this is the time of year when we can look around as be thankful for all the people who make life a joy.

As a clinical psychologist (yup, that's my day job) I see plenty of depressed people week in and week out. It still surprises me, as sometimes I feel like the former drill sergeant turned terrible therapist (a la the GEICO TV spots). How can you be depressed in America and in the Land of Enchantment when the sun shines 350 days a year? It's a wonderful place. If you're a golfer how can you be sour and bitter and cynical? It's

a wonderful game, meant to be played – not obsessed over.

"Miracle on 34th Street" represents one of those seasonal classics that continues to be relevant because of its timeless message of the power of believing. The film is vintage 1947 and is set in Manhattan, as Macy's has hired the perfect Santa for their Christmas battle with rival Gimbel's – his name is Kris Kringle! Despite his popularity, Kringle's boss (Maureen O'Hara) is skeptical, and her daughter Susan (played by Natalie Wood) believes that Santa is a myth. But when Kris is declared insane and put on trial, Susan and her mother begin to question their lack of faith, as it becomes clear that there is something very special about this "Santa."

“ ... do you really know what stupendous things you're capable of if you apply yourself? ”

My inspiration in "Miracle on 34th Street" comes from the idea that when you believe in something worthwhile, and energize your belief with personal imagination, there is such magic, power and genius, that your dreams can come true.

We often seem bound and limited by thinking small, failing to let our true potential shine above all else. As a person and as a golfer, do you really know what stupendous things you're capable of if you apply yourself? Kringle is eventually validated and found to be sane by a clever lawyer. Only in Hollywood. But in "Miracle," Susan found that having faith in something was fulfilling even when it seemed illogical. Sometimes we have to simply trust in our own ability and strength, in the face of seemingly enormous odds. You have to believe.

The other message I get from "Miracle" comes from the pathos connected with Christmas, including a longing for eight-story downtown department stores, with their elevator operators, and departments called "better dresses" and "notions." As a child I accompanied my mother to Public Square in Cleveland to do our Christmas shopping at the big department stores, which I thought were cavernous and wondrous.

I find that today there is something empty about the "mall" and the sterile strip center by comparison. It's the same longing I get for my old persimmon driver, leather golf bag and metal spikes. But I'm not sure I could break 90 with that stuff

Charlie Blanchard
Golf Doctor



today. Still, every time I play an old Donald Ross golf course I'm transported back in time to an era when gentlemen never wore blue jeans on the golf course and took their hats off at the dining table.

My all-time holiday favorite is Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." Over the years, there have been several movie versions of "Scrooge," as well as hundreds of important stage productions, and even a wonderful animated film that made its debut in 2009.

The very best, I think, is the 1995 film starring George C. Scott. Everyone, of course, knows the classic tale: A mean and miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, embittered and lonely by his singular pursuit of money, is visited by three spirits on Christmas Eve, all summoned by his long-deceased former business partner Jacob Marley. Marley seems intent on sparing old Scrooge an eternity of wandering through the netherworld burdened by the heavy chains he forged in life through failing to care enough about the business of all mankind. Mr. Scrooge awakens on Christmas morning a new man.

"They've done it all in one night," he muses, amazed in his own metamorphosis.

The message left to us by Dickens is all about transformation. Nearly all Dickens' novels are permeated by themes dealing with the plight of the poorer classes, a plea for mercy for the downtrodden, and the quest of common folk to rise above. Indeed, "A Christmas Carol" is no different in that regard. What is different is the starkly unmitigated fantasy of sudden personal transformation.

In life, and in golf, we are sometimes challenged by the possibility of, or mostly the urgent need for, major personal change. For most of us there is usually something important that happens – a precipitating event – which startles us into the realization of how useful it would be to change ourselves.

For me, that moment came 24 years ago (at age 46) when I decided to re-invent myself and become a medical professional. In my years of teaching golf, with partner Herb Wimberly, I have seen plenty of amazing golfer makeovers and skill transformations. The bad news is that it won't happen overnight; the good news is that it will open up a whole new wonderful world for you, as it did for Ebenezer Scrooge.

Dr. Charlie Blanchard is a licensed psychologist specializing in sports and leadership who works with PGA professionals and young golfers. Email Blanchard at drblanchard@lascrucesbulletin.com.



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Alexyss Burkhardtmeier

Alexyss Burkhardtmeier is a 16-year-old junior at Oñate High School. She plays wing on the Knights girls basketball team and is averaging 7.8 points, 1.2 assists, 1.2 steals and 3.8 rebounds per game. Burkhardtmeier was named to the All-Tournament team at the Joe Armijo Tournament in Albuquerque last week. She has a strong work ethic, is a good student with a 3.0 GPA and is a great friend to all she knows. Her interests outside of sports and school are hanging out with friends, texting and watching movies.



Terrel DeRouen

Terrel DeRouen is a 17-year-old senior at Oñate High School. He plays guard on the Knights boys basketball team. He is averaging 10 points, four assists and five rebounds per game. He is an 85 percent free throw shooter, is very competitive and is a senior leader. He is a dedicated student with a 3.0 GPA and enjoys following all college and pro sports when not on the court or in the classroom.



Aggie Insider

Injuries affect Aggies

Younger players step into leading roles

With the WAC season on the horizon for the men's and women's basketball teams, they are coming back to full strength at the right time.

Senior guard Madison Spence returned to the court last week at Arizona, which gives women's head coach Darin Spence the team he wanted back in October. The women face UTEP in the Pan American Center, Jan. 2, 2011, looking to sweep the series, winning at UTEP in overtime.

Spence's Aggies held their own while Madison recovered from a concussion suffered Nov. 22. The team continued their domination of the Encanto Thanksgiving Classic with another championship and beat Cal State Northridge. Before UTEP, the distaff Aggies travel to Albuquerque Dec. 30, for the rematch with New Mexico, with the first home conference game, Jan. 13, versus Nevada.

In Spence's absence, junior forward Tabytha Wampler has picked up the leadership role inside. She regularly is in double figures in both points and rebounds and has provided the inside presence the Aggies haven't had since Sherell Neal wore crimson and white. Senior guard Danisha Corbett is playing like a senior as well, stepping up her point production in Spence's absence.

In an odd twist of fate, both Spence and men's head coach Marvin Menzies have had to rearrange their personnel due to unforeseen injuries. Spence has got to be merry this Christmas knowing the full substitution rotation is available to execute



Jack Nixon
Jack's Corner

his game plan.

Menzies told the Coaches Luncheon gathering that it was possible that junior center Hamidu Rahman's calf injury could be healed by the start of conference play, which begins Dec. 29, at Idaho, in Moscow, Idaho. He said junior forward Troy Gillenwater might be available by the middle of January.

The league again has Utah State as the favorite, but no one has played with real consistency so a bye to the semifinal round of the tournament with a second-place finish is within range if the players heal as expected.

The Aggies began playing with a new energy after Thanksgiving. They have improved defensively and are learning how to score as a team rather than relying on one player. It isn't a sure thing, but the team has matured without their two leading scorers. When they return, it should provide the frosting on the cake.

Another Aggie author: Derek Sailors, who played for the Aggies from 1981-84, has written a book about the Old West called "A Copper Town Summer." He joins Rus Bradburd and Walt Hines as published authors. Sailors was a consistent performer from his freshman year on. I saw him last in the summer of 1991 when he was playing in the L.A. Pro Summer league. Good to see he has a new creative direction for his life.

'Staying the course'

Four-year players still the right way to build program

Marvin Menzies
Head men's basketball coach



The 2010-11 basketball season has begun with a series of trials and tribulations for our team to experience.

I always tell our players that a season is like a lifetime. Well, this lifetime was off to a relatively rocky start. Some of the setbacks we have endured were expected and some definitely were not. Nevertheless, we have practiced, prepared and performed each and every day without excuses and as hard as we possibly can. Even though we have had some disappointing losses, we must stay committed to developing this young team, with only one senior actually playing.

When I arrived at New Mexico State, my philosophy was to build the Aggie program with freshmen who would consistently develop and matriculate through the program. I wanted players the fans could identify with and come to love. A continual cycle of transfers and junior college players doesn't allow the community to ever really identify with their student athletes.

I also want an opportunity to shape these impressionable individuals into contributing members of society. This is difficult to achieve when you only have a player for two seasons. I believe we have a much better chance of doing so over a four- or five-year period.

I also believe that by consistently recruiting freshmen, in the long run, it will produce a program of greater strength and stability.

So we will stay the course. It may be tempting from time to time to add a temporary Band-Aid to a problem, but we would rather fix it with a

long-term solution. This is not to say we would never recruit a junior college player, but he would have to be a special student athlete with a different set of dynamics.

To see the exciting freshmen we have in Renaldo Dixon, Tshilidzi (Chili) Nephawe and Christian Kabongo (CK) logging significant minutes is so exciting for our program. There are very few programs in the country that have freshmen that talented playing such large roles on their respective teams.

To watch the continued development and impact of our sophomores this season in B.J. West, Bandja Sy and Tyrone Watson is equally exciting. We are very enthusiastic about the young talent we have brought into this program and will work hard to continue to do so. It was very rewarding to see their growth and potential in our win against Pacific at home.

As the season progresses, we look forward to their continued development as well as ours as a team. To reach the NCAA Tournament last season with only one playing senior on the roster was a great testament to the growth of a young team over the course of the season. When March arrived, we had an experienced group of players regardless of their youth.

This has been a trend since my arrival, and there is no secret recipe. It is the growth of young, talented student athletes through valuable on-floor experience. When this March arrives, we are expecting the same improvement. So I say again, "Stay the course my friends, stay the course."

This Week

In Aggie Athletics

Wednesday, Dec. 29

Men's Basketball

Idaho
Moscow, Idaho
8 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 31

Women's Basketball

New Mexico
Albuquerque
7 p.m.



Aggie student-athlete spotlight



Jasmine Lowe
Senior
Women's Basketball

Senior guard Jasmine Lowe scored in double figures in both road contests last week. At Michigan Dec. 13, she posted 12 points with a game-high four steals. Lowe led NM

State with 14 points at Arizona Dec. 19. She dished out five assists and led the team with three steals.



Kaitlyn Soto
Junior
Women's Basketball

Junior guard Kaitlyn Soto shined last week in a pair of road games. At Michigan Dec. 13, Soto started her fifth consecutive game and ended the night with 10 points, three

steals and three assists in 28 minutes of action. At Arizona Dec. 19, Soto shot 80 percent from the floor to tally 11 points for the Aggies.



Bandja Sy
Sophomore
Men's Basketball

In his first start of the season, sophomore forward Bandja Sy scored 15 points with two blocks in 33 minutes, all career highs, in the win over Arkansas-Pine Bluff

Dec. 13. He followed that performance with 12 points in the win over Oklahoma Panhandle State Dec. 16.

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Voting as of Dec. 20

NMSU Aggies	UTEP Miners
61.2%	38.8%

SportsBriefs

DeVries earns another honor

The American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) announced the 30th annual AVCA Division I All-American Teams for women's volleyball, Wednesday, Dec. 15. Junior setter Jennah DeVries earned her second AVCA All-American honor as she was named to the honorable mention team.

DeVries, a native of Sedalia, Colo., is only the second New Mexico State volleyball player to earn multiple All-American honors. Kim Oguh was named an All-American from 2005-07.

"We're really proud of Jennah," head coach Mike Jordan said. "She's a great setter and a great person. She works hard and earned this type of recognition."

DeVries led the Aggies and was second in the Western Athletic Conference with 11.06 assists per set. Dani Mafua of Hawai'i, was also named an honorable mention selection. Mafua didn't have many more assists than DeVries as she averaged 11.19 per set.

DeVries continues to impress everyone move up the records ladder with 2,833 assists in her career. She is now No. 6 on the all-time list, passing Jill Hendry who played for New Mexico State from 1987-88. She is now behind Jessica Rombach (1996-99) who posted 3,031 assists in her career while Christine Jinbo tallied 4,294 from 1993-96 to sit atop the all-time list.

Ag swimmers ranked No. 17

The New Mexico State swimming and diving team has jumped a spot to No. 17 in the latest CSCAA/CollegeSwimming.com Mid-Major poll.

"We had a great fall, and I am really excited to see where things end up in February," coach Rick Pratt said. "This is a hard-working group and to get some recognition for their sacrifices is nice."

The Aggies were ranked despite not having a rest-and-shave meet this fall. NMSU concluded the fall semester with a second-place finish in the UNLV Winter Invitational Dec. 11-13. The Aggies return to the pool at Northern Colorado, Jan. 21, 2011.

WAC players of the week

Louisiana Tech's Olu Ashaolu has been named the Verizon Western Athletic Conference Men's Basketball Player of the Week for the week of Dec. 13-19. The honor marks the second career WAC Player of the Week award for Ashaolu.

Ashaolu, a junior forward from Toronto, Canada (Christian Life Center Academy), recorded back-to-back double-doubles for the third time this season and helped La Tech to a 2-0 record last week. Ashaolu scored 21 points on 10-of-13 shooting and grabbed 13 rebounds in an 80-57 win at Houston Baptist. He then recorded 12 points and 10 rebounds in a 62-61 win at UT Arlington. Ashaolu also tallied two blocks in each game.

On the week, Ashaolu averaged 16.5 points, 11.5 rebounds, 2.0 blocks and 1.5 assists per game. He shot 68.4 percent (13-of-19) from the field and 75 percent (6-of-8) from the free-throw line.

Other nominees included: Boise State senior forward Daequon Montreal; Fresno State freshman forward Bracken Funk; Hawai'i junior guard Zane Johnson; Idaho junior guard Deremy Geiger; Nevada sophomore guard Malik Story; New Mexico State senior guard Gordo Castillo; San Jose State freshman guard Keith Shamburger; and Utah State junior guard Brock Keith Pane.

In women's basketball, Nevada guard Tahnee Robinson has been named the Verizon Western Athletic Conference women's basketball player of the week.

Robinson, a senior from Fort Washakie, Wyo. (Sheridan College), scored 30 points and grabbed eight rebounds in Nevada's 85-57 win over Portland State on Thursday, Dec. 16. Robinson was 11-of-18 from the field (.611), including

5-of-9 (.556) from three-point range. She made all three of her free-throw attempts, dished out four assists and made two steals in 32 minutes. Nevada is 7-2 on the season, the best start in school history.

The award is the second for Robinson in her career and third for a Wolf Pack player this season.

Others nominated included: senior guard Keisha Kanekoa, Hawai'i; senior guard/forward Rachele Kloke, Idaho; senior forward Adrienne Johnson, Louisiana Tech; and junior forward Brittany Johnson, San Jose State.

BYU tops UTEP in NM Bowl

Jake Heaps threw four touchdown passes, connecting with Cody Hoffman on three scores, and finished with 264 yards passing to help BYU beat overmatched UTEP 52-24 Saturday, Dec. 18, in the New Mexico Bowl in Albuquerque.

The victory capped a triumphant turnaround for the Cougars (7-6), whose 1-4 start included a rare loss to instate rival Utah State of the WAC.

BYU also got two interceptions and one of the team's four sacks from Andrew Rich, voted the most valuable defensive player.

UTEP's season went in the opposite direction compared to BYU, with the Miners losing six of seven after opening 5-1. They still reached a bowl game for the first time since 2005, but dropped to 0-5 since beating Mississippi 14-7 in the 1967 Sun Bowl.

Utah tops ice-cold Ags

Wampler, Spence lead NMSU in defeat

New Mexico State junior forward Ta-bytha Wampler and senior guard Madison Spence scored 23 and 17 points, respectively, for the Aggies Wednesday, Dec. 22, but NMSU fell to Utah 72-62 inside the Pan American Center.

The Aggies saw two starters go down with apparent knee injuries in the game. Senior Danisha Corbett and sophomore Camila Rosen both bowed out early in the second half. Their status for the Aggies' game next

week at New Mexico is unknown.

NMSU falls to 6-6 on the season while Utah improves to 6-7 with the win.

Utah guard Iwalani Rodrigues led all scorers in the game with 26 points. Ute forward Michelle Harrison pulled down a game-high 12 boards.

NMSU travels to Albuquerque to face New Mexico at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 30, in the Pit. UNM won the first meeting in Las Cruces on Dec. 1, 58-49.

H I G H S C H O O L

SportsSchedule

Las Cruces High School

Dec. 28-30.....Boys Basketball at Rio Rancho Tournament TBA
Girls Basketball..... Las Cruces Public Schools Tournament..... TBA
Dec. 29-30.....Wrestling..... at Silver Invite TBA



Mayfield High School

Dec. 28-30.....Boys Basketball at Rio Rancho Tournament TBA
Girls Basketball..... Las Cruces Public Schools Tournament..... TBA



Oñate High School

Dec. 28-30.....Boys Basketball at Rio Rancho Tournament TBA
Girls Basketball..... Las Cruces Public Schools Tournament..... TBA
Wednesday, Dec. 29.....Wrestling..... at Silver Invite TBA



Mesilla Valley Christian Schools

Dec. 28-30.....Boys Basketball at VFW Tournament (Alamogordo)..... TBA
Girls Basketball..... at Chaparral Tournament..... TBA



NM STATE UNIVERSITY ATHLETE of the WEEK



Gordo Castillo, Senior, Men's Basketball

Senior guard Gordo Castillo led the Aggies to their third win in a week with a season-high 17 points in the 69-64 victory over Pacific, Dec. 18. He shot 4-for-6 from the field including 3-for-5 from the 3-point line and 6-for-7 from the free-throw line. Castillo added two rebounds and two assists. Castillo returned from an ankle injury and recorded nine points, two rebounds and an assist against Oklahoma Panhandle State, Dec. 16. For the week, Castillo averaged a team-high 13 points and pulled down 2 rebounds per game. He shot 70 percent from the field, 62.5 from the 3-point line and 87.5 from the free-throw line.



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Oñate secures win as Knights fly over Eagles

Photos by Raul X. Ruiz Rooney



Timothy Jacobs gets a pass away before colliding with a Hobbs High School player. Jacobs had a double-double – 10 points and 10 assists – in the Knights' 57-52 win over the visiting Eagles Saturday, Dec. 18, at Oñate High School.



Terrel de Rouen pulls up for a jump shot during the Knights' win over the Eagles. With 19 points for Oñate, de Rouen was the home team's top scorer in the game that moved Oñate to 8-1 on the season.



Junior Jerry Flores, No. 32, hustles on defense in the second period. Flores chipped in eight points for the Knights as they moved to 8-1 on the season.



Oñate coach Saul Perez yells out a play during the game against Hobbs.



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Yellow marks the target

NMSU research looks to even golf greens

New Mexico State University researchers are working to eliminate the yellow patches that can distract from the rolling green hills of New Mexico golf courses in mid-summer.

Ryan Goss, assistant professor of turfgrass science at NMSU, was contacted by the Rio Grande Golf Course Superintendents Association in 2008 about the problem of yellow patches on the lawns of northern New Mexico golf courses. The patches existed even though the grass was getting ample water and fertilizer, and the association was unaware of the source of the problem.

"The courses looked like an Oregon Ducks uniform, some green with giant patches of yellow," Goss said. "The spots can be unsightly, especially if it is a golf course trying to make money."

After studying samples, Goss found the source of the problem was a lack of iron in the soil. The problem is mostly unique to the Southwest because of the amount of alkaline in the soil, Goss said. The problem is especially common with the cool weather grasses in northern New Mexico.

Goss and Matthew Alcalá, a graduate teaching assistant for NMSU Plant and Environmental Sciences, tested different treatment formulas on plots at Four Hills Country Club in Albuquerque. They found liquid iron formulations

provided the best results, eliminating the yellow patches in less than a week.

Goss said next summer he will begin researching methods to prevent the yellow patches from appearing. He hopes to find a treatment that will act as an environment-friendly solution, not only for golf courses, but for homeowners' lawns as well.

"Research is important because it shows good interaction between industries and the research that goes on at NMSU," Goss said. "Our research allows us to help improve golf courses and other areas with the same problem while minimizing negative impact to the environment."

Alcalá said participating in the study has been very educational, and he hopes both commercial and individual consumers will benefit from the findings of the study.

"As a graduate student, working on this study has allowed me to put the scientific method to use and to learn how to diagnose problems and find solutions for them," Alcalá said. "It's an overall good learning experience."

"Graduate students are invaluable to what we do," Goss said. "They balance learning about the researching process while actually conducting research, so when they graduate, they will have gained expertise and experience in research."



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Todd Dickson

Anthony LoBue, who is walking across the United States as "Tony the Vet," shakes hands with Pat Cash, a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10124, who was seeing him off after his stay in Las Cruces. LoBue, who started his walk in San Diego, aims to arrive at New York's Ground Zero by Sept. 11, 2011.

'Tony the Vet' makes stop

National trek to highlight veteran issues

By **Todd G. Dickson**
Las Cruces Bulletin

A man traveling cross-country to raise awareness of veteran issues spent the weekend in Las Cruces before heading down the road to Texas.

Anthony LoBue, better known as "Tony the Vet," started his yearlong journey in San Diego on Sept. 11. His goal is to reach New York's Ground Zero by the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

"That day we all became veterans," he said.

The 68-year-old Vietnam veteran from Brooklyn, N.Y., said he is confident that he will make his destination.

"My mantra is 'I can, I must and I will,'" he said.

LoBue said his message revolves around what he calls the veteran's three R's: Recogni-

tion, Respect and Rewards.

As he talks to veterans on his journey, LoBue has been crafting his proposal for omnibus legislation to address the whole gamut of veteran issues. He is calling for veterans to be exempt from paying federal income tax and other federal licensing and permit fees. He is pushing for improved health care, more retirement homes, centers, services and housing for homeless veterans.

LoBue would also like to see economic stimulus funding given to veterans and veteran-owned businesses, as well as more education and training.

To help pay for these services, LoBue also wants Congress to establish a trust fund for veterans based on 15 percent of all military spending.

To follow "Tony the Vet" and his travels, visit www.tonythevet.org.

'Tax lightning' suit filed

Las Cruces lawsuit may join state appeal

By **Todd G. Dickson**
Las Cruces Bulletin

A Las Cruces couple has filed a "tax lightning" suit, which is believed to be the first such suit from southern New Mexico.

What is "tax lightning"?

In 2001, the Legislature passed a law that caps at 3 percent the annual increase of the assessment value for residential properties. The cap is removed when the home is sold, and the property tax is then based on the current market value.

The law was driven by the phenomena seen in places like Santa Fe, where the rich and famous bought high-priced – and in some cases over-priced – homes. That drove property taxes so high that longtime lower-income residents could not afford to pay their property taxes.

During the housing boom that followed passage of the 2001 law and significantly raised almost all property values, new residents noticed they were paying much more in property taxes than their longtime neighbors.

That is "tax lightning" and parts of the law have been ruled unconstitutional by two state district judges in Bernalillo County. The state constitution requires that taxes be applied to residents equally.

A state appeals court has agreed to review the decision.

Last week, William and Martha Beerman filed a "tax lightning" lawsuit in state District Court in Las Cruces.

The retired couple on a fixed income bought their home on Squaw Mountain Drive in March 2007. The following year, the Doña Ana County Assessor's Office increased the tax value of the home from \$127,751 – which the Beermans say is average for the neighborhood – to \$215,100, a 68-percent increase.

The Beermans contested the increase, but their protest was turned down even though statements were made by the board and its attorney that the law was unconstitutional.

The Beermans' lawsuit had its first hearing Tuesday, Dec. 21, before District Judge Manuel Arrieta. William Beerman said Arrieta may forward the case directly to

the Court of Appeals to have it considered along with other tax lightning cases already there from Bernalillo County. He said this could prevent duplication of effort and possible conflicting decisions and asked the parties to give him their positions on this option in the near future.

William Beerman said he is objecting because the law is forcing him to carry an unequal and unfair tax burden.

"I've made 36 excessive monthly mortgage payments since the tax lightning increase was first imposed on me, and 16 mortgage payments just since tax lightning was declared unconstitutional," he said. "Each payment has about \$50 attributable to 'tax lightning.' That amounts to \$600 a year. The assessor contends the Bernalillo decision does not apply to Doña Ana County. The executive and legislative branches seem to be in no hurry to correct this problem while they continue to collect and spend money from me and the other victims outside Bernalillo. So I'm hoping for justice soon from the judicial branch."

The Legislature is expected to take up the "tax lightning" issue in the upcoming session. Some lawmakers believed the law can be amended to correct the constitutional questions without causing people to give up their homes because of property tax increases.

During her campaign, Gov.-elect Susana Martinez said she favored extending the 3 percent cap to include homes that change ownership from now on. She called for more protections to longtime homeowners who have not been hit with "tax lightning."

Some Democrats have called for rolling back property values to the 2001 levels and retaining the 3-percent increase cap, regardless of the new value of the home when it's sold. Critics of this approach say it would decrease the state's bonding capacity and reduce the money for governments to spend on capital projects.

According to the Albuquerque Journal, Legislative Finance Committee chief economist Tom Clifford said the 2011 session is the last good opportunity to address the tax inequity because the gap would simply grow for more homeowner as time goes on.

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In the news

Auditor slams land deals

State Auditor Hector Balderas released a report Monday, Dec. 20, criticizing development deals by the State Land Office (SLO).

Republican State Land Commissioner Patrick Lyons responded in a press release calling the special audit – made at the request of Democratic state Rep. Nate Cote – “factually flawed, grossly incompetent, legally deficient and purposefully misleading.”

The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) examined a sample of more than 100 state trust land transactions, including sales, land exchanges and planning and development leases, between Jan. 1, 2002, and March 11, 2010.

The OSA release stated it uncovered “numerous troubling financial, operational and contractual practices that require reform.”

Balderas said the SLO was engaged in complex deals without adequate documentation and using questionable appraisal and improvement value calculations.

“This speculative practice has led to New Mexicans losing millions of dollars of valuable land that was benefiting the trust,” Balderas said.

Although the state land commissioner is independently voted into office, the elected official does have to follow state and federal law, Balderas said. The state auditor specifically noted language in the Enabling Act that created the state of New Mexico, which states that trust land must be sold or leased to the highest bidder.

During his tenure, Lyons has been criticized for conducting single-source deals with developers to master-plan and get local government approval in return for also being able to complete the development, as in the case of the controversial Vistas at Presidio annexation on Las Cruces’ East Mesa.

The OSA noted all planning and development lease contracts require the SLO to pay an improvement value credit (IVC) to the private developer upon the subsequent sale, lease or exchange of the land. The IVC split ratios between the SLO and the developers vary significantly between each business lease, according to Balderas.

“Per SLO records, from November 2006 through July 2010, payments to developers from IVCs are \$15,495,148 of the total sales

proceeds of \$25,063,637. This amounts to a total developer split of total proceeds of approximately 62 percent. One business lease included a developer IVC split as high as 86 percent for a total of \$8,457,055 that the developer received of a total sales amount of \$10,130,000,” the OSA release stated.

The OSA noted other IVCs giving developers 40 percent, 50 percent and 66.67 percent.

The OSA asserts that a number of the developers were campaign contributors to Lyons.

“Currently, state law does not provide for contribution disclosure requirements relating to trust land transactions or prohibit contributions during the commissioner’s negotiation process for the exchange or lease trust lands,” Balderas said. “The Legislature should strongly consider disclosures for the State Land Commissioner.”

Lyons’ response characterized the audit as a “witch hunt at taxpayer’s expense” and doesn’t specify if any law, regulation or rule was actually violated.

“This so-called report completely misunderstands and misstates very basic business transactions that favored the trust beneficiaries and New Mexico taxpayers,” said Lyons, who is term-limited from serving as land commissioner again and was elected to a seat on the state Public Regulation Commission.

Lyons called Balderas’ assertion that Lyons has lost “millions of dollars of valuable land that benefited the trust” delusional.

Lyons said the 21 land sales completed during his administration conveyed 1,850 acres and generated \$20 million for the trust, which supports educational funding, state-supported hospitals, correctional facilities, capital outlay and water projects.

Over the last eight years, 33 land exchanges have increased trust assets by 83,185 acres, Lyons said. Those swaps have increased the trust’s land value and cash assets by nearly \$5 million and generated an additional \$6 million for deposit into the Land Grant Permanent Fund, according to Lyons.

The state land commissioner took issue with Balderas’ claim that the SLO misappropriated or mismanaged the state’s trust lands in some way harmed taxpayers.

“Balderas actually recommends modifying transactions to lose money,” Lyons said. “This may be the way the state auditor and Gov. (Bill)

Richardson operate, but it is not how the Land Office operates.”

Lyons said his administration maximized revenues for the trust, generating nearly \$4 billion for schools and other programs. Lyons said he more than doubled earnings for public education, saved taxpayers millions of dollars, reverted nearly \$6 million in unspent budgeted monies and significantly improved the office’s operations without increasing the SLO’s budget.

Balderas said Lyons did not take “the greatest of care when determining whether or not certain transactions are in the best interest of the trust and make every effort to maximize returns for New Mexicans.”

The SLO interfered throughout the audit process, according to Balderas, which had the effect of delaying the final completion of the report that has taken more than two years to complete.

“The SLO employed obstructionist tactics to delay the audit, including withholding documents requested by OSA auditors,” Balderas’ release stated. “The SLO also redacted information from documents before providing them to OSA auditors.”

The OSA has referred the report to various agencies, including the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee. Also, because of his view that the deal violated the Enabling Act, Balderas sent the report to the U.S. Attorney General’s office and the state Attorney General’s office.

Martinez nominates Skandera to head PED

Gov.-elect Susana Martinez has nominated Hanna Skandera to serve as her secretary of the Public Education Department.

Skandera has served as the deputy commissioner of education under Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, where she promoted and implemented middle and high school reforms that instituted greater accountability, incentives for high-performance and the end of social promotion.

According to Martinez, the Florida education reforms have greatly improved reading scores across ethnic groups with Hispanic students outperforming all students in 31 other states.

“Hanna is a proven reformer who has successfully implemented education innovations and achievement-based reforms for two of our nation’s governors,” Martinez said. “She shares my belief that we must focus on implementing reforms that improve student achievement here in New Mexico, rather than simply throwing more money at a failed system.”

Skandera has also served as an undersecretary of education for California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, and most recently as the deputy chief of staff and senior policy adviser in the U.S. Department of Education.

Her career as an educator began during college, where she worked with Catholic charities to develop peer education programs and life skills curricula that were used throughout the United States.

Skandera is a graduate of Sonoma State University with a bachelor’s degree in business and master’s degree in public policy from Pepperdine University, where she graduated first in her class.

“It will be a privilege to serve in Gov.-elect Martinez’s administration,” Skandera said. “She has directed me to reform a system that has failed young New Mexicans and we will do so by raising standards, rewarding excellence and re-focusing our attention on classroom achievement. The foundation for these bold changes is an approach to education that puts students first.”

Retirement board votes to phase in changes

The New Mexico Educational Retirement Board (ERB) decided at a special board meeting Friday, Dec. 17, to not change the retirement eligibility requirements immediately.

After hearing public comments, the ERB voted unanimously to recommend retaining the current eligibility requirements of Tier 1 (25 years of service and out, Rule of 75 and age 65 with five years of service, for members beginning employment before July) and Tier 2 (30 years of service and out, Rule of 80 and age 67 and five years of service, for members beginning employment on or after July), and to a half percent increase in membership contributions. The increase in member contributions would be phased in over a four-year period, resulting in an increase to members of .0125 percent per year.

“This recommendation is a very positive outcome for all of New Mexico’s educators,” Chairwoman Mary Lou Cameron said. “We believe this proposal will have the least impact on the maximum number of members while achieving the ERB’s goal of reaching 80 percent funding within 30 years. We look forward to working with the Legislature on this proposal.”

Any changes to the retirement plan must also be approved by the Legislature. Public school teachers and higher-education professors have objected to making people currently in the plan subject to the changes, which would require them to put off retirement for six-to-10 years to earn full retirement benefits. Critics said the fund is not in any immediate danger of becoming insolvent.

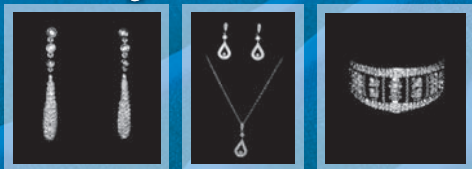
Cameron said the input from the membership helped the board reach its decision to take a more phased approach.

For more information, call Jan Goodwin, NMERB executive director, at 505-476-6118 or visit www.nmerb.org.

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Easy election



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Todd Dickson

Las Cruces school board incumbents Connie Phillips and Bonnie Votaw leave the Doña Ana County Government Center Tuesday, Dec. 21, after no one else filed to challenge them in the school board election Feb. 1, 2011. They will each be serving their second four-year term on the board, on which Phillips is currently president.

Food bank ops change hands

Roadrunner state group to oversee distribution

Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico has announced that Roadrunner Food Bank took over its regional food bank operations Friday, Dec. 17.

Roadrunner Food Bank has been serving New Mexicans since 1980.

"We are grateful to the community for their support during the transition and look forward to helping people achieve economic success," said Stacey Cox, CAASNM CEO.

For more information or questions, contact Art Fine with Roadrunner Food Bank at 505-349-8845 or visit the website at www.rafb.org.

Child Crisis Center opens doors

Center to give brief relief for overstressed parents

By **Todd Dickson**
Las Cruces Bulletin

With licensing in place and some time to get prepared, the new Child Crisis Center has opened its doors, which supporters hope will help prevent the injury or deaths of children, especially infants.

La Piñon Sexual Assault Recovery Services of Southern New Mexico led the effort to convert the former family shelter building on the Mesilla Valley Community of Hope campus into a place

where stressed or overburdened parents can temporarily leave their children in good care.

With the help of community volunteers and businesses, the Community of Hope building has new paint, flooring, bedrooms with cribs, play areas, bathrooms and bathing stalls made for children, a kitchen with working appliances and a fully equipped laundry room.

Staff will be at the center seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Those working at the center have cleared background

checks and completed training. The center can house up to 12 children from newborns to the age of 5 who are not yet attending school because La Piñon doesn't provide transportation at this time.

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Holloman prepares escort for vital delivery mission

Millions depend on successful operation

Team Holloman members are busy preparing for one of their most rewarding missions of the year later this week – “Operation Assist Santa.”

This year marks the third anniversary of aircraft from the base serving as special escorts as the jolly old elf makes his way through New Mexico.

“We are Santa’s favorite wing in the Air Force. All the aircraft tails assigned to the 49th Wing are marked with the two-letter designation ‘H-O,’” said Col. David Krumm, 49th Wing commander. “From the moment Santa and his reindeer take off from the North Pole, you can hear him calling for our escort, ‘Ho, ho, ho.’”

The F-22 Raptor will serve as an escort, or wingman, while the MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper will provide Santa with “special intelligence” through naughty and nice sensors and sleep detectors installed on the two aircraft. The remotely piloted aircraft will also ensure Santa has safe landing zones in the Tularosa Basin and Sacramento Mountain areas.

“The details of the mission are classified at this time. However, I can say there have been pilots in all three aircraft who have completed special training to make sure Santa and his

reindeer are as safe as possible during their flight and ground operations,” said a major with the 29th Attack Squadron, who operates the MQ-9 at Holloman.

All of the members of Team Holloman taking part in “Operation Assist Santa” have volunteered their time during the important training required to complete the mission and during the operations on Christmas Eve.

The “special” mission will serve as a thank you to area residents who have supported Team Holloman during 2010. In addition, the mission will serve as a preview of what 2011 will bring.

“With the tremendous amount of support we’ve received over the past year from the residents of the area, we wanted to ensure this special visitor completes his mission on time and on target,” Krumm said. “As everyone knows it is always a good idea to have a wingman when accomplishing any tasks, especially one as important as a worldwide trip. We work closely with Team Santa at the North Pole and the North American Aerospace Defense Command to make sure his mission is a complete and total success.”

In addition to Holloman’s support, Santa will be tracked by NORAD not only for his



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman John D. Strong II
An F-22A Raptor bearing the “HO” tail markings awaits clearance from Team Santa at the North Pole during “Operation Assist Santa” last year. Members of Team Holloman assist the jolly old elf as he makes his way through New Mexico on Christmas Eve. Other remotely piloted aircraft will ensure Santa has safe landing zones in southern New Mexico.

security, but to ensure that no enemy of the United States will pose as Santa Claus and cause harm to the citizens of this great country. You can follow Santa’s progress on NORAD radar at www.noradsanta.com.

According to the NORAD website, more than 1,200 American and Canadian uniformed personnel and Department of Defense civilians volunteer their time on Dec. 24 to assist with Santa’s mission.

Christmas Services

Joy to the World!

Come celebrate with us the birth of the King of Creation!

Christmas Eve December 24

4 p.m. – Worship for children of ALL ages, this brief Lessons and Carols service includes music for multiple choirs, vocal and instrumental soloists and scripture.
7 p.m. – A festive service of Lessons and Carols, led by the Chancel Choir, adult handbell choir and vocal and instrumental soloists will unfold the story of Christ’s birth through music, scripture, sermon and candlelight.

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University Presbyterian Church

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Friday, December 24
Family Service, 5:30 p.m.
Candlelight Service, 10:00 p.m.

Regular Sunday Services
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Worship, 10:00 a.m.

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St. Andrews Episcopal Church

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve
5:30 PM - Christmas Pageant
 All children are invited to participate in the Christmas program. This beautiful pageant will be followed by the first Eucharist of Christmas.

10:30 PM - Caroling
 We will join our voices to sing the beautiful hymns of the season. This is a special event you won't want to miss.

11:00 PM - “Love Came Down At Christmas”
Candlelight Vespers and High Holy Communion with Incense
 A service of lessons and carols ending in High Holy Mass (with incense) and candlelight. The perfect way to celebrate Christ’s birth as we welcome Christmas Day.
 Bishop (Ret.) Jerry Lamb, officiating

Christmas Day - 10:30 AM
 Holy Eucharist
 Service will be held at St. James Episcopal with Fr. Scott Ruthven presenting the sermon and Fr. Nicholas Funk officiating.

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Save a prayer

Gabriel Vasquez
Business Editor



I don't like to dump my personal problems on people.

I've always felt as if I'm letting my burdens out for someone else to shoulder. I was raised in the school of "figure it out yourself," so many of my internal conflicts have been resolved, well, internally.

And I kind of like it that way.

As Christmas approaches, however, feelings of family, goodwill and giving tend to take over. It opens a soft spot in my heart.

I'm asking my readers to keep something very near and dear to me in their prayers this week. It's the devastation of the human condition that's occurring less than an hour's drive from Las Cruces.

And it's not just my problem, Mexico's problem or even El Paso's problem. As Americans, and as the primary consumers of the illegal drugs being shipped from Mexico, it has become the nation's collective problem. We can ignore it, but it won't go away.

Most people in this region have become desensitized to the horror that's overtaken Ciudad Juárez. I'm guilty of this.

I hardly raise an eyebrow now when I read a news clip or hear a soundbyte about another murder that's occurred in Juárez, my hometown.

"Twenty found in mass grave ..." "Car bomb explodes ..." "Small girl hit by stray bullet ..." Twenty minutes later, I find myself thinking about the restaurant I'd like to visit that night, the friends I should see or if maybe instead, I should take to the jogging path for some evening exercise.

Those are the very decisions that Juárez residents no longer have the privilege of making.

For the hundreds of thousands of hardworking families that remain in the city, the answers to those questions have become routine. Stay home at night, double-lock every door, don't go out during the day except to work, and forget about visiting friends and family in "bad" parts of town. It's become a

See **Juárez** on page B4

INSIDE

Guard your identity

Sandler explains how to keep your information secure.....B6

A dream come true

Business owners open speciality store in MesillaB7

Blue-collar grit

State honors Gabe GuerraB8

Sanchez: Lower taxes, minimize regulation

Lieutenant governor-elect says state should 'kill' cap-and-trade program

By **Jimmy Currier** and **Gabriel Vasquez**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Lt. Gov.-elect John Sanchez concluded his statewide listening tour regarding small businesses on Friday, Dec. 17.

On Thursday, Dec. 16, he was in Las Cruces, where local business owners and community members gathered at the Staybridge Suites to discuss business issues.

"We need less regulation and lower taxes to make it easier for businesses in New Mexico to start up," Sanchez said. "The cost of doing business is high and we need to make it easier for businesses to hire more people and create more economic activity."

Sanchez will use the 33-county swing as a blueprint to understand the concerns of small business owners throughout New Mexico, he said.

He reminded the crowd that state government won't create jobs, but will create the climate so private-sector jobs can be created. Sanchez's mantra throughout the meeting was consistently to lower taxes and reduce regulation.

"I believe higher taxes means less jobs. Lower taxes means more jobs," he said. "We have 40,000 small businesses with 10 or fewer employees, and with lower taxes and less regulations, we can streamline government. If those businesses add one more person to the payroll, that's 40,000 new jobs. Think about it."

While Sanchez acknowledged the importance of attracting large national corporations such as Intel, he also emphasized the importance of assisting homegrown small businesses that dot New Mexico's many towns, villages and cities.

"Those are the businesses that make up the

backbone of our economy," he said.

Tom Cooper, a rancher in Doña Ana County, said he was concerned about a cap-and-trade program that the New Mexican Environmental Improvement Board enacted in November. Cap-and-trade is a market-based approach used to control pollution by providing economic incentives for reducing pollutants, primarily carbon dioxide. Opponents say that cap-and-trade will result in higher costs and an economic disadvantage, thus hampering economic growth.

"Kill it," Sanchez said. "We should undo it because it destroys the economy."

The New Mexico cap-and-trade program approved by the Environmental Improvement Board Nov. 2 would force coal-fired power plants, refineries, natural gas producers and other industrial facilities that release a certain percentage of carbon dioxide into the air to reduce those emissions by 2 percent starting in 2012. Many have opposed the new regulation, including the state's largest utility, the Public Service Co. of New Mexico (PNM). PNM filed a notice of appeal with the state last week.

Supporters of cap-and-trade tout the board's measure as the first step for New Mexico to being

See **Sanchez** on page B2



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Jimmy Currier

Lt. Gov.-elect John Sanchez was in Las Cruces Thursday, Dec. 16, to address the concerns of business owners as part of a 33-county statewide listening tour.

Rats, rants at chile warehouse

U.S. Marshals impound Derry chile in 'filthy' conditions

By **Marvin Tessneer** and **Gabriel Vasquez**
Las Cruces Bulletin

On Tuesday, Dec. 13, U.S. Marshals, acting under orders from the Food and Drug Administration, quarantined chile products in a warehouse in Derry, N.M., a small town 12 miles northwest of Hatch.

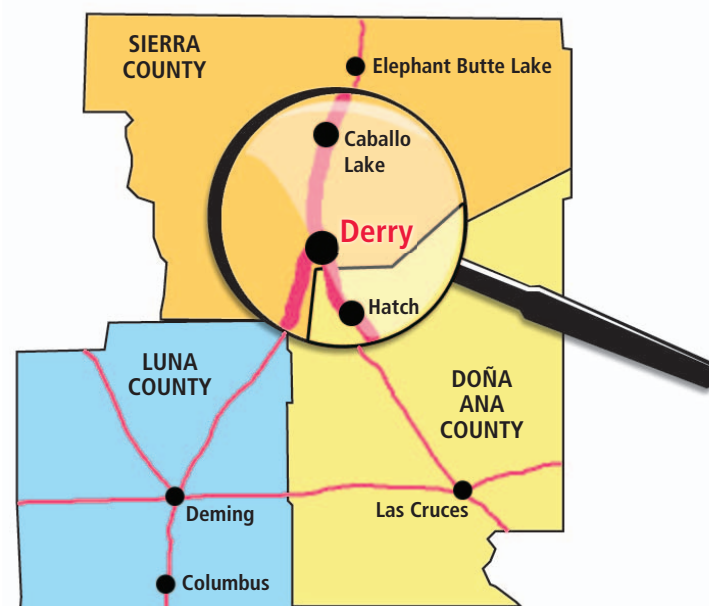
The warrant to quarantine the products was based on a civil complaint that alleged chile products in a Duran and Sons LLC warehouse were contaminated and being held under insanitary conditions.

The complaint alleges that when FDA workers conducted an inspection of the warehouse Nov. 15-22, they observed "evidence of active and widespread insect and rodent infestation," as well as other insanitary conditions.

The FDA report states investigators found rodent nesting material and droppings on or around food, several rodent-gnawed containers of food and stains indicative of rodent urine. In addition, the report states that investigators observed a live cat on the premises, live birds, apparent bird nestings, animal urine and live and dead insects where chile products were being stored.

"The alleged violations are serious and widespread," said Dara Corrigan, FDA commissioner for regulatory affairs. "This prompted the FDA to take aggressive

See **Derry chile** on page B2



U.S. Marshals recently seized a large amount of chile products located in a warehouse owned by Duran and Sons LLC in Derry, N.M., a small town 12 miles northwest of Hatch.



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Jimmy Currier

Lt. Gov.-elect John Sanchez listens to Anitta and Ramon Montijo talk about their small business at the Staybridge Suites.

Sanchez

Continued from page B1

proactive on reducing the pollution that they say causes global warming.

Anitta Montijo, who owns and operates Knight Security with her husband Ramon, said she wanted the city and state to be more business friendly.

Sanchez reminded the Montijos that the Martinez-Sanchez administration would be business-friendly, and would work with the state's municipalities to create that environment throughout the state.

Sanchez will take office as lieutenant governor Jan. 1, when he and Gov.-elect Susana

For more info

For more information on the campaign platform of Lt. Gov.-elect John Sanchez, visit www.johnsanchezfortlgovernor.com.

Martinez take the oath of office.

Before the small-business listening session, Sanchez took a tour of the Biad Chili Co. Sanchez said he knows a thing or two about small businesses. He's owned and operated Right Way Roofing in Albuquerque for 28 years.

The state's 60-day legislative session begins Jan. 8, 2011, in Santa Fe.

Derry chile

Continued from page B1

enforcement action to protect the health of consumers."

Carl Duran, president of Duran and Sons, said the chile products seized by the FDA had purposely been isolated and were set to be destroyed.

"We want our customers to understand that they're not getting any contaminated chile," Duran said. "None of the stuff in question is being sold. We have been working with the FDA and other officials, and we had the products marked for destruction."

The chile products seized ranged from chile pods to crushed chile powder.

"The product in question came from a 2008 crop and should have been destroyed," Duran contended. "It had been set aside in a corner of the warehouse marked for destruction. But we had not removed it when the inspectors came by."

Duran and Sons, a 46-year-old company, annually processes 200,000 pounds of red chile pods and sells them to retailers and wholesalers. It reports revenue of less than \$500,000 annually. The FDA, along with Duran, confirmed that the tainted products did not originate in New Mexico, but were imported from another country.

Duran said his company has not been informed of any FDA penalty resulting from the seizures, although the FDA said the violation goes against the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

"I just feel it was overkill," Duran told The Packer, a weekly national newspaper focused on agriculture, "because we had already agreed to destroy the product. The only thing that's changed is, it's across the nation now. Nobody's going to want to buy anything with our name on it. This will probably put me out

of business and 30 to 60 people out of work."

Seeing how the incident could potentially damage the reputation of New Mexico's chile industry, the New Mexico Chile Association released a statement to the Bulletin shortly after the report went national.

"This is an unfortunate incident, and we have offered the company involved access to association and New Mexico State University resources, though they are not an association member," said NMCA Executive Director Faye Hawkins. "We don't know enough about the facts to comment on the particular situation, but our industry association members are very concerned about food safety and most have state-of-the-art facilities and very high food safety standards."

"We support food safety standards for producers, foreign and domestic, that provide for the highest protection of the consumer. We respect the exhaustive efforts that the food industry here in the United States has voluntarily instituted to mitigate even the remotest possibility of food contamination and encourage all companies to continue their efforts in that regard."

The Duran case is being investigated with the assistance of the New Mexico Environment Division and the U.S. Marshals service. Assistant U.S. Attorney Raymond Hamilton is representing the United States in the case.

"According to the press reports, the product in question was imported. As an industry, we continue to be very concerned about imports of processed products since foreign food safety laws are lax compared with food safety requirements for products made here in the United States," the NMCA response continued. "Inspection of foreign-made processed products should be an FDA priority to protect consumers from the most likely sources of contamination - foreign processed products."

For more information, call the FDA consumer hotline at 888-463-6332.

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Fighting underage drinking and drug use

Border Region Coalition helps students send a message

Courtesy of the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico

The Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico (CFSNM) is working to curb underage drinking and drug use, and the organization is getting students involved in the effort.

Through the Border Region Coalition for a Drug-Free Community, a program under the CFSNM, students are creating public service announcements that educate parents on the efforts of drinking and drug prevention.

"The Border Region Coalition for a Drug-Free Community incorporates environmental strategies that provide awareness to the community about drug and alcohol abuse, especially among youth," said Jennifer Klass, coalition coordinator. "We understand that a community that is aware is a community that cares."

Oñate High School and Alma d'arte Charter School are participating in the awareness campaign. Each school received \$4,000 from a \$125,000 grant provided by the Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC), which was enacted in 1997 to provide grants to community-based coalitions that serve as catalysts for multi-sector participation in reducing local substance-abuse problems. The money has helped students produce print and media public service announcements targeting parents. The messages include ways they can help in the effort to stop underage drinking and drug use.

The Oñate High School media arts class is working on ideas for a public service announcement that will educate the community on drug and

alcohol abuse. Alma d'arte Charter School is currently preparing a 30-second advertisement aimed at parents that will encourage communities to clean up drug use.

"This group is using our UP! (branding), making it come to life to teach the neighborhood how to clean up drug (activity)," Klass said.

Between the two schools, nearly 20 students are participating in the efforts.

The efforts come at a needed time. A 2009 New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey

showed the youth of Doña Ana County are greatly at risk. In 2009, 27.1 percent of youth respondents reported drinking their first alcoholic beverage before the age of 13, and 40.1 percent reported drinking at least one alcoholic beverage in the last 30 days before the survey was administered. Nearly 29 percent of students who are current alcohol drinkers

said they can get alcohol from people who give it to them, they give money to adults to buy it for them, they take it from stores or they get it at home. Ten percent said they use prescription drugs to get high, and 19.9 percent said they have used marijuana in the past 30 days.

The Border Region Coalition strives to provide a venue for community collaboration and to support prevention efforts from every available community resource. By establishing and strengthening collaboration between communities, private nonprofit agencies and federal, state and local governments, the coalition can focus its efforts on preventing and reducing substance abuse

“ We understand that community that is aware is a community that cares. ”

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For more info

For information on how you can donate or become a member of the UP! Border Region Coalition, email Jennifer Klass at jennifer@cfsnm.org or call 521-4794.

wishes that are close to their heart. Through our planned giving programs, donors can honor loved ones or leave a legacy that benefits the people of southern New Mexico for generations to come. The CFSNM can advise donors on how best to maximize contributions, no matter what size. For more information, visit www.cfsnm.org or call Luan Wagner Burn at 521-4794.

SEASON'S GREETINGS



During this holiday season and every day of the year, we wish you all the best.



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Liz S. Medina
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Suite 4
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Diana L. Seward
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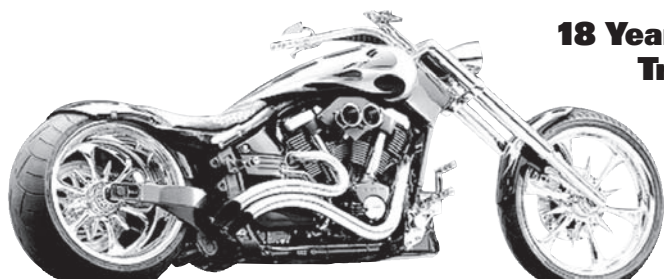
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Lessons from the 19th century financial crisis unlearned

Regulators should look to the history books for advice on fiscal meltdowns

The truism "There's nothing new under the sun" applies to the current financial crisis.

Real estate-based financial crises have happened many times in U.S. history. I was reminded of this when I re-read a study for the first time since graduate school. The article by Hugh Rockoff is on the Free Banking Era, a period during which banking regulation devolved to the states. The article, written in 1974 about bank regulation during the first half of the 19th century, eerily reads like a discussion of the current financial crisis.

The Free Banking Era has its roots in the victory of Andrew Jackson over the Second Bank of the United States. The Second Bank, which served as the central bank of the United States, was opposed by Jackson for favoring "money interests" over the interests of the general public. The Second Bank had received a 20-year charter that expired in 1836. Jackson prevented its renewal. Banking regulation thus devolved to the states.

Michigan was the first state to adopt free banking regulation. Traditionally, the establishment of a bank required a special charter from the Legislature, a costly and time-consuming process. Under free banking, anyone who could raise the capital could establish a bank without having to go individually to the Legislature, making the establishment of new banks far easier.

Under the Michigan plan, passed in 1837, banks could issue currency that could be redeemed for gold or silver. Banks were required to deposit bonds backed by mortgages with state regulators. Should the banks fail to redeem their currency, the bonds would serve as collateral.

Sound familiar? Banks getting into trouble by issuing mortgage-backed bonds? Well, the similarity with 19th century Michigan and our current situation gets even closer. To be considered valid as collateral, the real estate against which the mortgages were issued had

to be valued by an "independent" appraisal. In practice, the appraisals were often conducted by confederates of the bankers who were their friends, or even relatives.

These appraisers were the 19th century equivalent of the bond-rating agencies that gave triple-A bond ratings to subprime mortgage-backed bonds. Just as today, when the fundamental unsoundness of the mortgages backing the Michigan banks became clear, there was a run on the financial system. In 1837, the panic remained relatively localized, limited to one state. In our global economy, the subprime crisis turned into a worldwide financial meltdown. The scale is different, but the fundamental cause of the two crises is the same.

Apparently, our modern regulators haven't learned much from history. In fact, if you look around the world, many of the financial crises have started in over-valued real estate. The massive U.S. bank panic during the Great



Chris Erickson
State of the Economy

Depression can be traced to the collapse of agricultural land prices, Japan's lost decade arose from the bursting of the Tokyo real estate bubble, the 1998 Asian currency crisis started with a sharp decline of real estate prices in Thailand and so on. As the philosopher says, "History may not repeat itself but it sure does rhyme." When it comes to crises like the current subprime fiasco, the rhyme involves real estate.

Read Hugh Rockoff's article on free banking at www.jstor.org/stable/1991023.

Christopher A. Erickson, Ph.D., is an associate professor of economics at New Mexico State University. The views expressed here are his own and may not reflect the views of the Regents or administration of NMSU.

The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce annually honors a business that goes above and beyond in service to the community and strives to make the Mesilla Valley a better place for us to live and do business. Please help us by nominating a deserving business for their hard work and dedication. Thank you.



Business of the Year

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MountainView Regional Medical Center | <input type="checkbox"/> October
Dickerson's Catering & Event Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> February
FirstLight Federal Credit Union | <input type="checkbox"/> May
Bright Star Dental | <input type="checkbox"/> August
Surefire Promotional Products | <input type="checkbox"/> November
SpringHill Suites by Marriott |
| <input type="checkbox"/> March
Citizens Bank of Las Cruces | <input type="checkbox"/> June
Allen Theatres Inc. | <input type="checkbox"/> September
De La Vega's Pecan Grill & Brewery | <input type="checkbox"/> December
La Posta de Mesilla |

Business name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Contact person in the business: _____

Nominator: (no anonymous nominations will be accepted) _____

Please write brief paragraphs on the following criteria. Give specific examples for each.

1. Contributions to community welfare

2. Participation in community activities

3. Promotion of business progress in community

4. Professional development and advancement opportunities for employees

5. Demonstration of leadership in business community

6. Support of the strategic vision of the Chamber

Please return nominations to the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce no later than Jan. 1, 2011, or by mail to P. O. Box 519, Las Cruces, NM 88004-0519, or by fax at 527-5546.

Juárez

Continued from page B1

more than a few miles without encountering a federal or state police checkpoint where you're forced out of your car and made to empty your belongings.

Where people's homes are ransacked while they're away at work and the children are at school. Where people are held at gunpoint and made to exit their vehicles at stoplights. Where more than 50,000 businesses have been burned down or have been forced to shut their doors because of extortion. Where more than 3,000 people have been brutally murdered in less than one year – more than anywhere in the world.

All this less than an hour away from Las Cruces, where we enjoy a radically different way of life.

I'm asking that my readers keep the people of Juárez in their prayers.

For the first time in 27 years, I will not be traveling to Juárez to celebrate Christmas with my family.

My only request to the Big Guy this Christmas is that I get to go home next year.

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City of Las Cruces Building Permit Report Dec. 10-17

Permit #	Permittee	Owner	Project	Address	Value	Permit
20107557	Ridgetop Construction	The GST Exempt trust/Schumacher trust	Reroof	2948 Los Amigos Court	\$17,840	\$133
20107555	Sonoma Ranch Construction	Sonoma Ranch Construction Co. LLC	Res/New	4204 Canterra Arc	\$196,062	\$4,113
20107536	Emmanuel Construction	Eddie and Sam Flores	Reroof	1215 E. Griggs Ave.	\$2,000	\$46
20107535	Frankie V. Estrada	Frankie V. Estrada	Res/Add	1935 Wendale Ave.	\$300	\$30
20107569	DR Duran Construction	Three Crosses Joint Venture	Reroof	111 Scotland Court	\$4,000	\$51
20107568	Milagro Maintenance & Repair	Ray A. and Sonya Chavez	Res/Add	2558 Benz Drive	\$3,200	\$47
20107587	Roadrunner Construction Co.	Doña Ana Park Two Limited Partnership	Reroof	1900 N. Solano Drive	\$9,035	\$81
20107583	Optimum Roofing & Construction	Pamela G. Ramirez	Reroof	612 Hansen Ave.	\$4,200	\$53
20107586	Roadrunner Construction Co.	Doña Ana Park Two Limited Partnership	Reroof	1900 N. Solano Drive	\$7,047	\$69
20107580	Ronald and Sandy Pierce	Hilary Axelson and Lucille Hensley	Reroof	1816 Apollo Drive	\$4,000	\$51
20107575	Garcia Roofing	Genaro C. and Louisa L. Silva	Reroof	612 Cielo Bonito Court	\$8,605	\$78
20107600	G Bishop Roofing LLC	Thomas M. and Karin M. Taylor	Reroof	1807 Apollo Drive	\$5,318	\$59
20107616	Miguel J. and Michelle M.S. Rodriguez	Miguel J. and Michelle M.S. Rodriguez	Reroof	4980 Garnet St.	\$700	\$32
20107620	Crockett Construction	Tir NA Draiochta Properties LLC	Comm/Alt	300 N. Telshor Blvd.	\$15,000	\$116
20107602	Sweetwater Homes LLC	P I Holdings #1 Inc.	Res/New	4234 Ceres Court	\$227,878	\$3,917
20107626	Iron Cross Construction	Evseventy LLC	Reroof	1870 Rentfrow Ave.	\$7,000	\$69
20107601	Sweetwater Homes LLC	Sweetwater Homes LLC	Res/New	7385 Vista de Sobre Drive	\$169,248	\$3,817
20107608	Kona Investments LLC	GL Green & Associates LLC	Swimming pool	4069 Demos Ave.	\$26,000	\$168
20107665	G Sandoval Construction Inc.	Name not required	Subd/New	Metro Verde South Phase I	\$941,222	\$48,591

* Information from the BIA-SNM is provided by City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County permit offices



Doña Ana County Building Permit Report Dec. 10-17

Permit #	Contractor	Owner	Project	Address	Subdivision	Permit
36182	Desert Song LLC	John J. Krawczyk	Reroof	5490 Gardenia St.	Mirasol Subdivision Phase II-B	\$130
36183	Micander Construction	Diann Kesler	Reroof	4969 Modoc Trail	Talavera Subdivision Unit II	\$90
36185	Optimum Roofing	Orchard Properties LLC	Reroof	3810 N. Valley Drive	N/A	\$140
36193	Jarret W Smith Construction	Carroll Bradford	Res/Add	3574 Valdez Road	N/A	\$550

* Information from the BIA-SNM is provided by City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County permit offices

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Bank hires former GLCCC president

The former president and CEO of the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce has joined First American Bank to help with business development, Chairman and CEO Everett Crawford announced Tuesday, Dec. 21.



BERRY

Berry was employed by the chamber for almost six years before announcing his departure in September. Under his leadership, the chamber became accredited with four stars by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, grew to more than 1,000 members and created more than 20 committees to serve members and the community.

The chamber's CEO position was filled in November by Michigander Bill Allen, the former CEO of the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce in Royal Oak, Mich.

Berry has worked as CEO of numerous chambers of commerce throughout his career.

"His expertise in building relationships and a strong community has led Jim to an extensive career," Crawford said.

Berry was born in Arkansas and received his bachelor's degree in business administration in marketing from the University of Kansas. Berry's affiliation with local organizations includes Las Cruces Rotary, Toastmasters, the Arrowhead Center, Doña Ana Legislative Coalition and The Bridge.

In New Mexico since 1903, First American Bank has 12 locations in New Mexico in Albuquerque, Alamogordo, Artesia, Chaparral, Hobbs, Las Cruces, Lovington, Rio Rancho and Roswell.

Don't let the Grinch steal your holiday or your identity

Phishing and dumpster diving among methods used by thieves

Did you write a check at the grocery store today? Did you charge concert or sporting goods tickets to your credit card, mail a credit card payment, swap one cell phone service for another or apply for a charge account at a local retailer?

If so, you could be a candidate for identity theft. How, you ask? According to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC's) website, www.consumer.gov/idtheft, skilled identity thieves use a variety of methods to obtain our personal information. Here's how they practice their trade.

Many thieves get information from businesses or other institutions by stealing records or information while they're on the job, bribing or conning an employee who has access to those records or by hacking into the records. They may steal your incoming and outgoing mail, including bank and credit card statements, credit card offers, new checks and tax information.

Identity-thief outlaws may also rummage through your trash, the trash of businesses or public trash dumps in a practice known as "dumpster diving." They could also obtain your credit reports by abusing their employer's authorized access to them, or by posing as a landlord, employer or someone else who may have a legal right to access your report.

Thieves can also steal your credit or debit card numbers

by capturing the information in a data storage device using a practice known as "skimming". They may swipe your card for an actual purchase or attach the device to an ATM machine.

These bandits could also steal your wallet or purse, complete a "change of address" form to divert your mail to another location, steal personal information they find in your home or steal personal information from you through email or phone by posing as legitimate companies and claiming that you have a problem with your account. This practice is known as "phishing" online, and "pretexting" when done over the phone.

Another scam is to call your credit card issuer to change your billing address. The imposter then runs up charges on your account. Because your bills are being sent to a different address, it may be months before you realize that there is a problem.

Identity thieves may also open new credit card accounts in your name. When they use the credit cards and don't pay the bills, the delinquent accounts are reported on your credit report. They may also establish phone or wireless service in your name, open a bank account in your name and write bad checks on the account. They've also been known to file for bankruptcy under someone else's name to avoid paying debts they've incurred while using the alias. It is also possible for

Gary Sandler's
Real Estate Connection



them to buy a car by taking out an auto loan in your name or to obtain identification, such as a driver's license, issued in your name using their personal photo.

The criminals may even get a job or file fraudulent tax returns in your name or may give your name to the police during an arrest. If they don't show up for their court date, a warrant is issued for you.

So what should you do if you find that someone has stolen your identity?

First, put a fraud alert on your credit reports, and review them carefully. Fraud alerts can help prevent an identity thief from opening any more accounts in your name. Contact the toll-free number of any of the three credit reporting agencies to put the alert on your file. You need only contact one of the three companies to put the alerts in place. The company you call is required to contact the other two, which place alerts on their versions of your report. The companies are:

- **Equifax:** 800-525-6285; www.equifax.com; P.O. box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
- **Experian:** 888-397-3742; www.experian.com; P.O. Box 9532, Allen, TX 75013
- **Trans Union:** 800-680-7289; www.transunion.com; Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834-6790

Next, close the accounts that have been tampered with or opened without authorization. Speak with someone in the security or fraud department; follow up in writing, and include copies (not originals) of supporting documents. It's important to notify credit card companies and banks in writing. Send your letters by certified mail, return receipt requested, so you can document what the company received and when they received it. Keep a file of your correspondence.

When you open new accounts, use new Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) and passwords. Once you have resolved your identity theft dispute with the company, ask for a letter stating that the company has closed the disputed accounts and has discharged the fraudulent debts.

The third order of business is to file a report with your local police or sheriff's department or a department in the jurisdiction where the theft took place. Then, get a copy of the report or at the very least, the number of the report. It can help you deal with creditors who need proof of the crime.

Finally, file a complaint with the FTC. The FTC can refer victims' complaints to other government agencies and companies for further action, as well as investigate companies for violations of the laws the agency enforces.

You can file a complaint with the FTC online at www.consumer.gov/idtheft. If you don't have Internet access, call the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline, toll-free at 877-438-4338; TTY 866-653-4261; or write to the Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, D.C., 20580.

While these remedies will eventually eliminate the problems associated with identity theft, the best course of action is to prevent the theft in the first place. The best form of prevention is a keen awareness of the status of your credit files, charge accounts, bank accounts and other financial records. Only you can prevent identity theft.

See you at closing!

Gary Sandler is the president of Gary Sandler Inc., Realtors in Las Cruces and the host of Gary Sandler's Real Estate Connection, broadcast each Monday from 4 to 6 p.m. on KSNM-AM 570. Sandler also publishes the Real Estate Connection newsletter, is a member of the Board of Directors of Las Cruces Downtown Inc., and is the 2007 & 2010 recipient of the New Mexico Broadcaster's Associations Talk Show Host of the Year award. Questions or comments may be directed to Sandler at 525-2400 or by emailing gary@garysandler.com.

The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce annually honors a nonprofit organization that goes above and beyond in service to the community and strives to make the Mesilla Valley a better place for us to live and do business. Please help us by nominating a deserving nonprofit organization for their hard work and dedication. Thank you.



Nonprofit of the Year

NOMINEES

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> January
March of Dimes | <input type="checkbox"/> April
Las Cruces Chamber Ballet | <input type="checkbox"/> July
Las Cruces Business Network/
Synergy Network Group | <input type="checkbox"/> October
Downtown Las Cruces Partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> February
New Mexico Farm & Ranch
Heritage Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> May
Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary | <input type="checkbox"/> August
Small Business Development Center | <input type="checkbox"/> November
Building Industry Association of
Southern New Mexico |
| <input type="checkbox"/> March
WSMR-Family, Morale, Welfare and
Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> June
El Caldito Soup Kitchen | <input type="checkbox"/> September
Doña Ana Arts Council | <input type="checkbox"/> December
Las Cruces Rio Grande Rotary |

Nonprofit name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Contact person in organization: _____

Nominator: (no anonymous recommendations will be accepted)

Please write brief paragraphs on the following criteria.

Give specific examples of each.

1. Diversity and depth of services offered

2. Impact and contributions to the community

3. Development and training of volunteers

4. Years of service to the community

5. Cooperation with other organizations

Please return nominations to the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce no later than Jan. 1, 2011, by mail to P. O. Box 519, Las Cruces, NM 88004-0519 or by fax at 527-5546.



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In Good Company: *The Rustic Olive*

'Olive' their dreams come true

Southwest couple brings specialty business to Mesilla

By **Gabriel Vasquez**
Las Cruces Bulletin

It's a dream come true for two former Ruidoso residents.

Dave and Diane Fryer, veterans of the Southwest, recently opened The Rustic Olive, a shop near the Mesilla Plaza that sells extra virgin olive oils, vinegars and gourmet foods.

"We've been planning this for quite a while," said Dave Fryer, who had a long career in the construction business. "When we first thought of opening a store, Mesilla was our first choice. We like the atmosphere down here."

The couple recently moved to Las Cruces from Phoenix, where Diane Fryer worked as a retail manager and Dave Fryer was project manager for a custom homebuilder. Prior to their stay in Arizona, the couple lived more than 25 years in Ruidoso, "a great place to raise kids," Diane Fryer said.

"This retail stuff is not new to Diane, but it's new to me," Dave Fryer admitted. "But it's our dream."

The Fryers are banking on a national trend of similar shops opening nationwide, they said. It helps that they love olive oil, everything



Las Cruces Bulletin photos by Gabriel Vasquez

Diane and Dave Fryer, longtime Ruidoso residents, have brought The Rustic Olive to Mesilla, a shop that sells estate-grown olive oils, vinegars and gourmet foods.

that goes into making olive oil, and now, selling olive oil.

"It's a good, healthy product," Dave Fryer said.

The store carries extra-virgin, cold-pressed, high-quality olive oil produced from a small estate grower in California. The oils can be used for cooking, as a condiment, with bread and crackers or drizzled over many types of foods.

"We carry all kinds of infused flavors," Diane Fryer said. "They're great to drizzle on top of prepared food like chicken, steak and seafood."

The vinegars – you can mix those with olive oil for a great salad dressing in addition to other uses, Diane Fryer said.

"We also carry a lot of seasoning salts, spices, marinades and rubs. Our stuffed olives actually just came in yesterday," Dave Fryer said. "These are products that you can't find at the big grocery stores."

Olive oil has also been known to help lower cholesterol, it's a healthy alternative to butter and it has positive benefits for skin care, Diane Fryer added.

"It's probably one of the healthiest products you can use," Dave Fryer said.

The Rustic Olive is located at 1937 Calle de Parian, across from La Posta de Mesilla in the space that formerly housed the Purple Lizard, a longtime Mesilla shop.

"We haven't set a date yet, but we're planning to have a grand opening in January," Dave Fryer said.

The Rustic Olive opened to the public Saturday, Dec. 10.

From hatching the idea to posting the "Now Open" sign, the process of opening a small business in New Mexico has been challenging, but very rewarding, the Fryers said.

"We've done a lot, I mean a lot, of research," Dave Fryer said. "From selecting vendors to extensive research on olive and olive oils, we've learned a lot about all the little things involved in opening a business."

The couple also will apply for a beer and wine license and hopes to be serving St. Clair varieties by spring 2011, they said.

Q&A

Talking business with owners Dave and Diane Fryer

Why did you become entrepreneurs?

It was a dream. It's been a goal of ours to open a store.

What do you think about the local economy?

The local economy here is better than a lot of other parts of the country, it sure is a lot better than Phoenix. It seems to be pretty stable here.

Where do you see your business in five years?

Prospering. Maybe five years from now we'll be growing some olive trees here in Las Cruces or opening a second shop somewhere else in Las Cruces.

What business would you like to see in Las Cruces?

A Trader Joe's.

selling. This is something new and fresh for Las Cruces."

In addition to its olive oil, vinegar and gourmet food, the shop will also soon offer small gift items and other olive-related retail products. Olive oil samples are available at the shop free of charge.

For more information, call The Rustic Olive at 525-3100.

Details

Company

The Rustic Olive

Address

1937 Calle de Parian, Mesilla

Phone

525-3100

Hours

10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Sunday

Contact

525-3100



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Profile

Gabe Guerra:

A blue-collar steward of quality workmanship

LCPS lead mason tasked with keeping our schools safe

By **Gabriel Vasquez**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Curiosity got the best of Gabe Guerra.

His father, Tito Guerra, padlocked the shed outside their home and gave his son firm instructions: "Don't open the lock."

Hours later, the lock, perfectly intact, still hung from the shed's door.

"I just took the hinges off," Gabe Guerra laughed. "He said not to touch the lock."

Guerra was just a kid then, but it was the beginning of a career working with his hands that he says has fulfilled him personally and professionally.

Guerra is the lead mason for the Physical Plant Department at Las Cruces Public Schools, a department he's worked in for more than 16 years. He's worked for LCPS a total of 18 years.

"I started out in the mail room," he said. "You have to start somewhere."

He attended Mayfield High School, where he was a wrestler, a good student and was well on his way to becoming a family man. He married his high school sweetheart, Christie Guerra. But unlike many students his age, Guerra said college wasn't for him.

"I knew then I was an 8-to-5 kind of guy," he said. "I didn't want to be married to a career. I wanted to be with my family and have the weekends for my boys. That's just the way I was raised."

Guerra's father, Tito, had 10 children and worked for the LCPS Grounds Maintenance

Department for more than 40 years.

"I give him the credit for who I am today, and for my work ethic," he said. "He brought us up with love, passion and desire. He taught us that we could do whatever we wanted if we worked hard enough for it."

Guerra, along with the three other employees in the Mason Department – Raul Padilla Jr., Gurny Flores and Sammy Bernal – are tasked with ensuring the safety and maintenance of more than 40 LCPS facilities, including all the school buildings.

"What we do at the Physical Plant is really amazing," he said. "Our ratio of manpower to how much square footage we (maintenance) is huge."

The masonry division repairs and installs plaster, ceramic tile, sheet rock, ceiling tile, chain link fences, brick, concrete, playground equipment and much more.

"Basically, if a job needs to get done, no matter what it is, we take care of it," he said. "My guys have multiple tools in their pockets at all times. Sometimes, we can't even fit it all in the back of the truck. We're working with a putty knife one second and digging up concrete with the tractor the next."

Monday mornings for Guerra are "pretty wild," he said. That's when Guerra and his crew get the week's work orders, and Guerra has to prioritize the jobs that are most important.

“Guerra’s contributions to the teachers and students are beyond compare.”

BOBBY STOUT
LCPS PPD director

"Sometimes, we won't even get to the first job because we're called to work on a bunch of different projects that come up," he said. "But that's what I love about my job. I get to do something different everyday."

The unexpected work orders are just part of being in the Mason Department, which assists all other LCPS maintenance departments on call.

"We cut doors for the carpenters, cut out window units for the HVAC team, remove fences for the grounds department and break concrete for the plumbers," Guerra said. "To do this right, you have to keep an open mind, so I encourage my guys to always have a good attitude. My boss has a good attitude, I have a good attitude, and that trickles down."

More important than getting a job done on time is getting it done right the first time, Guerra added.

"Anything I do, if it's got my name on it, it has to be quality," he said. "And I pass that on to my guys. I tell them 'Don't just complete the work order, make sure you walk away and you're proud of what you did that day.'"

The times have changed since Guerra started working for the school district more than 18 years ago. There's more buildings and infrastructure to maintain and repair, older facilities are falling into disrepair and LCPS' facilities are used more often as the student population grows.

"LCPS does a very good job of keeping its students safe and building (new) facilities that need very little maintenance," he said.

With three sons of his own, a job from which he plans to retire and a loving wife, Guerra said he couldn't ask for anything more.

"This is a stable job and it has allowed me to raise my family," he said. "This job really content me. I love the variety, I love the work – it's a very rewarding place to be."

When Guerra's not patching plaster or digging up concrete, he's spending time with his family. His three boys are all actively involved in sports, including Orlando, 16, who is taking after his father by being a wrestler at Mayfield.

"We're a sport-oriented family," he said. "We

Details

Gabe Guerra

Lead mason,
Las Cruces Public Schools

Family

- Wife Christie
- Sons Orlando, Santana and Esteban

Education

Mayfield High School

Contact

527-6002

come from a family of wrestlers. It was amazing to see my dad put all 10 kids in different sports when I was a kid. I figure if he could do it, I could do it with three."

For his contributions to LCPS and the quality of work performed by his department, Guerra was awarded the 2010 Ben Lujan Maintenance Award from the New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority (NMPSFA) in a ceremony recently.

"Although I received the award, I very honestly believe it's my crew that makes me," he said. "If I could take my name off the plaque and put 'Mason Department,' I would."

"Gabe Guerra has proven to be an asset to the district. The Mason Department maintains a very diversified work detail," said Physical Plant Director Bobby Stout. "Guerra's contributions to the teachers and students of the district are beyond compare."

LCPS' Physical Plant Department also received a gold award from the NMPSFA, which means the district is "to be commended for making significant progress in maintenance management practices through demonstrated teamwork."

To contact Guerra, call 527-6002.

PRC keeps REC rates steady

Home solar users will see no change in 2011

By **Gabriel Vasquez**
Las Cruces Bulletin

The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) voted to keep the 2010 rate for Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) at 12 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) for small and medium solar photovoltaic systems connected to a public utility Thursday, Dec. 16.

Under the state-mandated Renewable Portfolio Standard, all public utilities in New Mexico must provide 10 percent of their power with renewable energy by Jan. 1, 2011, 15 percent by Jan. 1, 2015, and 20 percent by Jan. 1, 2020. To meet those standards, El Paso Electric and other state utilities offer incentives to their residential customers in the form of RECs, which offset part of the cost of purchasing a solar photovoltaic system. The REC program also helps businesses in the industry market, sell and install the equipment.

Local and state business owners, concerned that the REC rate would be lowered at the request of El Paso Electric and other

state power providers, appealed EPE's request to lower REC rates for 2011 earlier this year. They said that reducing the incentives for home and business solar users would be a bad decision during a time of growth for the renewable energy industry.

"We're thrilled about the decision," said Janet Honek, co-owner of Sunspot Solar Energy Systems. "This will continue to make it affordable for people in Las Cruces to have solar on their homes."

Honek said EPE will appeal the PRC's decision to keep REC rates at 12 cents per kWh. The company requested the PRC lower the rates to 9 cents per kWh when it filed its annual procurement plan in July.

EPE contends that because small and medium solar photovoltaic systems have become more affordable during the past year, REC rates should be lowered to reflect those costs.

Evan Evans, assistant vice president of regulatory services and rates for EPE, said any increased costs related to the impact of the PRC decision would be passed on to its customers.



Briefs

La Iguana now open



Michael LeBlanc, owner of La Iguana, worked for several months to renovate the old Popular Dry Goods building Downtown to create a new eatery next to La Placita.

La Iguana, the anticipated Downtown restaurant next to La Placita and the Rio Grande Theatre, opened for business last week. The restaurant serves breakfast fare, lunch and dinner. On the menu are salads, sandwiches, soups, steak, seafood and other items. The restaurant also features a coffee bar with specialty espresso drinks. The restaurant is open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and is closed Sunday. The restaurant is located at 139 N. Main St. on the Downtown Mall. For more information, call 523-8550.

NMSU to build wine academy



New Mexico State University's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management will open the Bobby Lee Lawrence Academy of Wine in 2011. Bobby Lee Lawrence passed away earlier this year.

New Mexico State University's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management will soon be home to the Bobby Lee Lawrence Academy of Wine. The beverage management laboratory will be named for Lawrence, known throughout the area as the "Southwest Wine Guy," who passed away earlier this year. The \$250,000 gift was made by Lawrence's wife Marion.

Lawrence was known around Las Cruces as a wine and food expert. He trained at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris and the Culinary Institute of America. He taught about wine at area wine festivals, wrote about wine for Sabroso magazine and had his own wine blog. Lawrence also had a successful media career.

The beverage laboratory will help the school expand its wine education courses and provide additional space for classes. The facility will add a curved bar, tables, wine chillers and space for students to learn and study. Enrollment at HRTM has grown to more than 400. With the new beverage laboratory, the school will have completed more than \$1 million in classroom improvements in the past few years, including \$700,000 for a new food lab in 2005 and \$250,000 for a new technology lab in 2006. The school also opened a new patio for its restaurant, 100 West, this past spring.

NMSU regents support DREAM Act

New Mexico State University's Board of Regents has approved a resolution in support of the DREAM Act. The resolution expresses the board's support and urges consideration and passage by the U.S. Senate of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, which would grant a six-year conditional permanent residency status for students who were brought into this country before the age of 16, have been here for at least five years as of the enactment date, graduate from a U.S. high school or obtain a GED credential and meet other requirements. Each year, 65,000 DREAM-eligible students graduate from American high schools, having been brought to the United States because of actions of their parents and having little to no ties to the countries from which they came. The DREAM Act has been supported by higher education associations across the country, including the American Council on Education and the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities.

NMSU engineers using advanced graphics technology

As New Mexico State University's research becomes more dynamic, complex and innovative, NMSU professors and student researchers are working to collect and process more data, more efficiently and faster. Charles Creusere and Phillip De Leon, electrical engineering professors at NMSU, are utilizing state-of-the-art graphics processing unit computing processors to enhance their research. GPU processors are specialized microprocessors that accelerate two- and three-dimensional graphics rendering within devices such as personal computers and game consoles, but can also be used for general-purpose computing and simulation. Using state-of-the-art GPUs, research that 20 years ago would have taken a supercomputer can now be performed using a processor able to fit within a regular desktop computer, cutting processing time the equivalent of a month into a couple of days. Creusere, who has been

researching humans' perception of quality changes in audio, uses the NVIDIA Tesla to collect and sift through the immense amounts of data collected through electroencephalography (EEG) brainwave testing. EEG testing measures the brain waves being produced by a subject's brain through 128 electrodes that are placed on the subject's head. Data is collected from each channel under several different conditions and then has to be filtered. Utilizing a similar GPU, De Leon, director of the Advanced Speech and Audio Processing Laboratory at NMSU, plans to apply high-performance computing using GPUs to digital signal processing in several areas of research. His research is supported by a \$140,000 grant from the U.S. Army.

Shuckworm making a comeback



The hickory shuckworm, a pest not seen in New Mexico since the 1990s, has made a resurgence in various parts of the state.

The hickory shuckworm, a pest found in pecan and hickory nuts, is appearing in parts of New Mexico for the first time since the 1990s. While shuckworms are easily managed, the New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service is trying to gauge exactly how far they may have spread. Hickory shuckworm larvae attack developing hickory and pecan nuts. This year, they have been found in commercial pecans collected in October near Roswell and in backyard pecans collected in Carlsbad in late November. Anyone suspecting damage from the parasite anywhere in the state is asked to bring pecan husk samples to their local county extension agent. For more information, call Carol Sutherland at 646-1132.

BLM announces holiday closures

The Bureau of Land Management is reminding new and regular visitors that the Dripping Springs Natural Area and Visitor Center (including La Cueva Picnic Area, Dripping Springs Trail, and Fillmore Trail), in the Organ Mountains, will be closed on Christmas Day Saturday, Dec. 25, and New Year's Day Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011.

On the Agenda

Shop Dine Mesilla

The Old Mesilla Association will host its Shop Dine Mesilla promotion at 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 23, in the Mesilla Plaza. The association, comprised of Mesilla business owners, is promoting holiday shopping in Mesilla to increase revenue after a challenging economic year. Many Mesilla businesses will stay open until 8 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 23. For more information, call Old Mesilla Association President Kathleen Foreman at 526-2620.

Date: Thursday, Dec. 23

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

Location: Mesilla Plaza
Town of Mesilla

Contact: 526-2620

Chamber's new year's party

De La Vega's Pecan Grill & Brewery will host the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce New Year's Eve Affair from 10 p.m. Friday, Dec. 31, to 1 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011, at De La Vega's, 500 S. Telshor Blvd. All white attire is requested. Cost is \$10. For more information, call 524-1968.

Date: Friday, Dec. 31

Time: 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Location: De La Vega's Pecan Grill & Brewery
500 S. Telshor Blvd.

Contact: 524-1968

Business on the Border

Tracey Bryan, president and CEO of The Bridge of Southern New Mexico, will be the featured speaker for the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance Business on the Border luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2011, at Hotel Encanto de Las Cruces, 705 S. Telshor Blvd. The Bridge is one of the most innovative public-private sector partnerships in southern New Mexico – seeking to increase the county's high school graduation rates and build a strong workforce for the future of the county. Learn how the Arrowhead Park Early College High School is already increasing return on investment in education dollars and providing a solid example of innovation in education that could help students statewide. Luncheon cost is \$20 per person, payable by cash, check or major credit card. Due to space limitations, reservations are required. Please confirm your attendance no later than Thursday, Dec. 30, by sending an email to rsvp@mveda.com or by calling 525-2852. The meeting is open to the public.

Date: Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2011

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: Hotel Encanto de Las Cruces
705 S. Telshor Blvd.

Contact: 525-2852

Building Las Cruces



Williams Avenue

Roadwork continues on Melendres Street and Williams Avenue, where workers are repaving the road as part of a project to fix various streets in the Melendres Street corridor near South Main Street.

Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Gabriel Vasquez

Don't stop marketing in a slow economy Make your employees become walking billboards

By **Julianna Barbee**

Director, Small Business Development Center, Northern New Mexico College

Marketing is essential to the growth and success of any business, yet it seems to be the first part of the operating budget that managers slash when revenues dwindle and the economy gets unpredictable. Understanding and appreciating the role of marketing can prevent business owners from making the mistake of viewing this type of outreach as a dispensable luxury.

Whether you conduct business in a small, rural area or the global market, some principles are universal.

Marketing is all about the customer. To meet your customers' needs you have to know those needs and know how your products or services will help them. Figure out ways to communicate with customers and persuade them to choose your services or products through creative marketing.

Stand out amid the information-overload din. On any

given day, people are exposed to thousands of marketing messages through advertisements on TV, radio, billboards, newspapers, magazines and the Internet. To win the competition for your customers' overtaxed eyes, ears and wallets, your message has to stand out amid all these appeals, and that requires creativity, a marketing budget and careful consideration of your target market and the best media channels to reach it.

A marketing manager recruits customers. Most businesses focus on everything but marketing, which is equivalent to opening your store but forgetting to let people know you're open. Having a marketing manager on your payroll means someone is accountable for considering your business from the customer's perspective and thinking about how to keep past customers while attracting new ones. A marketing manager can come up with a solid marketing plan that measures and tracks your progress so you don't have to rely on blind marketing and risk losing customers.

Marketing is everyone's job. The best marketing manager in the world can't execute a marketing plan without the rest of the organization contributing. Communicate the marketing plan to employees so they can participate and the best will become walking billboards. You can't control everything a customer experiences after entering your business, but you can make the visit as positive and profitable as possible by getting all employees on board as in-house marketing representatives.

The more you give, the more you get. One object of marketing is to give your customers as much service or quality as possible without hurting your revenues. Giving customers samples, demos or generous coupon offers is a form of marketing. But you have to be a visionary as well as a number cruncher. Creative marketing requires you to be part artist and part scientist so you can reach several goals: meeting customers' needs, exceeding sales projections and achieving measurable results from your marketing dollars.

Everything you do is marketing. Being good is not good enough in today's marketplace. Survival requires the incessant pursuit of excellence. Winning the rivalry for attention, money and customer loyalty requires businesses to continue perfecting services or products. Those that sit still are likely to fail. Make the most of marketing resources by understanding that everything you do has the potential to influence customers and either increase or dampen sales.

For more help, visit the Small Business Development Center website at www.nmsbdc.org.

Finance New Mexico is a public service project to assist individuals and businesses in obtaining skills and funding-resources for their business or idea. To learn more, visit www.financenewmexico.org.

“Marketing is everyone's job.”

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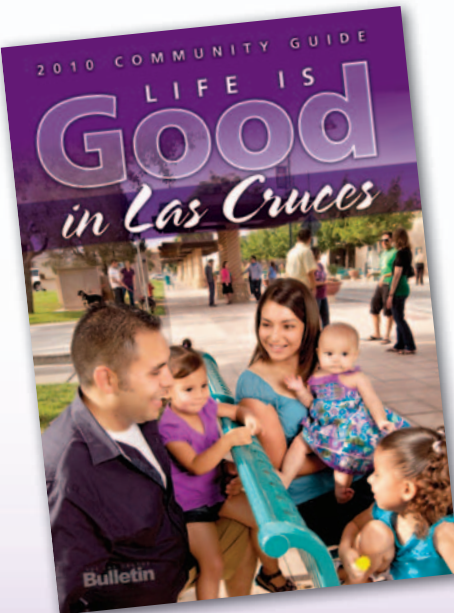
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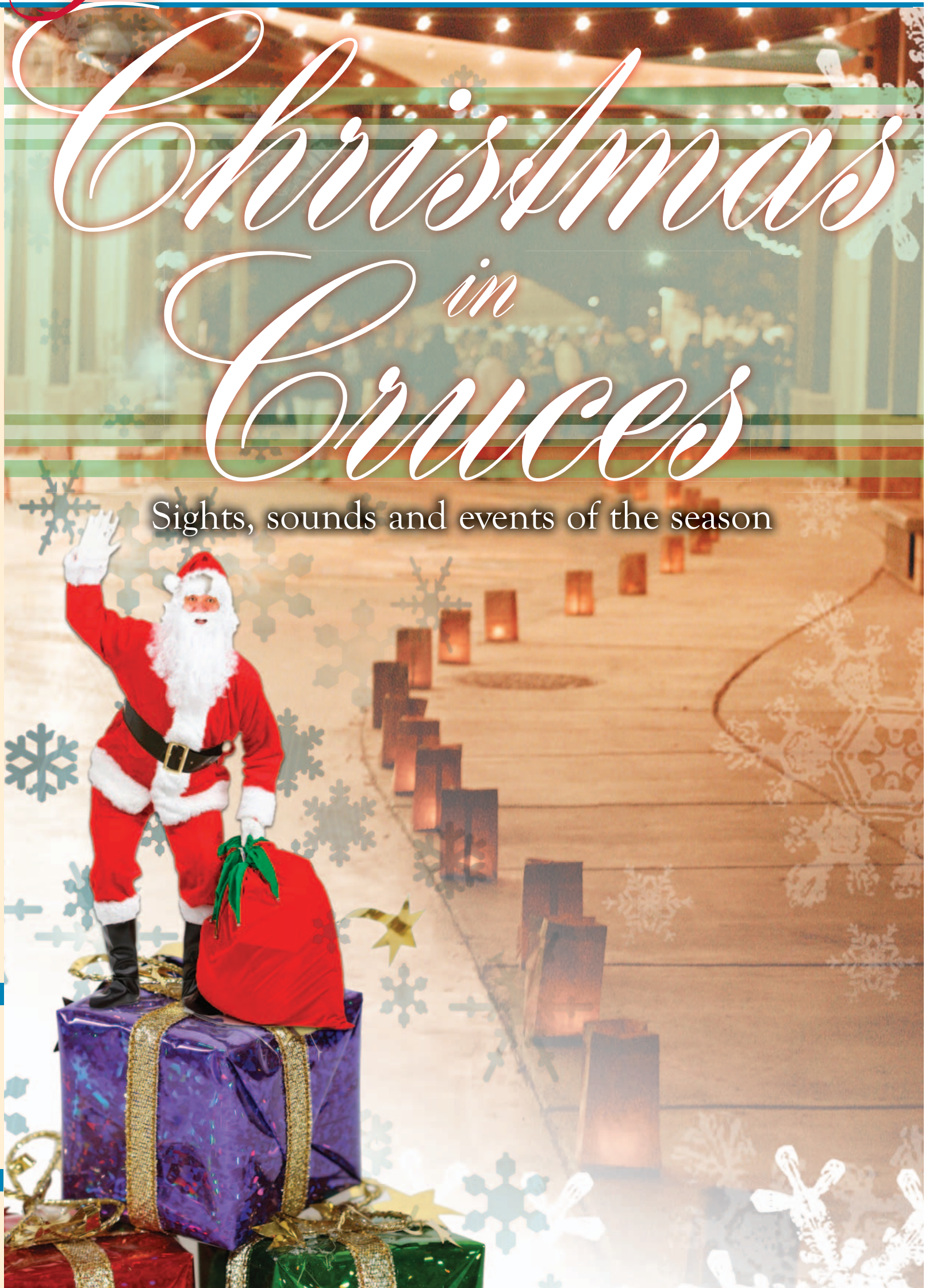
This 'Grit' is no offense to 'The Duke'
C18

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NEXT WEEK

Hot 'n' cold flicks
Jeff Berg presents the best and the worst of 2010.



'Twas the night before Christmas in Las Cruces

Remembering holiday traditions, Christmas festivals and celebrations that make our community special

By **Samantha Roberts**
Las Cruces Bulletin

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the town
Not a Las Crucean was stirring, not even a sound.
The stockings were hung on the adobe with care,
Just returning from Mesilla, luminarias lit the air.
The children are full, by vendors were fed,
While sounds of Christmas carols danced in their heads;
And mama in her warm coat, I spending cash,
Had just finished shopping for gifts to unwrap.
Christmas in Cruces is something to flatter,
All the events going on, create such a chatter.
"Greetings!" at the theater brought about big laughs,
The Bulletin's Gift Guides, you could not trash.
"The Nutcracker" ballet is sure to bring snow,
For the chamber ballet, applause and standing "O."
"It's a Wonderful Life" spread holiday cheer,
Directed by David Edwards, a friend we hold dear.
With Christmas appearing, so lively and quick,
Come holiday treats, our diets won't stick.
Breakfast with Santa, the children they came,
He listened, and smiled and checked off their name;

Now sleigh rides! Now carolers! Now spirit and cheer!
Now toy trains on small tracks, where Santa appeared!
The annual Winterfest admired by all,
Two fun-filled days, patrons could not stall,
Nor could they miss the tree at City Hall.
As dry leaves blew, that the south winds brought by,
Without snow on the mountain, this winter was dry.
But Cruceans still gathered at galleries to view,
And admired Christmas plays at theaters too,
Their hearts full of joy, each one special and new.
The giving is clear and far from a spoof,
Soup kitchen aid and Dress the Child are proof.
And creations of many and from all around,
At the La Casa Bazaar, where gifts could be found.
But at the center be ready, to saunter on foot,
And park farther away if your car produces soot.
A bundle of tamales and green chiles in sack,
While large souvenirs were tied to the rack.
And now something new, that made the town merry!
Icons of jazz, and the sounds that they carry!

Saxes and drums that put on a show,
Give tribute to Ellington, Goodman and "Satchmo."
The spirit of music extended in key,
At Citizens Bank performing songs that were free.
And down in Las Cruces selling jars full of jelly,
Farmers gathered at their market to fill everyone's belly;
Pecans and treats on top of their shelf,
Selling their goods, the New Mexico elf.
And "Here Comes Santa" at Boba Cabaret,
Reminds he is near, with reindeer and sleigh.
It's time to be home and distant from work;
The writer, the teacher and the bank clerk.
Cherish your dinner with a bottle of rose,
And time spent together before it all goes.
And remember Las Cruces as you slip into bed,
If Santa is real, or all in your head,
He has one message; it's simple and right.
"Keep shopping local, and to all a good-night."



Many Good Wishes
FOR THE Holidays
AND A Frammin'
New Year!



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Featured artist: *Ken Neidig*

Play it sweetly, Jazzman

Player, educator, writer takes us down that road

By **David Edwards**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Imagine standing in front of the door of a New York City penthouse apartment getting ready to ring the doorbell. You are there to do an interview with someone you greatly admire, someone whose career you had followed since you were a kid. You are about to meet face-to-face with your childhood idol.

Local musician, educator and author Ken Neidig was in just such a position in 1979 when he interviewed "The King of Swing" Benny Goodman. It was the true highlight of a 25-year career in the publishing business.

Neidig worked at *The Instrumentalist* magazine from 1970-84 and then started his own magazine *BD* (for *Band Directors*) *Guide*, which he published from 1984-95. During those years – and while writing six books – he interviewed a number of jazz greats including Louie Bellson, Les Brown, Maynard Ferguson, Woody Herman, Stan Kenton and Wynton Marsalis.

"The *Band Director's Guide*" – Neidig's first book – was published in 1964 and was widely used across the country. He also wrote the "*Choral Director's Guide*" and "*Music Director's Complete Handbook Of Forms*."

Neidig describes his life as "8 Decades of Creativity" in a self-published booklet, which will celebrate his upcoming 80th birthday. He divides his career into three significant areas: playing, teaching and writing.

He began playing the clarinet at age 10 and started playing in his grammar school band in his hometown of Washington, N.J. He later took up the saxophone.

"When you play the sax, you tell everyone that the clarinet is really your best instrument," he said. "When you play the clarinet, you tell everyone the sax is your best. That way you're covered."

His playing continued through high school, and after graduation, he went to Murray State

University in Kentucky, from which he received a music education degree in 1952. After his freshman year, Neidig spent the summer touring with a dance band led by Len Foster and they played dance gigs all over the South.

He got married, graduated college, enlisted in the Army and spent most of his three years in the service in Tokyo, Japan. While in the army, Neidig "inherited" a six-piece dance band from another soldier, and "Ken Neidig and his Men Of Note" entertained at an American Legion club off post for a couple of years.

“ It is my hope that at least some of it will be useful to others. ”

KEN NEIDIG,
Jazz historian

After the service, he took a teaching position in Elizabethtown, Ky., starting beginning players in fourth grade. He continued teaching for seven years and still maintains good relationships with a number of his students from that time. He moved to the Ft. Knox schools, where he taught for another eight years.

Neidig had always dabbled in writing – he worked on his grade school newspaper and edited his high school yearbook – but a trip to Prentice Hall Publishing with a football coach and writing friend got him a contract for his book. "*The Band Director's Guide*" was the result.

As an officer in the Kentucky Music Educators Association, Neidig edited the organization's newsletter, doing everything from ad sales to layout and circulation. He also edited the *Bluegrass Music News* from 1967-70. But bigger things were ahead, and he accepted the editing/ad manager position with *The Instrumentalist* and moved his family (by now there were four children – all bluegrass musicians) to Wilmette, Ill., outside Chicago. His work with the magazine continued for 14 years, but eventually, when the founder's son took over, they parted ways. His marriage ended as well.

After spending two years "not competing," Neidig began his own magazine, *BD Guide*, which he ran successfully until his retirement 16 years ago.

It was during a trip during the late 1980s to

New Mexico to give a presentation at a music educator's convention that he met Marianna Gabbi, then conductor of the New Mexico State University (later Las Cruces) Symphony. The two have been together since and Neidig moved to Las Cruces in 1995. Neidig and Gabbi have been travelling the world together since 1991, including trips to England, Europe, Russia, Mexico and South America. He also self-published another book, "*Rehearsing the Band*" which was reprinted by Meredith Music along with two collections of magazine articles from *BD Guide*.

Neidig has stayed active in the playing and arranging departments, producing a number of pieces for the Mesilla Valley Concert Band. Another big project has been to restore and reprint a number of original charts from the Benny Goodman orchestra – cleaning them of notations and changes and making the scores and musicians parts available to bands everywhere.

He got involved as the resident expert on Benny Goodman for the Jam Session in Las Cruces, which will take place over the next few months at various locations in town. On Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011, Neidig will give a gallery talk on Benny Goodman at the Branigan Cultural Center and Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011, he will join the Jazz Unlimited Big Band onstage at the Rio Grande Theatre for some Goodman charts prior to the screening of "*The Benny Goodman Story*."

Neidig says in the afterword to his booklet, "*In 80 years I have gathered, organized, preserved and distributed a large amount of knowledge. It is my hope (and belief) that at least some of it will be useful to others.*"

Having someone in Las Cruces who once rang Benny Goodman's doorbell, it's probably pretty useful.



Details

Ken Neidig

Gallery talk
on Benny Goodman

When

11 a.m. Saturday Jan. 15, 2011

Where

Branigan Cultural Center

Cost

Free

The Jazz Unlimited Big Band

With Special Guest Ken Neidig

When

5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011

Where

Rio Grande Theatre
Followed by a screening of
"*The Benny Goodman Story*"

Cost

Free

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EventsCalendar

FRI. 12/24

9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Last Minute Market by the Las Cruces Farmers & Crafts Market, Downtown Mall, along Main Street. Wide variety of arts and crafts, food, fresh produce, unique fine art and Santa. Free. Email staff@lascrucesfarmersmarket.org.

SAT. 12/25

Merry Christmas and happy holidays

SUN. 12/26

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday Growers Market, Mountain View Market, 1300 El Paseo Road, Suite M. Call 523-0436.

Noon to 4 p.m. Uptown Craft and Growers Market, Mesilla Valley Mall in front of Sears in the parking lot. Shop for local arts, crafts and produce. Call 650-7414.

3 to 7 p.m. Open Mic, Blue Moon Bar, 13060 N. Highway 185. Free. Call 647-9524.

7 to 10 p.m. QTango dance orchestra, Las Cruces Country Club, 2350 N. Main St. Cost \$10. Call 526-9723.

9:30 p.m. Sam Irons and Cyrus Baker acoustic concert, SB's Late-night Lunchbox, 120 Water St. Free.

MON. 12/27

10 a.m. Yarn Junkies, Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 700 S. Telshor Blvd. Meet in the café for fun and exchange knitting ideas. Free. Call 522-4499.

TUE. 12/28

5 to 6 p.m. Beginning belly dance class, My Place Jewell, 140-A Wyatt Drive. Learn to dance and use props. Great exercise for the body and mind. Cost \$2. Call 526-9509.

5 p.m. Jazz Film Series: "Satchmo," Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St. As part of the Jam Session, the Dona Ana Arts Council and Rio Grande Theatre present a classic Jazz-themed film from the Hollywood vaults. The screening is preceded by a mini-concert by a Jazz group. This week's performance will be by The Creole Jazz Band and the screening will be "Satchmo: Louis Armstrong," starring Louis Armstrong, Wynton Marsalis and Tony Bennett. Free. Call 523-6404.

7 to 9 p.m. Fiber Club, My Place Jewell, 140-A Wyatt Drive. Cost \$2. Call 526-9509.

7 to 9:30 p.m. Argentine Tango Group, Las Cruces Country Club, 2350 N. Main St. Beginners, singles and couples over 21 welcome to join the Big Band Dance Club partner. Cost \$5-10. Call 642-1699.



"Satchmo: Louis Armstrong," starring Louis Armstrong, Wynton Marsalis and Tony Bennett will be showing at the Rio Grande Theatre Tuesday, Dec. 28.

WED. 12/29

8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Las Cruces Farmers & Crafts Market, Downtown Mall, along Main Street. Wide variety of arts and crafts, food, fresh produce, unique fine art and much more. Free. Email staff@lascrucesfarmersmarket.org.

6:30 p.m. Stitch & Visit meeting, Hastings, 2350 E. Lohman Ave. Creative ideas and good conversation are shared. To participate, bring a portable craft.



Free. Call 525-1625, email meadows@zianet.com or visit lascrucesstitches.multiply.com.

THU. 12/30

5 to 6 p.m. Beginning belly dance class, My Place Jewell 140-A Wyatt Drive. Learn to dance and use props. Great exercise for the body and mind. Cost \$2. Call 526-9509.

6 to 9 p.m. Live acoustic music by Daniel Parks, Amaro Winery, 402 S. Melendres St. No cover. Call 527-5310.

8 to 10 p.m. Country western holiday dance by Big Band Dance Club, Las Cruces Country Club, 2700 N. Main St. Dance to the music of Jim Corrons. Beginners, singles and couples are welcome. Must be 21 years or older. Western attire recommended. Cost \$7-\$9. Call 526-6504.

FRI. 12/31

Noon, El Paso Sun Bowl, Sun Bowl Stadium on the UTEP campus. Notre Dame Fighting Irish versus Miami Hurricanes. Sold out. Call 915-533-4416.

6 to 9 p.m. Live music by La Cella Bella, Amaro Winery, 402 S. Melendres St. No cover. Call 527-5310.

6 to 9 p.m. Live music by Ted Scanlon from the Desperados, Mix Pacific Rim Cuisine and Katana Teppanyaki Grill, 1001 E. University Ave. No cover. Call 532-2042.

ArtsBriefs

NYE party at Ramada Palms de Las Cruces

Come celebrate New Year's Eve beginning at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 31, at Ramada Palms de Las Cruces, 201 E. University Ave. The celebration will offer two separate parties under one roof. Ramada's ballroom will feature Phat Soul with reserved seating and the bar club will provide entertainment by Dulce with special guest Sunny Padilla and a special performance by Paul Benavidez and Jeff Segretto. Tickets for either location include admission to one event, party favors, champagne and assorted appetizers. Room packages are also available. Tickets are \$35 per person, 21 and up only. Room packages start at \$159 and include two admission tickets. For more information, call 915-630-2206 or 526-4411, ext. 402.

Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra annual Pops Concert

The Las Cruces symphony presents its sixth

annual Pops Concert Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 8-9, 2011, in the Atkinson Recital Hall on the NMSU campus. This year's Pops Concert will feature the music of ABBA by tribute band Arrival from Sweden. The concert has great hits from the '70s and '80s, including "Mamma Mia," "Dancing Queen," "The Winner Takes it All," "Chiquitita," "Waterloo," "Fernando" and many more. Performances will be held at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7, and 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 8. Tickets are available through the Las Cruces Symphony Office for \$35, \$45 and \$50. For more information, call 646-3709.

Mesilla Valley Chorale donation to DACC

After presenting a sold-out show at the Rio Grande Theatre Sunday, Dec. 12, the Mesilla Valley Chorale donated the proceeds from the concert to the Doña Ana Arts Council (DACC). The donation will go towards renovation and upkeep of the Rio Grande Theatre. A brief awards ceremony was held on the steps of the theater Thursday, Dec. 16, during which a \$4,100 check was presented to David Salcido,



(Back row) George Griffin, Ron Saltzman, Ida McCoy, David Chavez, John Schutz, Lanova Sheets and Don McCoy (front row) Kathy von Ende, Meredith O'Connell, Alex Glowacki, DAAC Executive Director Ceci Vasconcellos, Rio Grande Theatre Manager David Salcido, Heather Pollard, Chorale Director Nancy Ritchey, DAAC Program Coordinator Kelly Covert, Marc Robert and DAAC Finance Administrator Vanessa Medina receive a donation from the Mesilla Valley Chorale.

theater manager, and members of the DACC Donor Development Team, who were responsible for bringing the two groups together for the special event.

Chorale Director Nancy Ritchey was pleased to learn that a portion of the money donated by her organization has been earmarked to acquire chorale risers for the theater. In the past, risers have been borrowed from local schools and churches for chorale performances. Present during the ceremony were members of both the Mesilla Valley Chorale and the DACC boards, along with theater staff members.

For more information about the DACC or the Rio Grande Theatre, call 523-6403.

Crime and Punishment at the Black Box

No Strings Theatre Company presents "Crime and Punishment," adapted by Marilyn Campbell and Curt Columbus from the novel by Fyodor Dostoyevsky and directed by Shaun Hadfield, at the Black Box Theatre, 430 N. Downtown Mall. "Crime and Punishment"

opens Friday, Jan. 21, 2011, and runs through Sunday, Feb. 6, 2011. The story is about a young and destitute student who plans the perfect crime – the murder of a despicable old pawn broker that no one loves and will not be missed. But just because one can reason that such a crime could benefit humanity, does it still make the act just?

In this new adaptation of Dostoyevsky's literary masterpiece, the audience is transported into the mind of a murderer, where he relives the thoughts, ideas and feelings that drove him to commit such terrible atrocity.

The cast for the No Strings Theatre Company is Rodya Raskolnikov played by William Zimmerman, Poriry Petrovich played by Algeron D'Amassa, Sonya Marmeladova played by Natasha Sanchez and many more.

Performances are at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. Sundays. A Thursday performance at 7 p.m. February 3 will also run. Tickets are \$10 for regular admission, \$9 for students and seniors over 65 and all seats on Thursday are \$7. For reservations or more information, call 523-1223.

Arrival from Sweden, an ABBA tribute band, will play at the Pops Concert Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 7-8, 2011.



Finding holiday spirit at 'The Nutcracker'

Dances of Sugar Plum thoughts stayed in my head

Review by **Samantha Roberts**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Despite the warmer weather, "The Nutcracker" ballet brings the feeling of Christmas to Las Cruces.

If you're like me, the 60-70 degree temperatures have taken away from the cooler-holiday-weather feel, and make it difficult to believe it's the holidays. But hopefully you were able to partake in holiday traditions, such as "The Nutcracker" that made you want to gather around the Christmas tree and sing "Frosty the Snowman."

A co-worker and I made plans to see "The Nutcracker" in early November, so you can imagine how disappointed we were to find the Sunday show was sold out. Luckily, a very nice gentleman allowed my friend and I to grab the last two remaining seats that he conjured with metal foldout chairs – a special "thank you" to him.

But even without the cushioned theater seat, I enjoyed every minute of the performance by the Las Cruces Chamber Ballet (LCCB).

I was especially blown away with the set designs because each oversized backdrop made me forget I was watching a stage.

And I must give credit where credit is due – to the dancers.

Baylee Banks, a lovely played



Federico Garcia and Kayla Zimmerman danced in The Land of Snow Friday, Dec. 17, as part of "The Nutcracker" Act I.

Clara, and Sky Blue as Fritz started the show strong, and Banks nailed her role as the sweet and charming Clara throughout the ballet.

Potentially my favorite little dancers, the mice of the Rat Queen's army, were adorable as they hopped and clawed around on stage. Equally as cute and memorable was the little cow that twirled and turned between Act II dances.

From the Dew Drop Fairy (Jacquelin Huerta) and the Snow Queen (Kayla Zimmerman) to the Arabian Queen (Evelyn Ross) and the Sugar

Plum Fairy (Victoria Pryor), each girl danced with grace through her fingertips.

Even though I cannot name them all, each dancer did a wonderful job and their hard work was evident. I loved the snowflake dance in Act I and the Bon-Bons in Act II, with a special guest performance by Richard Williams as Mother Ginger Sunday, Dec. 19.

Overall, this two-hour performance was well rehearsed, entertaining and added just the amount of Christmas spirit I was looking for.



Evelyn Ross as the Arabian Queen



Jacquelin Huerta as the Dew Drop Fairy



Stephany Perez as the Soldier Doll and Jessica Miller as the Ballerina Doll entertain the children.

Call to Artists

NEW MEXICO ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR

The 50th annual New Mexico Arts and Crafts Fair, which will feature 220 of New Mexico's most talented artisans, invites artists to submit their work. Artwork will be displayed at the Manuel Lujan building at Expo New Mexico, the state fairgrounds in Albuquerque. The New Mexico Arts and Crafts Fair is the longest running art show in New Mexico and features New Mexico artists exclusively. The deadline to register is Monday, Jan. 31, 2011. Apply online at www.zapplication.org. For more information, visit www.nmartsandcraftsfair.org, email info@nmartsandcraftsfair.org or call 505-884-9043. Event dates are June 24-26.

LCCT PLAY SUBMISSIONS

The Las Cruces Community Theatre is calling for play submissions for its 2011-12 season. Directors are asked to submit up to three plays or musicals they would like to direct for consideration. Submit the name of the play, author, publisher, a brief synopsis and a budget. In the case of musicals, directors must also submit the cost of score rental and royalties, copy of the script and a CD of music. Please include contact information. The deadline for submissions is Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011. The Play Reading Committee will submit its

recommendations to the board by April 1, 2011, and directors will be notified as soon as possible. Anyone interested in directing that does not have a specific play in mind, let the committee know as well.

The approximate dates for performances are August, October and December 2011, and February, April and June 2012. Directors may indicate a preference for one of the time slots.

Submissions may be dropped off at the LCCT, 313 N. Downtown Mall. If there is no one at the theater, leave submissions with the Blue Gate Gallery. For more information, call Kathi Jane at 526-6810 or email southam97@gmail.com.

ASTC AUDITIONS

The American Southwest Theatre Company (ASTC) at New Mexico State University Theatre Arts announces auditions for its Spring 2011 productions. Needed are men and women ages 18-30. Auditions will be held at the Hershel Zohn Theatre on the NMSU campus from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011, with callbacks scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 16, 2011. Sign up for an audition slot on the callboard in the Hershel Zohn Theatre lobby between Jan. 3-14, 2011. For more information, call Mike Wise at 646-5418.

SANTA ANA SEARCH TO DISCOVER, SHOWCASE

Santa Ana Star Casino announces the launch of Santa Ana Star

Search, an event designed to discover and showcase New Mexico's best amateur performers. From dancers, singers, comedians, musicians, variety performers and actors, Santa Ana Star Search will seek out the state's most talented individuals or groups and help them launch an entertainment career.

The Santa Ana Star Search winner will receive an opportunity to sign a one-year development contract with a national talent agent, be awarded a \$10,000 prize, receive a trip for two to the 2011 "American Idol" finale in Los Angeles as a member of its studio audience and conduct a solo performance at Santa Ana Star Casino's Bosque Event Center.

Santa Ana Star Search is accepting applications through Feb. 5, 2011, at the Bosque Event Center at Santa Ana Star Casino. For more information, call James Korenchen at 505-797-6671 or email james@jameskorenchen.com

LOS ARTESANOS GALERÍA

Artists living in New Mexico are invited to submit their work for jury consideration at Los Artesanos Galería in Mesilla. All media will be considered. All work submitted for consideration must be original and created by the submitting artist. The submission must contain the artist's name, media, address, email and phone number, as well as the dimensions and pricing for each piece. For more information, call 526-1144.

MESILLA VALLEY FINE ARTS GALLERY

The Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery, 2470-A Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla, has openings for interested artists and digital photographers to display their work. For more information, call 522-2933, stop by the gallery for an application or visit www.mesillavalleyfinearts.com.

PRESS WOMEN ZIA AWARD

New Mexican women writers are invited to submit their books for the 2011 Zia Award, given to the author of an outstanding book in children's literature published in 2008, 2009 or 2010. The contest is open to all subgenres within children's and youth literature. The award is given each year by New Mexico Press Women at the annual spring conference. To be eligible to receive the award, selected winners must read at the award luncheon during the 2011 conference in Las Cruces Saturday, April 9, 2011. Submissions can be made by the author or by someone on behalf of the author, such as a publisher. Membership in New Mexico Press Women is not required, but the writer must be a woman who lives in or has a strong connection to New Mexico. The book may be published anywhere. To submit for consideration for the Zia Book Award, send a brief cover letter, including complete contact infor-

mation, the author's biography (including her connection to New Mexico) and a description and copy of the book and a check for the \$10 entry fee payable to New Mexico Press Women to: Sari Krosinsky, Zia Book Award Chair, 315 Terrace St. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Entries must be post-marked no later than Friday, Jan. 14, 2011. For more information, email michal_kro@hotmail.com.

CERAMIC EXHIBITION

The Potters' Guild of Las Cruces and the Las Cruces Museum of Art request submissions for the regional juried ceramic exhibition "From the Ground Up XXV." The submission deadline is April 8, 2011. This call for submissions is open to ceramic artists from the Rocky Mountain region of the United States – New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. Artists may submit up to four entries that were completed within the past three years. The submission fee for one to four entries is \$30 and is payable to Potters' Guild of Las Cruces. Submission forms can be downloaded from the Las Cruces Museum of Art website, www.las-cruces.org/museums. Mail entries to Museum of Art, Attn: From the Ground Up, P.O. Box 20000, Las Cruces, NM 88004.

For more information, call 541-2137.

'It's a Wonderful Life' at St. Paul's UMC

Photos by Raul X. Ruiz-Rooney

The cast during the finale of "It's A Wonderful Life: The Musical," which was presented Dec. 17-19 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church



Henry Potter (Dave Edwards) instructs his "goon" L.J. Cline.



Uncle Billy (Tom Warren) is berated by George (Bob Diven) for losing an \$8,000 deposit.



George Bailey (Bob Diven) is rescued from suicide by Clarence (Brandon Brown) even though he is just a "Second Class Angel."



St. Paul's UMC minister of music Doug Weeks conducts the band and cast of "It's a Wonderful Life: The Musical."

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Bulletin Restaurant Guide

Back to the drive-in days

Memories and good food conjured up at Old Town Restaurant

By David Edwards
Las Cruces Bulletin

It was my first “driving” date – I was actually getting to use the family car (a hot 1968 Ford Fairlane station wagon. Can you say “chick magnet?”) to take a girl to “get a Coke.” It was my sophomore year in high school, and she had very long brown hair and green eyes, and not only was it my first car date, it was also my first date with her.

Here’s the thing I really remember though. My dad, God love him, made me drive with him to her house in Las Alturas (at least to the road next to her house, not up the driveway, thank heaven) and follow the exact route I would take picking her up and taking her to Shirley’s Drive In for that beverage. Not that it had anything to do with the pre-drive or the choice of soda purveyor (I am sure it was me), but that was also my last date with green eyes.

The reason I was reminded of all this was due to having lunch at Old Town Restaurant – which all those sad years ago, was Shirley’s. It has been Old Town for 17 years, and though the sign outside says “Restaurant,” the lettering on the front of the building says “Hospitality” and that is the way my dad – it later became one of his hangouts – always referred to it.

“Let’s go to Old Town Hospitality,” he would say.

And hospitable they are, when I went the other day for lunch, the friendly waitress sat down in the booth next to me when I told her I had a question. (Some folks might have a problem with that, but I appreciate the feeling that your servers actually care.) It seemed as though a number of customers were on



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by David Edwards
Manager Keith Parsons and his staff offer good old Mexican and American food with a generous serving of hospitality.

a first-name basis with the employees. I confess I hadn’t eaten there in quite a while, and I was surprised at how much I had mis-remembered. I thought it was mostly Mexican grub, but Old Town has a great deal more to offer. There are breakfast items, burgers, steaks, sandwiches and salads in addition to the Mexican selections.

I had been craving tamales lately and they happened to be the special that day. I had been told that the red was the hotter of my chile choices and that the tamales would be smothered in red sauce. Just what I wanted. Restaurant tamales are usually a bit fluffier in the masa department and generally have more meat in them. No complaints about that. And these fit the bill, covered in thick, tasty red chile. The accompanying beans and rice were also flavorful.

I ordered a chile relleno on the side, since I am always searching for the best in town. I will have to say that currently the one at Old Town is on the top of the list. Every relleno could use more heat in my book, but this large chile was battered just right, plenty cheesy and covered with a creamy green sauce that even my anti-sauce advocate mom might not object to. Not very hot, but really excellent flavor.

Another trip and my carnivorous nature led me to order a good, old-fashioned diner staple – the chopped sirloin, which also happened to be topped with grilled onions, green chile and (four of my favorite words) smothered with

melted cheese. It also happened to be the daily special. I had a tasty cup of vegetable beef with rice soup beforehand and French fries as accompaniment.

Anything on the extensive menu is available anytime.

“You want steak at seven in the morning, we do that,” manager Keith Parsons said. “You want eggs at 3:30 in the afternoon, we do that too.”

Saturday and Sunday there is an all-you-can-eat menudo special for only \$6.50.

Old Town is owned by David Gutierrez, who also happens to be the treasurer of Doña Ana County, and his wife Manuela. They started the business in 1994, and it had been a couple of different restaurants since Shirley’s went the way of that Ford station wagon.

Parsons has been on board for two years and is married to the Gutierrez’ daughter Xochi, who is co-manager and has been working around the restaurant since she was 12. The Parsons hope to

take over completely in the future.

The atmosphere of the place is decidedly retro, with booths, tables and a counter that feels like the old Shirley’s days. You can’t cruise the drive-in anymore – all that remains of it are two strips of walkway in the back parking lot that used to be flanked by parking spots, menu boards and speakers. I had to take a little turn in my Ford Taurus just to get the feel again. It was easy to visualize kids and carhops and my dad making me promise to not go anywhere else. But these days, the vibe is just good food and “hospitality.”

“Steak at seven in the morning ... eggs at 3:30 in the afternoon. We do that.”

KEITH PARSONS,
manager

Details

Old Town Restaurant

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Bulletin Restaurant Guide

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WEDNESDAY EVENING DECEMBER 29, 2010. TV schedule table with columns for time slots (5:00-11:30) and channels (PBS, CBS, ABC, FOX, NBC, CW, WGN, ESPN, ESPN2, USA, TNT, TBS, COM, LIFE, FOOD, HGTV, A&E, HIST, TLC, DISC, ANPL, FAM, DISN, NICK, AMC, SYFY, CNN, CNBC, MSNBC).

THURSDAY EVENING DECEMBER 30, 2010. TV schedule table with columns for time slots (5:00-11:30) and channels (PBS, CBS, ABC, FOX, NBC, CW, WGN, ESPN, ESPN2, USA, TNT, TBS, COM, LIFE, FOOD, HGTV, A&E, HIST, TLC, DISC, ANPL, FAM, DISN, NICK, AMC, SYFY, CNN, CNBC, MSNBC).

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Sudoku

Complete the grids below so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively. It is a game of logic, not math, and there is only one solution per puzzle. Have fun and exercise the grey matter. Tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

BEGINNER

9x9 grid for BEGINNER Sudoku puzzle.

CHALLENGER

9x9 grid for CHALLENGER Sudoku puzzle.

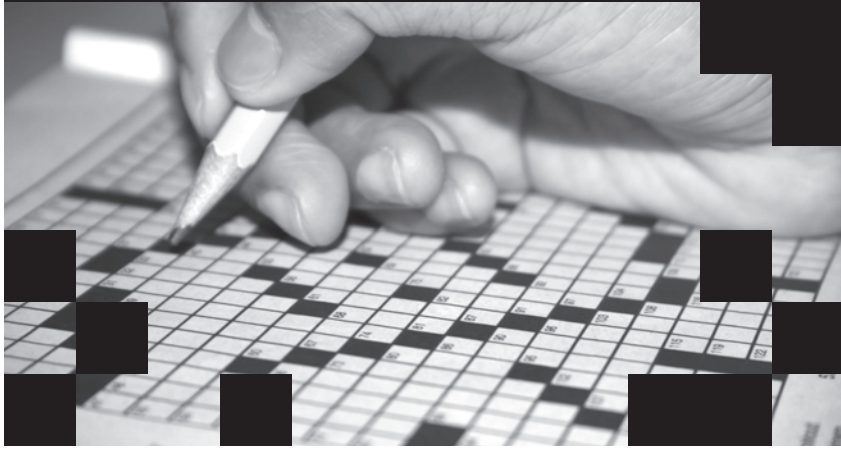
EXPERT

9x9 grid for EXPERT Sudoku puzzle.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

Grids showing solutions for BEGINNER, CHALLENGER, and EXPERT levels from the previous week.

BrainGames



Word Salsa

Circle these English words and their Spanish equivalents that appear in the grid horizontally, vertically, diagonally and backward. Encierre estas palabras en inglés y sus equivalentes en español que aparecen al revés, horizontal, vertical y diagonalmente.

FROM YEARS GONE BY

ENGLISH	SPANISH
BANNER	BANDERA
BROOCH	BROCHE
CARD	TARJETA
DIARY	DIARIO
NOTE	NOTA
MEMENTO	RECUERDO
PHOTO	FOTO
POSTCARD	TARJETA POSTAL
RECEIPT	RECIBO
TICKET STUB	TROZO DEL BOLETO
TOY	JUGUETE
YEARBOOK	ANUARIO

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11/16



Crossword Puzzles

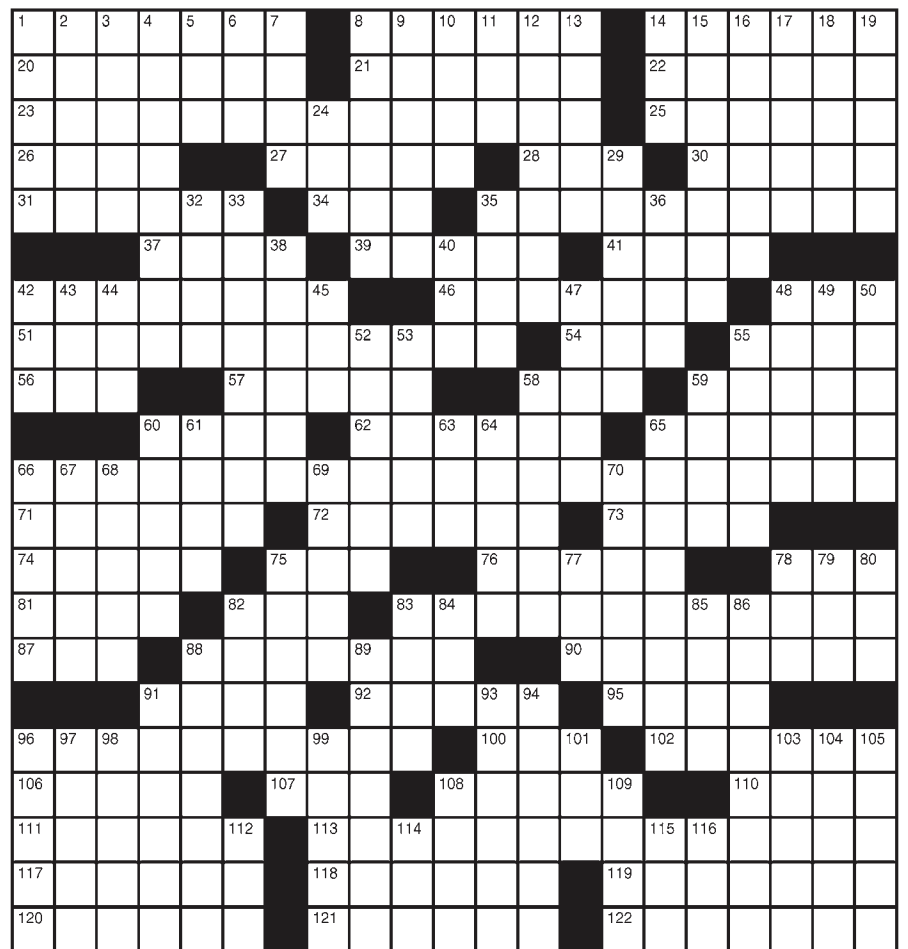
Diagramless, 21 x 21

Like a regular crossword but with an added challenge. Sleuths must also create the diagram and figure out where the numbers and black squares go.

- | ACROSS | DOWN |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Flutter | 1 On behalf of |
| 5 Chatters | 2 Actor Chaney |
| 9 Yes man | 3 Grow older |
| 11 Yep | 4 Type of guitar |
| 16 Skirts | 5 "The Forsyte Saga" author |
| 19 Worked for | 6 Actress Gardner |
| 20 Hangman's loop | 7 Hit on the head |
| 21 Computer model | 8 Take a chair |
| 22 NBC classic | 9 Leon lady |
| 23 Concerning | 10 Flair |
| 26 Pouch | 11 Not connected |
| 28 "William Wilson" writer | 12 Garden tool |
| 29 Brenda or Spike | 13 Large motorcycle |
| 30 Gaping mouth | 14 New World nat. |
| 31 Exist | 15 Baddeley and Gingold |
| 32 Large vase | 17 Medicinal quantity |
| 33 Mule of song | 18 Lets live |
| 34 Chapel vow | 22 Stimulus |
| 35 Earth: pref. | 24 Washington city |
| 36 Repetitive beat | 25 Jean Arp, e.g. |
| 41 Grating speech | 27 Business VIPs |
| 45 Priest's hat | 37 One left behind |
| 46 Serving to make one | 38 Mel Gibson film |
| 47 Hampered | 39 Upper limb |
| 49 Wished harm upon | 40 Wee bit |
| 52 Flowed | 41 Nexus of activity |
| 53 Was ahead | 42 Knight's title |
| 54 Pigpen | 43 Night before |
| 55 Portuguese saint | 44 Magazine merchant in York |
| 56 Last word | 47 Pick up the tab |
| 57 Horned snake | 48 Extent covered |
| 58 In the past | 50 Art supporter |
| 59 Links org. | 51 Boneheads |
| 62 Blackjack | 59 Minor royal |
| 65 Gosh! | 60 Do, on the sly |
| 66 Superlatively sore | 61 Light hair color |
| 70 Similarities | 62 Architects Eiel and Eero |
| 73 Crudely chipped flints | 63 Gets there |
| 74 In the beginning | 64 Sabals |
| 75 Waltz classic | 67 Pentagon grp. |
| 78 Pregnancy thirds | 68 Old-time high note |
| 82 Agt. | 69 Half a fly? |
| 83 Low NCO | 70 Family dog |
| 84 ___ been had! | 71 Caustic solution |
| 85 Understand | 72 ___ Angeles |
| 86 Pen fluid | 75 Soft cheese |
| 87 DDE's command | 76 Bruce and Kravitz |
| 88 Trawling device | 77 Maintenance cost |
| 89 Definite article | 79 Swimmer Williams |
| 90 Compass pt. | 80 Second-time employee |
| 91 Most forsaken | 81 Ooze |
| 95 Part of a pelvis | 92 Always, to Keats |
| 96 Violinist Menuhin | 93 Gladiators' 56 |
| 100 County of SW England | 94 Charged particle |
| 101 Kitchen gadget | 97 60-minute units |
| 105 Wrench | 98 Reuther's grp. |
| 106 Gray and Moran | 99 502 |
| 107 Friend of Pooh | 102 Vigor |
| 108 Gulp | 103 Hurricane center |
| 109 Made haste | 104 Sign of assent |

WORLDWIDE WISHES

- | ACROSS | DOWN |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 More speedy | 18-wheelers |
| 8 Puts to a test | 2 Sunken ship |
| 14 Binges | 3 Dental filling |
| 20 Che Guevara's first name | 4 Have a desire for |
| 21 1862 battle site | 5 Clicking sound |
| 22 Danny of "Radio Days" | 6 Greek letter |
| 23 Hawaiian wish | 7 Dice toss |
| 25 More down in the dumps | 8 Try for a date |
| 26 Myth ending? | 9 Black eye |
| 27 Trotsky and Russell | 10 1978 Heisman winner |
| 28 Thunder Bay's prov. | 11 Miss. neighbor |
| 30 Peter of Herman's Hermits | 12 Lennon's widow |
| 31 Former U.S. space station | 13 Ms. Alexander |
| 34 Come to regret | 14 Detective Spade |
| 35 Portuguese wish | 15 Trailblazer |
| 37 Frosts | 16 Calmness |
| 39 Work at getting in shape | 17 "Adam Bede" writer |
| 41 Extra-wide shoe size | 18 Actress Verdugo |
| 42 Ate like a chicken | 19 Tender spots |
| 46 British tenant farmer | 24 Last of cash? |
| 48 West of Hollywood? | 29 African fly |
| 51 Danish wish | 32 Got top grade on |
| 54 Q-U connection | 33 Torments |
| 55 In good health | 35 Spin a floating log |
| 56 Be unwell | 36 Supporting pieces |
| 57 Market price | 38 Sandwich meat |
| 58 Unknown's last name | 40 Puncture starter? |
| 59 Saint of letters | 42 Links org. |
| 60 Feature of a fedora | 43 Lilly or Whitney |
| 62 Teems | 44 Infielder Ripken |
| 65 Brazilian port | 45 Up to, briefly |
| 66 German wish | 47 First-year students |
| 71 Sappho's birthplace | 48 Deserve |
| 72 Back down | |
| 73 S-shaped curve | |
| 74 Sore points | |
| 75 Musician's organ | |
| 76 Greek poet saved by a dolphin | |
| 78 Gl's garb | |
| 81 Calendar abbr. | |
| 82 Mus. collection | |
| 83 Spanish wish | |
| 87 Spanish Mrs. | |
| 88 Removes oneself | |
| 90 Spooky state | |
| 91 Utter an orison | |
| 92 Silvery European fish | |
| 95 Auctioneer's last word | |
| 96 French wish | |
| 100 Flowed | |
| 102 Broadway dancer Ruby | |
| 106 Six-time U.S. Open | |



- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 49 Leonard play | 75 "The Perfect Fool" star | 98 Okays |
| 50 Burstyn or Barkin | 77 Verb-forming suffix | 99 Of a unit of resistance |
| 52 Productive oil well | 78 Lyrical poem | 101 Bk. after Ezra |
| 53 One-name singer | 79 "___ Kapital" | 103 Glossed term |
| 55 Former Bengals coach | 80 '60s radicals | 104 Computer post |
| 58 Composer Shostakovich | 82 Cajole | 105 Bonheur and Parks |
| 59 Singer Winans | 83 Roll up | 108 Seed protector |
| 60 Neuwirth and Daniels | 84 Tours summer | 109 Periods |
| 61 Greek letters | 85 Depraved | 112 Goddess of folly |
| 63 Dumbstruck state | 86 Started a new paragraph | 114 Mythical bird |
| 64 Of the kidneys | 88 Coarse behavior | 115 Balin or Claire |
| 65 Norse Armageddon | 89 In a heavy way | 116 ___ Jose, CA |
| 66 Deflated tires | 91 Shah's domain | |
| 67 Happen again | 93 Kind of socks | |
| 68 Milo or Tessie | 94 Infamous Imelda | |
| 69 Boorish | 96 Abrupt pulls | |
| 70 Unclaimed | 97 Early-stage seed | |

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

Word Salsa

N O I A M E L B O R P C I O N
 O X I E L P M O C O M P L E J O
 I D N I E B Z O L A G A N E C
 C I T C X A W K W A R D O G E
 A F A I P R E D I C A M E N T
 W I N F R A N O I C A U T I S
 K C G I E Z O Q C A M Q N S T
 A U L D C O R U P A M P O S L
 W L E I A S I A R M E R I A U
 R T Q C R O S G O E L E T R C
 R M U I T R M B L I C A R I
 A I E F O O A I L I D A U A F
 S R N S U R M R E I D N R T B F
 N E S P S P B E M N G I I M I
 G N R A D E R N E D R O S E I D

Diagramless

O S I E R
 R E L E A S E S S T A R C H
 R E S E T T L E T E N U R E
 S K A T E E D R E D B A R B E R
 L E G A L I T Y B O U G H
 E P I T A P H S G E T G O
 E B B S B E T E S I R S
 T O A T U R N H E N N A A A R P
 C O R O N A A R T I N A S S F L O E
 L E I S E E P A G E S G L E N
 I N N F A N M A C T H E
 L A D D B A R T L E T T R A Y
 E P E E A R M H O L E S U N C A S E
 N E R D S A S S Y A S S A Y E D
 D E S S P E N T T E A S
 H O T E L O S C U L A T E
 I R A N I P H A R I S E E
 D E M O N S E E D G I N S S I P
 T E A R E R H E N H O U S E
 E S T A T E T R A I N I N G
 P I O T T I S

Forte

R E S I D E M A R S A L A L O A F E D
 I C E B O X O B E R L I N O C T A V E
 F R E N C H D R E S S I N G B A L S A M
 F U N H A U N T S I L A S A T N O
 M O U S E C L O N E S O N T
 P O W E R S T E E R I N G C O N T A C T
 O M E L E T G L U E R E V E L L E
 S O L O S C A L M S A U T E S K I N
 H O L D B O D Y B U I L D I N G I N S
 I D O L S S T O I C P O N C E
 L A S E R S C O A S T L A U G H S
 A N T S Y F L A G G C R U S T
 P G A S P E E D R E A D I N G R A T S
 T O R T R A I S E D I V A M A N E T
 O R B I T E R S D E L I M A N T R A
 P A I R O F F S P E L L C H E C K I N G
 L E E O C T A N E A S K S
 P A L S C R O O N P A S S E D I A
 O R I O L E P R I N C E C H A R M I N G
 P E N M A N R E C Y C L E G E O R G E
 S A G E S T A S S E R T S R E L A T E D

CRYPTOGRAM

H C T M A V A V Y A M B Z A J R P G H
 U R E H J Z C P C K B L K T R U U H
 Y T M K A E Z A M Y L U U I ?
 I Z A J R I K L P G K R V A E
 "Y A M K R E A B B A ."
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
 The slickest Halloween threat on Twitter is "trick or tweet."



'A Shine of Rainbows'

Film has mysticism, magic and whimsy

Review by **Jeff Berg**
For the Las Cruces Bulletin

Certainly a unique booking coup for the Fountain Theatre, this Canadian/Irish co-production, "A Shine of Rainbows," beautifully shot on Corrie Island off the coast of Ireland, is probably the first film ever shown at the Fountain that received the Dove Foundation "Family Approved."

But don't let that fool you, as the film played at a number of high profile film festivals, including Toronto and the Chicago International Children's Film Festival.

It is definitely family friendly, and would be a nice way to introduce the kids or grandkids to the wonders of "art house" cinema.

The story is simple enough, as we follow Tomas, a young lad of 8 years, who is bullied and picked on by the other kids in the orphanage where he resides. Tomas has a slight stammer, which makes him an easier target for the ruffians who harass him on a daily basis.

However, not long into the film, he is adopted, seemingly sight unseen, by a lovely and lively woman, Maire, who takes him home to her small village. Her husband, played by the underrated Aidan Quinn, is a bit gruff and not exactly sure that he wants this interloper as part of his life. But the hell with husbands, as Maire gently rebukes his complaints while opening door after door to the soon less frightened Tomas.

Tomas makes two friends almost immediately, the slightly older (and later somewhat jealous) Seamus, and a beautiful and bright young lass with locks of flame, Nancy.

This threesome pursue several kid adventures, but filmmaker Vic Sarin also seems to be making the point that it is the women in Tomas' life that make the difference. His new mother is kind, attentive, firm and loving, and his new gal pal Nancy is patient, understanding and much smarter than Seamus (and Tomas for that matter), especially when Seamus decides to do a typically stupid boy trick when he tries to steal bird eggs.

"A Shine of Rainbows" also offers a goodly amount of mysticism and magical whimsy ... on the beach near the village are a number of Easter Island type statues, one of which is said to be the "ruler," so to speak, of the island. And the seals in the cove, Tomas is told by his mom, are able to take messages to those who are no longer with us. One of the seals, whose face looks like my dog's but with a shave, is also outcast by the others, and it is this kind creature with which Tomas bonds – taking him food, telling him his problems and asking him to deliver messages to his departed grandmother. Certainly this is a gentle allegory for Tomas life – one spent as a sort of outcast, especially prior to his adoption.

It can be quite pokey at times, and a 10 minute trim from its 100-minute running time would have been welcome. Editing is somewhat suspect as well, and at times interferes with the storyline.

But the film tells a rich story of love and acceptance, mixing it well with a touch of



Tomas (John Bell) is adopted by Maire (Connie Nielsen) in "A Shine of Rainbows."

quiet humor and brief moments of adventure and tension.

Quinn, whose work seems underappreciated in other films, does a great job here as he tries to accept his new role as an adoptive father. John Bell as Tomas does a superlative job, and Connie Nielsen as Maire seems well cast for her role, although at times her optimism seems somewhat false.

Stunning cinematography and a quiet Irish score underline this gentle film, one that gives one pause to think about things,

but not too hard.

"A Shine or Rainbows" probably won't be on any "best of" lists this year, but that's certainly not for lack of sincerity. It is a perfect holiday season film.

Happy Solstice, Christmas, Kwanzaa, belated Hanukkah, Boxing Day, or whatever it is, if anything, you celebrate! jeffberg@lascrucesbulletin.com. Jeff Berg is a board member of the Mesilla Valley Film Society. These reviews reflect his opinion of the movie, not that of anyone else connected with the film society.

FILM REVIEW

"A Shine of Rainbows" opens Sunday, Dec. 26, at the Fountain Theatre. Please note that the theater is closed on Dec. 24-25. Although not rated, a "G" would certainly fit well here. Running time is 100 minutes.

GRADE
A-



Nancy (Tara Alice Sully), Tomas (John Bell) and Seamus (Jack Gleeson)



Tomas befriends a misfit seal who he believes can take messages to his departed grandmother in "A Shine of Rainbows," which opens Sunday, Dec. 26, at the Fountain Theatre.

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AtTheMovies

'The wicked flee when none pursueth'

'True Grit' returns to original source thanks to the Coens

Review by **Jeff Berg**
Las Cruces Bulletin

"The Dude" has replaced "The Duke," and boy has he done a good job.

Jeff Bridges, who recently won an Oscar for his role in "Crazy Heart," has stepped into the boots of The Duke (John Wayne) and fills them handsomely.

In this remake of the only film that Duke Wayne ever won an Oscar for (certainly not his best performance), Joel and Ethan Coen, whose previous works include "Blood Simple" – which will screen at the Fountain Theatre on Jan. 22, 2011 – and another mostly made in New Mexico piece, "No Country for Old Men," have upgraded the film and taken to heart the style and dialogue of the Charles Portis novel upon which the story is based.

Newcomer extraordinaire Hailee Steinfeld offers a young woman, strong of spirit, who will suffer no shenanigans gladly from the likes of Bridges' loutish, one-eyed, hard drinking, not quite straight shooting U.S. Marshal Rooster Cogburn. Nor will her grit be tarnished or her sand spilled by the likes of Texas Ranger LeBoeuf (Matt Damon), who sides with her and Cogburn as she hunts down the man who shot her pa.

I was skeptical when I saw Damon cast as LeBoeuf, as I am not much of a fan of his work, but he holds his own here, helped along by excellent costuming and trueness to the spirit of the dialogue and utterances of the times.

Prodded by the intelligent and well-read 14-year-old Mattie Ross (Steinfeld), Cogburn accepts her offer of \$100 to track Tom Chaney, the killer who has taken off for Indian Territory, now known as Oklahoma.

The Coens pull off an interesting location coup in the film, successfully (usually) masquerading northern New Mexico to look like Arkansas and Oklahoma by using scant light, smoke and fog effects that offer an often gently bleak feeling to the surroundings while keeping the story real.

As the three venture into Indian Territory, they occasionally (somewhat like the sparkling and unusual Johnny Depp Western of a few years yonder, "Dead Man") encounter unusual Western characters, none of whom can be slotted in as stereotypes.

They discover the body of a dead man hung very high in a tall tree for no apparent reason, and when Ross asks Cogburn why someone would do that, the often pickled marshal offers, "They probably thought he'd be more dead that way." They take the corpse with them, knowing that even a dead man has value, and the corpse reappears two more times, once when they trade it to a First Nations warrior and again when a bear skin clad "doctor" offers the body back to them, sans teeth.

But the Coens' usual blend of humor (a cornbread shoot out is marvelous and beautifully photographed) and dark humanity is not often present in this picture. Rather it has been replaced with a truism to the book, both in tone, dialogue, story and setting. Gone is Ross' hard edged offerings on religion, but that really isn't necessary here, because you know that no one needs religion during such times as these.

As their journey continues, LeBoeuf and Cogburn taunt and challenge each other, sometimes due to Cogburn's fondness for drink, other times it is because LeBoeuf is from Texas. Twice he rides off to leave Cogburn and Ross to their fate, calling out "A-Dee-Os" – butchering even the simplest word



U.S. Marshal Reuben J. "Rooster" Cogburn (Jeff Bridges) pursues the murderer of Mattie's father.

of the Spanish language.

No mind, you know they will reunite when necessary, and when they do, there is hell to pay.

When the good finally encounters the bad, we are introduced to brief performances by Josh Brolin as Chaney and Barry Pepper, certainly one of the most underrated actors in the business (check out his performances again in "Saving Private Ryan," "The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada" and, if it ever gets released, "Like Dandelion Dust") as the leader of the band of bad, Lucky Ned Pepper, who Cogburn knows from reputation and a previous encounter. Lucky Ned, though a bad man with bad teeth, does maintain a sense of honor, which allows Ross to continue her quest.

Nothing like the original version, the Coens' "True Grit" is a sight to behold. Already on many critics "best of" lists for 2010 (and soon to be on mine ... check it out in next week's Bulletin), the Coens have created an accessible and slightly revisionist Western that will hopefully allow for the next revival of the ever stalwart genre, something I would embrace heartily.



Cogburn is hired by Mattie Ross (extraordinary newcomer Hailee Steinfeld) to track down her father's killer.



Texas Ranger LeBoeuf (Matt Damon) joins in the pursuit.

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TRUE GRIT
Starring: Jeff Bridges,
Matt Damon and
Hailee Steinfeld
Director: Joel and
Ethan Coen
Running time:
113 minutes
Rating: PG-13

Film Review

The title quote is from the film's opening credits. "True Grit" starts Saturday, Dec. 26, at Allen Theatres.

Grade A+



At The Movies

Picking the Flicks



Movie information from www.rottentomatoes.com. Thumbs-up based on a 5-point scale.

<p>Tron Legacy Rating: PG Plot Overview: Sam Flynn looks into his father's disappearance and finds himself pulled into the digital world of Tron, where his father has been living for 25 years. Starring: Jeff Bridges Director: Joseph Kosinski</p> 	<p>The Tourist Rating: PG-13 Plot Overview: An American tourist's playful dalliance with a stranger leads to a web of intrigue, romance and danger. Starring: Angelina Jolie, Johnny Depp Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck</p> 
<p>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One Rating: PG-13 Plot Overview: In this seventh installment, Harry faces new troubles; – he must collect all of the Horcruxes that the evil Lord Voldemort has left behind. Starring: Daniel Radcliffe Director: David Yates</p> 	<p>How Do You Know Rating: R Plot Overview: A romantic comedy centered on the love triangle between a professional softball player, a corporate executive and a major-league pitcher. Starring: Reese Witherspoon, Owen Wilson Director: James Brooks</p> 
<p>Tangled Rating: PG Plot Overview: When the kingdom's most wanted – and most charming – bandit hides out in a mysterious tower, he's taken hostage by Rapunzel. Starring: Mandy Moore Directors: Nathan Greno, Byron Howard</p> 	<p>RED Rating: PG-13 Plot Overview: An action-comedy about the CIA's former top agents, but the secrets they know just made them the agency's top targets. Starring: Bruce Willis, Helen Mirren Director: Robert Schwentke</p> 
<p>Secretariat Rating: PG Plot Overview: Based on the remarkable true story of maybe the greatest racehorse of all time. Starring: Diane Lane Director: Randall Wallace</p> 	<p>The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader Rating: PG Plot Overview: Lucy and Edmund Pevensie return to Narnia where they take a trip aboard the royal ship The Dawn Treader. Starring: Ben Barnes Director: Michael Apted</p> 
<p>The Fighter Rating: R Plot Overview: A look at the early years of boxer "Irish" Micky Ward and his brother who helped train him before going pro in the mid-'80s. Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Amy Adams Director: David Russell</p> 	<p>Yogi B Rating: PG Plot Overview: Yogi, everyone's favorite pic-a-nic basket-stealing bear, must prove he really is "smarter than the average bear," to find a way to save Jellystone Park from closing forever. Starring: Dan Akroyd Director: Eric Brevig</p> 
<p>Due Date Rating: R Plot Overview: A high-strung father-to-be is forced to hitch a ride with a college slacker on a road trip in order to make it to his child's birth on time. Starring: Robert Downey Jr. Director: Todd Phillips</p> 	<p>Life As We Know It Rating: PG-13 Plot Overview: Two single adults become caregivers to an orphaned girl when their mutual best friends die in an accident. Starring: Katherine Heigl, Josh Duhamel Director: Greg Berlanti</p> 
<p>Little Fockers Rating: PG-13 Plot Overview: Greg and Pam, from "Meet the Parents" and "Meet the Fockers," are raising their mischievous son who makes their lives a wreck. Starring: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro Director: Paul Weitz OPENING DEC. 22</p> 	<p>True Grit Rating: PG-13 Plot Overview: A tough U.S. Marshal helps a stubborn young woman track down her father's murderer. Starring: Jeff Bridges, Josh Brolin Directors: Joel and Ethan Coen OPENING DEC. 22</p> 
<p>Gulliver's Travels Rating: PG Plot Overview: Travel writer Lemuel Gulliver takes an assignment in Bermuda, but ends up on the island of Lilliput, where he towers over its tiny citizens. Starring: Jack Black, Jason Segel Director: Rob Letterman OPENING DEC. 25</p> 	<p>Black Swan Rating: R Plot Overview: A psychological thriller set in the world of ballet. Nina, a featured dancer, finds herself locked in a web of competitive intrigue with a new rival at the company. Starring: Natalie Portman Director: Darren Aronofsky OPENING DEC. 22</p> 

New this week on DVD Tuesday, Dec. 28

- The American**
Rating: R
Genre: Suspense
Starring: George Clooney
Director: Anton Corbijn
- Resident Evil: Afterlife**
Rating: R
Genre: Action, Horror
Starring: Milla Jovovich
Director: Paul W.S. Anderson
- The Haunting of Amelia**
Rating: NR
Genre: Suspense
Starring: Tania Raymonde
Director: A.D. Calvo
- And Soon the Darkness**
Rating: R
Genre: Suspense
Starring: Amber Heard
Director: Marcos Efron
- Handsome Harry**
Rating: R
Genre: Drama
Starring: Steve Buscemi
Director: Bette Gordon

Top Grossing Dec. 17-19

- Tron Legacy** (Week No. 1) \$43,600,000
- Yogi Bear** (Week No. 1) \$16,705,000
- The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader** (Week No. 2) \$12,400,000
- The Fighter** (Week No. 2) \$12,200,000
- The Tourist** (Week No. 2) \$8,700,000
- Tangled** (Week No. 4) \$8,676,000
- Black Swan** (Week No. 3) \$8,300,000
- How Do You Know** (Week No. 1) \$7,600,000
- Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part One** (Week No. 5) \$4,845,000
- Unstoppable** (Week No. 6) \$1,800,000

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Dec. 26 - Dec. 30 A Shine of Rainbows 2009, 101 min., directed by Vic Sarin.	Dec. 31 - Jan. 6 The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest 2009, 147 min., OPEN New Year's Eve with 5 p.m. showing of <i>Millennium: The Story before the 7:30 film.</i>	Saturday CineMatinee POPCORN BOWL! Jan. 1 only 11 a.m. Bagdad Café 1987, 90 min., rated PG Halftime Lunch with Russ Smith's Happy Dog Food Cart 1:30 p.m. Love Ranch 2010, 117 min., rated R
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On December 24th, All Theatres will not play the last listed showtime for each movie!



TELSHOR 12

IRON LEGACY DAILY 11:30, 2:45, 6:05, 9:15 (PG) \$2 UPCHARGE NO PASS OF ANY KIND

IRON LEGACY DAILY 12:00, 3:15, 6:35, 9:45 (PG) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

YOGI BEAR DAILY 12:45, 2:50, 4:55, 7:00, 9:05 (PG) \$2 UPCHARGE NO PASS OF ANY KIND

YOGI BEAR DAILY 12:35, 2:55, 5:05, 7:35, 9:40 (PG) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

NARNIA DAILY 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00 (PG) \$2 UPCHARGE NO PASS OF ANY KIND

Little Fockers DAILY 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:45, 9:00 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

THE FIGHTER DAILY 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00 (R) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS DAILY 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:05, 9:20 (PG) NO PASS OF ANY KIND

TRUE GRIT DAILY 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 9:55 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS DAILY 11:50, 2:10, 4:25, 6:30, 8:50 (PG) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

Tangled DAILY 11:30, 4:35, 9:30 (PG)

NARNIA DAILY 2:00, 6:55 (PG)

How Do You Know DAILY 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

Little Fockers

Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Blythe Danner, Jeri Polo, Jessica Alba, Dustin Hoffman, Barbra Streisand

Kids bring everyone closer, right?

TELSHOR 12 DAILY AT 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:45, 9:00 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

CINEPORT 10 DAILY AT 11:35, 12:05, 2:00, 2:35, 4:15, 4:50, 6:35, 7:30, 9:10, 9:50 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

JACK BLACK

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IN 2D DAILY AT 11:50, 2:10, 4:25, 6:30, 8:50 (PG) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

TRUE GRIT

JEFF BRIDGES, MATT DAMON, JOSH BROLIN

WRITTEN FOR THE SCREEN AND DIRECTED BY JOEL & ETHAN COEN

TELSHOR 12 DAILY AT 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 9:55 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

CINEPORT 10 DAILY AT 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:15, 9:45 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

BLACK SWAN

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YOGI BEAR DAILY 1:00, 3:05, 5:10, 7:15, 9:20 (PG) \$2 UPCHARGE NO PASS OF ANY KIND

Harry Potter DAILY 2:45, 6:05 (PG13)

Tangled DAILY 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:10, 9:30 (PG) \$2 UPCHARGE NO PASS OF ANY KIND

BLACK SWAN DAILY 11:45, 2:05, 4:25, 7:20, 9:40 (R) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

IRON LEGACY DAILY 12:10, 3:25, 6:15, 9:30 (PG) \$2 UPCHARGE NO PASS OF ANY KIND

DUE DATE DAILY 12:00, 9:30 (R)

THE TOURIST DAILY 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50 (PG13)

Little Fockers DAILY 11:35, 12:05, 2:00, 2:35, 4:15, 4:50, 6:35, 7:30, 9:10, 9:50 (PG13) NO PASS OR DISCOUNT

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SECRETARIA DAILY 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 (PG)

LIFE AS WE KNOW IT DAILY 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00 (PG13)

RED DAILY 2:10, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 (PG13)

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We deserve a break

Natisha Hales
Adventures in Dieting



Whether we want to or not, our weight is something we become aware of at least once a day. When we get up in the morning, get dressed, every time we look in the mirror, every time we eat and every time we turn on the television. If it comes to mind during every one of those instances, it can be absolutely exhausting.

While we take days off of work and school, we should also take some days off from worrying about how much we weigh and how we're going to lose those 10 pounds, love handles or thunder thighs. I'm not suggesting we should binge and gorge ourselves on anything and everything – though the holidays can encourage it. I am saying we should calm down and relax.

If you weigh yourself every day – I do, and it can be quite addictive – resist the urge to step on the scale for the rest of the week. If you count calories, ignore the labels and simply enjoy the food you're about to eat. Remember how good it tastes without thinking, "Oh, I shouldn't have eaten that," or "I really have to run that queso off tonight."

If you make healthy decisions regarding your diet every day, you're probably going to make similar decisions without even realizing it, so take a vacation from the strict rules you've imposed on yourself. Don't think about it. You don't think about work when you're on vacation, so take a vacation from your diet – dwelling on it can become just as taxing on the mind and body as all the other holiday stressors we've been warning you about for the past month.

The holidays should be a time for family. Enjoying the quirks of your rarely seen relatives who live on the other side of the country – or world – and spending more quality time with those you see on a regular basis. That in itself can boost your mental health. Since I've moved next door to my brother and his family, it's been a blast and it has lifted my spirits, even if I have three little munchkins running back and forth between each house every day. A full house can be stressful, but at the same time, I'm glad to know that this is my family and they love me as much as I love them – no matter how much I weigh or what I look like.

If you really do obsess about your weight or your diet, try to occupy your time with something else – watch movies together, play some board games or find a way to burn calories while spending time with your family, like playing a game outside in the yard. The weather outside is far from frightful in this part of the country, and part of the beautiful day should be spent outside.

Not only will taking a break keep you from disappointing yourself when you fail to follow your diet or exercise routine over Christmas, but it will prepare you for the new year. It's so cliché, yet each

See **Break** on page D4

Convenient, affordable care

The new Quick Care Clinic now open on Telshor

By **Natisha Hales**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Following a trend that has taken the nation by storm, business partners John Hadley and Alfonso Archuleta opened Quick Care Clinic, a walk-in, non-urgent medical clinic, at 840 N. Telshor Blvd., Suite G.

The clinic treats patients of all ages with a wide variety of non-life threatening injuries and illnesses, and the key is that the clinic is open beyond the hours of a normal family practice where the wait can be up to three hours, Hadley said.

"We have a lot of doctors in town, but it's still not enough," he said. "When people get sick, it's always after hours, and the option was to go to ER. They don't have to do that anymore."

Two years of research was conducted before the business partners – builders by trade – decided to take the plunge into the health care field, but it was a good business venture, Archuleta said.

Hadley said he has already seen success with a similar clinic in Albuquerque that opened in September, and they opened the Quick Care Clinic in Las Cruces in mid-October. The clinic, Hadley said, is not designed to replace a family doctor, but fill an immediate need of briefly seeing a doctor or certified nurse practitioner and obtaining a prescription.

"When you're sick, you don't care about the ambiance, you just want to go in and out and get a prescription or get a referral," Hadley said.

Some have been skeptical of the retail clinic sector – or "Doc in the Box," as Hadley jokingly calls it – but Hadley said everyone is just as qualified, and the care is the same as it would be in a family practice. Hadley himself was a bit skeptical until his first visit to a walk-in clinic 20 years ago in New Jersey.

See **Clinic** on page D4



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Natisha Hales

Co-owner John Hadley, medical assistant Elva Aguirre, office manager Melissa Barela, Dr. Emilio Rivera and co-owner Alfonso Archuleta welcome patients to Quick Care Clinic, which opened in mid-October.

Don't shoot your eye out



Before allowing your child to play with his or her new toys, inspect them to ensure they do not pose a safety hazard.

It's not too late to give safe toys

By **Natisha Hales**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Even if the Christmas shopping is complete, those who buy gifts for children should always be aware of giving safe toys and gifts, and Prevent Blindness America is looking to ensure that awareness by naming December as Safe Toys and Gifts Month.

When purchasing gifts for their little loved ones, shoppers should be prompted to keep in mind safety and suitability, and knowing what to look out for can make a big difference in preventing injuries, despite the good intentions of the gifts.

When your children open their

Christmas gifts this year, take time to observe the cautions issued by Prevent Blindness America and decide whether you need to return or exchange your gift for a more appropriate one.

Inspect all gifts before opening. It may not be something your child will be happy with, but it's important to inspect all children's gifts before allowing children to play with them. In the long run, your inspections can prevent any injuries, even if your child may not realize it at the time.

Make sure the gift is age-appropriate. Even if the thought is that the child will "grow into it" or they're smarter than their normal

See **Toys** on page D4

'Look, Daddy, it's snowing'



Bob Nosbisch
*Getting the
Word Out*

December 1976. I was 20 years old, working in a military personnel office at Bitburg Air Base, West Germany. After a tour of duty in Utah, this was my first overseas assignment. Like many other young guys in the military, I wore the mask of bravado, showing that I could get through Christmas without getting emotional or homesick even though my family was on the other side of the world.

Many of my fellow airmen had returned to the U.S. to celebrate Christmas or other holidays with their families. Others had taken off for the German or Swiss Alps for some great skiing. Since I had just arrived in Germany two months ago, my savings of annual leave and money were quite depleted so I wasn't going anywhere.

A few days before Dec. 25, one of my colleagues, Joe Kindler, asked me what I was doing for Christmas. Before I could answer, Joe said, "Aleta and I would like to invite you and Andy over for Christmas. We'll pick you up." Aleta was Joe's wife; "Andy" Anderson was a work colleague.

Something pierced my veil of bravado and instead of pretending I had plans, I said, "That's very nice of you and Aleta, Joe. I'll be happy to share Christmas at your house."

It's hard to believe that 34 years have passed since my first Christmas in Germany and I still do not remember what we ate, but I do fondly recall Joe and Aleta's kindness by taking two guys out of the barracks and sharing a Christmas meal with them, asking for nothing in return.

Fast forward to December 1999. After attending Christmas Eve church services, some friends and their children came to our house. While Daniel, Kelli and Erica played with our children, Laura and Dylan, in one of the rooms, the adults visited in

another room. Suddenly, our adult laughter was interrupted by...

"Mr. Nosbisch! Mrs. Nosbisch! Laura doesn't feel good! We think she's sick!"

The six adults looked down into the faces of four grim-faced elementary school children who were concerned that one of their friends was sick.

We went back to check on Laura. With flushed cheeks and sad eyes, she obviously looked as if she did not feel well. After taking her temperature, I told our friends they were welcome to stay, but I was taking Laura to Prompt Care.

By the time Laura and I arrived at Prompt Care, several other sick children and their parents or other caretakers already were there. After signing in and taking care of paperwork, we waited. As we waited, I thought, "What a way to spend Christmas Eve - father and daughter in Prompt Care. This is special."

After a nurse checked out Laura, a doctor briefly examined her and then wrote a prescription. As Laura and I left the building, she looked up, smiled weakly, and said, "Look, Daddy. It's snowing." Sure enough, a light snow was falling on Las Cruces. I looked at my watch. It was 12:10 a.m. Dec. 25. As we drove to a local pharmacy to get the prescription filled, I thought, "What a way to welcome Christmas Day. Here I am with my sick 9-year-old daughter and snow is falling in Las Cruces. This is truly memorable."

The kindness of Joe and Aleta Kindler in 1976 and a doctor and nurse in 1999 brightened up two of my Christmases in different ways. To those of you who brighten up your communities by giving of yourselves and making your communities better places in which to live, "Thank you."

Merry Christmas and best wishes for a prosperous 2011!

Bob Nosbisch is the educational outreach coordinator for the College of Health and Social Services at New Mexico State University.



More than 70 health care professionals from all over the world, including NMSU nursing professor Geri Schmotzer, traveled to Cuba in November with the American Public Health Association.

Nursing professor learns from Cuba

Schmotzer will pass public health experiences on to students at New Mexico State University

New Mexico State University nursing professor Geri Schmotzer traveled to Cuba in November with the American Public Health Association, gaining experience and knowledge she will use in the classroom setting.

Schmotzer represented NMSU among more than 70 other health care professionals from around the world who traveled to Cuba. The group visited several health institutions in the country, including the National School of Public Health.

"It was a great opportunity to look at a system that works, and works fairly well, and to represent NMSU while doing so," Schmotzer said.

Schmotzer said many of the experiences and information she received in Cuba will contribute to her teaching at NMSU. Because

health care reform is currently at the top of the political arena in the United States, Schmotzer can incorporate many things she learned about the Cuban health care system into her teaching to make it more relevant and interesting.

"Because I teach community health and nursing, I can use a lot of what I experienced in Cuba in the classroom," she said.

Schmotzer said trips such as this one are important and educational to people in health-related careers, and she encouraged prospective and current health care professionals to engage in a similar experience.

"It was a great learning experience," Schmotzer said. "It was also great to see how our Cuban counterparts were anxious and willing to develop a working relationship with people in the United States."

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Healthy Happenings



ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS/ DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES SUPPORT GROUP

Adult Children of Alcoholics and Other Dysfunctional Families support group meets at 2 p.m. Sundays at 903 Piñon Ave. This is a 12-step program for men and women who grew up in alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional homes. They meet in a mutually respectful, safe environment and acknowledge their common experiences. For more information, visit www.adultchildren.org.

TOPS MEETING CHAPTER 381

Take Off Pounds Sensibly Chapter 381 is open to new members of all ages at its Thursday morning meetings, which start with a private weigh-in from 10 to 10:30 a.m. Weigh-ins are followed by group discussions of weight loss, dietary help and nutrition. The group meets at Trails West Senior Community, 1450 Avenida de Mesilla, in the Main Room. For more information, call 523-6240.

T'AI CHI CHIH CLASSES

Learn how to activate the Chi (vital force) with T'ai Chi Chih: Joy Thru Movement, a moving discipline comprised of 19 movements and one pose. Each Tuesday, accredited instructor Rose Alvarez-Diosdado holds free classes for beginners from 9 to 10 a.m. and for more experienced practitioners from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. in the fourth-floor Women's Resource Room at MountainView Regional Medical Center, 4351 E. Lohman Ave. No registration is required. For more information, call 526-3016.

WALKING GROUP

The City of Las Cruces encourages the public to join the Rise and Shine Walking Group at 6 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The group meets at Meerscheidt Recreation Center, 1600 E. Hadley Ave. The cost is \$1.50 per person, per day, and a

30-day punch pass is \$36. For more information, call the Meerscheidt Recreation Center at 541-2563. The TTY number is 541-2661.

CARING BRIDGE SUPPORT GROUP

Caring Bridge, an activity support group for adults in recovery from mental illness, meets from 4 to 6 p.m. every Monday and Wednesday at the Bridge, 2511 Chaparral St. The group matches those in need of support with caring volunteers to help build bonds, share experiences and create arts and crafts to sell in a supportive environment. For more information, call Kathy or David at 522-6404 or email bridge@nmsu.edu.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Overeaters Anonymous is a 12-step, spiritual program for those with a desire to stop eating compulsively. There are no fees. The program meets at 7 p.m. each Monday at Unity Church of Las Cruces, 125 Wyatt Drive. Enter through the back door. The group also has a big-book meeting at 2 p.m. Fridays at Newman Center, 2615 S. Solano Drive.

YOGA CLASSES AT MEERSCHIEDT

The City of Las Cruces offers ongoing yoga classes for all ages from 9 to 10 a.m. each Tuesday and Thursday at the Meerscheidt Recreation Center, 1600 E. Hadley Ave. Classes are taught by Olivia Solomon, a certified Kripalu instructor. The cost is \$1.50 per class. For more information, call 541-2563.

ZUMBA CLASSES

The City of Las Cruces offers a Zumba class from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. Mondays and 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesdays at Meerscheidt Recreation Center, 1600 E. Hadley Ave. The fee is \$1.50 per person. For more information, call 541-2563. The TTY number is 541-2661.

T'AI CHI CHIH, YOGA CLASSES

Clear Mind Zen Temple,

642 S. Alameda Blvd., will offer T'ai Chi Chih classes from 4 to 5 p.m. each Wednesday with certified instructor Rose Alvarez-Diosdado.

Certified yoga instructor Susie Citrin will offer yoga classes from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. each Thursday at the temple.

A small donation is asked for each class.

For more information, call Harvey Hilbert at 680-6680.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Overeaters Anonymous meets from noon to 1 p.m. every Wednesday at St. James Episcopal Church on the corner of St. James and South Main streets. For more information, call 647-5684.

YOGA CLASSES BY KAREN NICHOLS

Karen Nichols is offering 90-minute yoga classes for adults and upper teens at 6 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays at My Place, 140-A Wyatt Drive. Donations in excess of space rental benefit Jardin de los Niños. Participants should bring a yoga mat and any props they may need. Classes are suitable for all levels of experience. For more information, contact Karen at karen_f_n@yahoo.com or leave a message at 882-4943.

GAY COMMUNITY CENTER GROUPS

The Las Cruces Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender and Questioning/Queer (GLBTQ) Center, 1210 N. Main St. and is open from noon to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The center offers gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members of the community counseling, support groups and networking activities. For more information, call the center at 635-4902 or email info@newmexicolbtcenters.org.

Pride on Main AI-Anon is a 12-step support group and fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics that meets from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. each Tuesday. The group is open to all with a focus on the GLBT

- community.
- A GLBTQ youth support group meets from 7:30 to 9 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. For more information, email Richard at rm@nmsu.edu.
- A support group for parents, guardians, other family and friends caring for or raising a GLBTQ youth meets from 7:30 to 9 p.m. the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Learn new skills and receive support and advice on raising a GLBTQ youth.
- Sexual Compulsives Anonymous meets from 7 to 8 p.m. each Monday. The group is a 12-step program for anyone dealing with sexual compulsion.
- A LBTQ women's group meets from 7:30 to 9 p.m. the first and third Mondays of each month. The group provides an opportunity for LBTQ women to get know and support each other. For more information, email Dawn at dmbates@nmsu.edu.
- A men's group meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month. The group is an opportunity for men in the community to get together and support each other. It is an inter-generational group with discussions and activities designed by group members.
- Bisexuals' support group meets from 7:30 to 9 p.m. the second and fourth Thursdays of each month.

For more information, email Dawn or Dianna at dmbates@nmsu.edu or diannag@nmsu.edu.

LA LECHE LEAGUE

La Leche League of Las Cruces, a group for breastfeeding mothers and mothers-to-be interested in breastfeeding, has two monthly meetings. The daytime meeting is at 10 a.m. the first Friday of each month at the Southwest Environmental Center, 275 N. Downtown Mall. The evenings meetings are currently held at the home of leader Renee Beltran.

Contact Renee at 635-6683 or reneeeltran1@comcast.net for directions or any other inquiries.

CROHN'S AND ULCERATIVE COLITIS SUPPORT GROUP

Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis are collectively known as Irritable Bowel Disease or IBD. As many as 1 million Americans have IBD and both illnesses are similar. They are marked by an abnormal response by the body's immune system and include chronic inflammation of the intestines. There are no cures and management of the diseases includes medications, diet and surgery.

The group meets from 3 to 5 p.m. the second Sunday of each month in the Community Education Room

of Mountainview Regional Medical Center, 4311 E. Lohman Ave. The group is sponsored by the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America (www.cdfa.org).

For more information about the Crohn's and Colitis support group, call Jo Tice Bloom at 382-0722.

TRANSPLANT SUPPORT GROUP

The Southern New Mexico Transplant Support group meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at MountainView Regional Medical Center, 4311 E. Lohman Ave., in the Community Education Room. The group helps to bring information and support to people who have lost a family member, donor family members and transplant recipients. For more information, call 496-2627.

TAI CHI CLASS

A class for Tai Chi, Yang style long form, will begin at 9 a.m. Thursday Jan. 13, in the park by the Mesilla Park Recreation Center, 304 W. Bell Ave. The class will meet Thursdays from 9 to 10 a.m.

The class is taught by Steve Barowsky, director of the Center for Internal Arts and senior instructor for Energy Arts. The cost is \$80 for the first eight lessons. For information, call Barowsky at 915-584-4730 or email sbarowsky1@operamail.com.

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Quick Care

Continued from page D1

"I was so sick, and my neighbor told me about a retail clinic," he said. "I refused to go, and when I felt like I was ready to die, I finally went. I ended up staying with them, and they became my primary doctor – they knew everything about me. I went reluctantly, but I never looked back."

Even when he moved to other communities in northern New Jersey, Hadley said he would still make the drive to the clinic.

When he moved to Las Cruces, he realized the need for similar clinics in the area was evident, and even with several walk-in clinics in town there are still "pockets" that need to be filled, and Archuleta and Hadley plan on filling them – opening at least one additional clinic by August 2011.

Toys

Continued from page D1

age group already, age-appropriate toys are graded for safety as well. Many toys aimed at older children contain small pieces that can be swallowed and pose choking hazards for a younger child. Older children's toys also can also require more responsible handling that a younger child may not be able to accomplish, therefore posing another safety hazard.

Watch the recall list. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission includes an extensive list of toys recalled for posing any kind of hazard for consumers. The list, found by visiting www.cpsc.gov, includes pertinent information, such as the manufacturer, the safety hazard, the amount recalled and a remedy for those who have already purchased the gift. If your child has received a gift that has been placed on the recall list, don't even question whether or not they should be able to keep it.

Always read the labels. Before allowing a child to play with their new toy, make sure you read all warning labels that accom-

pany the gift. Manufacturers will alert consumers to small pieces that present choking hazards, fire safety issues, sharp edges and whether the toy should be used under adult supervision. Other important items to think about are fake food gifts, which children could mistakenly eat, or toxic items. Be sure that children's paints, crayons, bath products, markers and other items are non-toxic. If they are toxic, take them back and exchange them for non-toxic items.

Make sure their toys don't have excess strings, cords or items that can injure children. Although Ralphie of "A Christmas Story" wanted his BB gun more than anything for Christmas, his teacher, mother and the Santa he visited were right – he could shoot his eye out. Prevent Blindness America urges consumers not to purchase a BB gun for a child for the holidays – or any other toy that shoots or sends off pieces, such as a slingshot.

Ensure toys are durable. Avoid any toy that breaks into shards, splinters or other sharp pieces. Also, make sure toys can endure being twisted and chewed.

Keep allergies top of mind. Homemade candies and other goodies are always a well-received gift, but make sure that no foods contain anything your child is allergic to. Some foods – such as hard candies – are not suggested for children under 5. If you're not sure whether a food or item contains any allergens, opt for the safety of your child.

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For more information on Safe Toys and Gifts Month, visit:

Prevent Blindness America
www.preventblindness.org

Safe Kids USA
www.safekids.org

For more information about toy hazard recalls, visit:

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/toy.htm

U.S. Recall News
• www.usrecallnews.com/2010/11/2010-toy-recall-list.html

• www.recalls.gov

Break

Continued from page D1

and every one of us will plan to lose some weight once the new year begins. We usually make unattainable goals, and the gyms and exercise industry are counting on that. In my opinion, even having just a week off will help you start anew and gain success, and there are plenty of deals that await you.

From zero down and zero enrollment all the way to 100 percent guarantees, the world of weight loss hits its peak as millions of Americans vow to lose the "X" amount of pounds they put on during the previous year. It may be cliché to make the resolution, but it's even worse to join the millions who stop trying to lose weight after the first month or even week. Let's make a new year's resolution to take advantage of them, not the other way around.

Whether you've attained any weight-loss goals this year or not, who cares? You can always get back on track tomorrow. Happy holidays and happy eating!

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12/28 2:00 - 4:00 pm Village Inn 445 S Telshor Blvd Las Cruces, NM 88011	12/30 6:00 - 8:00 pm Furr's Family Dining 2340 Griggs Ave Las Cruces, NM 88001	12/30 11 am - 1:00 pm Golden Corral 601 S Telshor Blvd Las Cruces, NM 88011	12/30 5:00 - 7:00 pm Hilton Garden Inn 2550 S Don Roser Dr Las Cruces, NM 88011
12/30 8:00 - 10:00 am Village Inn 445 S Telshor Blvd Las Cruces, NM 88011	12/30 2:00 - 4:00 pm Village Inn 445 S Telshor Blvd Las Cruces, NM 88011	12/31 8:00 - 10:00 am Village Inn 445 S Telshor Blvd Las Cruces, NM 88011	12/31 2:00 - 4:00 pm Village Inn 445 S Telshor Blvd Las Cruces, NM 88011

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MERRY CHRISTMAS
and Happy New Year
to all Las Cruces!

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Using words in self-defense

This is the first in a series of articles on using words in self-defense.

At Gold Medal Taekwondo, I teach people of all ages how to use knees, palms, elbows and other body parts to defend themselves from attack. However, the most useful part of your body for self-defense is your brain.

Choices you make and things you say can either make you more or less likely to need to use your body in self-defense. The strategies I explain in this series of articles will help kids and adults deal with bullies and more dangerous predatory attackers. But verbal self-defense strategies are just as important to use with your friends, family members and co-workers.

Bad choice of wording or tone can turn a disagreement into an argument, permanently damaging an important relationship.

The first tip to remember is to control your emotions and choose your words carefully. When someone says something that makes you scared or angry, the first response that comes to mind is probably not a good one and is likely to be something that would hurt the other person, making them defensive and prone to saying something hurtful back. A good book on the subject, "Verbal Judo" by Doc Thompson, says, "In the bedroom, the boardroom and the bar room, personal face is always a fighting issue."

Let's start with something pretty easy – shifting responsibility for the problem to someone who isn't there in the room with you.

What do I mean by that? Brian Tracy, author and motivational speaker, calls it using a "straw man" to argue instead of you. When you tell an angry person (or anyone, really)

"no," that may hurt their feelings, causing them to want to hurt you in return. But if you are just relaying the message from someone else, it doesn't hit them as hard.

Let me present some examples:

At the dinner table, a relative makes a politically charged statement you completely disagree with. "So-and-so is the best congressman we've ever had," for example. Instead of saying, "No, he's a complete idiot," and getting mashed potatoes thrown at you, you could say, "What would you say to someone who feels he really made a mess of..."

You don't need to let them know that you are the person who feels he is a bad congressman until much later in the discussion.

At work, someone asks you to donate money to a charity you don't wish to support. Instead of hurting their feelings with the truth, you could tell them your spouse won't let you donate any money to any causes until the house budget is under control.

Here's how your child could use this. (Remember to practice it with them.) A school-

Marcy Shoberg
The Art of Self-Defense



mate, walking the line between friend and bully, asks your child to give them something or do something they don't feel comfortable about. Instead of refusing, the child could put it off on you saying, "I would, but my (mom or dad) is really strict about me not doing that. Sorry."

I'm sure there are situations where this "straw man" strategy wouldn't work. Therefore, I have another article to write.

Marcy Shoberg is owner of Gold Medal Taekwondo, 519 Boutz Road, which teaches sport and traditional taekwondo, as well as self-defense to preschoolers, kids, teens and adults. Shoberg is also director of Las Cruces Self Defense, specializing in teaching no-nonsense, reality-based self-defense to women, children and men. She can be reached at 526-4429 or gmktkd@zianet.com.

Health Briefs

Health reform law creates new protections

Beginning next month, the new health insurance law will provide increasing transparency and scrutiny over proposed health insurance premium hikes. Because New Mexico's health insurance premiums are among the fastest rising in the nation, U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman said he believes this increased scrutiny could greatly benefit the state.

The Department of Health and Human Services unveiled a new rule that gives states greater authority to perform more thorough reviews of a health insurance company's request for an increase in rates. Insurance companies will also be required to publicly disclose significant proposed increases, along with a justification.

The Affordable Health Care Act, enacted earlier this year, gave states this increased authority to oversee premium hikes. It also provided millions of dollars to states to hire staff and conduct analysis of insurance premium hikes proposed by insurance companies as well as to provide direct assistance to individuals and families experiencing difficulties with insurance companies.

"One of the main goals of the health insurance reform is to ensure American families are paying a fair amount on their premiums and getting high quality health care in return," Bingaman said. "Before reform, New Mexico premiums were increasing at an unsustainable rate. Because of the new law, health insurance companies will not only be required to spend more of the premiums they collect on delivering quality health care, they will also have to demonstrate that their proposed increases in premiums are justified."

More information on the regulation is available at www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/ratereview.html

Baby to be honored in Rose Parade float

The flower portrait of Joseph Quiambao, a 4-month-old Navajo infant from New Mexico who was an organ donor, will be one of 60 memorial "floragraph" portraits decorating the Donate Life float honoring organ and tissue donors in the 2011 Rose Parade.

The portraits will adorn colorful kites on the Donate Life float themed "Seize the Day" – a tribute to the legacy of those who have given the gift of life and the hopes they bring to those in need of transplants.

Joseph's mother made the decision to donate her infant son's organs after his tragic death in March 1998.

"I prayed for a miracle to save my son's life, but instead the

miracle was that Joseph was able to save the lives of two baby girls," said Bernadette Tohtsoni. "I didn't want another mother to suffer the loss of their precious child."

The family decorated the floragraph portrait using seeds, spices and other organic materials to cover the digitized photograph. Tohtsoni and her older son will be traveling to Pasadena, Calif., to put the finishing touches on the Donate Life float and watch the Rose Parade on New Year's Day.

"The Donate Life float provides us with the opportunity to honor and celebrate the life of a New Mexico organ donor with a memorial floragraph," said Patricia Niles, CEO of New Mexico Donor Services, the nonprofit organ and tissue recovery agency serving the state of New Mexico. "Bernadette and her family have been advocating on behalf of life-saving organ donation within the Native American community for many years."

Native Americans have the lowest donation rates in New Mexico, although they comprise 24 percent of the kidney transplant waiting list.

More than 28,000 lives are saved each year in the U.S. through the gift of organ donation, giving hope to more than 110,000 people awaiting a life-saving organ transplant. In addition, every year hundreds of thousands of people need donated corneas to prevent or cure blindness, and tissue to heal burns or save limbs.

Local food bank transitions

After almost 30 years of running the food bank, Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico has announced that Roadrunner Food Bank has taken over operations on Dec. 17.

Roadrunner Food Bank has been serving New Mexicans since 1980 and is the leader in creating solutions to end hunger in New Mexico.

"We are grateful to the community for their support during the transition and look forward to helping people achieve economic success," said CAASNM CEO Stacey Cox.

For more information, call Art Fine with Roadrunner Food Bank at 505-349-8845 or visit www.rafb.org.

Free Wheelchair Mission hosts benefit

The Free Wheelchair Mission will hold the second annual Valentine's Dinner Dance from 5 to 9:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 13, 2011, at the Ramada Palms Hotel & Conference Center, 201 E. University Ave.

The dance will benefit distribution efforts of the local Free Wheelchair Mission in Latin America. Tickets are \$35. For more information, call 525-2450 or email tickets@liftinglivesnm.org.

Caregiver class graduates



The staff and management of Casa de Oro Care Center, Casa del Sol Senior Care and The Village at Northrise announce the most recent graduates of the Caregiver One program. The Caregiver One program is part of the SunBridge CareWorks program, implemented in 2006 to provide health care education and training to its staff for certification as a nursing assistant.

Michael Hainer, executive director of Casa de Oro, congratulated the graduates for their dedication, commitment and compassion, and encouraged them to continue their education and to take advantage of opportunities to learn and grow. He also thanked family and friends for supporting the graduates in this effort.

Mary Helen Garcia from Casa de Oro was the facilitator of the program and Cuca Gilliland from The Village at Northrise was the mentor.

The 2010 Caregiver One graduating class includes Casa de Oro graduates Darrell A. Silk, Yuri Baca, Olivia Barrera, Adrienne Combs and Hugo Rodriguez; and Village at Northrise graduates Sandra Gaytan, Mary E. Hughes, Ashley Ray, Joann Sambrano, Elaina Sanchez and Ted Torrez. Silk was recognized as the valedictorian for the graduating class.

The Caregiver One program is an 11-week program offered through SunBridge Healthcare. Certified nursing assistants who meet eligibility criteria may apply for acceptance into the Caregiver One program.

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Remembering Baby Brianna at Brianna's Bench dedication

Atlas Home Repair photos

The Remember Me Foundation, an organization with a purpose to provide a permanent memorial for children who are victims of domestic murder, has dedicated a bench in memory of Brianna Lopez. Though the bench was completed and delivered to Atlas Home Repair in April, installation was delayed for months pending permission to place the bench at her gravesite in the Doña Ana Cemetery. In addition to planters, the bench also includes a plaque for Brianna, whose gravesite was previously unmarked. The plaque reads: "Brianna Mariah Lopez, Feb. 14, 2002 - July 19, 2002, The Small Voice We Never Heard."



Top: La Piñon Executive Director Donna Richmond, Cecil Campbell of Atlas Home Repair and Kip Scarborough of the District Attorney's Office. Seated: Remember Me volunteer Heather McCullar, Deputy District Attorney Amy Orlando, Kathryn Ahlefeld of Atlas Home Repair, victim advocate Lana Weir and Lisa Marshall of Atlas Home Repair



Atlas Home Repair President Cecil Campbell attaches the plaque to the bench as Deputy District Attorney Amy Orlando looks on during the dedication ceremony Monday, Dec. 20.

Health Brief

Cancer society guide explains new laws for cancer patients

Cancer patients and their families looking for information on how the new Affordable Care Act will help them better access health care can now turn to a new consumer-friendly guide developed by the American Cancer Society and its advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN).

The guide, which features the stories of real people who have battled cancer or helped loved ones fight the disease, describes how provisions of the law improve the quality of care and make health care more affordable, available and easier for patients to understand.

"This consumer guide is part of the American Cancer Society's efforts to educate the public about the Affordable Care Act and its benefits for cancer patients, survivors and their families," said Sandy Adondakis, New Mexico Government Relations Director for ACS CAN. "We want people to understand that the law, while not perfect, will meaningfully improve the health care system for people with cancer and save lives."

Since the Affordable Care Act was signed into law on March 23, key provisions have gone into effect that are giving seniors, children and the uninsured better access to quality, affordable health care. These provisions, as well as those that will be implemented over the next few years, will meaningfully improve the health care system for people touched by cancer. The new law will ensure that people with cancer will no longer:

- Be denied coverage due to pre-existing conditions;
- Be charged more for their coverage because of health status;
- Be faced with annual or lifetime coverage limits that cause a sudden termination of care; or
- Have to choose between saving their life or their life savings because they lack access to affordable coverage.

The guide outlines how the new Affordable Care Act will improve the quality and cost of health care in the United States for people with cancer and those at risk for cancer. The guide is posted on both the American Cancer Society's and ACS CAN's websites. For more information, visit www.cancer.org or www.acscan.org.

Merry Christmas!

Dr. David Warren,
Dr. Michael Law and staff.

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Wrapping gifts for *Be a Santa to a Senior*

Photos by Theresa Montoya Basaldua

Brenden Martinez, 12, helps organize gifts that were wrapped and bagged by volunteers and Home Instead Senior Care employees Tuesday, Dec. 21, at the facility. The gifts, which are placed in bags decorated by Hermosa Heights Elementary School students, will be delivered to seniors just before Christmas.



Volunteer Dawn Haven places a shirt into a gift bag.



Brett Ostler, 11, is eager to help.



Home Instead Senior Care caregiver Marie Miller and owner Jan Wimsatt organize the giftwrapping event. Home Instead Senior Care has sponsored the Be a Santa to a Senior program for six years, Wimsatt said, and this year, 500 seniors will receive gifts.



Tiffany Martinez shows off a gift ready to be delivered.

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ThePetReview

A great day at the dog park

Pet briefs

Dogs, owners enjoy the atmosphere

By **Natisha Hales**
Las Cruces Bulletin

It has been nearly two years since Las Cruces opened its first dog park, a public venue where dogs can run free without the restraints of a leash.

Built with \$150,000 secured by state legislators, the park opened in 2008 on Hermosa Street near the Meerscheidt Recreation Center. Since its opening, the park has been a tremendous success, according to incoming Las Cruces Dog Park Coalition board President Kevin Armstrong.

“Dogs need a place where they can be with other dogs. They’re very social animals,” Armstrong said. “There are people who use it every day, myself being one of them. We’ve been there in the snow and the dead heat of summer.”

Armstrong takes his two dogs – Kiwi, a blue heeler, and Scout, a terrier mix – and has watched the interaction of pets and their owners at the park, which has seen as many as 45 dogs at one time.

“It has been incredibly peaceful when you consider the number of dogs and people that are there,” he said.

There have been occasional problems among dogs, mostly a “quick lesson” taught when one dog



Jack Schleder poses with his dog Taylor, a Bouvier, at the Las Cruces Dog Park, located on Hermosa Street behind Meerscheidt Recreation Center.

is trying to interact with another who doesn’t want to interact, Armstrong said, but there have been no serious human injuries or hospitalizations.

In their research, members of the Las Cruces Dog Park Coalition found that most incidents take place when a dog is entering or leaving the park, and that imposing rules that require owners to remove an aggressive

dog has worked to decrease any opportunities for injuries.

In addition to its research, the nine-member board of the Las Cruces Dog Park Coalition actively works to ensure the dog park is a safe place for dogs and their owners with a priority to maintain and improve the park’s facilities. Though the park is run by the City of Las Cruces,

Armstrong said the coalition has a strong relationship with city Parks Administrator Mark Johnston.

The coalition donated more than \$3,500 to the city for a motion detector light for the gate area and a solar-powered light for the main park so it can be open after sunset. Armstrong said the coalition is organizing a thorough park cleaning next week, which will entail washing down posts, boulders and seating.

The organization also has a role in helping people understand how to use the park and get cooperation from those who may be violating the rules.

With its success, Armstrong said the park has become a place for social interaction among dogs and their owners.

“Most people want to find out what the dog’s name is, we tell dog stories, and you meet new people all the time,” he said. “The dogs really benefit from it a lot, sometimes dogs are so excited that you can hear them a block away in the car, but as soon as they come inside they quiet down. It’s really funny.”

For those who have never been to the dog park, Armstrong advises them to enter through the special-needs area of the park, which has been set aside for those dogs who may be more timid. But it’s important to make sure the dog is off the leash inside the double gate and then enter the main park when the dog is calm.

“You just have to trust that the dogs will take care of each other,” Armstrong said.

Reiki for animals

Pi-Yoga Studio is offering a Reiki Healing Clinic for Animals starting at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011, at the studio, 207 Avenida de Mesilla.

Reiki is a hands-on energy healing method originated in Japan that can help release emotional problems due to a traumatic situation, such as abuse or being hit by a car. Other benefits include helping your pet relax and healing your pet from a sickness or injury. There is a \$25 suggested donation.

For more information, call 526-0977.

ASCMV seeks volunteers

The Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley is looking for volunteers who love animals and want to do what they can to help. For more information, visit www.ascmv.org.

Fence materials needed

ACTion Programs for Animals (APA) is seeking fence materials to donate to its low-income clients so they can mend or build a fence, dog run or enclosure.

If you have leftover fencing materials to donate, APA will pick it up. For more information, call 644-0505 or email actionprogramsforanimals@yahoo.com.

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Looking Back

This week in the history of the Mesilla Valley

Marvin Tessneer
Out of the Past



100 years ago

1910

• A large audience attended a performance by world famous Shakespearian actor Frederick Ward of "Julius Caesar" at the armory. The Las Cruces Citizen noted that the people of the town could be counted on to turn out for worthy entertainments, but "were too wise to spend money on traveling stock companies of no merit."

• Undertaker H.C. Strong told his "friends and patrons" that he had not closed his undertaking business, but since "Las Cruces and Doña Ana County were the healthiest locales in the United States," he had acquired a real estate license to avoid "sitting around the office reading and doing nothing."

• Las Cruces Transfer Co. advertised the livery, feed and sale stables located behind the Don Bernardo Hotel, and also that its "buss and baggage wagon meets all trains."

• A poll of prominent businessmen showed most were in support of the new state constitution. R.D. Williams called it one of the best in the U.S., while D.S. Mystinger said it was one of the "rottenest things ever sprung on the American people."

75 years ago

1935

• Las Cruces were looking forward to the 1936 Sun Bowl pitting the underdog Aggies against Hardin-Simmons University. The Citizen rebuked the El Paso Times for predicting a three-touchdown win for the Hardin-Simmons Cowboys, noting that no team had scored more than one TD against the Aggies all year. Coach Jerry Hines predicted the Aggies would be "in splendid condition" for the game.

• "Too Tough to Kill" with Victor Jory and Sally O'Neill, and "Texas Terror" with John Wayne were playing at the Del Rio Theatre.

50 years ago

1960

• New 1961 "reflectorized" license plates were on sale said the local distributor, with only a rear plate being required. The plates would be good for three years as the state would begin issuing "tabs or stickers" to attach to the plates in the following years. Car plates were silver with red letters, while truck plates were silver with green letters.

• The sheriff's office was searching for White Sands Missile Range employee Oscar Piccus, who disappeared after visiting Charlie's Casino or Organ on Dec. 7. The day after Piccus disappeared, a snowstorm left 4-foot drifts in the Organ Mountains.



Photo by Louis B. Bentley reproduced courtesy of the New Mexico State Library Rio Grande Historical Collection
Another view of the Stephenson-Bennett mine shows a riser and the top of a vertical shaft. One of the oldest mines in the Organ district, ownership of the mine was complicated by political matters, including the annexation of the area by the United States. Prior to the Gadsden Purchase, the Mesilla Valley was considered to be in Mexico, and the ownership by Blas Duran was questioned due to his status as a "foreigner." After a series of lawsuits, the mine ended up in the hands of El Pasoan Hugh Stephenson.

• The Mesilla Valley Chamber of Commerce was offering "senior memberships" to all citizens who "have retired from gainful employment." The chamber also authorized a brochure designed to attract senior citizens from other parts of the country to retire in Las Cruces.

25 years ago

1985

• The Gospel Rescue Mission was preparing a meal of turkey with dressing, yams, vegetables and desserts for Las Cruces residents and transients passing through. The mission had been founded 15 year earlier by a group of people interested in helping those who were "down on their luck."

• The state's credits for solar equipment was set to expire at the end of the year, and the future of federal credits was uncertain. The Consumer Affairs Division of the state Attorney General's Office was getting many phone calls from consumers feeling pressured by solar companies desperate to make sales by the end of December. Consumers were advised to use caution when making purchases of solar equipment, and were warned not to allow themselves to be pressured, hyped or conned into buying something they don't want, don't need and can't afford.

Information gathered from NMSU Library's Microform Area and Archives and Special Collections. Edited by Jim Hilley.

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Information about hospice and palliative care, as well as advance care planning, also is available from Caring Connections. Visit caringinfo.org or call 1-800-658-8898.

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A different perspective at 'The Mouse's Tale Christmas Pageant'

Photos by Chris Mortenson



Rapping camels Stephen Jenkins, Michael Perduk and J.C. Ortega amp up the crowd during "The Mouse's Tale Christmas Pageant" Sunday, Dec. 19, at Morning Star United Methodist Church.

Sarah Jenkins as Old Granny Mouse



Five-year-old Moana Lowew is captivated by the Christmas play told from the point of view of the animals in the manger.



The animals and angels enjoying themselves during the play "The Mouse's Tale."



Annika Flora plays Mary.



Michael Durish breaks it down for the audience during one of the musical numbers in "The Mouse's Tale."

Church News

Continued from previous page
 Christmas Eve Friday, Dec. 24. The 4:30 p.m. service, for children of all ages, will include music and lessons. The 7:30 p.m. service will be led by the Chancel Choir, and include music, scripture, sermon and candlelight. For more information, call 526-5559.

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN ADVENT

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 4675 Bataan Memorial West, will hold its Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24, and Christmas service at 10:15 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 25. For more information, call 382-0220.

EL CALVARIO CHRISTMAS EVE

El Calvario United Methodist Church, 300 N. Campo St., invites the public to its Christmas Eve candlelight service with Holy Communion at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24. The church will then hold its winter Bible school from 10 a.m. to noon Monday, Dec. 27, through Thursday, Dec. 30, for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. A bilingual approach will be used. For more information, call 647-3155.

NATIVITY ORTHODOX SERVICE

St. Anthony of the Desert

Orthodox Mission, 518 N. Alameda Blvd., will hold nativity services Friday, Dec. 24, beginning with royal hours at 9 a.m. and vespers and liturgy of St. Basil the Great at 4 p.m. Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom in honor of the birth of the Lord will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 25. For more information, call 524-1071.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT CALVARY

Calvary Chapel Las Cruces, 139 S. Main St., parking lot No. 1, invites the community to its Christmas Eve candlelight service at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24. Worship songs, scripture reading, a short teaching and lighting of the candles with audience participation

will be given. For more information, call 524-0985.

CHRISTMAS AT UNITY

Unity of Las Cruces, 125 Wyatt Drive, will hold a shared Candlelight Christmas service at 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24, at the Center for Spiritual Living, 575 N. Main St. The 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 26, service will be the church's annual Burning Bowl Ceremony, followed by letters to God of your intentions and desires for the upcoming year. For more information, call 523-5592 or visit www.unityoflascruces.org.

ACTS RETREAT FOR MEN

Men ages 21 and up are invited to attend the ACTS Retreat Jan. 13-16, 2011, at the Cathedral of Immaculate Heart of Mary, 1240 S. Espina St. The retreat is an opportunity for men to deepen their relationship with Jesus, renew themselves spiritually, build lasting relationships and become more active in their church. The cost is \$60 and scholarships are available. For more information, call 524-8563.

UNITY NONPROFIT STORE

Unity of Las Cruces has opened a nonprofit store at its location, 125 Wyatt Drive. The store will feature handcrafted jewelry, home décor, gifts and more made by artisans

in developing countries. Proceeds will go back to the countries. Store hours are 9:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and Thursdays and 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sundays. For more information, call 523-5592 or visit www.unityoflascruces.org.

PEACE LUTHERAN PRAYER GROUPS

Peace Lutheran Church, 1701 Missouri Ave., is providing two prayer groups. A centering prayer group will meet weekly at 9:30 a.m. Saturdays and will include 20 minutes of meditation. A prayer group focused on support, healing and gratitude will be held at 4:30 p.m. Mondays in Classroom 107. For more information, call 522-7119.

SeniorActivities



Call the Munson Senior Center at 528-3000 or check postings at the facility, 975 S. Mesquite St., for information on ongoing programs.

AEROBICS CLASS

Aerobics class with Luis Ortega is at 9 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the Eastside Community Center, 310 N. Tornillo St. The suggested donation is 50 cents.

AQUATICS CLASS

Aquatics class (senior exercise class) with Nora Bailey is offered on a first-come, first-served basis from 11:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at Frenger Pool, 800 Parkview Drive. The suggested donation is 50 cents.

HATHA YOGA

Yoga classes are held at the Benavidez Community Center, 1045 McClure Road. Nora Bailey, a certified instructor, leads Hatha yoga classes beginning at 8 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Suggested donation is 50 cents.

CORE-FLOOR EXERCISE CLASS

Core-floor exercise classes with Lucille Garcia are held from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Munson Center,

975 S. Mesquite St., and from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. Thursdays at Mesilla Park Community Center, 304 W. Bell Ave. The suggested donation is 50 cents.

T'AI CHI CLASSES

T'ai Chi classes with instructor Jason Shoberg are held from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St. The suggested donation is 50 cents.

CHESS

Chess games are played from 8:30 a.m. to noon Fridays at the Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St. All are welcome. Participants are asked to bring chess sets, boards and clocks, if available.

CHINA PAINTERS

China painters class is from 1 to 4 p.m. Mondays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg is played from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursdays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

JEWELRY MAKING

Jewelry-making classes are from 1 to 4 p.m. Mondays

and Jewelry Lab is from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

BLOOD PRESSURE AND GLUCOSE CLINICS

Blood pressure and glucose clinics by Alpha Nurses are held:

- 10 a.m. to noon, Monday, Benavidez Community Center, 1045 McClure Road
- 10 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, Mesilla Park Community Center, 503 W. Bell Ave.
- 9 to 11 a.m. Wednesday, Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.
- 10 a.m. to noon, Thursday, East Side Center, 310 N. Tornillo St. Suggested donation is 25 cents.

BINGO MANIA

Bingo Mania is from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Wednesdays at the Eastside Community Center, 310 N. Tornillo St. No money is involved. Donations of old and/or new knickknacks for prizes are welcome. Call 541-2305 or 541-2304 for more information.

PINOCHLE

Pinochle players meet from noon to 5 p.m. Fridays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

HORSESHOE PITCHING

Horseshoe-pitching practice is held from 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday behind Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St. For more information, call Burt Trujillo at 522-4849.

LADIES' POOL TOURNAMENT

A free ladies' pool tournament open to ladies 50 years of age and older is held at 8:30 a.m. the first Monday of each month at the Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

MEN'S 8-BALL TOURNAMENT

A free men's 8-ball tournament open to men 50 years of age and older is held at 9:15 a.m. the last Wednesday of each month at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St. Sign up is from 8 to 9 a.m. For more information, call Dan Carrillo at 528-3111.

CANASTA

Canasta is played from noon to 4 p.m. Wednesdays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St. All are welcome.

WATERCOLOR PAINTING CLASS

Watercolor painting class is held from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Mondays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

STAINED-GLASS CLASSES

Beginning and advanced stained-glass class meets at 8 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and intermediate stained-glass class meets at 1 p.m. Wednesdays and Fridays at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St.

WOODCARVING CLASS

Woodcarving class meets from 9 a.m. to noon Fridays at the Eastside Community Center, 310 N. Tornillo St.

HANDS 'N' FEET CARD GAME

Hands 'n' Feet card game is from noon to 4 p.m. Thursdays at Eastside Community Center, 310 N. Tornillo St.

TRAVEL CLUB

The Voyagers Travel Club is open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday at Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St. The club is currently booking the following trips:

- **Fort Davis, Texas, and McDonald Observatory:** Jan. 17-19, 2011, Cost is \$270 double, \$315 single.
- **Sunland Park and War Eagle Museum:** Day trip Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2011.

Cost is \$25.

- **Mount Rushmore and Black Hills of South Dakota:** May 14-22, 2011. \$760 double, \$1,019 single. For more information, call Helen Glover at 528-3166.

WALKING GROUP

In case of bad weather, walks will take place at Mesilla Valley Mall. Minimum participants eight, maximum 14. All walks depart Munson Center, 975 S. Mesquite St., at 9 a.m. and return around 11 a.m.

- Tuesday, Dec. 21, and Thursday, Dec. 23: East Mesa Recreation Center, .2 mile loop.
- Tuesday, Dec. 28, and Thursday, Dec. 30: La Llorona Trail. For more information, call 528-3000 from 8:15 to 8:30 a.m.


DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Area drivers ages 50 and older can take the AARP Driver Safety Program Classes are scheduled from:



- Noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 28, Good Samaritan Society-Las Cruces Village, 3011 Buena Vida Circle. The cost is \$12 per person for AARP members and \$14 for nonmembers, paid at the door. Participants must bring a valid driver's license and a pen or pencil. For more information, visit www.aarp.com.

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Featured home: 1485 Vista del Cerro

Photos by
Francisco Tafoya



Located in Picacho Hills, the home at 1485 Vista del Cerro was built in 2007.



A square spa is connected to the swimming pool, which resides next to the grill area.



The library can hold more than 1,000 books.

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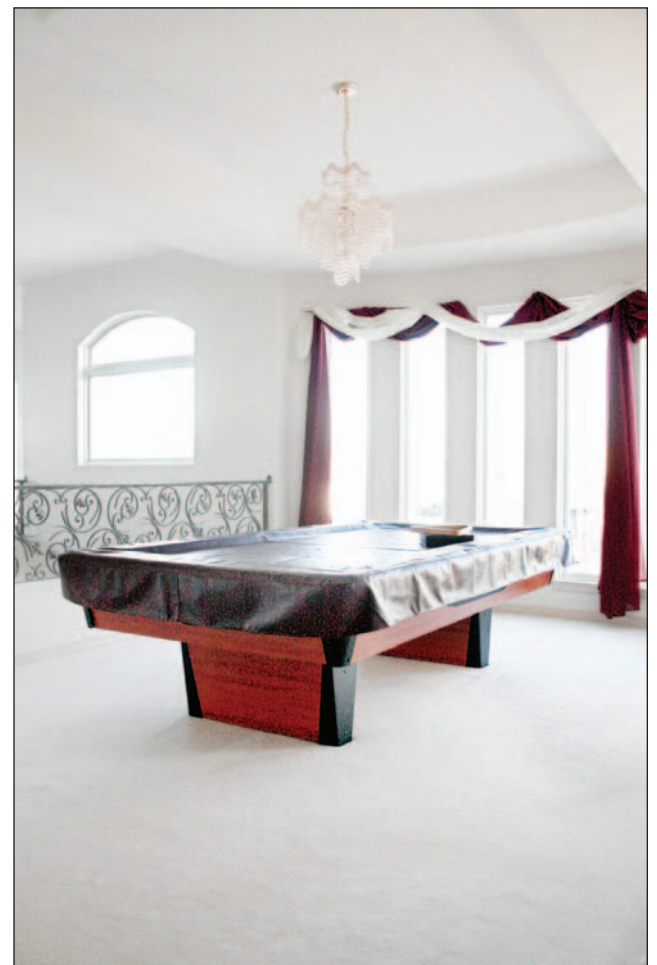


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A bay window brings natural light into an upstairs bedroom.



Upstairs includes a game area, perfect for a pool table.

Modern twist to Mediterranean style

Residents bring light and style to two-story Picacho Hills abode

By **Beth Sitzler**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Among the Southwest adobes and Tuscan dwellings that cover the Picacho Hills area is a two-story Mediterranean-influenced home unlike any other.

Built in 2007 for Margot and Case Van Dyke, Winton/Flair created the spacious abode at 1485 Vista del Cerro, which was designed to complement the surrounding neighborhood and capture the area's views, an important characteristic to the couple.

"The street is high, so we could build a two-story and not block anyone else," said Margot Van Dyke, adding that they purchased one of the last vacant lots on the street. "It provided us a better view from the second story."

Enclosed behind a short, wavy rock wall, the cream-colored home sits atop a small hill. A fountain surrounded by rock and native plants, including yuccas and ocotillos, leads to a portico covering the entrance.

"All of the homes in the neighborhood are neat and have xeriscaping to a certain degree," Van Dyke said.

Through the large, wood double doors is the foyer of the more than 4,000-square-foot home. The two-story entrance features copious amounts of natural light as well as a crystal chandelier. Other crystal light fixtures can be found throughout the home.

To the right of the entrance is the Van Dykes' favorite area – the library.

"We love the library," Van Dyke said. "We can read next to the fireplace, and there is so much light."

Skinny windows stacked on top of each other shine natural light on the built-in shelves, which can store more than 1,000 books, an important feature for Van Dyke.

"I'm a writer and I have to do a lot of research," she said. "The library was very good for me because it kept me from having to run to the (city) library."

Wanting to meld function with style, the couple installed a concrete block fireplace, a deviation from the home's two other granite fireplaces.



Encased in granite, the master bathroom features a jetted bathtub as well as a large walk-in shower.

"We wanted something totally different and unique," Van Dyke said.

In addition to the fireplaces, granite was also used to cover the floors.

"It's pretty unusual," Van Dyke said. "It's so nice. When it's hot in the summer, and you walk barefoot on the granite, it cools down your whole body. It's helped us lower our bills in the summer."

Across from the library, behind an arch and plaster pillars, is the formal dining room. The room is connected to a hallway that winds past the powder room and around to the great room.

Covered in white carpet, the spacious great room includes a fireplace as well as large, boxed windows. The room opens up to the kitchen. Filled with stainless-steel appliances and granite tile countertops, the kitchen is great for entertaining. The home's intercom system can

also be found in the kitchen.

Beside the kitchen is a bedroom, which the couple is currently using as an exercise area. Shut behind glass double doors, the room also features built-in shelves for storage.

Stairs tucked in the corner of the great room leads to the second story. Wrought-iron railing surrounds the game and wet bar area, allowing visitors to gaze down to the foyer and library. The large windows bring in the view of the surrounding neighborhood, city lights and Organ Mountains. To better enjoy the scenery, a short hall leads to the viewing deck.

The upstairs bedroom is connected to an office through a Jack and Jill bathroom. The office is also adjoined to a media room with its own balcony. Featuring surround sound and a projector, Van Dyke said the room is ideal for those who enjoy watching movies on a 9-foot screen.

Details

Featured home

1485 Vista del Cerro

Square footage

More than 4,000

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Bedrooms

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Bathrooms

Two and a half

Fireplaces

Three

Price

\$599,900

Special features

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The master suite can also be found upstairs. Showcasing a private deck and fireplace, the bedroom has enough room for a seating area.

Past the his-and-her closets, the bathroom was designed to be a relaxing destination. Covered in granite, the neutral-toned room includes double sinks and jetted bathtub, as well as a large walk-in shower, which is encased in tile and glass and features multiple showerheads.

Described as a "party home," Van Dyke said in addition to the up-close view of Picacho Peak, the backyard also features a barbecue area and a 6-foot deep heated swimming pool. A square spa covered in cement, designed to look like flagstone, is connected to the pool.

Within walking distance of Picacho Hills Country Club, Van Dyke said the home offers residents convenience as well as luxury.

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The skinny on plastic wrap

Clingy material isn't just for the leftovers

By **Beth Sitzler**
Las Cruces Bulletin

With the holidays here, you may notice your refrigerator and pantry shelves quickly filling with mounds of food.

A good way to preserve those tasty dishes longer is with plastic wrap, a thin substance that is rolled out to cover dishes and keep air out. The material creates a seal without the need for adhesive, thanks to its clingy characteristic.

Since accidentally being invented in 1953 from polyvinylidene chloride – the scientist was actually trying to create a thick plastic cover for his car – plastic wrap has seen several changes in its design over the years, including the material of which it's made – now a low-density polyethylene.

Perfect for storing a variety of food items, plastic wrap serves other purposes around the home.

1. Save your paint: The next time your do-it-yourself project has been interrupted, prevent your paint, putty or other liquid from drying out by covering it with plastic wrap. Simply remove a sheet of the clear substance and cover your paint or putty can, making sure the wrap is touching the surface of the goop, and attach the lid. Plastic wrap can also be used to preserve paint rollers for a day. Cover the roller in it and store it in the refrigerator, where it will remain moist.

2. Get an improved grip: While wearing gloves as you conduct yard work will keep your hands warm, it can also impair your grip, causing your rake or shovel to slip from your fingers. Keep your tools in the palm of your hand with plastic wrap. Just cover the handle with the stuff, and it will be easier to hold.

3. Enhance pain-relieving rubs: Has that

old knee injury flared up again? Relieve the pain of sore muscles or joints with liniment and plastic wrap. After rubbing the liquid pain killer into your skin, cover the tender area with a sheet of the plastic. The wrap will increase the heating effects of the rub, enhancing its effects. Be sure to test this trick on a small area to make sure it won't burn your skin.

4. Keep ice cream fresh: After that carton of ice cream has been opened and has sat in the freezer for sometime, ice crystals will begin to cover the top. Stop these crystals – which ruin the dessert's taste and texture – from forming with the help of plastic wrap. Before returning the container to the freezer, thoroughly wrap it in the plastic. While this might be an extra task, it will ensure that your ice cream remains fresh-tasting every time you get a bowl.

5. Shield the top of your refrigerator: The top of your refrigerator is an annoying and difficult area to clean. Make the task of cleaning this dust magnet easier with plastic wrap. After wiping down the surface, cover it with the clingy substance. When it comes time to clean the area, just remove the clear sheet and replace it with a fresh one.

6. Salvaged wine: Every wine enthusiast knows that exposure to air causes the alcoholic beverage to go bad, but how many know about cork taint? The term refers to wine that has a musty, unpleasant taste or odor caused by a cork that has been exposed to pesticides or chlorine bleach. This unsavory characteristic can be removed from the wine with the help of plastic wrap. Simply stuff a long length of the cling wrap into the bottle. Swirl it gently for five to 10 minutes, then remove the wrap and the bitter taint with it.



*Around-the-house item:
Plastic wrap*

7. Frottage your walls: Are your plain walls boring? Give your interior a new decorative look using plastic wrap. Using a technique known as frottage, French for "rub," wrinkled sheets of paper or plastic wrap and press it against freshly painted wall while the paint is still wet. Repeat this over the entire wall until you have achieved the textured look you desired.

8. Stop air drafts: A quick and temporary solution to leaking windows or doorframes can be found in your kitchen. Plug the gaps with pieces of plastic wrap. The sheets will stop air from coming in and out of the home until you can give it a more permanent repair.

9. Create makeshift booties: Whether you have to walk through snow, mud, paint or other messy substances, keep your shoes clean with booties created from plastic wrap. Wrap your shoes with several sheets of the clear stuff

and secure it with tape. After you're done, carefully tear off the plastic, removing the mess from your feet.

10. Care for a cast: Anyone who has ever broken a bone can testify to how important it is to keep the cast dry – which can make it difficult to bathe. Instead of skipping your daily shower, get some help from plastic wrap. Cover the cast with the storage wrap to create a barrier between the plaster and intruding water. Be sure to secure any gaps and seams with tape before you get into the bathtub.

11. Make your own rope: An easy replacement to rope for tying objects is to create your own with plastic wrap. Cut off a long piece of the wrap and twist it into a tightly wound string. Your improvised rope will be strong enough for just about any job, from creating a ponytail to securing a box lid. Plus, it can be reused when done.

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Tips make party throwing easy

Simple shortcuts for effortless, elegant holiday entertaining

It's the most wonderful time of the year, and often the busiest time, too, as family get-togethers and holiday celebrations quickly fill the winter months. This holiday season, you can save time and avoid chaos in the kitchen by taking a few simple shortcuts.

Whether you're the go-to host for the holiday festivities year after year or it's your very first time to serve up the annual feast, take comfort knowing you have these six time-saving tricks up your sleeve.

- Spice up store-bought.** Adding an unexpected, tasteful touch to store-bought foods and beverages is one of the easiest and least-expensive ways to wow your friends and family. For example, just a dash of cinnamon-citrus Tastefully Simple Warm Up! mulling spice mixed with your favorite apple cider can turn an ordinary drink into a heartwarming holiday experience.
- Seize the day (before).** Many hors d'oeuvres can be prepared in advance and simply heated – or reheated – in the oven or microwave on the day of your holiday party. Try combining precooked crab meat, cream cheese and a packet of cheese dip mix the day before your party, and all you'll have to do on the big day is bake it for five to seven minutes until it's golden, bubbly and so good your guests will never guess your secret.
- Give chopping the axe.** This year, there's no need to wipe away tears as you chop and mince onions and garlic for recipe after recipe. Instead, take help from dehydrated seasoning blends, which can be substituted for fresh ingredients in your favorite recipes or mixed with sour cream for a delicious dip in seconds.
- Make your ingredients multitask.** When you're stocking the pantry prior to your holiday party, choose a lineup of flavorful products that offer more versatility than other one-note wonders. For instance, a jar of cranberry-pomegranate preserves can easily do double-duty. First, use it as a tasty glaze for beef or pork, and then serve up the remaining spread with toasted English muffins on Christmas morning.
- Do homemade in a hurry.** Nothing says "home" like the smell of bread baking in the oven ... but who has time for mixing, kneading, rising and so on? It's easier than you might think to have your homemade bread and enjoy it, too, with Tastefully Simple's signature Bountiful Beer Bread Mix. This versatile bread mix can be prepared with any carbonated beverage and takes just 30 seconds to mix together before popping it in the oven.
- Add life to leftovers.** Rather than reheating the entire holiday spread for an encore presentation, try using leftovers in creative yet quick recipes. For example, beef roast can be shredded and added to your favorite just-add-water soup mix, while mashed potatoes are perfect in warm, cheesy casseroles.



Food art made easy

Wavy knife is a quick way to enhance plain snacks

By **Beth Sitzler**
Las Cruces Bulletin

A party just isn't a party without food. From platters of cheese to mounds of vegetables, your holiday guests will appreciate a little something to nosh on throughout the night.

Although simple in their preparation, these items don't have to be simple in appearance. Food sculpting has become all the rage in recent years, with professional chefs designing and carving gravity-defying sculptures from chocolate, cheese, butter and a variety of fruit. The practice has become so popular that kitchenware companies have created elaborate tool sets complete with spiral cutters, scoopers, flexible knives and other delicate blades for the more experienced at-home cook.

Making your own food art at home doesn't have to be so complicated, however. Whether it's for a holiday party or a summertime celebration, you can get simple, yet artistic food creations year-round with a wavy knife.

What is it?

A wavy knife is the easiest way to jazz up fruit, vegetables, breads, cheese and other soft foods.

The sharp blade is formed into a wavy pattern to create a decorative crinkled cut. When used to slice food, the knife makes quick and textured pieces with ease.

The wavy knife comes in a variety of styles, with the two most popular being the traditional knife and the chopper. While both types create that desired crinkled texture, the traditional style is easier to grip and maneuver, giving the user more control over the blade.

Created from stainless steel, the wavy knife can be used on everything from cucumbers, potatoes and carrots to cakes,



Featured kitchen gadget: Wavy knife

brownies and cookie doughs. It is also an easy way to fancy up otherwise plain deviled eggs.

How it works?

Simple to use by cooks of any skill level, the wavy knife is just like any other cutting tool. Just slice your food in a smooth, up-and-down motion, so the crinkled texture is clean and even. After your items have been chopped, arrange them on a decorative tray and present to your party guests.

When you're done, thoroughly wash

the wavy knife. While most are dishwasher safe, some types should only be cleaned by hand washing with soap and warm water. Be sure to read the care instructions that come with your knife.

Where can it be found?

Artistic and functional, the wavy knife can be purchased online at www.amazon.com or www.laprimashops.com.

How much does it cost?

The wavy knife costs about \$7.

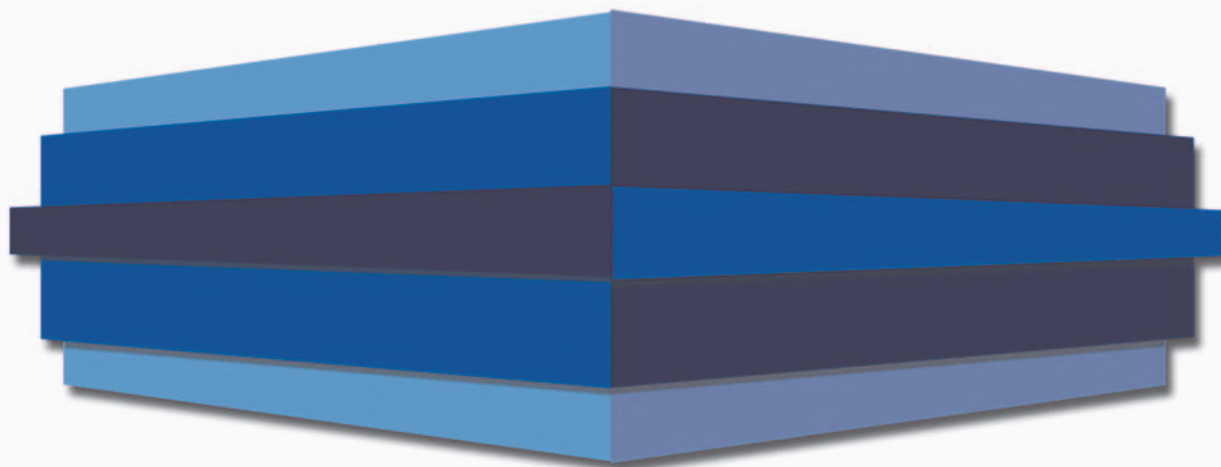
Easy Classic Deviled Eggs

6 hard-cooked eggs, peeled and cut lengthwise
1/4 cup light mayonnaise or salad dressing
1/2 teaspoon dry ground mustard
1/2 teaspoon white vinegar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
Paprika for garnish

After carefully cutting the eggs in half using a decorative knife, remove the egg yolks and place into a small bowl. Mash them with a fork, then add the mayonnaise, mustard powder, vinegar, salt and pepper. Mix thoroughly. Fill the empty egg white shells with the mixture and sprinkle lightly with paprika.

Cover gently with plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to one day before serving. (Recipe adapted from www.deviledeggs.com.)

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Featured builder: *Michael Clifford*

Builder takes a new, green direction

Mike Clifford and team join the energy-efficient market

By **Beth Sitzler**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Since entering the homebuilding field in 1997, Michael Clifford has made a name for himself in the custom market. Now, he is working to combine his talents with green building techniques.

The Las Cruces native said he got his first taste of the construction world when he

was a teenager. At that time, he and a friend would help their neighbors with side projects on the weekends.

"It was something I always enjoyed," he said, adding that he was able to do everything from concrete work to shingling a roof. "I liked the creativity. You always get to do something different."

While attending New Mexico State University, Clifford continued to work in the

construction field. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in finance, he said he took the expected job path and went to work for a bank.

"I hated every minute of it," he said. "I hated being indoors. It just goes to show you that following your degree doesn't always work out."

In the 1980s, Clifford said he worked with Terry Givier of Westcoast Builders, adding that his innovative construction ideas were a great influence. Unfortunately, the construction industry had hit a rough patch, and he had to find a stable income.

Clifford worked for the cable company until he decided to finally become a licensed contractor and established Team Builders.

"I was getting too old to climb up and down those poles. I wanted something different to do," he said.

Finally becoming a builder

When first entering the homebuilding industry, Clifford said Team Builders focused on lower-end homes, which allowed him to make a name for himself in the local market and learn the business.

To also help him learn the business, Clifford turned to his fellow builders, especially his good friend Dan Casanova of Enchantment Custom Builders.



Details

Featured builder
Michael Clifford

Company
Team Builders

Phone
650-6502

Address
1155 Commerce Drive, Suite E

Website
www.finecustomhomes.net

Education
Bachelor's degree in finance,
New Mexico State University

Organizations

- Building Industry Association of Southern New Mexico
- New Mexico Home Builders Association

Family

- Wife Sallie
- Four children



After establishing Team Builders in 1997, Michael Clifford has created custom homes in the area, specializing in Southwest creations.

Continued on following page

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Continued from previous page

"I learned a lot from him and others in the field," he said.

With enough experience under his belt, Clifford then made the transition into custom home construction, a task that wasn't too difficult since he said he would go above and beyond to make his lower-end homes comfortable and efficient.

"In the cookie-cutter business, I didn't do too well. I was always doing extras," he said. "I would install better windows and things like that. I felt that the homeowner deserved it."

Although he has built homes in a wide variety of styles, Clifford said he prefers to construct Southwest-inspired creations commonly found in the area.

"I like a lot of wood accents," he said. "Those kinds of homes really appeal to this area."

No matter the style, Clifford said each home is built with comfort in mind.

"I went in thinking that I was going to move into every house I built, so I wanted to make it as comfortable as possible," he said.

Focusing on quality over quantity, Clifford said he has built between 40 and 50 homes throughout his career, never taking on more than three projects per year.

"I like to be on top of things and in control," he said. "If you do a lot of homes, you have to be sure to have people you trust."

As the housing market began to drop, Clifford said he ran into more and more obstacles.

"The biggest challenge right now is financing," he said, adding that this includes getting financing for customers and spec homes. "Once I start building, there aren't any challenges."

From these challenges, Clifford has been inspired to look in a new direction.

A green future

To help navigate through the changing market, Clifford said in addition to going back to his renovation and remodeling roots, he has begun to look at building more green homes under Build Green New Mexico and Energy Star programs.

"I think it's what the custom market is

leaning toward," he said. "Customers are much more educated now, and in the long run, everyone is leaning this way."

Currently working on a 2,975-square-foot home in the second phase of the Pueblos at Alameda Ranch subdivision, Clifford said the home will include several green and energy-efficient features, such as a high-SEER cooling unit, energy-efficient water heater and spray foams.

"It's a learning process every day," he said. "There is still a learning curve."

While the Internet has been an important resource for Clifford, he said he has also learned a lot about building green through the El Paso Electric Energy Star New Homes Program.

Through the tax rebate program, Clifford and other area builders have attended building seminars. They also are being guided through the certification process by a professional Home Energy Rating Systems rater.

"After this, all of my homes will be Build Green New Mexico," he said. "It will be easier down the road. I'm utilizing the Internet and (other resources) and I'm educating all of my (subcontractors) as I learn."

Whether it's a custom green home or a remodeling project, Clifford said he approaches each client the same.

"I sit down with the customer and find out what their wants and needs are," he said. "I then come up with a plan to fit those wants and needs that is affordable and works for them and me."

While this process can be long and time consuming, forming lasting relationships with his clients has been the greatest reward of his more than decade long building career.

"I didn't cure cancer, I haven't made millions, so I think my greatest achievement may be that after 12 or 13 years I still love what I do, and I have been blessed with great people to work with and great people that live in the homes that I have built," he said.

With his shift into a new niche, Clifford said he looks forward to the future.

"I'm hoping that people can see what we do and like it, and we can get more presales in this market," he said. "I hope to work with people who want to do what's right and leave less of a carbon footprint."



Now in the framing stages, the new home built by Clifford in the Pueblos at Alameda Ranch is being constructed to include green and energy-efficient techniques and materials, including spray foam insulation.



The Build Green New Mexico home will also include an outdoor fireplace and living area.

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Lighting your home

Another look at remodeling existing fixtures

If you are remodeling or building a new home, one of the most vital things to consider is lighting.

In remodeling existing lighting fixtures, don't think that you have to keep the placement the same. In most existing bathrooms, I find that the fixture placement above a vanity is much too low. I try to set a vanity fixture at 92 to 96 inches from the floor. The elongated space gives more room for a larger mirror, which reflects the light and makes the space appear larger. Since most vanities are now 36 inches high, it is a nice distance to allow a beautiful fixture with ample room for illumination and a mirror for your bath.

If you have a double sink, use two fixtures and fill the space so lighting is above both sinks. If you have a commode room, either a wall sconce or a ceiling fixture will work. Determine how many watts you need to provide the right amount of light for the space.

Of all the rooms that need special lighting, the kitchen is usually the most important. A mixture of lighting types is used to illuminate the task at hand in a kitchen. Strong light is needed for food preparation, but ambient light is desirable for eating. Recessed cans can give you all-over lighting for your kitchen, while pendant lighting can be placed over a bar area

Maureen Villmer
Practical Design



and a chandelier can be hung over the kitchen table.

If your space is larger, you may want to combine several of these types (recessed with a chandelier). Don't forget a very important placement for kitchen lighting – under cabinet. This will light your work surface at night and can also be used for ambiance. Above-the-cabinet lighting is also a beautiful addition to any kitchen. Rope lighting that plugs in above with a switch below makes for a great night light with little cost in electricity.

I once walked into a home of a client where all the lampshades were burned, and all shades were turned sideways on the harp of the lamp. They had put 250-watt bulbs in their lamps to increase the lighting in the room. It was not only a lighting problem, but a danger to the family. The house was built in the 1960s and only one light was in the middle of a 20-by-32-foot room. This is how it was done in the '60s. They could have burned the house down.

Look around, if that sounds like you, be careful. As a part of the remodeling, we added 16 recessed cans, an eyeball above the fireplace and hanging pendants above a bar area. We also added a plug in the middle of the room to have lamps plugged in. This '60s house came up to date with the proper lighting in 2010.

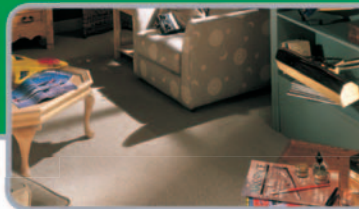
Outdoor lighting should be such that it illuminates the surrounding property so you can walk easily and see the walkways properly. New Mexico has night-sky laws, so make sure you follow them. No light should be shining up, and caps or covers over exterior lights should be used to prohibit light from shining up into the sky. Outdoor lighting should not cause glare. To create well-balanced lighting for the outdoors, you need to combine standard and low-voltage lighting. You can use path lights to produce a wide and downward spread of light.

As we grow older, we need more light to see our world – both inside and outside. Enjoy the view!

Maureen Villmer is an interior designer in Las Cruces with 35 years of experience. If you have questions you would like answered in her column, email her at maureenvillmer@hotmail.com, visit www.environmentonline.com or call 496-7605.

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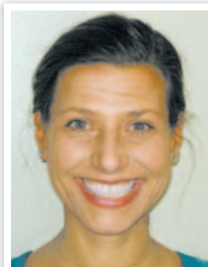
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'Tis the season of baking

Bulletin staff share their favorite cookie recipes

By **Beth Sitzler**
Las Cruces Bulletin

When the tree is trimmed and the gifts are wrapped, the only thing left to do is gather your loved ones and bake up batches of your favorite holiday treats.

While Bulletin General Manager Richard Coltharp said he enjoys a tubful of store-bought cookie dough – evenly distributing the raw material between the cookie sheet and his mouth – others have fond memories of the homemade variety.

“I’ve never baked cookies, but I was always very excited to clean the bowl of leftover cookie dough when I was much younger,” said Jim Hilley, Bulletin copy editor.

This year, members of the Bulletin team would like to share their most beloved holiday cookie recipes with you and your family. Who knows, you might find a new favorite and start your own tradition.

Chewy Noels

Jorge Lopez, marketing consultant

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup nuts, chopped
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/8 teaspoon baking soda
1/8 teaspoon salt
2 eggs, beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla
Powdered sugar

In a 9-by-9-by-2-inch baking pan, melt the butter or margarine. Stir together the brown sugar, nuts, flour, baking soda and salt. Stir in the eggs and vanilla. Carefully pour into the buttered pan, do not stir. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes. Sift the powdered sugar over top.

Place waxed paper under wire rack and immediately invert pan onto rack. Cool, then dust again with powdered sugar. Cut into bars. Write Noel on each bar with green decorator icing, if desired. Makes 24 bars.

The Best Chocolate Chips Cookies Ever!

Samantha Roberts, reporter

1 stick of butter
1 stick of margarine
1 cup white sugar
1 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups oats, ground
1 cup milk chocolate chips
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Soften butter and margarine at room temperature – until soft to touch but not melted. In a large mixing bowl, combine butter, margarine, white sugar and brown sugar. Stir until a sugar paste develops. Add vanilla and eggs; mix well. Add the dry ingredients – flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt – stirring in between. Add ground oats and both chocolate chips.

Scoop tablespoon size clumps on a non-stick pan or parchment paper. Bake 10 minutes or until cookies begin to brown.



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Beth Sitzler

Nothing says the holidays like a batch of Mom’s Butter Cookies with Raspberry Preserves, a favorite of a Bulletin staff member.

Chocolate-Dipped Coconut Macaroons

Stephanie Griffin, assistant to the publisher

1 14-ounce package sweetened shredded coconut (about 5 cups)
4 large egg whites
2/3 cups sugar
1/3 cup all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
6 ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled to room temperature

Heat oven to 325 degrees. In a medium bowl, combine the coconut, egg whites, sugar, flour, salt and vanilla. Drop packed tablespoonfuls of the mixture onto parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing them 1 inch apart.

Bake, rotating the baking sheets halfway through, until lightly golden, about 25 to 30 minutes. Cool slightly on the baking sheets, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

When cool, dip the bottom of each macaroon in the chocolate and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Refrigerate until firm, about 20 to 30 minutes. If you’re short on time, omit the chocolate and serve these deliciously chewy cookies plain. Store the macaroons in an airtight container at room temperature for up to seven days. Makes 32 macaroons.

Refrigerator Thumbprint Fudgy Cookies

Pam Rossi, marketing consultant

1/4 cup softened butter
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 cup white sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
2 1/2 cups quick oatmeal (not instant)
1 cup raspberry preserves
1/4 cup powdered sugar

In a 2-quart saucepan, combine butter, cream and sugar. Warm over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat, add vanilla and chocolate chips and stir until chocolate melts. To complete the dough, fold in the oats and stir until all ingredients are thoroughly combined.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls and place on a cookie sheet lined with waxed paper. Using the bottom of a glass, flatten cookies to 2 inches in diameter. Make a depression in the center of each cookie with your thumb. Chill cookies in refrigerator 30 minutes or until set. Spoon one-half teaspoon of preserves into center of each cookie. Dust with confectioners’ sugar. Makes 2 1/2 dozen no-bake cookies.

The Best Sugar Cookies Ever!

Theresa Montoya Basaldua, art director and special projects manager

Cookies:
1 1/2 cups butter, softened
2 cups white sugar (1 cup confectioners’, 1 cup granulated)
4 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
5 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
Zest of 1/2 lemon

In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, baking powder, lemon zest and salt. Cover and chill dough for at least one hour.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Roll out dough on floured surface 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. Cut into shapes with any cookie cutter. Place cookies 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets.

Bake 6 to 8 minutes or until golden brown in preheated oven. Cool completely.

Glaze:
1 cup confectioners’ sugar
1 tablespoon light corn syrup
2 tablespoons milk
10 drops food coloring

Stir confectioners’ sugar, corn syrup and milk together. Stir in food coloring if desired. This glaze must be stirred each time you use it. If it is not stirred before each use, it will dry with a mottled look instead of a solid color.

Peanut Blossoms

Natisha Hales, special sections editor

1 (9-ounce) bag Milk Chocolate Kisses
1/2 cup shortening

Bulletin baking tips

- For a healthier cookie, replace 1 stick of butter with 1/2 cup of applesauce.
- For a quick and oil-free cake, replace all the added ingredients of a boxed cake recipe with one can of diet soda. The cake will be light, fluffy and lower in fat.
- Use real butter, real extract and the best/freshest ingredients available for tasty results.
- For easy clean up, use parchment paper-lined cookie pans for baking.
- Cool cookies on paper towels – no racks to clean up.
- Wrap the crust edge in foil to avoid over baking before you place a pie in a hot oven.
- Lower the oven temperature by 25 degrees if you are using a dark or non-stick pan.

3/4 cup creamy or crunchy peanut butter
1/3 cup granulated sugar, plus extra
1/3 cup packed light brown sugar
1 egg
2 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In a large mixing bowl, beat shortening and peanut butter until well blended. Add 1/2 cup granulated sugar and brown sugar. Beat until light and fluffy. Add egg, milk and vanilla, and beat well.

Stir together flour, baking soda and salt. Gradually add to the peanut butter mixture. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in extra granulated sugar and place on an ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Immediately place an unwrapped chocolate Kiss on top of each cookie, pressing down so the cookie cracks around the edges. Move cookies to a wire rack and let them cool completely. Makes 4 dozen cookies.

Mom’s Butter Cookies with Raspberry Preserves

Beth Sitzler, Homes & Southwest Living editor

1 cup butter, room temperature
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg, slightly beaten
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 to 2 teaspoons water, if needed
Raspberry preserves

In a medium bowl, or food processor fitted with the metal blade, mix butter, sugar, egg, flour, vanilla and salt until a smooth, pliable cookie dough forms. If mixture seems dry, work in 1 to 2 teaspoons of water. Gather dough into a ball; knead slightly. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate 30 minutes or until ready to use. Dough can be stored in refrigerator up to one week. Makes about 2 cups dough.

The dough can be formed into balls and dipped in beaten egg whites, then chopped nuts. Set on an ungreased cookie sheet and press your finger into the middle to form a hole. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes, then spoon the raspberry preserves into the hole. Other flavored jams or jellies can be used. Bake for another 10 minutes or until the edges are golden brown.

The dough can also be put through a press or formed into ribbons. Roll the dough out into a rope and place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Slide your finger along the length to create a groove in the dough. Bake half way through, then add the preserves and finish baking.

Finishing your green home for the holidays

Take care of those last touches to make your kitchen more green

Editor's note: This is part three in a series of three articles.

Nothing says "happy holidays" like fresh baked goods and home cooking. That is why the holidays are a great time to think about ways you can make your kitchen a healthier, more energy efficient and more environmentally friendly room.

In parts one and two of this three part series, we looked at the appliances, lighting and surfaces that my wife Karen said she would include in her ideal green kitchen. This week, we will look at the way kitchen fixtures, waste disposal and water filtration fit the ideal green kitchen.

Fixtures

Perfecting my wife's green kitchen means we think of everything, including the kitchen sink. Kitchen fixtures are the next area Karen said she would focus on when designing her ideal green kitchen.

You're probably getting tired of hearing about low-flow water fixtures, but I am going to mention them one more time anyway. Low-flow faucets are one of the single easiest ways to conserve water in your home.

Low-flow kitchen faucets by Delta are one brand we particularly like. Delta's lower-flow faucets typically use about 20 percent less water than traditional kitchen faucets without sacrificing performance. For the average household, this can mean significant water savings each year and a reduction in the monthly water bills.

Let's face it, no matter how much our parents drilled it into our heads, many of us still leave the water running when we brush our teeth, wash our hands or clean dishes. Low-flow fixtures ensure that we use less water

Bob Pofahl
*Build Green,
Build Better*



even if we forget to turn them off.

There are other products that can save even more.

Touchless and hands-free fixtures are another technology I'm excited to see used in a residential design. By automatically shutting off the water when not being used, touchless technology further reduces the amount of water wasted.

Another kitchen fixture that can be green is your kitchen sink. A typical stainless-steel kitchen sink is at least 60 percent recycled. However, there are 100-percent recycled steel sinks available. Using recycled steel is great because it requires much less energy than manufacturing with virgin steel.

If you are looking for something other than stainless steel, there are many other green sink options including cement, copper, recycled glass and more.

So far, we have covered the major areas of my wife's ideal kitchen. Here are a few other odds and ends Karen said she would consider in her ideal green kitchen.

Waste disposal and recycling

Properly disposing of kitchen waste is one of the key ways you can do your part to protect the environment.

The kitchen produces more waste than any other room in the house. The first thing you can do to reduce the amount of waste you send to the landfill is make recycling as easy as possible. When designing your home, plan space for a separate recycling bin close to your garbage bin. That way, it is simple and convenient to separate items that can be recycled. Now that Las Cruces offers single-stream recycling, you can mix all of your recyclables into one bin.

The second way you can reduce kitchen



Selecting a low-flow kitchen faucet is the easiest way to conserve water in your home.

waste is by reducing the amount of food scraps sent to the landfill. According to the Clean Air Council, nearly 16 million tons of food are thrown away each year.

One great way to reduce food waste is through composting. Composting involves collecting all of your food scraps and converting them into compost material that can be used as fertilizer. You can check out my blog for more information on composting.

Unfortunately, composting isn't always practical and many people don't have the time or patience for it. Thankfully, technology has given us a great green alternative: disposers. A disposer is like a juiced up version of the traditional disposal.

Disposers provide an environmentally friendly alternative to transporting food waste to landfills. Disposers can process foods such as chicken bones, fruit rinds, corn cobs and other items that can't be processed by a traditional disposal.

Many wastewater treatment plants can now turn the food processed by disposers into fertilizers and use it as an energy source. Make sure to check with your utility company before installing a disposer.

Water filtration

Water filtration is the last key component my wife added to her ideal green kitchen. As I've mentioned previously, Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour. Adding a water purification system to your kitchen eliminates the need for bottled water. Purifiers cost as little as \$30 and produce filtered water in the range of 5-cents to 25-cents per gallon. That means you are getting your water much cheaper and in many cases more pure than you would from a bottle.

The ideas I've offered in this three-part series are just the beginning of what you can do to create your ideal green kitchen. I'd love to hear from you about the other ways you're making your kitchen a greener place this holiday season. Send me an email or visit my blog and leave a comment with your thoughts. Happy holidays!

Bob Pofahl is the owner and developer of Picacho Mountain, southern New Mexico's only Build Green New Mexico certified community. For more information about green building, contact Bob at 523-2500 or visit his blog at blog.picachomountain.com.

Home Sales Scoreboard

LAS CRUCES AREA

	This Week	Last Week	Same Week Last Year
Closed Sales New Homes	0	6	5

Closed Sales Existing Homes	16	14	12
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Pending Home Sales (All)	143	151	160
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	This Week	Last Week	Same Week Last Year
Average Days on Market (All)	100	140	107

	This Week	Last Week	Same Week Last Year
Median Price New	N/A	\$164,440	\$178,000

Median Price Existing	\$246,200	\$124,750	\$183,000
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	This Week	Last Week	Same Week Last Year
Total Homes on Market (All)	1,094	1,093	1,232

Real Estate Agents	426	426	512
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"Homes" include detached single-family homes, townhomes and condominiums

Source: Las Cruces Multiple Listing Service (MLS)* for the period 12/13/10 - 12/19/10
*MLS is wholly owned by the Las Cruces Association of Realtors
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ChileKnights

Recipes to ring in the New Year

Say goodbye to 2010 with these celebratory dishes

Has it really been a year since we rang in 2010? But here it is – once again – another new year and another excuse to steal midnight kisses, to pop the cork and to croon “Auld Lang Syne.”

Whether your plans are to stay home or to go out, be prepared to ring in 2011 armed with tasty appetizers, such as salsa that bubbles with champagne goodness, wonton “chips” spirited with five-spice powder, meatballs touched with chili and cranberry sauces and a favorite popper of mine, dessert balls tipsy with rum and red chile powder. “Feliz Año Nuevo, chileheads!”

2011 Champagne Salsa

French monks were the first to bottle a bubbly form of wine called champagne. (From about.com)

- 1/2 green pepper, chopped
- 1/2 red pepper, chopped
- 1/2 yellow pepper, chopped
- 1/2 red onion, chopped
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1/4 cup coriander, torn
- 1/2 fresh red chile, sliced
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons dry champagne
- 2 tablespoons white wine

Mix together the green, red and yellow pepper, red onion, lime juice, coriander, chile, champagne and white wine in a bowl. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper. Serve with veggie-style crackers or other favorite crackers.

No-Bake Big Apple Red Pepper Bourbon Balls

- 2 cups vanilla wafers, finely ground
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 3 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 tablespoon red chile powder
- 2 cups walnuts, finely ground
- 3 tablespoons light Karo syrup
- 1/2 cup bourbon or rum

Mix all ingredients until thoroughly combined. Form into small balls. Roll balls in powdered sugar. Store in refrigerator in covered container.

Cork Popping Chips and Dip

One of the first advertisements for a cork popping from a champagne bottle appeared



Las Cruces Bulletin photo by Sunny Conley

Ring in the New Year with No-Bake Big Apple Red Pepper Bourbon Balls.

in a 1915 English magazine. The illustration depicted a lady riding a champagne cork (Lordprice Collection).

- 24 wonton wrappers
- Five-spice powder to taste

- Cream cheese dip:**
- 8 1/2 ounces crabmeat, drained if using canned meat, and flaked
 - 8 ounces cream cheese
 - 1 teaspoon red onion, chopped
 - 1 to 2 green onions, diced
 - 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/2 teaspoon soy sauce
 - Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray two baking sheets with non-stick spray. Combine the cream cheese and crabmeat mixture. Stir in the remaining ingredients, mixing thoroughly.

Take a wonton wrapper and lightly dust it with the five-spice powder (about 1/8 teaspoon). Cut the wonton diagonally so that it forms two triangles. Continue with the rest of the wrappers. Cover the remaining wrappers with a damp cloth so that they don't dry out.

Arrange the wonton wrappers on the baking sheets. Place in the stove on the middle rack, and bake until they turn brown, about 5 to 6 minutes. Remove and cool.

Place the cream cheese in a medium-sized baking dish. Bake until the cream cheese is heated through and just starting to bubble,

about 18 to 20 minutes. Remove and serve immediately with the wonton chips for dipping. If desired, also serve hot mustard and/or sweet and sour sauce.

Hot Midnight Kisses

The custom to kiss at the stroke of midnight of a new year originated back to the ancient Roman merry making festival of Saturnalia, and observances around the winter solstice at yearend. (From celebrations.com)

- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 1/2 cup herb bread crumbs stuffing mix
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce
- 1/3 cup melted butter

Cook spinach as directed on package; drain well. In large bowl, mix together all ingredients. Form into balls and freeze. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes or until lightly brown.

Noisemaker Wheels

The tradition of noisemaking (church bells ringing and merrymakers yelling) at the strike of midnight is an ancient belief that such raucous behavior could drive evil spirits away.

- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup spicy cocktail sauce

Sunny Conley
Chile Knights



- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 2 cans shrimp, not drained, finely shredded with fingers
- 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 4 to 5 green onions, finely chopped
- 6 to 8 (10-inch) flour tortillas
- 1 1/2 cup additional cocktail sauce, for dipping

Microwave the cream cheese in a medium glass bowl, for 30 to 45 seconds, depending on the wattage of your microwave. Mix the cream cheese, cocktail sauce and lemon together until well-blended. Stir in shrimp, mozzarella cheese, celery and green onions. Mix well.

Spread about 1/2 cup of the mixture onto each tortilla, and roll up tightly. Wrap each tortilla in plastic wrap, and refrigerate overnight for flavors to meld. Slice rolls on a diagonal into 1/2-inch pieces, using a serrated knife and wiping often while cutting. Arrange on a serving dish, along with a bowl of cocktail sauce, for dipping.

Big Apple Cocktail Meatballs

The first Times Square New Year's Eve Ball was constructed of iron and wood and adorned with one hundred 25-watt light bulbs. Five feet in diameter, it weighed in at 700 pounds. Big Apple meatballs are a wee bit lighter and edible! They're especially tasty when dipped in a delicious sauce prepared with cranberry sauce and spicy chili sauce.

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- 3 tablespoons onion, minced
- 1 (8-ounce) can jellied cranberry sauce
- 3/4 cup chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix together the ground beef, egg, water, bread crumbs and minced onion. Roll into small meatballs. Bake in preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes, turning once. In a slow cooker or large saucepan over low heat, blend the cranberry sauce, chili sauce, brown sugar and lemon juice. Add meatballs, and simmer for 1 hour before serving.

Serving idea: Place meatballs in a decorative bowl centered with a small bowl containing the sauce and a container packed with party toothpicks.

Sunny Conley, a former Las Cruces, is an award-winning cookbook author and food columnist. Contact Sunny at sunny.conley@gmail.com.

Merry Christmas!

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Heading off at the pass, neck

Decapitating flies used to combat red fire ants

Red fire ants' days are numbered in the United States, thanks to effective commercial pest control methods and a USDA program introducing natural enemies into the red fire ants' world, including right here in Doña Ana County.

In addition to Las Cruces, the government has already started deploying these natural enemies in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas and Tennessee.

"This program could wind up saving the United States about \$4 billion a year," said Philip Koehler, a renowned University of Florida entomologist who spearheaded portions of the USDA research.

For more than 70 years, red fire ants have spread throughout the southern U.S., stinging and irritating millions of Americans with impunity and causing nearly \$6 billion in damages annually to crops, livestock, electronics and residential populations in 12 states and Puerto Rico. Plus, their stings can even lead to death in humans from anaphylactic shock.

Conventional pest control methods destroy fire ant colonies – an effective, yet reactive solution. Accidentally imported from Brazil in 1931, red fire ants have had no natural enemies in the U.S. – until now.

Meet the phorid fly, also known as the decapitating fly. You've heard of the Terminator, now meet the Decapitator.

"The adult decapitating phorid fly actually lays an egg in the thorax of the red fire ant," Koehler said. "When the egg hatches, the larvae eats out the head of the ant until it literally falls off. Nothing else has the inside of a head like a red fire ant so the flies don't attack anything else."

Koehler, author of "Pests In and Around the



Barry Murray
The Bug Guy

Florida Home," said one fly has the potential to kill 200 to 300 red fire ants.

In addition, scientists are also using biological warfare against the red fire ant by releasing *Thelohania Solenopsae*, a highly contagious and virulent red fire ant disease, which infects the ovaries of the queen, resulting in 90 percent fewer eggs. This begins a chain reaction where the lack of eggs leads to fewer worker ants and when the mound is taken over by another colony, those ants contract the disease.

Scientists are also raising red fire ants in laboratories and releasing diseased larvae on red fire ant mounds, said Koehler.

To be certain the flies and the disease would not attack any other organisms, Koehler said the USDA carefully conducted nearly a decade of research.

"We brought in the pest, but didn't bring in any natural enemies," Koehler said. "Combined with commercial pest control methods, these enemies will significantly impact red fire ant colonies over a period of time."

Koehler said the red fire ant population in Brazil is 80 percent smaller than in the U.S. – in large part due to the balance created by its natural enemies.

The flies and disease are long-term solutions and are not a substitute for conventional pest control methods, Koehler said.

As national spokesperson for Truly Nolen of America, Barry "The Bug Guy" Murray has more than 20 years of experience in the pest control industry. For more information, to ask the expert a question or to see the brand-new "Insect Inquirer" blog, visit www.trulynolen.com.

Habitat begins fifth home of the year at the Foundation pouring

Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity photos



The layout of the four-bedroom home on Calle Bella built by Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity before the concrete is poured Tuesday, Dec. 14.



Raymundo Renteria of Hard Hat Construction helps funnel the concrete out of the cement mixer. Six Hard Hat Construction employees worked to cover the 1,200-square-foot home, which is the fifth MVHFH home built this season.



MVHFH home recipient Sarah Johnson gets a helping hand from Eddie Roman of Hard Hat Construction as the company pours the foundation of her home, the 83rd house built in the area by the nonprofit.

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