

# RUIDOSO NEWS

**FIRE DANGER  
LOW**

RUIDOSO, NEW MEXICO • WEDNESDAY, FEB. 3, 2010 • OUR 63RD YEAR, NO. 79 • 75 CENTS

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# Plan B for track bill

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New legislation that could provide a tax break for racinos in New Mexico, through a county gross receipts tax, has been introduced at the Roundhouse.

The measure, submitted last Thursday, came just days after another bill, to provide "tax equity" for the Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Casino, was deemed all but dead.

The proposed new "local option

*After tax parity for racinos appeared doomed, new legislation would provide a local option, via an election, to raise GRT rate*

county business retention gross receipts tax," called HB203, would provide tax relief for gaming operations at horse racetracks.

In counties that impose the new tax, the bill would require an amount up to \$1 million in annual county business retention gross receipts tax revenues go to the state. Those revenues would be

used to offset a gaming tax credit of up to 50 percent of a racino's monthly gaming tax.

The credit would be limited to \$1 million annually. Any remaining tax revenues would be sent back to the county for promotion or administration of the county, instructional or general purposes for a public post-secondary educa-

tional institution in the county, capital outlay to expand or relocate a public post-secondary school in the county, or funding professional services for economic development planning.

"If this passes it would give counties the option of putting it on the general ballot," said New Mexico House Rep. Zach Cook (R-Ruidoso), who has co-sponsored the bill. "They (the voters) would say if they want to."

Before a county commission

See BILL, page 5A

## HOT ICE



COURTESY DAVID TREMBLAY

A sun halo creates an eerie scene in the Rancho Ruidoso area during a snowstorm last week. Halos appear in the skies more often than rainbows and form when light from the sun or moon is refracted by ice crystals associated with thin, high-level clouds such as cirrostratus. The halos can be seen on average twice a week in Europe and parts of the United States. The 22-degree radius circular halo and sundogs are the most frequent. The image was taken with a fish-eye lens, which encompasses 180 degrees.

# Manual cost irks councilors

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The idea of paying \$347,000 for a training manual and video on top of a \$36 million price tag for a regional wastewater treatment plant and associated engineering fees irritates Ruidoso village councilors.

They voiced that irritation Tuesday to staff and to Michelle Salas, the representative on the project for Molzen-Corbin Engineering. But when votes were cast to move ahead with a contract amendment to cover the manuals with a \$200,000 cap, Councilor Michele Rebstock registered the only vote against approval.

The amendment, the seventh to date on the contract with Molzen-Corbin, the firm that designed the

plant and oversees the project, initially asked for \$225,000 for operation and maintenance manuals, \$75,000 for startup and training assistance and \$47,000 for video tape preparation to record operations for future plant operators. The \$347,000 expense would be split 85 percent from Ruidoso and 15 percent from the city of Ruidoso Downs.

Village Manager Debi Lee was authorized to negotiate a lower price for the work. Lee told councilors that after checking with other government entities across the state, she found that typically, the operation and maintenance manual is included in the collection of other construction documents as part of a project cost.

"Videotaping typically is an

additional service, but not (the manuals)," she said. "Engineers I spoke to said usually that is within the contract, but could be an additional cost."

Before the vote, Village Public Works Director Randall Camp said an engineer pulls together all of the manuals from the equipment manufacturers, subcontractors and contractors and does the training. Because Molzen-Corbin prepared the Preliminary Engineering Report and designed the plant, having that firm's representative handle the trainings is important, he said.

"This will be a new plant and it's much more complicated than the current plant," Mayor L. Ray Nunley explained to people in the audience.

"You're an engineer and I respect your opinion," Councilor Jim Stoddard said to Camp. "I'm an English major, but this seems like an exorbitant amount of money. I know it's highly important, but it seems like a lot of money. Could we negotiate a price? Are there other firms that could do this?"

Camp said training usually runs 1 percent of the total contract value. "This is a 'not to exceed' number."

Councilor Greg Cory asked Salas why the manuals are an amendment to the contract when firm officials knew from the outset the manuals would be needed. Salas replied that was the way the contract with the engineering firm was written.

See COST, page 5A

## Weekly publisher fired

Terry Fitzwater started Ruidoso Free Press for R.D. Hubbard

JIM KALVELAGE  
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The editor and publisher of the two-and-a-half month running Ruidoso Free Press has been fired.

Terry Fitzwater's termination was confirmed Monday by Ruidoso Downs Racing President Ann McGovern.

### FITZWATER

"When I say 'we' it was the Ruidoso Free Press that terminated him," said McGovern.

In Tuesday's edition McGovern explained she was temporarily overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Ruidoso Free Press.

"The recent arrest of the Ruidoso Free Press' publisher and editor is a serious issue and one that we could not ignore," McGovern wrote on the paper's editorial page. "Like all good businesses we investigated the situation and have formulated a plan to move forward. That plan includes terminating our relationship with Mr. Fitzwater."

The Ruidoso Free Press, rolled out its first weekend edition on Nov. 17, 2009. The inaugural paper stated it was a production started by Ruidoso Downs race-track owner R.D. Hubbard.

Fitzwater, who was a past publisher of the Ruidoso News, had been charged in connection with a reported domestic vio-

See FIRED, page 5A

WIN! WITH!

**DON WILLIAMS**

VOTE TO ELECT DONALD A. WILLIAMS FOR MAYOR



ROSS BARRETT/RUIDOSO NEWS

Join the Chamber ladies at 340 Sudderth Dr., Ruidoso on Thursday for 7 Mares Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting at 11 a.m. To celebrate this occasion get half off all menu-priced breakfast and lunch items until 2 p.m.

LCC meeting

Members of the Lincoln County Planning Commission will hear a wastewater presentation by Jack King with the New Mexico Environment Department during their meeting at 1

p.m., today.

But, for a change, they will meet in the Lincoln County Sub-Office next to the Ruidoso Public Library on Kansas City Street and Cree Meadows Drive.

County Planning Director Curt Temple will update them on information about the extraterritorial zones in the county and discussions are scheduled on water and LPC meeting supplemental rules.

Old business includes County Comprehensive Plan implementation recommendations to the County Commission.

ALSZDC meeting

The Alto Lakes Special Zoning District Commission will conduct a regular meeting at 9 a.m., Thursday, in the Stag Room of the Alto Lakes Golf and Country Club, 1 Mulligan Drive, Alto.

The final agenda for the meeting will be published at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and will be posted on the bulletin board of the Country Club.

Trailbuilding school

Chris and Leslie Kehmeier of the Subaru International Mountain

Biking Association Trail Care Crew will be in Ruidoso for a Trailbuilding School this week.

Crews teach "sustainable" trail building, which means building trails that last a long time and require minimal maintenance.

That approach helps reduce trail damage, protects the environment and enhances visitor enjoyment.

The schedule for Saturday, Feb. 6, begins at 9 a.m. with a Trailbuilding School classroom session at the Smokey Bear Ranger District office of the Lincoln National Forest at 901 Mechem Dr.

From noon to 1:30 p.m., lunch will be provided by Dreamcatcher.

The IMBA Trail Crew Care power point presentation on "The Economic

Benefits of Bike Trails in a Community" was changed from Thursday to 1:30 p.m., Saturday at Smokey Bear Ranger Station after lunch.

A Trailbuilding School field session also is planned, followed by a volunteer dinner and social at Dreamcatcher, 2629 Sudderth Dr.

Contact Cody Thurston at codythurston@yahoo.com for more information on the rest of the schedule that begins Feb. 4, with a ride and rolling assessment of the trails during the day.

Friday, participants will prepare a trail work project and a morning group ride is planned for Sunday.

Participants in the IMBA's multiple-day session Feb. 4-7, should sign up on the organization's Web site at http://go.imba-

com/ruidoso.

Democrats meet

The Democratic Party of Lincoln County will meet at 6 p.m., Thursday at K-Bob's Steakhouse, U.S. 70, in Ruidoso.

To order from the menu, arrive at 5:30 p.m. The business meeting will begin a half-hour later. Local and state candidates for office are invited to join party members during the social part of the meeting.

Grand opening

Come enjoy handmade burritos bursting with seasoned, steak, chicken, chile relleno, and many more mouth watering combinations ready to tempt your

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3A

ALLEN THEATRES advertisement with showtimes for 'Book of Eli', 'Leap Year', and 'Tooth Fairy'.

'Sweeter than Chocolate...' 60 minute massage \$50 coupon advertisement.

City Bank New Mexico advertisement featuring a 7-day forecast for Ruidoso, regional cities, national forecast map, and various weather statistics.

FROM PAGE 2A

senses.  
At 7 Mares indulge yourself with one of the many signature fish plates. Fish smothered in tantalizing chipotle sauce, traditional sea platters like Empanizado, Grilled Shrimp, and the Carne-rooms Fiesta.

You will enjoy the quite clean atmosphere with homemade salsa and a hot fresh basket of tortilla chips waiting for you at your table.

Then dive into and experience the Best Chimichanga's stuffed with chicken, beef, or pork with home made red or green sauce topped with fine, melted to perfection, cheese and served with rice and cheese covered beans.

Host your next event with 7 Mares, whether dining in or out with our unique dining experience that only 7 Mares can cater.

If you're a burger and fries kind of guy stop in and check out the biggest burger this side of the Pecos. Weighing in at over 4LBS. this burger devours the biggest appetites always fresh and mouth watering. This enormous burger covered in your favorite condiments like cheese, tomatoes, lettuce, onions, green chilies, bacon, our renowned homemade guacamole, or Hawaiian style built to your specifications. This burger will feed you and your army with style and bit of fun too. So for your next dining pleasure think of the seas the 7 seas, 7 Mares, where you are always welcomed with the freshest food served with a smile.

Join the Chamber ladies at 340 Sudderth Dr. Ruidoso on Thursday for 7 Mares Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting at 11am.

Questions needed

With a candidates forum less than two weeks away the Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce is asking residents of they have an questions for the contenders.

Four people are running for mayor and eight for three seats on the village council.

The chamber, which will host a Feb. 16 forum at the Ruidoso Convention Center, said there has been little response to a request for questions from the public. All questions will be collected prior to the forum and organized to better facilitate the meeting.

If someone is interested in submitting a questions they should contact the chamber by this Friday at 257-7395 or by emailing the chamber's executive director at sandi@RuidosoNow.com.

The Feb. 16 forum has been set for 6 to 8 p.m.

PSLC meeting

The Photographic Society of Lincoln County is the only organization in the county dedicated to the advancement of the craft of digital photography.

The members include amateur, hobbyist and professional photographers, who offer their expertise to anyone who wants to know more about the field of photography.

Regular meetings are set for 7 p.m., the second Thursday of each month in the Region IX offices in the Horton Complex, 237 Service Road.

One day and extended field trips, lectures and social gathering are conducted throughout the year. The dues for 2010 are \$15, which covers all family members living at one address.

For more information, contact Leland DeFord at 257-8662 or Herb Brunell at 258-4003.

Office hours

Chris Chaisson will now be serving as Congressman Harry Teague's local representative, filling in for Drew Stout. He will be having 'office hours' the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons of each month at Ruidoso Village Hall. Please stop by to visit to discuss any issues you might have that the Congressman's office can help with.

Chris Chaisson was appointed to serve as a Fellow in Harry's office via the U.S. House of Representatives Wounded Warrior Program. Sergeant Chaisson, who was an Infantry Team Leader, was injured during a tour of duty in Iraq.

He will be based in the Congressman's Roswell, New Mexico office, phone (575) 622-4178. Chris has experience working with veterans service organizations and the Veterans Administration and he is well prepared to serve any New Mexico veterans needing assistance. If you are a veteran in need of assistance or know someone who needs help with a case, please don't hesitate to call the office or visit with Chris.

Tax help

Free tax preparation is offered to all middle to low income individuals and families of all ages. The help comes from volunteer tax councilors and auxiliary personnel under the auspices of AARP in cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service.

Help has been offered nationwide for 42 years and in the Ruidoso area for the last 20 years.

This year, we will be

open from Thursday through April 11.

Come see us at the Ruidoso Senior Center on Thursday and Friday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. till noon.

For those that are outside of the Ruidoso area, please contact your local Senior Center to schedule a local tax preparation day in your town.

JUB meeting

The regular meeting of the Joint Use Board of the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant was moved to 10 a.m. the third Wednesday of each month.

The change from the second Wednesday was approved by the board last week to allow the councils of the village of Ruidoso and the city of Ruidoso Downs to take action on items first before they are considered by the JUB, which is composed of representatives from the two towns and from Lincoln County.

"Does this fit everybody now?" asked JUB Member Dave Parks, a county commissioner.

The city meets the second Monday of the month and the village on the second Tuesday. In the past, items approved by the JUB often had to be taken back to the councils for their ratification, which delayed implementation. The JUB meetings will be conducted at Ruidoso Village Hall, 313 Cree Meadows Dr.

In other action, JUB members:

- approved a contract with Stream Dynamics for a maximum of \$40,000 to come up with restoration and stream health projects for the Rio Ruidoso, in line with a court settlement. The company was selected by the Ruidoso River Restoration Committee. The committee is mandated by the court to spend \$1 million for projects to improve the river's condition.
- approved change orders 1-8 associated with Phase 1A of the new wastewater treatment plant, and change orders 9 and 10 associated with Phase 1B. The change orders already were explained by staff to both councils, reviewed and approved.

Homeland Security

There will be a Homeland Security presentation given by Mr. Carlos Castanada, a border security liaison for Homeland

Security.

It will be at the Cattle Baron on Feb. 11, at 5:30 p.m.

Special program

The Hubbard Museum is pleased to announce that a special program entitled, "New Discoveries and New Discoveries at Fort Stanton Cave" will be held on Saturday, Feb. 13, at 2:00 p.m. in the Johnny & Marty Cope Learning Center with Mike Bilbo, Cave Programs Manager with the Fort Stanton National Conservation Area.

There is no additional charge other than regular museum admission fees to attend the program. Members of the Museum will receive free entry to the museum as well.

Mike Bilbo is in charge of the effort to explore and document the caves in the region including the famous Fort Stanton Cave and Snowy River. His presentation will document the effort with some photographs and information about the future usage of the cave.

"We are especially pleased to bring Mike Bilbo to the Museum for this presentation," commented Jay Smith, Director of the Hubbard Museum, "So many of our residents have some experience with the caves in the past, and we are excited to hear about what may come next with one of our great historic assets of Lincoln County." Bilbo is also a volunteer member of the Fort Stanton, Inc. Board of Directors and a regular volunteer at the Fort.

The Hubbard Museum of the American West is located at 841 Highway 70 West, and is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5p.m. Admission to the Museum is \$6.00 for adults, and reduced admission is available for senior citizens, military personnel, and youth.

Visit our web page at www.hubbardmuseum.org or call 575-378-4142 for information about other events, exhibits, and activities at the Museum. The Hubbard Museum of the

American West is owned and operated by the City of Ruidoso Downs.

Art awards

Hubbard Museum of the American West announces award recipients for Biennale Grande Exhibition.

The Hubbard Museum of the American West is proud to announce the award recipients for the Biennale Grande Art Exhibition. Artists working in New Mexico were invited to enter their work in eligible media categories including drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art and mixed media. All pieces submitted had to be work completed within the last five years to be entered.

"We had over 150 entries from artists across the state of New Mexico, and we have just over 50 pieces on display," commented Jay Smith, Director of the Hubbard Museum, "We are delighted with the turnout and hope that this is the beginning of a new tradition at the Hubbard Museum."

The public may still participate in the exhibit by voting for their favorite piece in the show. Ballots are available for patrons at the Museum, and the piece winning the most votes will be given the Award of Distinction at the conclusion of the show. The

Biennale Grande will be on display through April 11.

The following awards were given at the Opening on Friday evening; First Place Award, Kalen Green, "The Yoke of Form", Second Place Award, K. Henderson, "Redwing", Third Place Award, Rory Combs, "Medicine Crow".

Honorable Mention Awards; Anita Keegan, "African Geese"; Jakki Kauffman, "High Desert, Cool Shade"; Joy Campbell, "Whirlygig".

Many of the pieces on display are for sale as well, and the Hubbard Museum will receive a commission from each sale. For more information about the show and sale, or for a list of participating artists, please contact the Museum at 575.378.4142.

Please call the Museum at 575.378.4142, or visit our web site at <www.hubbardmuseum.org> for more information about the facility, or about other events and exhibits taking place at the Museum. It is located at 841 Highway 70 West.

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# OPINION

## RUIDOSO NEWS

Lisa Morales, publisher  
Marty Racine, editor

A MediaNews Group Newspaper, Published every Wednesday and Friday at 104 Park Avenue, Ruidoso, New Mexico

### OUR OPINION

## Track talk will carry 'Ruidoso Day'

Locals descend upon Santa Fe

As you read this, movers and shakers from the Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs political and business communities are in Santa Fe for the annual "Ruidoso Day" schmoozefest at the state capital.

The list includes the editor and publisher of the *Ruidoso News*. We will report on the experience.

This year, much of the talk will concern efforts to provide tax relief for racino operations at Ruidoso Downs. A bill that would have provided tax parity with Indian casinos had no chance in these challenging economic times. A substitute

bill that provides a local option to raise the gross receipts tax rate to retain businesses such as the track is now circulating in the Roundhouse (see story, page 1A).

If passed, the bill authorizes counties to put the GRT question before the voters.

Already, sides are lining up on the issue. One side calls it corporate welfare for R.D. Hubbard. The other side points to the track's importance to the local economy.

We are just now beginning to pass this political football, and it will get heated, like the mill levy fight two years ago. Stay tuned.

## Pet projects just might have to wait

My colleague Harold Morgan, instructing a workshop on financial writing years ago, told reporters in his audience to "pay attention to the big numbers."

His words echoed as I picked through the 66-page list of capital outlay projects on the chopping block. It's a telling inventory of what the state was going to spend money on.

Capital outlay is a good thing, if it's yours. If it's somebody else's, it's pork and it's bad. And while a project for the biggest cities is one of many, in small communities the spending and jobs, however temporary, are a form of economic development.

SB 182 by Sen. Carlos Cisneros, a Questa Democrat, would eliminate 2,596 projects totaling about \$181.8 million. It may seem like a lot, but not when you look at the bigger picture — and bigger numbers. Of the \$3.6 billion appropriated since 2003, about \$1.4 billion hasn't been spent. Some projects are in the works, but for those on Cisneros's list, activity has been slim to none.

The bill would also reclaim balances of projects completed and continue others by financing them another way. Not all these projects will die; some were mistakenly included because of paperwork snafus.

This money, now idled, could be directed to more viable projects to benefit communities and the state, noted the Legislative Finance Committee, or be used to stanch the flow of red ink.

The big numbers on the bill's hit list are usually construction projects. For example: two fire stations in Farmington, \$321,750; a town hall for Tatum, \$504,192; and a community center in Española, \$191,500. And they're often water and sewage systems, like the Eunice Affordable Housing Project Sewer, \$32,632.

In this trying year, we're interested in big and small numbers alike, like these nice-to-haves: Angel Fire's Sports Park (\$25,694), Gallup Main Street improvements (\$150,000), Roswell's Blackdom

Memorial (\$136,206), and Socorro County park renovation and improvement (\$255,000).

Be assured that constituents somewhere championed everything on this list, and many of them are now trying to pull their projects from the well. "Howls of protest," read the headlines.

I did a little quiet howling too. In my other life, I'm a historian, so it pains me to see cuts to museums, events and programs that preserve the state's history and to know we're going to nickel and dime our statehood centennial. But I realize that in a thin economy, my pet

causes don't stack up against education, law enforcement or programs for the disabled.

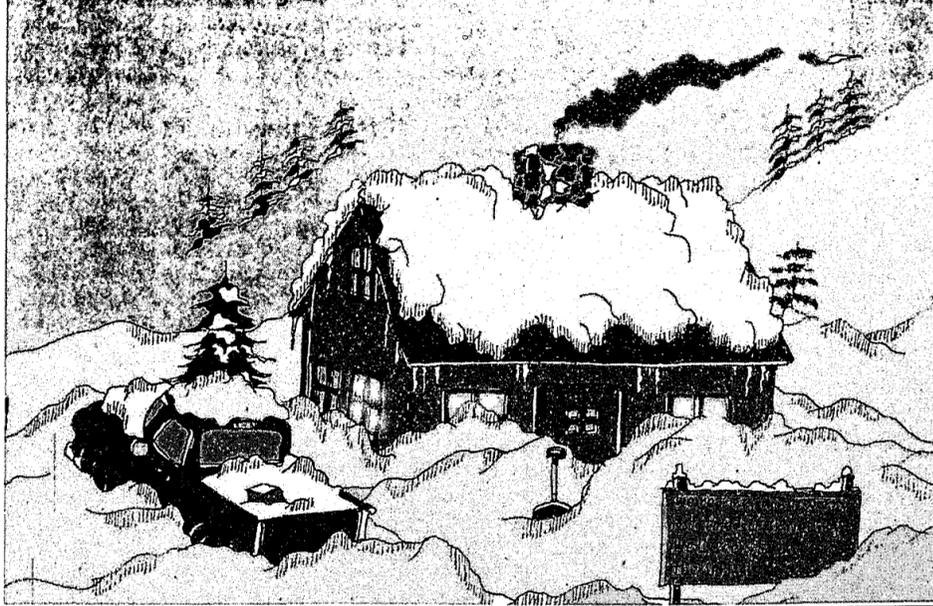
That's what Senate Finance Committee Chairman John Arthur Smith would like everyone to remember: We're in the hole, folks.

SB 182 isn't just a budget-cutting exercise. Its specific goal is to raise about \$150 million to shore up reserves, which are presently less than 1 percent, "inadequate in any economy, but especially so in these highly uncertain times," says the LFC's fiscal impact report. State employee furloughs will raise the reserves to 2.5 percent. SB 182 would bring reserves to a respectable but not flush 5 percent.

If everyone insists on keeping their pork, stalled and hopeless as it is, the state could fall short of its obligations, which means we would need even more cuts; more furloughs, layoffs or higher taxes. The howls of protest hint at a kind of desperation, as if there won't be another opportunity. But there will. We've survived downturns before, and we'll survive this one.

Here's a bit of grand irony. In 2001 Gov. Gary Johnson vetoed the entire capital outlay bill because he was angry that lawmakers didn't give him the exact tax cut he wanted, although they did offer him a tax cut. In 2003 Gov. Bill Richardson got that tax cut, and its cost is about \$150 million more than the current deficit.

## Prelude to cabin fever...



### YOUR OPINION

## Snow removal could be improved

To the editor:

SNOW REMOVAL in Ruidoso leaves me scratching my head. Who is in charge of the strategies involved in keeping our streets clean?

First of all, I have been plowing snow since 1965; yeah I'm old, and grew up in northern Vermont. We never had a school day, the buses always ran us to school.

Typical snowfalls were at least 1 foot if not 3-5 feet back then. When I see a dump truck with chains running up and down the center ridge of ice trying to break up the mess I just wonder who thought this one up.

If you are going to do this stunt then at least put a full load in the back to give some weight. Now, it seems to me that if I were to remove snow here I would start by removing the snow in the center of the street and pushing to the side.

Apparently the sidewalks don't matter anyway cause they don't even plow them in Midtown so another six feet at the edge of the road should not matter. When you don't remove the snow in the median you create a massive safety problem with narrowing of the two lanes in many places.

Then you add the freeze melt process where the accumulation in the middle melts, runs across the north side of the street and then freezes at 5 p.m. Not to mention people who try to cross over the mounds get stuck or wreck their drivetrains bouncing over the residue.

At night at least in midtown come in and remove the snow on the sides of the streets to facilitate store owners in removing their snow to the now cleaned edge of the street. I plowed the sidewalk with my tractor the other day from Thriftway to the Allsup's because the last time it snowed the ice stayed till this storm.

Give me a tractor to use and I will plow the sidewalks in Midtown for free. I used to plow sidewalks for two villages in Vermont, over 120 condominiums at Smugglers Notch Ski Ways, many restaurants and private residences.

It took me three days to plow each of my customers once. The whole concept of snow removal is to get rid of it quickly before it freezes. My customers very seldom had to deal with the ice, because the snow was removed before it could ice over from the traffic.

I would think with the liability on the Village of Ruidoso there would be a concerted effort to become much more efficient in this process.

Just my thoughts, anyone else out there wonder what's going

on?

Dave Stanley  
Ruidoso

### Bank locally

To the editor:

SO, YOU'RE amazed that the Wall Street bankers who got us into this financial mess are the ones getting the bailouts?

You're angry because they got billions from you, the taxpayers, they're getting million dollar bonuses — despite their lousy performance — and you and the other hard-working middle class are getting pay cuts, lay-offs and no work to be found?

Well, you and others like you are not without recourse.

There is a movement on, literally, to show our displeasure and take our money elsewhere ... To move our money, deposits and investments out of the big banks that are the heart of the problem, and put it into small, local banks ... those that support our local economy, and have themselves been hurt by the crisis.

Here is a Web site that describes this movement and how to find banks in your area that are local. (Note that all banks which have branches in Lincoln County qualify as 'local'): [www.moveyourmoney.info/](http://www.moveyourmoney.info/)

Also, a statement and video released last week by the New Mexico House Majority announced that Rep. Brian Egolf (D-Santa Fe) ([legis.state.nm.us/lcs/legdetails](http://legis.state.nm.us/lcs/legdetails)) has introduced House Bill 66, under which the State Treasurer and Board of Finance would move New Mexico's \$1.4 billion main account from Bank of America into local community banks and credit unions: [www-democracyfornewmexico.com/](http://www-democracyfornewmexico.com/)

Encourage your state representatives to support this bill, and ... move your money!

Tony Davis  
Alto

### Thanks from food bank

To the editor:

AS THE HOLIDAY season ends, the LCFB Board, Volunteers & clients would like to thank the community.

The many individual donors have received notes, tax receipts and letters expressing our appreciation for their contributions. Without them, the Food Bank could not exist!

We especially would like to also recognize churches who have organized or sponsored ongoing Food Drives or donations each year:

Community United Methodist Church, Methodist Men & Women, First Presbyterian Church, St. Anne's Guild and the Episcopal Church, St. Eleanor's Catholic Church, First Christian

Church and First Baptist Church's Kingdom Seekers.

Also very important were the food drives sponsored by: Sierra Vista Primary's Kayla Glasgow, White Mountain Elementary's Dana Lenzo, Ruidoso High School's Mrs Temple & Capitan Elementary's Wayne Ellison. Ruidoso Middle School helped by contributing hundreds of empty boxes in August to hold food donations. Even the very young at Nob Hill Early Development Center were encouraged by Joy Taylor to give food. We appreciated their hard work and contributions.

Other major food drives were sponsored, planned and organized by: Perry Champion and KWES/KBUY (Daily Bread Barrels in stores/banks), Rotary Club's two Sierra Cinema Food Drives (Georgia Underwood, Ray Cook), Inn of the Mountain Gods Cash for Cans Food Drive, You Can Make A Difference Talent Show Food Drive (Pam Magdanz), MTD and Tim Keithley's Fill the Bus Drive, and Matt Bryant IGA's Buy a Bag Food Drive and Alfred Romero.

Clubs and businesses were there for us: Altrusa, Benevolent & Patriotic Does, Capitani Quilters, Condotel Corporation, Club Gas, Lawrence Brothers, Noon Lions Club, Race Track Chaplaincy, Walmart, Mrs. Baird's, Starbucks, Wild Turkey Federation, Ruidoso Ford, Post Office Workers, Rose Group, Ruidoso Federated Women's Club, Michelle's, the Elks, Hubbard Foundation, Lincoln County Commissioners, Laureate Alpha Delta, and White Mountain Glass.

Gratefully,

Ray and Sue Alborn  
President & Secretary  
LCFB

### Kudos to LCMC

To the editor:

MY HUSBAND, Ken, was taken to the ER on Jan. 7. with cardiac complaints. Within 30 minutes he had an E.K.G., an I.V. started, and labs drawn, no waiting!

We were impressed with Diane, Amanda, and Dr. Carol Marquez who were very professional, informative, compassionate, and really put us at ease. Within a few hours he was in Albuquerque for further care. We appreciate Dr. Robinson, Beverly, and the staff, for all their patience.

Ruidoso is very fortunate to have this level of medical care in our community.

Thanks be to God for his recovery, and thanks to all at Lincoln County Medical Center, ambulance crew, and White Mountain Medical.

Karen Hutchinson and family  
Ruidoso

# BILL

FROM PAGE 1A

could impose the county business retention gross receipts tax, a majority of voters in the county would have to provide their approval at an election.

The board of commissioners would have to adopt a resolution calling for the election within 75-days of adopting an ordinance seeking the special tax. If the voters approve the measure, the ordinance setting the county business retention tax would take effect.

The effective date could be July 1 or Jan. 1. If the tax is turned down by voters, the county commission would have to wait one year before another attempt at the tax.

"I'm getting a favorable reaction from people in Lincoln County," said

Cook. "And I know there is some opposition too. It's the people in the county making the decision."

An earlier bill that would have reduced the gaming tax for lower revenue racinos ran into trouble because of the state's financial problems. "If the tracks can instead claim a tax credit, and if they do, that would obviously hurt the state," said Cook. "That's why we came up with this where the county will reimburse the state."

Cook said the earlier graduated gaming tax bill "is not going anywhere."

The chief sponsor of the gross receipts tax bill is Rep. Thomas Garcia (D-Ocate).

His District 68 covers parts of northern New Mexico, including the Raton area, where a new racetrack and casino is scheduled to open later this year.

The new proposal is

being looked at by local officials hoping to keep Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Casino in the Ruidoso area.

"It gives another option that we're going to look at and evaluate," said Sandi Aguilar, executive director of the Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce.

"We'll talk with the various lobbyists and legislators and we'll poll our members."

In December the chamber initiated an effort to the local track and casino. That followed the track's request before the New Mexico Racing Commission in November to move the facility to the Las Cruces area. For several years track officials have said they might seek to relocate because of competition from nearby tribal casinos who pay a lesser percentage in revenue sharing to the state compared to the track-casinos gaming tax.

# County ordinance explained

Legislation proposed at the state level would not be a duplication of Lincoln County's economic development ordinance adopted last August.

While enactment of a gross receipts tax under either the state legislation introduced last week or under the county ordinance would require authorization by voters, they are aimed at different goals, said County Manager Tom Stewart.

"The local ordinance has nothing to do with what is being proposed (in the legislature)," Stewart said Monday. "They are proposing a business retention GRT that can be imposed up to 1/4th of 1 percent in increments, and is subject to an election. If a county decides to go for this option, they have to create an ordinance and within 75 days, must hold a special election or conduct it with a general election."

"A business that wants to come under the provisions must apply to the state and the state can offset 50 per-

cent of the tax the business would have paid up to \$1 million."

The bill appears to be aimed at a proposed race track in Raton and at Ruidoso Downs Race Track, which the owner has indicated he might move.

The purpose of the county's ordinance already approved is to allow the public support of economic projects, such as entering into joint powers agreements with other local entities to support economic development, Stewart explained.

The ordinance authorizes the county to contribute assets, but the imposition of the GRT would be up to voters and could be imposed up to .1255 of 1 percent in increments of .0652 of 1 percent, he said.

"It is an infrastructure tax that businesses would collect and send to the state to be redistributed back to the county for projects," Stewart said.

~ Dianne Stallings

# COST

FROM PAGE 1A

"It's tantamount to buying a \$30,000 car and paying \$3,000 for the owner's manual. I would think it would come with the car," Cory said. "Is it typical to pay an engineer for videotaping?"

Salas said an engineer frequently is used to videotape.

Lee said Molzen-Corbin is the engineer of record and firm representatives are doing a great job with the project.

"It's not appropriate to ask another company (to prepare the manuals)," she said. "You could hire someone to gather the information and then give that to Molzen-Corbin for review. I suggest we meet with (Salas) and (other company representatives). Our responsibility is to not spend anything unnecessarily. They evaluated how much it was going to cost. They need to get started and we need to sit down with them."

Salas pointed out that the arrangement to pay for the manuals separately was approved in February

2009 in a meeting with officials from the village, from the city of Ruidoso Downs, her firm and the New Mexico Environment Department. "I don't know if it ever was approved by the council," she added.

Salas said firm officials estimate 2,000 hours to prepare the training manuals and the work must be finished before the plant is fired up, probably in February 2011. The manual will belong to the village and her firm cannot use the material anywhere else, she said.

Rebstock pulled out a sheet and read a state-

ment that all written material is owned by Molzen-Corbin

"For 2,000 hours and this price, we could hire a full-time engineer for a year," she said. "I've not heard of a project where vendors and engineers didn't give manuals and we have two engineers on staff and Ruidoso Downs has an engineer. No way can I understand why on a \$36 million project, we're paying \$347,000 more for manuals."

Bobby Snowden, wastewater treatment plant manager, said O&M manuals are used for the life of

a treatment plant. "We're still using the manual from the old plant. When something breaks down, every part is numbered and can be ordered."

He pointed out that the plant's discharge into the Rio Ruidoso must meet the toughest standard nationally for nitrogen. An expert in nitrogen removal will be brought in when the time is right and a laboratory is being built on site, because chemicals must be added to remove the nitrogen and phosphorous and two weeks would be required if samples were sent out for analysis.

He hopes to keep staffing at the current level with the possible addition of a chemist.

Stoddard said while he shared Rebstock's frustration, he didn't see much choice for the village.

Reflecting on the high tech nature of the proposed treatments of the discharge into the river to reduce contaminants and improve river health that were mandated by a court settlement, Councilor Ron Hardeman said, "This isn't rocket science, but in the world of wastewater treatment, this is close to rocket science."

# FIRED

FROM PAGE 1A

lence incident on Jan. 15. Ruidoso police were called to the emergency room of the Lincoln County Medical Center where a woman told an officer that she had been punched in the chest by Fitzwater at the residence the two had

shared for eight months. The victim told police that she had been battered by Fitzwater on several occasions.

Fitzwater was arrested on Jan. 22 on a misdemeanor charge of battery against a household member. His attorney, Freda McSwane, entered a not guilty plea in Magistrate Court in Ruidoso three days later.

# Search for new chief going well

DIANNE STALLINGS  
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The search for a new police chief in Ruidoso hasn't turned out to be very tough. The applications are rolling in and include three potential candidates from within the department.

Village manager Debi Lee told councilors at their meeting last week that 42 applications were received by the closing. "This is considered a destination place," she said. "It's a compliment to us. We haven't had to push."

The position was advertised on the Web sites of the village, the New Mexico Municipal League and the International Association of Police Chiefs, as well as the Ruidoso News and the Albuquerque Journal.

"The International Association of Police Chiefs Web site created a big interest in the position and the Human Resources Department received several phone calls about the position," she said.

Former police chief Wolfgang Born retired Dec. 31, and former two-

time police chief Dick Swenor stepped in to serve until a permanent replacement is hired.

## Other information

In other employee-related information at year's end, Lee reported 36 new hires were processed into the village during 2009 and 34 left, 14 temporary employees.

"That makes a turnover rate for the village 16.5 percent for the 2009 year," Lee said. The village has 92 employees who have worked five years or longer here and 106 employees with four years or less service with the village. The average number of years of service with the village is 6.16 years, which represents a 6.57 percent increase over last year's number."

## Village issues

In other village department issues, Lee reported:

- 40 new business registrations were processed in December and an additional 240 businesses were cross-referenced with quarterly reports received from the New Mexico

See ISSUES, page 7A

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# EDUCATION

## H1N1 vaccinations this week at RMSD

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H1N1 vaccinations will be available this month for students in the Ruidoso Municipal School District.

School nurses, in conjunction with the state health office in Ruidoso, will provide the vaccinations, said Mary Lou Moore-Estes, a registered nurse in the school district. Parents interested in having their students vaccinated should contact the nurse at the child's school. Permission forms must be completed and returned before upcoming clinics at the schools.

The H1N1 clinics in the district will be on Friday, Feb. 12, at the White Mountain Elementary and Sierra Vista Primary schools from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, Feb. 19 will bring a clinic to Ruidoso High School from 9 to 11 a.m.

The middle school will provide immunizations on Friday, Feb. 19, from 5 to 7 p.m. In addition to parent-approved students, the clinics will be available to school staff and residents in the community.

In addition, the Lincoln County Public Health Office, operated by the state health department, is giving H1N1 vaccinations on a walk-in bases every Tuesday afternoon from 1 until 4:30 p.m. The office is at 105 Kansas City Rd. in Ruidoso.

The clinics come as a recent analysis of death and hospitalization data due to H1N1 in New Mexico found that young

children have the highest rate of hospitalizations. Those between the ages of 50 and 64 have the highest death rate.

New Mexico's overall rate of swine flu hospitalizations was 50.3 per 100,000 population. The rate for children younger than five was 135.5, a rate more than 2.5 times higher than any other age group in New Mexico and twice the national estimate. Children and young adults five to 24 had the second highest rate in the state at 50.6 per 100,000 people.

New Mexico's overall death rate due to H1N1 is 2.6 per 100,000. The highest death rate is 5.3 amount those 50 to 64 years old, followed by 3.1 for people over the age of 64. Children younger than five, and adults 25 to 49, had a death rate of two per 100,000 individuals.

"While H1N1 disease has been declining, New Mexicans are hospitalized every week, and people continue to die from influenza complications," said state Health Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD. "You should still take this disease seriously, and the vaccine is the best way to protect yourself."

Vigil reminds parents that children who are younger than 10 need two doses of H1N1 vaccine to be fully protected. Doses should be given four weeks apart.

The health department has distributed more than 700,000 doses of the vaccination to providers and public health offices statewide.



COURTESY GEORGINE INKS

The Red Feather Theatre Company rehearses Jerry's Café, a stage drama written by a high school senior. Performances will be Feb. 12 and 13 at the Ruidoso Performing Arts Center, with a matinee on Feb. 14.

## Jerry's Cafe opens Valentine's weekend

JIM KALVELAGE  
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Rehearsals for the next production of the Ruidoso High School's After School Drama Club are underway.

Jerry's Café is written by high school senior Lindsey Porter and was chosen from over 100 student written plays for its "light heartedness" and dance options, said theatre instructor Georgine Inks. "Students really, really wanted to do a play that had lots of dancing," said Inks.

Originally written for more modern times, the one act play was quickly adapted to fit a 1920's era

so that some of the work could be part of the high school's Junior History and English collaborative project.

It marks the second collaboration this year that the school's Red Feather Theatre Company has had with other departments at Ruidoso High School.

Last semester the art department, under the direction of Mrs. Marilyn Lyons, and with assistance from artist and teacher Deborah Wenzel, helped with the graphic and painting of the flats background for A Midsummer Night's Dream.

The Red Feather Theatre Company was

organized last school year and produced four shows. One of the productions was also a student written play by 2009 senior Hannah Kashmar titled Masks, Love, and Pirates. It featured 12 couples sword fighting with real fencing foils and sabers.

The play competed at the New Mexico Drama Festival and won "superior" in all categories of student direction, original play, costumers and stage combat.

Jerry's Café will also compete at the drama fest in Portales next month.

The performances will take place at the Ruidoso Performing Arts Center on

Feb. 12 and 13.

Brats and burgers cooked by the Lincoln County Sheriff's Posse will be served from 5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. in the fine arts building hallway.

Curtain time in the adjoining theatre will be at 7 p.m. Tickets for dinner and the show are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door.

On Feb. 14, Valentines Day, there will be a 2 p.m. matinee.

Tickets are \$5. No food will be served at the matinee.

The dinner and show last year brought in over \$4,500 for the Red Feather Theatre Company.

## BUZZY BEES



COURTESY

**Nob Hill Early Childhood Center Headstart Buzzy Bees** for December, top photo, are: Back row: Madison Perez, Savannah Mendez, Christopher Wilson, Brian Rosales, Kihari Garcia, Christian Nava, Serenity Chaves, Irasenna Cardenas. Front row: Justin Less, Melanie Loera, Sixto "Gabriel" Herrera, Sebastian Lawrence. **Kingergarten Buzzy Bees** for December, bottom photo, are: Back row: Dayanara Ruiz, Topanga Lopes, Brandon Platero, Love' Camejo, Rodrigo Martinez, Nidia Mendoza, Bailey Wright, Julius Espinoza, Dominic Brown. Middle row: Wolfgang Martinez, AnArosa Herrera, Monae Ceja, Trinity Munoz, Devin Randolph, Colten Sidwell, Jasmine Nevarez, Alexa Cape. Front row: Tannis Evans, Avery Flusche, Jesus Zubia, Rebecca Adams, Lizbeth Lopez.

## ENMU compliant with Homeland Security

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The three campuses of ENMU, including the Ruidoso community college campus, are Homeland Security compliant.

Employees from each campus, including everyone from campus presidents to directors to secretaries, have taken Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training.

ENMU is now the first higher education system in New Mexico to achieve compliance, said Attila Hertelendy, director of ENMU's Emergency Medical Services Management



Program. NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all levels of governments, non-government organizations and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from the effects of incidents, according to FEMA.

"We are very pleased that employees of the Eastern New Mexico University system have

been willing to take time out of their busy schedules to participate in this FEMA training," said Steve Gamble, ENMU president. "While we hope we never have to deal with a major emergency at any of our campuses, we feel that this training has made up better prepared. The safety of our students and employees is always our number one concern, and we believe earning NIMS-compliant

status indicates how seriously we take this responsibility."

To qualify for the designation a number of employees, over the last few months, took a series of courses.

With the ENMU system NIMS-compliant, the door is open to the university system to apply for federal, state and other types of funding for training and exercises.

## Teen Spotlight

Teen Spotlight features area teens that have made a difference in their community. Lena Reyes is the next teen in the Spotlight. Lena is currently a senior at Carrizozo High School. She is the daughter of Rachel Monrreal.

Involvement in school is a priority with Reyes. She is a good student, the vice-president for the Carrizozo MESA (Mathematics, En-

gineering, Science Achievement) team, and is involved in student council. The sports arena is also an area Reyes has seen success as she has participated in volleyball, basketball, and track. She was named to the 2009 All-District Volleyball team and placed 6th in discus at the 2009 NM State Track meet.

Community is another important focus for Reyes.

She is a member of the Junior Rotary and has attended the 2008 and 2009 Light the Fire Youth Leadership Summits.

These Summits teach leadership skills and encourage students to become involved in their communities. It is clear that Reyes is an emerging community advocate.

Reyes credits her mom, her Grandma Reyes, and her Monrreal grandparents with being supportive influences in her life. She plans on attending college to pursue a Bachelor's degree in nursing and would like to become a pediatric nurse. Reyes shows her positive side when she says, "I have a good and happy future ahead of me." That attitude



will definitely help her reach her goals.

Teen Spotlight is sponsored by Lincoln County DWI Prevention.

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# Downs says no to JUB voting change

DIANNE STALLINGS  
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Ruidoso Downs representatives said they aren't interested in changing the balance of voting power on the Joint Use Board that governs the regional wastewater treatment plant.

And they indicated at a JUB meeting last week they thought Ruidoso officials were jumping the gun investigating a shareholders approach to vote allocation, instead of trying to work with the current structure.

Under the existing arrangement, the village of Ruidoso is responsible for 85 percent of the expenses associated with the plant based on the amount of sewage flow it produces, compared to 15 percent for the city of Ruidoso Downs. The village and the city each have two representatives on the JUB. The fifth member is a Lincoln County commissioner, but the county has no financial interest.

While all JUB members voted in agreement with a motion by JUB Member Jim Stoddard, a Ruidoso

village councilor, to direct staff to schedule further discussion between village and city officials on a shareholders approach, Ruidoso Downs City Clerk Carol Virden, a city JUB representative, followed with another motion. She directed JUB Attorney Ned Kendrick to come back with an organizational structure on how the JUB functions, along with options for administrative policies and procedures. That motion also passed without opposition.

Village Public Works Director Randall Camp walked JUB members through the shareholders method, explaining that over time, the cost of a share would increase, and that an entity with more shares than it needs could sell, lease or trade them to another entity receiving treatment service.

"This is as low as we'll ever pay to have sewage treated," he said.

Each share would equate to one gallon of the 2.7 million that can be treated daily at the new plant being built under a mandate in a court settle-

ment over the quality of the water in the Rio Ruidoso into which the plant discharges, and to comply with new tough nitrogen and phosphorous standards established in the plant's discharge permit.

"The whole idea is to be fair and equitable," Camp said. "It can be tweaked in a number of ways."

JUB members already appear to have discarded the concept of forming an autonomous Authority to run the plant, because members fear the municipalities would lose control of rate setting and taxing power in reference to the plant. They contend those powers should remain with elected officials answerable to voters, and not be delegated to appointed boards. They also pointed out a separate Authority means more expense and staff.

"I though we all agreed we would explore the bylaws for the JUB as it exists now and what could make it better," said Tom Armstrong, mayor of Ruidoso Downs and a JUB member. "We've been waiting for reports from Ned...to explore where the

JUB is and what could be done with that, what he thinks might work. After we hear that, we would welcome your report and we will try to turn in our own proposal about what we think we ought to do. I felt pretty comfortable hearing about the JUB and what can make it better. I'm just surprised we're going to look at a shareholder deal."

Stoddard said, "We need a concept before (Kendricks) can create bylaws."

Dave Parks, a county commissioner and JUB member, said sooner or later the representation issue has to be resolved. They can try first to sit down and kick around ideas, next go to binding arbitration or ask a court to decide, he said, adding, "I don't like the latter two."

If he was mayor of Ruidoso Downs, he would said the bylaws should reflect the city would never be liable for anything but its proportionate cost of operation and capitalization, and its percentage of use must be guaranteed, and that customers in the city would never be

charged more than resident of Ruidoso.

Armstrong said he wants to hear how the JUB was formed initially versus today. "I'm told it doesn't work," he said. "Why? I've seen it work since I've been in office."

JUB Member Greg Cory, Ruidoso Mayor Pro Tempore, gave two reasons he doesn't think it works.

"We can't agree to allow either municipality to talk to Ned without dragging the respective counsels (municipal attorneys) into it," he said. "We're paying three attorneys when we should only be paying one."

In the past, change orders on the treatment plant have been held up by the minority partner, because it has equal votes, he said.

"If I had 15 percent of the bill and equal representation, I'd be happy too. But this is a problem begging for a resolution and we can't even agree on how to approach identifying solutions. The problem for my is my municipality is paying 85 percent of the bills at the plant, overhead, administration operation and

construction costs, yet we have the same number of members on the JUB as the member that pays 15 percent of the bills. This body can obligate the village into decisions with which it may not agree."

Village Attorney Dan Bryant said the county already has one autonomous Authority that collects and transports garbage to a landfill. Since its inception in 1991, members have wrestled with the question of representation. The local governments involved decided they would not cede certain powers, budget approval and residential rate setting, to the Solid Waste Authority. He compared using flow as a representation measure for voting to the U.S. House of Representatives, where population dictates the number of members.

"The little states complained and the Senate was created and everybody gets two votes," he said.

Representation could be different for certain issues, he said. "The shareholders decide some things, but the minority position also has a set of rights."

## ISSUES

FROM PAGE 5A

Taxation and Revenue Department to ensure anyone engaged in business activity in the village is registered with the clerk's office.

- early voting for the municipal election begins Feb. 10, in the village clerk's office in Village Hall, 313 Cree Meadows Drive.
- the New Mexico Hay

Growers Association staged their annual session at the Convention Center Jan. 10-16, but no events were planned for Dec. 27-Jan. 2, and Jan. 3-Jan. 9.

- the fire chief and assistant chief are working to implement a new Rescue Intervention Team concept on the fire ground, for interior attack operations to ensure trapped firefighters can be extricated quickly from a burning building in an emergency situation. The concept will require

additional training, equipment and changes in staffing within the department.

- Since July, 539 properties have been certified as properly thinned against wildfire hazard by the village Forestry Department staff. Forty-seven hazard tree were removed from private properties and 42 from village land. Work was completed on 4,327.07 acres under the cost-share program. Property in the Wingfield block of land

reached the 95 percent compliance point, the best rate of all the blocks defined.

- Black Forest is next at 94 percent. Followed by Ponderosa/Pine Lodge at 89 percent, Upper Canyon at 86 percent and Camelot Pinecliff at 80 percent.

The Sudderth/Mechem corridor, the most recent were owners received letters to comply, sits at 25 percent.

Village Forester Dick Cook emphasized that pub-

lic land and private land must be treated together to create the swaths of thinned property that can provide some safety and a break from a rapidly moving wildfire.

- A contract to thin 11.81 acres north of Two Rivers Park was advertised and then awarded to Villalba Company of Ruidoso Downs.

Work already began and will affect some areas of the park as slash is piled until grapple trucks can pick up

the debris. A number of large dead trees lie next to the trails, and the paths will have to be blocked while thinning occurs in those areas.

Forestry staff also identified six more parcels of village property to be thinned, totaling about 50 acres to date. Thinning on another 50 acres of a 90-acre grant project east of U.S. 70 was completed and 8 adjacent acres will be added using the same cost-share grant.

## Downs dislikes Village JUB proposal

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A "shareholders" proposal for ownership of the under construction new regional wastewater treatment plant is considered a power grab by some Ruidoso Downs city officials.

Ruidoso village councilors are seeking more information on the shareholder concept.

"It was just a proposal that they (Ruidoso) put together," said Ruidoso Downs Mayor Tom Armstrong. "I was not very pleased with it. The City of Ruidoso Downs has their opinion of where the JUB (the Joint Use Board for the treatment plant) needs to stay."

City Councilor Dean Holman said what the village is offering needed to be looked at carefully. Pointing to a voluminous proposal, Holman said he hasn't had enough time to review the entire document.

"I hope I'm wrong, but it looked like it was another attempt at the control of the Joint Use Board and wastewater treatment plant," Holman said. "It

was just the same thing by a different name. This time they're calling it shareholders shares or whatever. I think that I picked up strongly that they wanted the number of the shareholders to be reflective of the number of members on the Joint Use Board."

Holman contended that would take any control away from Ruidoso Downs. He agreed with City Clerk Carol Virden that the board should have more authority and power. But Holman added the board should remain a board and not become an "authority."

There had been talk a couple of years ago of creating an authority, similar to the establishment of the Lincoln County Solid Waste Authority. That authority, organized in 1991, has representatives from Lincoln County and it's participating communities. It can set some rates.

"An authority is different than the board that we have now," said Holman. "An authority would give complete control to the authority. The village and the city both would be at their control, and have the authority to raise taxes."

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# City of Ruidoso Downs addresses repair projects

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Water supply issues in Ruidoso Downs are being addressed. One involved a major water line break. The other is a problem at the Griffith Spring pump house.

"Water crews had been walking the water lines for about a month because the tanks had not been filling," said Public Works Director Cleatus Richards. "We knew we had a leak and I think we found it. They got that fixed and our tanks are now filling like they should."

Richards said it is

unknown how long water had been leaking.

The other water system need involves pumps at the spring that are affected by electric power fluctuations.

"We had one occasion where water had been overflowing, coming down the street from the spring house," said Richards. "The power company is trying to work with us. They put a monitor on the power line to try and see what's causing the fluctuations."

Richards said the problem resulted in one pump burning out.

"The guys are basically having to baby-sit those pumps and do extra checks

during the evening hours"

In other public works areas, Richards said street work is taking place on both West Drive and U.S. Highway 70, though wintry weather had delayed the projects. Curb and gutter has been placed on West Drive, but freezing conditions stopped progress on a finish grading and paving of the street. The project is on hold for now.

Curb and gutter is in place along another section of U.S. Highway 70. Light pole bases were poured and now the poles are being reinstalled.

With the new sidewalks, the city's Beautification

Committee is looking at acquiring two trash receptacles for the walkway.

Design engineering on the Agua Fria Subdivision sewer system is nearly completed. Richards said that project will be phased.

"We do have a small amount of money and we're hoping to at least get a small project with what we have available," said Richards.

"We are asking for a special appropriation from (U.S. Senator Tom) Udall's office for both water and sewer for the Agua Fria area."

Engineered construction plans for bridges have been

approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Richards said hopefully a New Mexico Environment Department review will be completed next week to allow the projects to go to bid.

Approval of a six month extension, from the original Feb. 14, 2010 deadline from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, "has been assured," according to Richards. FEMA had pledged funding assistance for the repairs.

The Friedenbloom Drive and the Joe Welsh Drive bridges were damaged by severe flooding in July of 2008.

City parks are also getting attention.

An abandoned structure on the upper level of Riverside Park has been demolished.

Erosion control work to slope an area is being done to prevent runoff damage to the park.

Electric hand dryers are being installed in the restrooms at All American Park.

"We've had a continued problem with towels because they were used primarily to clog the toilets, and then spread all over the place," said Richards. "I think this will make a much cleaner restroom."

## Loss of 'hold harmless' guarantee could cost county \$1 million

DIANNE STALLINGS  
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Several years ago when Gov. Bill Richardson pushed for the abolition of gross receipts tax on food and medical items, he pledged local governments that depended on the revenues from those sources would be protected and compensated.

But with a \$650 million state budget deficit, state legislators are considering eliminating that "hold harmless" guarantee to municipal and county governments.

Statewide, that would mean a \$120.9 million cut for cities and counties. Lincoln County and its municipalities could see a cut in revenue of more than \$1 million

County Manager Tom Stewart told county commissioners at their meeting earlier this month, the state should either continue the hold harmless reimbursement or reinstate the gross receipts tax.

Lincoln County would lose \$85,674 in food distrib-

ution supplement and \$9,561 for medical for a total of \$95,235.

Ruidoso could lose \$276,771 in food tax supplement and \$143,864 for medical for a total of \$420,635.

Ruidoso Downs would lose \$597,838 for a food sales supplement, Capitan would lose \$110,085 for food and \$286 for medical, and Carrizozo would lose \$16,980 for food.

Corona apparently received no supplement for either category.

Last October, county commissioners approved a resolution urging Richardson and state legislators to oppose the repeal of the hold harmless provision for local governments to the GRT on food and medical services during the special session of the legislature.

Commissioners passed a new resolution with the same message this month on a motion by Commissioner Eileen Sedillo.

The resolution states that the recession significantly reduced the revenues of the state and

counties.

The impact is anticipated to continue at least through Fiscal Year 2011, and "a state-level fiscal imbalance is not truly rectified by impairing revenues of local governments, especially because county finances currently are severely strained."

Part of the problem is shrinking revenues from the remaining GRT, and counties are increasingly dependent on that source of revenue, including the hold-harmless amounts, to provide services to residents, the resolution states.

The total impact to the county of removing the full hold harmless provisions would be \$1,241,059, according to the Taxation and Revenue Department, the resolution noted. Commission asked legislators, "to keep the faith" with its county governments by retaining the full hold-harmless provisions.

"I have to say if I was a municipality in the county, I would be very concern," Stewart said. "This would be a huge hit."

## WWTP delays push timeline

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Construction delays at the Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs regional wastewater treatment plant could push the "substantial completion" timeline to March 2011, said Ruidoso Downs' Public Works Director Cleatus Richards.

A Feb. 8, 2008 court judgment required construction be finished and the new plant in operation by Dec. 1, 2010.

An environment lawsuit had been filed in 2005 by the now WildEarth Guardians and two Lincoln County residents.

The plaintiffs argued the sewage treatment plant's effluent to the Rio Ruidoso violated its dis-

charge permit.

"I think we'll still be in good shape because we made good decisions on handling those delays," said Richards. "I don't feel we'll be in any great trouble with either the EPA or the Forest (WildEarth) Guardians. Weather is a delaying factor."

In addition to weather, a delay in shipment of an ultraviolet disinfection for the facility set the timeline back as well.

The recent Ruidoso approval of a contract amendment with contractor RMCI Inc., to cover the costs of the delays, was applauded by Richards.

"I'm quite thankful that we took the lump sum option because snow storms will severely impact

the progress," said Richards. Construction is being substantially delayed by weather."

The \$214,000 change would provide RMCI with additional workdays to complete construction.

Two other options had been offered. One would have seen RMCI continue on a time and materials basis. That was turned down because of uncertainty. The other would have shut down construction until the weather was more favorable.

The Ruidoso Downs City Council approved the lump sum option on Dec. 14, 2009. The Ruidoso Village Council, on a three-three tie that was decided by Mayor L. Ray Nunley, followed suit on Jan. 14.

## Road fund cuts reduce county projects

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State cuts in road project dollars means Lincoln County crews may have to wrap up projects with \$54,219 less than planned.

County Manager Tom Stewart told commissioners at their meeting last week he previously received a letter from Gary Shurbert, District Two

engineer for the New Mexico Department of Transportation notifying the county of a 25 percent reduction in the Local Government Road Fund program.

The State Highway Commission meets in February to finalize the cuts.

Stewart said he will report back to commissioners for action at their

February meeting.

The School Bus Route Fund may see the state share of \$53,780 drop to \$41,592; the County Arterial program from \$137,973 to \$107,445; and the County Cooperative program from \$54,775 to \$43,272.

"As a minimum, our road superintendent would like to fully fund the School Bus Route project in Palo Verde Slopes, because the project nearly completes resurfacing in that location, with one more year to go next year," Stewart said.

He recommended absorbing the cuts and funding all three projects as originally envisioned to keep the county maintenance program on track.

He told commissioners he's optimistic the program will return to normalcy next year.

The Palo Verde subdivision project encompasses Reynolds Circle East Loop, east of U.S. 70, for 48 miles for a total cost of \$71,829.

The Cooperative project covers Torrey Pines Trail, Midiron Drive and Greenbrier Court in Alto Lakes covering 1.52 miles of county roads, plus additional patching for a total cost of \$73,033.

The County Arterial Project also covers road in Alto Lakes, Pinehurst, Broadmoore, Mountain Oak Court, Grapevine Court and Midiron for 1.52 miles and a total cost of \$183,964.

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# AG says Ruidoso council violated Open Meetings Act

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The Attorney General of New Mexico determined the Ruidoso Village Council violated the Open Meetings Act based on a complaint filed by Jerry Shaw, former mayor, former coordinator of the Lincoln County DWI Prevention program and a candidate in the March municipal election for a council seat.

"On Feb. 12, 2008, the council went into executive session subject to the attorney-client privilege pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the Village of Ruidoso was or may become a participant," Village Attorney Dan Bryant wrote in a memorandum to councilors.

On May 18, 2009, Shaw filed a complaint with the attorney general alleging a violation, because she contended there was no litigation connected to the issue in which the village might become involved, he explained.

Bryant told councilors at their meeting Tuesday he responded to the complaint, but received a letter from Assistant Attorney General Elaine Lujan on Nov. 18, 2009, informing him the office's opinion was that the council did violate the OMA.

"This letter instructs the village to rectify the violation by addressing it in a public meeting," Bryant wrote.

The minutes and a copy of the agenda of the open session will be submitted to the AG's office by the end of today.

Bryant made it clear that he disagreed with the opinion, but short of direction from the council to seek a declaratory judgment in district court, the council needed to discuss the issue in open session, as directed, he said. The attorney still cautioned councilors not to mention employee names or other details that could be considered confidential personnel information.

"(Shaw) filed the complaint asserting the closed session was inappropriate," he said. "She thought we said she or an employee might entertain a suit. I made it clear that was not the case."

"We were to be sure we were taking steps covering compliance and labor issues." The controversy dealt with accounting and payroll issues connected to overtime worked by police officers in connection to the DWI prevention program, and the money withheld for Medicare and social security, if it was properly withheld and sent to the

Internal Revenue Service, he said.

"In my response (to Lujan), I clarified this was client-attorney relationship advice," Bryant said. "No action is needed tonight. I caution in your responses not to go into more details (regarding the employee)."

Councilors Greg Cory and Jim Stoddard expressed concern over the AG's opinion. Cory asked what Bryant has done to ensure a similar error doesn't occur in the future.

"That's a difficult question, because as I sit here tonight, I believe Ms. Lujan's opinion is incorrect, that I have a mandatory professional duty imposed upon me by the Canons of Ethics not to discuss private legal liabilities of my clients in a public forum and thereby create potential liability to the village," he said.

"The attorney general's opinions are advisory, just a lawyer like any other. While they have the ability to issue letters and to request this, my higher calling is to you."

"We are incredibly careful about what can go into executive session and if the conversation strays, we put the brakes on and steer back."

Stoddard asked who on village staff determined if an executive session was

appropriate?

In February 2008, Dan O. Higgins was village manager and executive sessions were scheduled during a pre-agenda meeting.

Threatened or pending litigation is a legal exception to the OMA, Bryant explained.

The decision was made before a clarification was received from the state Department of Finance and Administration that the village was handling the program properly, he said, "but the concern was with internal accounting, tracking overtime, ... and withheld FICA and Medicare, not with the DWI program."

The attorney said his worry about possible litigation involved regulatory enforcement of labor agencies and the IRS, not Shaw. "I tried to be very clear that was never part of the conversation that we might be sued by Jerry Shaw," he said.

"I assume you found legal provisions to support your position," Stoddard said.

"I'm sure somewhere in the United States there are," but he hasn't tried to find them, Bryant said.

Cory asked if possible punitive action was anticipated and Bryant said he didn't think there would be any consequence once the

AG's office received confirmation that the issue was discussed by the council in open session.

Shaw said her complaint was not against the council, but stemmed from the prior village management when an incident occurred and was brought to the council's attention.

"I am not an employee," Shaw said. "I had a contract. DFA makes the rules. The village was the fiscal agent and I followed codes. There was no problem until (a former village administration official) decided I was breaking the law."

"I said if I am, everyone in the state was. I cited the page. It should have been settled by (Higgins), instead it was ramrodded through the council in closed session."

She wanted a ruling that the closed session was improper, but didn't want the village fined.

"I have no animosity," Shaw said. "I was in government 10 years and know for what a closed session can be called."

Bryant reiterated, "I don't want (Shaw) going away thinking I thought she would sue. I didn't then and I don't now. I never mentioned a name. No elected officials did either."

Councilor Michele Rebstock said she didn't

remember much detail, but at the time thought they were discussing a village employee and an overtime problem.

"I don't know why it couldn't have been discussed in public, but I'm not a lawyer," she said. "I'm an open book. I'll talk about anything in public much to the distaste of other councilors and our lawyer."

"Yeah, I've heard that," Mayor L. Ray Nunley shot back.

"We go by what our attorney says," Rebstock continued. "I don't remember anything about you might sue. If I did something wrong, I'm sorry for that."

Other councilors echoed the apology to Shaw. No action was needed.

Contacted later, Shaw pointed out that she revived the county DWI program supervised by the village after two failures by other directors and that it frequently was lauded by state officials as "the best in the state."

Shaw's response to a request for proposals was not selected in the last contract round and the coordinator's position was awarded to someone else.

In a related issue, councilors confirmed the mayor's appointment of Theresa Burns to the DWI Planning Council.

## Prisoner sues county and Sheriff Virden

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Under pending litigation listed by Lincoln County Commission Attorney Alan Morel, a woman prisoner transported by a contractual service is claiming she suffered personal injuries.

Magan Marie Mays is suing the County Commission and Sheriff Ricky Virden in the U.S. District Court in New Mexico.

She alleges violation of civil rights and injuries resulting from an incident that occurred when she claims she was assaulted by a guard employed by Court Services Inc., a contract provider of inmate transport services for the county.

The incident apparently occurred during transport from Tennessee to New Mexico.

The complaint also claims the sheriff was responsible for the hiring and training of Court Services employees.

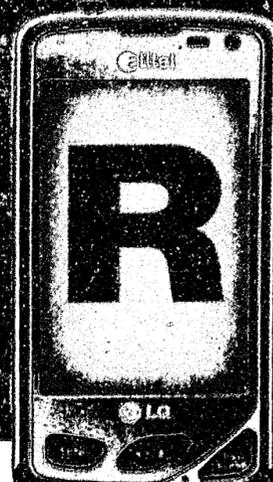
Attorney Nicole Werkmeister of the Narvaez firm represents the county and has filed a motion to dismiss.

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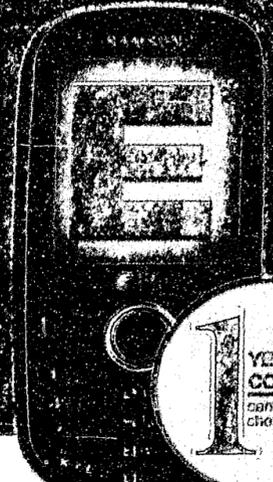
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# Another snow maker due through area today

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Yet another storm system will cross the Sacramento Mountains today. And while snow will fall, rain should be part of the mix for many as well.

"There is confidence in a warmer system," said National Weather Service meteorologist at the Albuquerque forecast office, David Craft. "Last week we had a nice cold front come through and that brought a lot of snow for Ruidoso. This should be more rain."

But there should be some periods with snow, said Craft.

"Mainly about 7,000 feet I expect more snow than rain," the forecaster said.

"Over 7,500 feet it will probably be all snow. This should be another good one for the skiers. I'm going to emphasize heavier snow when you get over 8,000 feet."

Craft said in Ruidoso four inches of new snow is not out of the question.

A winter weather advisory was issued by the weather service late Tuesday afternoon for the northern Sacramento Mountains, which includes the Ruidoso area.

For the southern Sacramentos a winter storm warning had been posted.

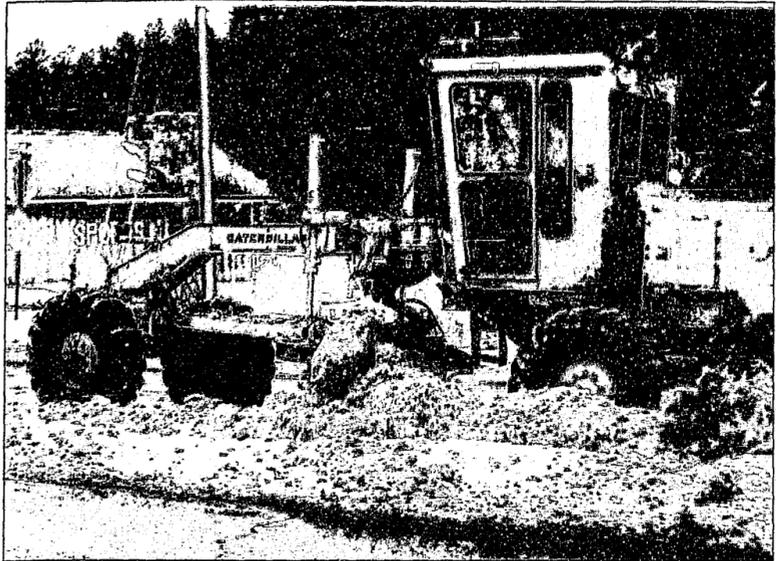
The low pressure system was moving in late Tuesday from Baja California, sliding northeast across the Land of

Enchantment. Hazardous travel conditions were expected at times today because of snow covered and icy roads, and visibilities occasionally lowering to under a half mile at some locations.

Last Thursday a potent winter storm from the Pacific moved across the region delivering some impressive snow accumulations.

Ski Apache received 25 inches. And the Sierra Blanca snowtel station had 11 inches of new snow recorded. In Ruidoso 10 inches fell, according to the weather service.

A storm less than a week earlier also dropped snow that approached depths of one foot at some locations.



COURTESY JOHN SODEN

Village road crews worked to remove snow from Sudderth on Jan. 26, just prior to another major storm hitting the area two days later.

## Downs audit report improved over last year

JIM KALVELAGE  
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Ruidoso Downs made strides last year to resolve a couple of financial issues reported in the city's audit report for the year that ended June 30, 2008.

The approved audit for the year that ended June 30, 2009 cited two findings, compared with four the year before.

Resolved were a need to comply with New Mexico's lodger's tax statutes, avoid having deposits in financial institutions in excess of FDIC insurance levels, and providing adequate documentation in personnel records.

A repeat finding, failing to have an employee with adequate qualifications and training sufficient enough to prepare the city's financial statements, will probably be repeated.

"That's going to be there as long as you don't have that situation in place here," CPA Dan Austin, who conducted the audit, told city councilors.

"In an ideal situation in an audit you guys prepare this document and all I do is put six pages in there with my opinion on compliance and internal control issues," said Austin.

"That's the way it's supposed to work, but it doesn't happen that way.

There's nobody that has the staff. The only ones that might have the staff are some of the bigger municipalities."

"It's a catch-22," said City Councilor Dean Holman. "The state puts those regulations on them and they're so small and can't hire someone who has the expertise."

The second finding cited the inventory of the city's Hubbard Museum of the American West.

Austin wrote that there are numerous inventory items that have been listed for a significant period of time and may not be valued accurately.

"I went in and did some

test work and a lot of those items that are in the inventory were old," said Austin. "I think some of them have been there since I was doing the Museum of the Horse audit years ago."

The Hubbard Museum of the American West was founded in 1992, growing from the initial collection of the Anne C. Stradling Museum of the Horse.

The museum is directed to develop an inventory valuation policy.

Austin noted the 2008-2009 audit was a change from a year ago because the city received more than \$500,000 in federal funds. He said that required additional reviews.



Snow storms blanketed Fort Stanton giving it a winter-wonderland look as captured by local historian and author Lynda Sanchez. Above, frost- and snow-laden trees line the Laundress Quarters. Right, a lone lamp post stands as a sentry to the white silence of the fort.



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PAGE 1B

## side line

### Ski Report

#### Ski Apache

The snow resort is open daily 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. You may call 464-1234 for the latest ski report and information. The ski report is culled from [www.ski-apachesnowreport.com](http://www.ski-apachesnowreport.com)

Tickets: Season passes are normally available by phone at 464-3600.

New snow past 48 hrs.: 0 inches

Season total: 134 inches

Weather for Wednesday: Snow showers before 11am, then rain. High near 39. East wind between 5 and 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80 percent. New snow accumulation of 1 to 2 inches possible. Wednesday evening, snow likely. Cloudy, with a low around 27. South wind between 5 and 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent.

Weather for Thursday: A 30 percent chance of snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 38. West wind between 5 and 10 mph. Thursday evening, partly cloudy, with a low around 24.

Current conditions: Excellent

Mid-mountain snow depth: 54 inches

Snow surface: Powder, machine groomed

Groomed runs: Bunny, Easy Street, East Easy Street, Moonshine Gulch, Lower Moonshine, Lower Deep Freeze, Ramp, SBT, Snow Park, Capitan Lite, Chino, Meadows, The Face, Elk Ridge, Bull Run, part of Apache Bowl, Game Trail, Wild Onion and Gondola Lift Line.

Groomers Pick: Gondola Lift Line

Lifts open: No. 1, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, No. 6, No. 7 open Saturday, Sunday and holidays and No. 8 Gondola is open.

Snowmaking: No

### Results

#### Boys Basketball

Friday, Jan. 29

Lovington 52, Ruidoso 57

Tularosa 90, Capitan 25

Saturday, Jan. 30

Mountainair 56, Hondo 48

#### Girls Basketball

Friday, Jan. 29

Tularosa 35, Capitan 29

Saturday, Jan. 30

Lovington 82, Ruidoso 39

Hondo 46, Mountainair 33

### Sports On Tap

#### Boys Basketball

Thursday, Feb. 4

Gateway at Mesalero, 7 p.m.

Hondo at Vaughn, 7 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 5

Lordsburg at Capitan, 3 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 6

Roswell at Ruidoso, 7 p.m.

Mescalero at Tatum, 6 p.m.

Mountainair at Carrizozo, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 9

Portales at Ruidoso, 7 p.m.

Carrizozo at Vaughn, 7 p.m.

Corona at Hondo, 6:30 p.m.

#### Girls Basketball

Thursday, Feb. 4

Mescalero at Gateway, 5:30 p.m.

Hondo at Vaughn, 5 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 5

Lordsburg at Capitan, 4:30 p.m.

Ruidoso at Dexter, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 6

Mescalero at Tatum, 1 p.m.

Mountainair at "Zozo, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 9

Capitan at Cloudcroft, 4 p.m.

Ruidoso at Lovington, 7 p.m.

Tularosa at Mescalero, 5:30 p.m.

Carrizozo at Vaughn, 5:30 p.m.

Corona at Hondo, 5 p.m.

### On Deck

#### IMBA Visits Ruidoso

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Trail Care Crew will be meeting with the Ruidoso Parks and Recreation Department Feb. 4-7. Of particular interest will be the IMBA Open House and Round Table discussion to be held at Smokey Bear Ranger Station, Saturday, Feb. 6, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Of particular interest will be a power-point presentation on "The Economic Benefits of Bike Trails in a Community" at 1:30 p.m. This is a powerful presentation and public attendance is requested to show support for the development of bike trails in Ruidoso. To ensure space availability for the open house please email Debbie Jo Almager if you will be attending at [debbiejoalmager@ruidosonm.gov](mailto:debbiejoalmager@ruidosonm.gov) or call 257-5030. To help with trail construction please register through this link <http://go.imba.com/ruidoso>.

# Opportunity comes knocking

## IMBA Trail Care Crew visits Ruidoso to lay out ideas for a bike trail system in the Lincoln National Forest

MIKE CURRAN

[mcurran@ruidosonews.com](mailto:mcurran@ruidosonews.com)

In an effort to build upon existing local entities (Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Ski Apache) which bring people to the Ruidoso area, a few visionary citizens of the community have banded together in an effort to build new mountain biking/shared-use trails and revitalize current ones.

Last year, through the aspirations of the Bicycle Ruidoso Club, the newly formed Ruidoso Trails Fund and the Smokey Bear Ranger District, a grant of \$25,000 (derived from the Lodgers Tax which was requested by the White Mountain Outdoor Club) was awarded to the Village of Ruidoso for the creation of a trail system to be built upon 20,000 acres of the 1.1 million acres the Lincoln National Forest encompasses.

As a result, the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Trail Care Crew will be coming to Ruidoso, Feb. 4-7, to present a power-point presentation and teach



RANKIN HARVEY/FOR THE RUIDOSO NEWS

Sem Gallegos breaks out into the open.

how a trail system should be built, to wit, adopting designs to minimize environmental impact, avoiding sensitive habitat and archeological areas, diminishing soil erosion, preserv-

ing streams and wetlands and preserving open spaces.

To bring IMBA into the this week's process has been a long, ongoing endeavor.



RANKIN HARVEY/FOR THE RUIDOSO NEWS

Cody Thurston leads with Sem Gallegos (second) on a mountain bike run.

More than a year ago, Cody Thurston and Gerardo Garcia of the White Mountain Outdoor Club attended an IMBA power-point trail system talk in Carlsbad.

Both were impressed to the point they requested a sit-down meeting with the Association to see if it would come to Ruidoso.

See BIKE, page 2B



TY WYANT/FOR THE RUIDOSO NEWS

Jonathan Smith was first in the Men's Snowboard.



TY WYANT/FOR THE RUIDOSO NEWS

Kyle Staples took first in the Men's Ski category.

# Annual Terrain Park Series competition

MIKE CURRAN

[mcurran@ruidosonews.com](mailto:mcurran@ruidosonews.com)

Saturday marked the second year of the Terrain Park Competition Series at Ski Apache to the delight of many spectators who watched as skiers and snowboarders completed the second leg of three competitions this season. The first of these events took place Jan. 9.

Eleven entrants in last weekend's contests entered five categories: Men's Ski, which was won by Kyle Staples, Child Ski (under 18), won by Drey Smith; Men's Snowboard, with Jonathan Smith capturing first place; Child's Snowboard, in which Michael Macias took the top spot and Female Snowboard, with Kelly Locke coming in first.

All participants were



TY WYANT/FOR THE RUIDOSO NEWS

Matt Collins won a third place in the Men's Snowboard.

evaluated by a panel of judges who awarded points for each run.

The final leg of this year's Terrain Park Competition Series will be held, Saturday, Feb. 27, at Ruidoso's ski resort. Competitors who wish to

participate must register by 10 a.m. on the day of the races at the special service booth in the plaza at Ski Apache. A \$10 fee is required.

Another popular skiing and snowboarding activity which has met with success



TY WYANT/FOR THE RUIDOSO NEWS

Mike Roberti does a black-flip and took second place in the Men's Snowboard competition at Ski Apache.

is the Terrain Park Jib that includes Lincoln County school students from third grade and up.

Students who take advantage of this program must conform to the extra-curricular guidelines of the participating schools of

Ruidoso, Capitan, Corona, Carrizozo, Hondo and home-schoolers.

Normally, Ruidoso High School registrants compete on Wednesdays and the others attend on Fridays.

See SKI, page 2B

# CARRIZOZO GIRLS BEAT CLOUDCROFT, BOYS LOSE



Ryan Guevara gives his all in 'Zozo's 60-54 loss to Cloudcroft.



Billy Page urges his troops onward.



Ashley Ventura contributes in 'Zozo's 53-22 win over Cloudcroft.

## BIKE

FROM PAGE 1B

First they had to prove sincerity and when monies were obtained (\$25,000), the wheels were set in motion to move ahead with the potential project.

If this week's meetings proceed as scheduled and are met with general approval, a Ruidoso Master Trail Plan will be implemented and IMBA will return March 1 to design the trail system and teach people the proper techniques of how to build such a sustainable system.

Once the plan is in place, the project will

depend heavily on volunteers.

The costs from IMBA will be about \$29,000. The additional monies, over and above the \$25,000 received from the Lodgers Tax to the Village of Ruidoso was donated by the White Mountain Outdoor Club who worked tirelessly to procure the funds through donations earlier last year.

"IMBA will show what a trail system can do for the economy of a town and jump-start the program," Thurston explained. "Once the trails are in place it is a gift that will keep on giving and events can then be brought in that will benefit the community and every-

one in it.

"Other than maintenance, which will be done by the Forest Service, with an understanding with the Bicycle Ruidoso Club, no other costs should be necessary."

Last year, the Borderland Biking Association of El Paso, after bringing in IMBA to build a mountain biking trail complex, realized 50 entrants from its "Puzzler" race.

This year more than 150 participants and spectators enjoyed the race.

"Whole families attended the race in El Paso," Thurston said. "And these people used the local hotels, supermarkets and local retailers."

Reportedly, the "24 Hours of Old Pueblo" race attracted 5,000 people to the desert north of Tucson.

"Imagine what that did for the economy there," Joe Coakley of the Ruidoso Athletic Club said.

"Ruidoso is close to such major markets as El Paso, Albuquerque, Dallas, Houston and Tucson and it's not unreasonable to assume we could attract visitors from those areas."

"Austin, which can get hot, has a large mountain biking community and Ruidoso is the closest mountain area to them."

Subaru (the auto company), sponsors IMBA in their endeavors but any donations by Ruidoso

retailers (hotels, food, etc.) will be subtracted from the final bill the Association presents to the Village of Ruidoso.

"The bike trail system could greatly compliment the racetrack and Ski Apache," Thurston said. "And we are looking to build upon that and bring additional visitors into the area."

Research has shown, when trails are properly planned and executed, mountain bikes have no more impact on the natural environment than hiking, and far less than many other recreational uses.

The median income for mountain biking adults is \$75,000 with the average

enthusiast spending roughly a couple hundred dollars a day, per individual, during their getaways.

This week's meeting with the IMBA Trail Care Crew is open to the public, Saturday, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Lunch will be served (provided by Dreamcatcher) at 12 p.m.

The economic benefit presentation by IMBA is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. and the public is urged to attend the talk.

A volunteer dinner and social will take place at Dreamcatcher from 6-9 p.m.

All who wish to attend the presentation Saturday must register online at <http://go.imba.com/ruidoso>.

## SKI

FROM PAGE 1B

This event will culminate on Feb. 24 and Feb. 26, respectively. A fee of \$5 is required.

The Cross Your Heart event will take place at Ski Apache, Feb. 9.

This all-age occurrence is marked by a Western mode of dress for females and feminine attire for the males.

A \$15 fee is necessary and the proceeds go to benefit the American Heart Foundation.

The Ski Apache Cup will be held Feb. 19-21. The cost is \$125 for a team of six entrants or \$25 per individual.

Teams must have at least one female and one snowboarder included.

To enter the Cross Your Heart or Ski Apache Cup events all interested parties may call the ski school desk at 464-3641.



A young competitor makes it over while skiers head up the mountain to their runs.



A skier takes the jump in the Terrain Park competition.

# PLEASE ADOPT ME!

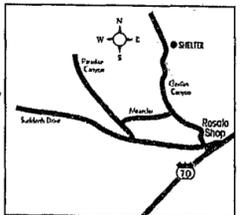
**NEW ADOPTION FEES: All cats are now \$40. The fee includes spay/neuter, booster vaccinations, rabies vaccination, and microchip. We are also proud to now have an "in-your-prime" program: animals 5 and older adopted by persons 50 and older are half the normal adoption fee (\$40 for dogs and \$20 for cats). Still includes spay/neuter, booster vaccinations, rabies, and microchip.**



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**MADORI**

A very sweet girl, Madori is about 6 months old. She has short black and white fur. Madori loves playing with the other cats and kittens. She has been in the shelter since November 24 when she was found trying to stay warm at a local golf course. Madori is friendly and very playful. She is already spayed and current on her vaccinations, all she needs now is a home.

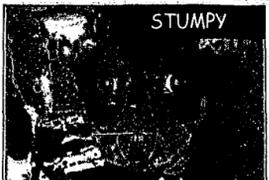
SPONSORED BY HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS



**NIKKA**

Nikka is a large shepherd mix and weighs just over 100 pounds (though she could afford to lose a few pounds). Nikka is 8 years old, housebroken, good with children, cats and other dogs...what more could you ask for! She also knows how to sit and shake. She desperately needs to find a home and we are sure she will make a great pet.

SPONSORED BY JUANITA MOTE



**STUMPY**

Stumpy is quite the spunky little guy around 4 months old as of 1/4/2010. He is very playful and already knows how to play fetch. He has lots of puppy energy and would love someone to play with.

SPONSORED BY MARY BETH FOWLER



**FRIDAY**

Friday is a very smart girl who weighs about 55 pounds and is around 9 years old. She knows how to sit, stay, and lay down. It looks like she might have some greyhound in her as well. She would prefer to be the only dog of the house. Friday has beautiful black and white markings. All she needs now is the perfect home.

SPONSORED BY LINCOLN COUNTY CRIMESTOPPERS



**HUNTER**

Hunter is a beautiful 2 year old Anatolian Shepherd with a sad past. He came to the shelter from a neglectful situation and was very underweight and unsocial. He has gained 10 pounds & is now in a foster home with children and several other dogs and is getting along great with everyone & loves the children.

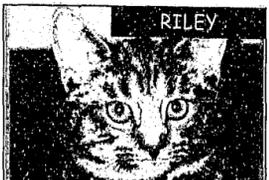
SPONSORED BY WALMART



**JOCKO**

Jocko is a cool kitten with only 1/2 a tail! As of 1/7/10 he is about 4 months old. Jocko is playful and very loving. You can also see his sister, Josie and their mother Tatum.

SPONSORED BY RUIDOSO NEWS



**RILEY**

Riley is an adorable kitten, about 3 months old. She is very affectionate and outgoing. Riley is well socialized and will make a great pet.

SPONSORED BY RUIDOSO NEWS



# LINCOLN COUNTY

## Raw honey is liquid gold

**P**ure honey with pollen is a powerhouse of vitamins and minerals.

Most nutritionists believe that honey is a great source of good health. It helps maintain normal body function, stimulates organs and glands, enhances vitality, and supports the human body's energy production capabilities.

It does this with naturally occurring vitamins, amino acids, and 28 minerals.

Bee pollen antioxidants strengthen the immune system and help protect against free radical damage. You could say it is the crown jewel of health foods.

People who suffer from allergies are now being advised by doctors to start using local bee pollen for relief of symptoms associ-

ated with allergic reactions brought on by airborne materials from blooming plants and trees.

There is a lot of confusion among the public as to the definition of local pollen and where to find it. Purchasing raw local honey harvested from the horticultural zone where you reside is the best choice.

Generic honey bottled in a \$3 squeeze bear at the grocery store has been processed and the pollen removed.

Water is also added and then pasteurized as the extra moisture content would otherwise cause the altered product to spoil.

This heating process kills the antioxidants and therefore offers little, if any, health benefits.

You may as well drink a soda pop and pocket the change.

Here in New Mexico there isn't any labeling regulation to identify the honey you purchase.

Most customers buy the least expensive brand which is always processed, watered down, and more than likely shipped from China.

The U.S. government currently has a ban on honey from China because of their mostly unregulated use of pesticides.

They skirt the law by shipping to another country first, changing the label, and then on to the U.S. We call this practice "dumping."

When it comes to buying honey, you don't get what you don't pay for.

How many times have you heard someone say that all honey is the same because it all tastes alike? Nothing could be further from reality.

There exists a multiplicity of chemical profiles in honey across the world; such as sugar content, isotope ratios, color, flavor,

pollen count, and medicinal characteristics.

Variations in a product such as honey come from differences in geographical origin, botanical source, and processing technique.

Light colored honey always sells faster than dark varieties but the fact is the darker the honey, the more antioxidants it contains.

Initial research indicates honey may be beneficial for cough suppression, weight management, brain health, and sleep duration. Research of honey and its relation to major diseases is taking place in various countries the world over.

It has been known to have wound healing and anti-bacterial properties for some time but the scientific way in which it works has not been totally proven.

Manuka honey, harvested in New Zealand, may be effective by destroying key bacterial proteins.

MRSA cells grown in a

laboratory at the University of Wales and treated with this honey were killed.

If we can discover how this honey destroys MRSA, it could be used more frequently as a first line treatment against bacterial infections that are resistant to currently available antibiotics.

Urban myth would have you believe that diabetics should never eat honey.

Total amount of carbohydrates in a food is the key factor, not the sugar.

Diabetic patients should ask their doctor if fruits are permitted in their diet.

Since this question is a bit rhetorical, they can have confidence in knowing that honey is allowed in moderation.

Rest assured that consuming honey will result in a much lower blood sugar than the same amount of sugar or other glucose rich in starches.

Honey is the best nutritive sweetener of choice for diabetics.

The Center for Disease Control does not recommend feeding honey to infants under 12 months old.

What is not clear is whether this decision was reached by proven science or political hype generated by hippy folklore.

There are hundreds of foods that infants should not eat that are not listed by the C.D.C. I suggest you follow your pediatrician's advice.

If your honey starts to turn white, it is not going bad and is perfectly safe to eat.

Storing it in the refrigerator or in a cold location will cause it to crystallize and become cloudy.

Simply place the jar in warm water until it becomes as clear as it was when purchased.

*TIM THOMPSON can be reached for comment at [tw0128@tularosa.net](mailto:tw0128@tularosa.net) or at Carrizozo Honey, 575-973-0670.*



**What's the Buzz**  
TIM THOMPSON

## County teen birth rates less

JIM KALVELAGE

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Teen birth rates in Lincoln and Otero counties have been less than the statewide rates, according to a report from the New Mexico Department of Health.

Lincoln County had a birth rate of 49.1 per 10,000 females ages 15 to 19. The numbers cover 2005 to 2007.

In Otero County, the rate was 43.6. Chaves County had a rate of 74.3. Across New Mexico the level was 59.8 births per 10,000 teens.

The highest rate, 96.9, was documented in Lea County. The lowest, at 10.1, was in Los Alamos County.

Lincoln County teen births rates for girls 15, 16

and 17 years old were at 25.7. Otero County was at 20 and Chaves County at 44. The New Mexico rate was 34.3.

The New Mexico county with the highest birth rate for girls 15 to 17 years of age was again Lea County, at 60.1. Los Alamos was lowest with a rate of 4 births per 10,000.

New Mexico Department of Health Secretary Alfredo Vigil, MD, said the state must make more progress in reducing the rate of births to teenagers.

In 2002, the rate was 61.3.

The most recent data, from 2007, put the rate at 57.7.

"We must continue to work with teens and community partners around New Mexico to provide complete services that

emphasizes the importance of abstinence and also provides critical information on how young people can protect themselves from unplanned pregnancies and diseases," said Vigil.

A recent report from the Guttmacher Institute cited New Mexico as having the highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation with 93 per 1,000 girls.

The health department noted that reporting pregnancies to the state is not required, so the department is unable to track the number of pregnancies and calculate an accurate rate.

Birth data is collected by the department's Vital Statistics Bureau.

The Guttmacher Institute report used an estimate based on old data from 2005, according to the health department.

## New PA for Carrizozo Clinic

A replacement physician's assistant is on the job at the Carrizozo Health Center.

Ellen Orr Wittman, PA-C, joined the facility on Monday.

Wittman arrived in Carrizozo almost five months after the position became vacant. The rural clinic is operated by the Lincoln County Medical Center.

"We're extremely happy to have Ellen join the Carrizozo clinic team and feel she'll be an excellent fit for Carrizozo, Corona and Lincoln County," said Dr. Gary Jackson, LCMC medical director.

"Ellen has a strong background in family medicine training and clinical experience which will be of great benefit to patients of this clinic."

Wittman completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She completed post baccalaureate courses in pre-medicine and Spanish at El Camino College in Torrance, Calif., the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, Santa Fe Community College, and the College of Santa Fe.

She received her physician assistant masters' degree from Samuel Merritt University in Oakland, Calif.

Wittman has provided clinical care services in New Orleans, family practice for the Dona Ana Detention Center in Las Cruces, and at the Health Centers of Northern New Mexico.

She was also a hospitalist physician assistant at Alta Vista Regional Hospital in Las Vegas, N.M.

"My goal has always been to provide compassionate medical care in a not-for-profit setting while working in a comfortable, dedicated environment to an under-served patient population," said Wittman.

Wittman will be at the Carrizozo Health Center daily, Monday through Friday.



Physician assistant Ellen Orr Wittman has joined the Carrizozo Health Center.

## Rollover accident injures Capitan man

A Capitan man was seriously injured in a rollover incident west of Carrizozo on Jan. 26.

The driver, Joshua Trillo, 19, was ejected from his pick-up truck. An air ambulance helicopter was sent to the location near the Valley of Fires Recreation Area. He was transported to the trauma center at the University Medical

Center of El Paso, formerly known as Thomason Hospital. The extent of his injuries were unknown by New Mexico State Police, who investigated the rollover.

A passenger in the truck, Cassandra Apodoca, 17, of Capitan received a minor injury.

A small child, unnamed in a police report, was unin-

jured. According to State Police Captain Keith Duncan, Trillo was driving eastbound on U.S. Highway 380 when he went off the south side of the road. He overcorrected, lost control, and rolled the vehicle. The incident happened about 3:45 p.m.

Duncan said possible citations are pending.

- Jim Kalvelage

### COUNTY BRIEFS

#### Capitan forums

Capitan Candidate Forums will be hosted by the Capitan Chamber of Commerce for the upcoming March elections.

A Trustee Meet and Greet Forum is Friday, Feb. 5, at the Capitan Public Library from 6-8 p.m.

The public is invited to come and go as they please

during that two-hour block to meet each of the registered candidates.

Guests are invited to have one-on-one conversations with the trustee candidates.

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## Street Fair Scholarship apps due

The Carrizozo Labor Day Street Fair reminds residents of its continuing education scholarship program for Carrizozo area residents.

A total of \$2,000 in scholarships will be made available in May to residents continuing their education. Applicants must have a Carrizozo address, have graduated from high school or have a GED, and either be planning to attend or already attending community college, trade school, technical school, university, etc.

Applications should include two letters of recommendation and a statement of personal goals.

Grade point averages are required information but are not a deciding factor.

The Fair's Committee is interested in helping individuals who are hard workers and are serious about continuing their education.

Previous winners are invited to submit new applications if they still have needs.

Community support has been very generous in making the Street Fair scholarships available, especially those who have purchased birdhouses as well as those who participated in the motor cycle rally last August.

The call inviting folks to put their artistic talents to work creating

unique birdhouses again this year will be made soon.

However, the committee is wondering whether there should be a different item made to support scholarships. If you have an opinion on this, please let J'Lane know. In the meantime, for more information on the Street Fair, call J'Lane Zamora at 575-937-7721 and/or check our Website: [www.carrizozostreetfair.org](http://www.carrizozostreetfair.org).

A scholarship application can be picked up at the Carrizozo Schools, City Bank, La BrewJa, the Four Winds Restaurant or Roy's Ice Cream Parlor.

Applications are due March 1.

# CORONA CARDINAL CHEERS



JULIE CARTER/RUIDOSO NEWS

Corona Cardinal cheerleaders provide an encouraging motivating force for the Corona boys basketball team. The cheerleaders are first the Corona girls basketball team, then they suit up after their game and cheer the boys through their four quarters. Front row, l-r, Shelly Gensler, Christian Huey, Judith Torres, Kelly Gensler; Middle row: Lois Robinson, Judy Romero, Carissa Ann Kinnick; Back row: Taylor Huey, Kristi Gensler, Alejandra Hernandez and Allysanne Huey.

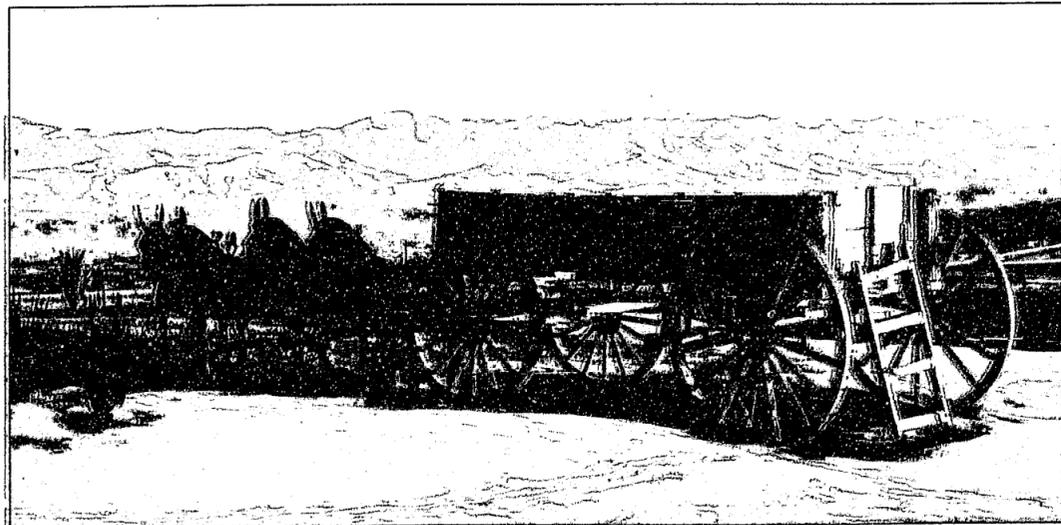
# CARRIZOZO ¡BRAVO!



COURTESY



Carrizozo ¡BRAVO! winners for November 2009 are, top photo, Grades K-2, Front: Robert Lueras, Erollyn Lueras, James Hemphill, Melissa Barela, Kelsie Guevara, Daniel Najar, Bella Bartz, Jameal Garcia, Dylan Romero and Mathias Zamora; 2nd Row: Ray Ray Ochoa, Michael Trone, Ali Hernandez, Dallton King, Keegan Gattis, Sydney Zamora, Suntana Zamora, Tazia Swift, and Ethan Ortiz; Top: Jacob Parkhurst, Ryslyn Lueras, Nathan Montes, Christopher Chavez, Sebastian Mantano, Austin Vega, Mya Zamora, Kaitlin Guevara, and Joanna Vega. Grades 3-6, bottom photo, Front: Isaiah Ysasi, Orion Wyatt, Detrick Miller, Julian Garcia, Victor Najera, Xavier Zamora, and Mikhail Barela; 2nd Row: Angel Miller-Barela, Megan Nava, Savannah Sanchez, Clayton Swift, Tristen Barela, Dominic Barela, Jared Guevara, Patrick Hooten, Janae Willingham, and Kristie Gallacher; Top: Precious Hernandez, Krishelle Montes, Adrianna Samora, Taylor Thornton, Deline Arteche, Lashae Lueras, Miccah Hamilton, Emily Comstock, Cirsten Barela and Gracie Hooten.



JULIE CARTER/RUIDOSO NEWS

Recent snows blanketed the Sacramento Mountains leaving Carrizozo with a frosty view as seen from the Valle del Sol subdivision Friday after the storm clouds cleared and the sun shown through late in the afternoon.

# Notes from Rosalie

We have awakened in the mornings to the Organ Mountains covered with snow. What a beautiful sight. We even had a steady slow rain all day.

This week seems to be having lunch with friends. We met with Elisa and Paul Pacheco and Mary Ellen and Franklin McKay for lunch one day. We had a great time catching up with our families and reminiscing about the good times we had in Lincoln County. My how time does fly!

Nin Taylor is doing fine. She is the Mescalero nursing care. She fell Dec. 22 and broke her femur close to her hip. She underwent surgery to have a rod put into her leg. While she was in the hospital she celebrated her 95th birthday on Dec. 26. Her daughter, Shirley, also had a birthday the 24 of Dec.

Bill and Bev Strausser have returned from Mayo's. Bill was undergoing some tests.

Caroline Cristman had a Navajo Weaving class at the La Placita. There were six ladies in the class. One lady was from New York. The class was taught by Judy Pakelsma of Capitan.

The all put their Navajo looms up at our house. It had lots more room and easier to heat. It sound like they had a great time.

They ate lunch at the Dolan house and Gene cooked meals for the evening meat.

Thanks Gene, you are a good cook and lots of help otherwise.

I have been busy organizing my photos. Too

many moves and they are in such a mess. Slowly but surely getting them done.

Creative Memories retreat at Ft. Lone Tree is coming up in February and I want to have my photos ready to take them.

The landlord put in a new furnace for us and it so much more efficient. He also put in new lights in the garage.

The furnace had been in the house since 1986 and was too old to put in new controls. It was okay but not very efficient.

So many are getting the crud. I believe I had the flu as I was so sick. Others are very sick for a couple of days then are okay. So I hope my readers aren't getting it.

The Aggie Basketball team has won several games in a row but lost against the San Jose team.

I was watching the early news about Hatti. A reporter had picked up a baby boy named Frankie. A couple who had been trying for two years to adopt him saw him and now he has a new home and two sisters.

It is such a disaster for such a poor country. It seems it is so long to get emergency supplies to the people because of such damage, no heavy equipment to move the debris.

There have so many miracles of people being rescued, even after eleven days. They need all our prayers and help.

We made it to Lincoln late Wednesday evening last week, as the weatherman said that a storm was coming in Thursday.

We woke up Thursday morning to 6 inches of

snow and it snowed all day.

We heard reports of snow up to as much as a foot or more in Lincoln County. It was a beautiful sight but made it difficult for residents to get out of their driveways although the highways were in good shapes. On the way to Lincoln the view of Sierra Blanca Mountain was beautiful.

We made it to Capitan one morning for breakfast and to buy some groceries. I got to visiting with two gentlemen who were sitting next to our table. Our attention was brought by one of the men who had put on plastic bags to protect his shoes from the snow. He was Dan Herbert, whose son owns the body shop west of Capitan.

The other gentleman was Ramon Morales, a lifetime resident of Capitan and Lincoln.

We got to visit with some friends at the Hondo Senior Center but so many could not get out of their driveways. We were disappointed not to visit with more people. We did visit with several other friends.

The crud seems to be making the rounds with some ending up with pneumonia. I had it after Christmas. You cough so much and so hard you get a terrible sore stomach.

We arrived back to Las Cruces late Monday night to a beep-beep and telling us we had a low battery. We couldn't locate the problem, so our landlord and daughter came over and we still had problems.

His daughter, Hanna, finally said thought it was the smoke alarm high on the hall highway.

He put in another battery and that solved the noise ( and it was shrill).



LINCOLN TRAILS ROSALIE DUNLAP

Art on 12th Street was put in place Jan. 15 to commemorate the opening of the movie, The Book of Eli. The story boards were the brain child of and designed by renowned artist, writer and cartoonist Rick Geary. In the photo, Geary views one of the boards as it was unveiled to the public. The painting of the boards was done by community members and students.

PHOTO BY POLLY E. CHAVEZ



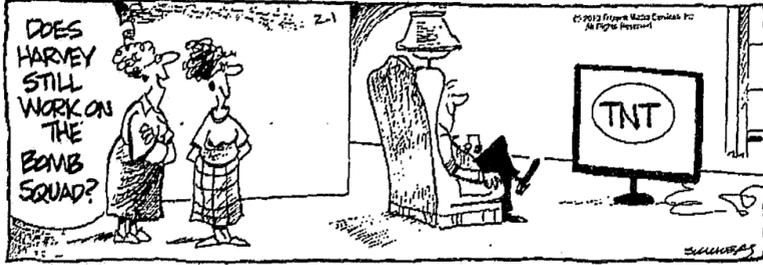
## HAVE YOU SEEN ME??



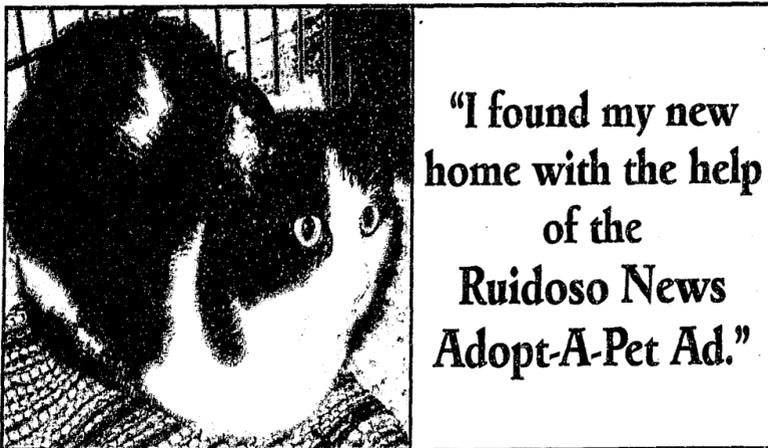
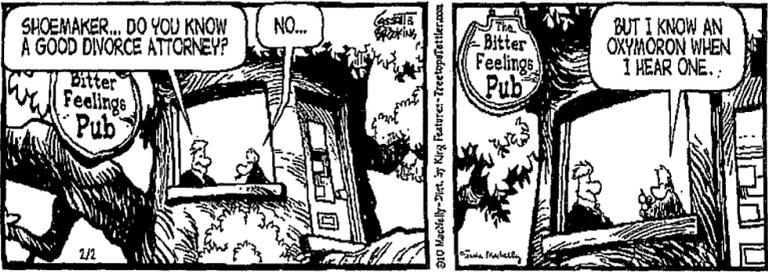
### LOST "LITTLE BEAR"

I AM A MINI AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD FEMALE A YEAR AND A HALF OLD AND LIVE IN THE STETSON PARK AREA EAST OF RUIDOSO DOWNS. MY FAMILY REALLY MISSES ME, SO PLEASE CALL THEM IF YOU HAVE FOUND ME. TEL: 973-4647

BOUND & GAGGED



SHOE



"I found my new home with the help of the Ruidoso News Adopt-A-Pet Ad."

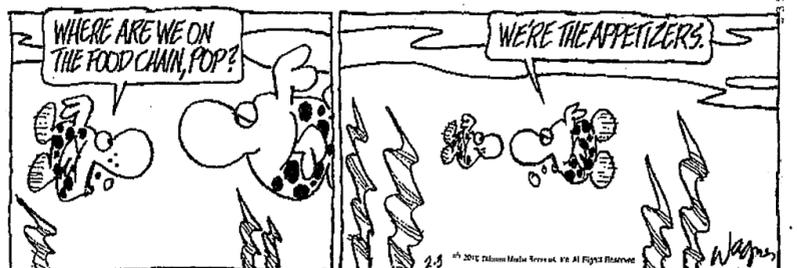
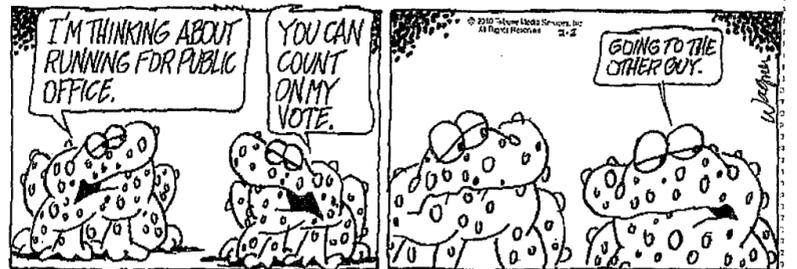


"I found my new best friend in the Ruidoso News Adopt-A-Pet Ad."

Published every Wednesday in the

RUIDOSO NEWS

ANIMAL CRACKERS



SCRABBLE BRAND G R A M S

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SCRABBLE grid with racks 1-4 and letter counts: 1st Letter Double, 1 A, 1 O, 1 U, 1 Y, 4 L, 1 S, 1 P; 1 A, 1 E, 1 P, 1 H, 1 G, 1 M, 1 R; 1 A, 1 E, 1 I, 1 C, 1 S, 1 T; 1 A, 1 I, 1 D, 1 C, 1 S, 1 R.

PAR SCORE 150-160 BEST SCORE 222 FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus.

For more information on books, clubs, tournaments and the school program go to www.scrabble-assoc.com or call the National SCRABBLE Association (631) 477-0033.

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JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

JUMBLE words: YUMST, TOQUA, TICILE, GLAND. Includes a grid for the answer.

Print answer here: [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Mike Argirion and Jeff Knurek

Cartoon for 'THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME' showing a man laughing at a boss's jokes. Includes a grid for the answer.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION grid with scores: RACK 1 = 65, RACK 2 = 13, RACK 3 = 61, RACK 4 = 83, TOTAL 222.

SUDOKU

THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mapham Group

Level: 1 2 3 4

Sudoku grid with numbers 4, 3, 5, 3, 7, 8, 2, 9, 5, 1, 2, 6, 9, 1, 5, 7, 6, 3, 6, 9, 2, 4, 5, 3, 7.

SOLUTION TO TODAY'S PUZZLE 2/3/10. Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk



Think Snow!!!

Answer: MUSTY QUOTA ELICIT LADING. Jumbles: MUSTY QUOTA ELICIT LADING. Was - QUITTING. He didn't laugh at the boss' jokes because he

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## RUIDOSO NEWS



# OUR FREEDOM DAILY SINCE 1776

*We the People*

*of the United States  
do hereby give ourselves this Constitution  
to maintain and establish this Constitution for*

Since the founding of our nation, the role of newspapers in our democracy has been crystal clear. We have been, and will continue to be, the eyes and ears of the American people. After all, the right of free speech is meaningless if no one knows what's really going on. That's why more than 100 million Americans depend on their hometown newspapers daily and why today's newsrooms are staffed with dedicated, highly trained reporters and experienced editors who bring you the very best journalism found anywhere, in print and online.

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