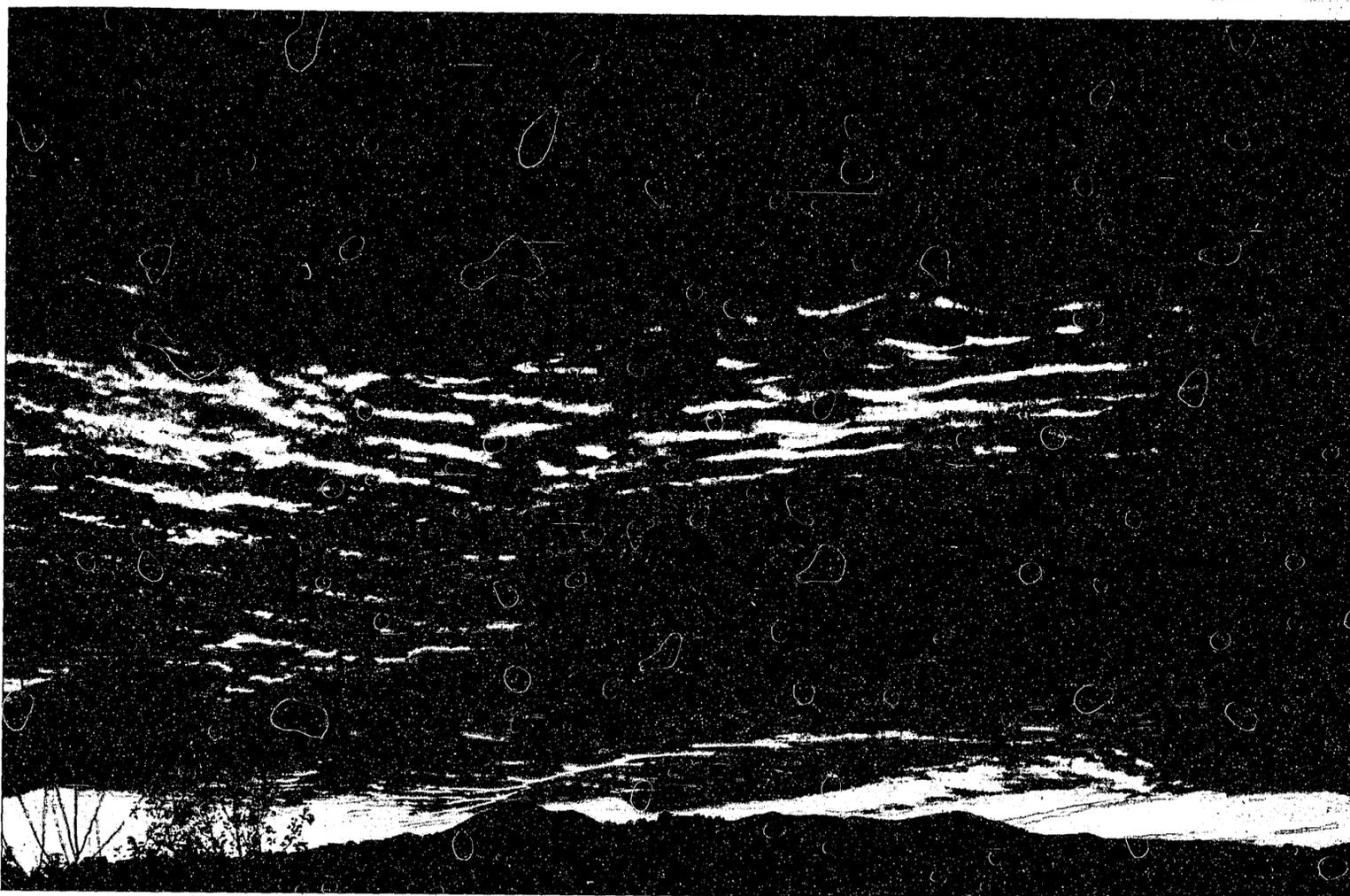


**FIRE DANGER
MODERATE**

RUIDOSO NEWS

RUIDOSO, NEW MEXICO • WEDNESDAY, JAN. 19, 2011 • OUR 64TH YEAR, NO. 76 • 75 CENTS



We're used to striking sunsets in Lincoln County, but this photo, taken in December, captures one of the best.

COURTESY DAVID TREMBLAY

County audit gets complicated

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

Manager deals with "never-ending series" of government regulations

While Lincoln County Manager Tom Stewart said he's pleased, overall, with the county's Fiscal Year 2009-2010 audit, new rules caused some problems.

"We will never reach perfection when new rules are imposed by a never-ending series of (Government Auditing Standards Board) and (Statement on Auditing Standards) pronouncements," he told county commissioners at their meeting last week.

"From my perspective, up until this year, the county had no mechanism for ensuring inventory that was not purchased, but rather had been acquired through donation or prescriptive right, was entered into inventory," Stewart said.

"In the process of conducting our first physical inventory, Michele Caskey, our inventory specialist, uncovered a number of significant assets that were missing from our inventory, namely land, buildings and vehicles donated to the county sometime between 1912 and the present, as well as the value of our infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, that had been constructed over time."

While the auditor, Ray Roberts with the Accounting and Consulting Group, agreed the assets should be added into the

inventory, the dispute is over how to calculate their value, the manager said. For instance, the land on which the county courthouse complex sits was donated in 1912, and was never on the inventory.

"We initially submitted a value of \$15,000 for this asset, which the auditors had us adjust to \$850, the value of the land in 1912," Stewart said. "We are still in the process of confirming that the values we placed on our 794 miles of paved, gravel and dirt roads are acceptable to the auditors. This is complicated, because the roads were built over time and the cost to put them in varies depending upon how long ago they were built. There also are associated costs with road construction that do not affect their value as an asset."

With all of the complications and inventory adjustments, county employees and Stewart simply ran out of time in the course of the audit cycle to satisfy all of the auditors' inquires, he contended.

The remedy boils down to satisfying the auditors' questions and then moving forward from there, which should put the county in a good position for the next audit, he contended.

Some accounting classes will be

scheduled for staff and commissioners on preparation of financial statements and reading audits. Policies such as conflict-of-interest and whistle-blower protection need to be adopted to educate employees about things to look for to detect fraud. An automated system to detect changes in payroll and vendor files also was suggested by the auditors, he said.

Roberts pointed out that only on the issue of the capital assets inventory, did his firm rendered a qualified opinion.

"It doesn't affect the budget or the way the money was spent, it's an accounting item," he said. "It's been an issue in the past that the county has attempted to address. Sometimes you have to take a step back to go forward. The records were worse at the end of the year. Now with a person on staff and our help, this goes away next year."

"Tom and the staff are all over it."

However, he said if the same finding shows up next year, commissioners should be concerned.

In the remainder of the audit, the firm offered an unqualified opinion, meaning it had no reservations about compliance in general and with federal rules and regu-

lations.

"We don't have any government audits that don't have findings," he said, noting a total of five for the county audit. "You don't have any big things that should be of concern. There are too many rules and always some human errors."

He said the county is sitting with 136 percent of next year's budget in cash reserves. "The county is where it needs to be," Roberts said. "Tim and the staff made sure you're safe and sound."

Commissioners accepted the audit in a unanimous vote.

Commissioner Jackie Powell, a bookkeeper, said she is concerned not to see progress after hiring a person for the inventory. She doesn't like the finance director being responsible when the inventory falls under another department.

"I haven't seen an organizational chart, but I think we need that to make it work," Powell said. "I know we're in good shape day-to-day."

Commission Chairman Eileen Sedillo said the finding "jumped out at me." "We need inventory and finance working together," she said. "I can just feel there is something wrong."

Stewart defended the new inventory clerk, saying she put in a lot of work since the audit, and at one point had the discrepancy down to \$2,000.

See AUDIT, page 8A

Frigid weather forecast

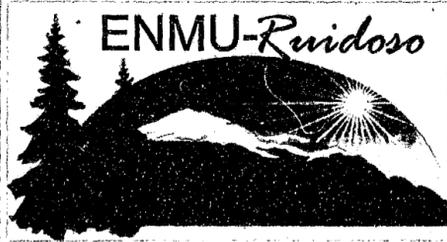
JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

After several days with temperatures above normal, into the 50s around Ruidoso, Mother Nature will remind us that it is January.

Much colder air, gusty winds and light snow is on the way for tonight and Thursday. A winter storm, formed over the Pacific Northwest on Tuesday, will plunge southeast and cross the Land of Enchantment. In a special weather statement, the National Weather Service forecast office that covers the Ruidoso area said any rain that the system brings will change to snow tonight as a potent cold front delivers dramatically chillier air.

The statement said the exact track and strength of the storm system was somewhat uncertain, but much colder temperatures are almost certain for

See COLD, page 8A



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INDEX | CLASSIFIED 8B | EDUCATION 6A | OPINION 4A | SPORTS 1B

A **MediaNews Group** NEWSPAPER

Birding field trip

On Saturday, Jan. 22, the Lincoln County Bird Club is sponsoring a birding field trip to Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in southern Socorro Country. The 12-mile loop road allows automobile drivers excellent views of wetland wildlife and raptors. There are several short walking trails and many photo opportunities. The wetlands attract huge flocks of wintering cranes and geese that are the refuge's most interesting feature.

All who are interested are invited to join the outing. Plan to meet at the parking lot beside the Shell station on Ski Run Road at 7:00 a.m. Bring snack, water and camera.

Meeting cancelled

The regular meeting of the Lincoln Historic Preservation Board, originally scheduled for 7 p.m., Jan. 20, at the Lincoln Community Church in Lincoln, has been cancelled.

A lack of agenda items was the reason provided by Lincoln County administrative assistant Billejo Guevara for the cancellation.

U.S. 70 work

Work on the U.S. 70 South White Sands Boulevard Overpass in Alamogordo began Monday and will run through February. The New Mexico Department of Transportation will handle the bridge work on the overpass, which includes enclosing two openings at the top of the bridge with concrete wall barrier which will connect to the existing concrete wall barrier on either side.

The \$130,000 project will result in increased safety on this bridge. All work is expected to be complete by the end of February.

Single and double-lane closures can be expected during the duration of this project. Hours of operation are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

For up-to-date information on the project, visit the NMDOT road advisory web site at nmroads.com or call 511.

Oil, gas leases

The Bureau of Land Management is offering oil and gas leasing mineral rights on 32 parcels totaling 12,368.11 acres located on federal lands in New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma.

The oral auction is set for 9 a.m., Jan. 19, at the BLM State Office Building, 301 Dinosaur Trail, Santa Fe. BLM staff will be available in the lobby at 8 a.m. to allow each interested party time to obtain a bidding number. The sale will begin promptly at 9 a.m.

Only oral bids offered at the sale will be accepted. Parcels will be awarded to qualified bidders offering the highest acceptable bid. The minimum acceptable bid is \$2 per acre.

The lease sale notice can be found at: http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/energy/oil_and_gas/lease_sale_notices.html.

The breakdown by state is as follows:

- 15 parcels totaling 7,756.33 acres in New Mexico
• 12 parcels totaling 4,076.67 acres in Texas
• and 5 parcels totaling 535.11 acres in Oklahoma.
Leases will be awarded for a period of 10 years, or as long thereafter as there is production in paying quantities.
Fifty-two percent of the revenues from federal lease sales is returned to the U.S. government and 48 percent goes to the state where the mineral lease occurs.

Alpine Village

The Alpine Village Water and Sanitation District will meet at 4 p.m., Feb. 7, in the District's building at 114 Alpine Meadows Trail.

The meeting will cover regular business for the District, such as paying bills and reporting on the operations of the water system.

Additionally, the agenda may contain discussion regarding committees to address the Conservation and a Drought Contingency Plan, Capacity Assessment, and revising the Bylaws and Regulations.

All residents of the District are welcome to attend. Agendas are available at least 24 hours prior to meeting time. All regular monthly meetings are conducted at 4 p.m., the first Monday of the month.

Public comment

The Surface Water Quality Bureau of the New Mexico Environment Department invites public comment on a draft update of two federally required planning documents: the Statewide Water Quality Management Plan and the Continuing Planning Process.

Major proposed changes include: merging the two documents into one, providing greater detail on the process for developing Total Maximum Daily Loads, and adding the Hydrology Protocol, a methodology for distinguishing between ephemeral, intermittent and perennial streams that can be used to support changes to water quality standards.

The public is invited to comment on the draft update, which is available for review at http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWQB/planning/wqmp/cpp/index.html.

Two public meetings will be conducted by the bureau. The first is set for 6 p.m., Feb. 2, at the LaFarge Public Library, 1730 Llano Street, Santa Fe.

The second meeting is schedule at 6 p.m., Feb. 8,

in Room 2007B, City Hall, 700 N. Main St., Las Cruces.

Written comments and requests for hearing must be received by 5 p.m., Feb. 28. Send them to pamela.homer@state.nm.us. Requests for hearing must be in writing and set forth the reasons why a hearing should be conducted.

After the public comment period closes, the Bureau will revise the draft as appropriate and prepare a response to comments. The Water Quality Control Commission will conduct a hearing, if there are hearing requests and if it determines there is significant public interest.

If there is no hearing, the Commission will consider the document for approval at one of its regular open public meetings.

New therapist

Lincoln County Medical Center announced Monday that a physical therapist has joined the hospital's Rehabilitation Services Department.

John Kvale comes to LCMC from Hawaii, where he had been a staff physical therapist at the Ohana Sports Medicine clinic, a rural outpatient orthopaedic center.

He also has experience working in a hospital satellite clinic, rural hospital outpatient center and skilled nursing facility.

Kvale received his bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Ohio University in 2002.

Kvale also received his doctorate in physical therapy from the University of Colorado. He has been certified as a certified strength and conditioning specialist since 2006.

"The rehab services department in the therapy center is expanding the services they provide for Lincoln County," said Patsy Parker, director of patient care services at LCMC.

The department has seen a 30 percent growth in patient use since the opening of the therapy center in March 2009.



KVALE

"I feel John's experience, caring attitude and knowledge will compliment the superb rehabilitation services already in place," said Brandi Darnold, rehabilitation services manager.

"It is critical we have a fully staffed department with permanent employees who are vesting in our community to meet the needs of the area. We're recruiting another physical therapist and hope to have one in place in a few months."

Sonic booms

Officials with the 49th Wing have announced the flying schedule through Jan. 23.

Sonic booms could occur Wednesday, Jan. 19, from 3 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.; and Thursday, Jan. 20, from 1:45 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 7:45 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.

At this time no flights are scheduled for Friday, Jan. 21; Saturday Jan. 22 or Sunday, Jan. 23.

Schedules can change based on a variety of reasons and scheduled times do not always mean sonic booms will occur.

For additional information, visit the Holloman Web site at www.holloman.af.mil.

GOP women

The Federated Republican Women of Lincoln County will get together at a new location for their regular monthly meetings and will sponsor a school board election candidate forum at the first session this year.

The meetings are scheduled for 11:30 a.m. on the fourth Monday of each month and will be a "bring your own brown bag lunch" at the Ruidoso Senior Center.

The forum on Jan. 24 will cover school board candidates for Ruidoso, Capitan and Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso.

For more information, call the FRWLC at 575-430-7258.

We welcome your community notices. Please email information and photos to the editor at mrcaine@ruidosonews.com, then look for the stories on this page.

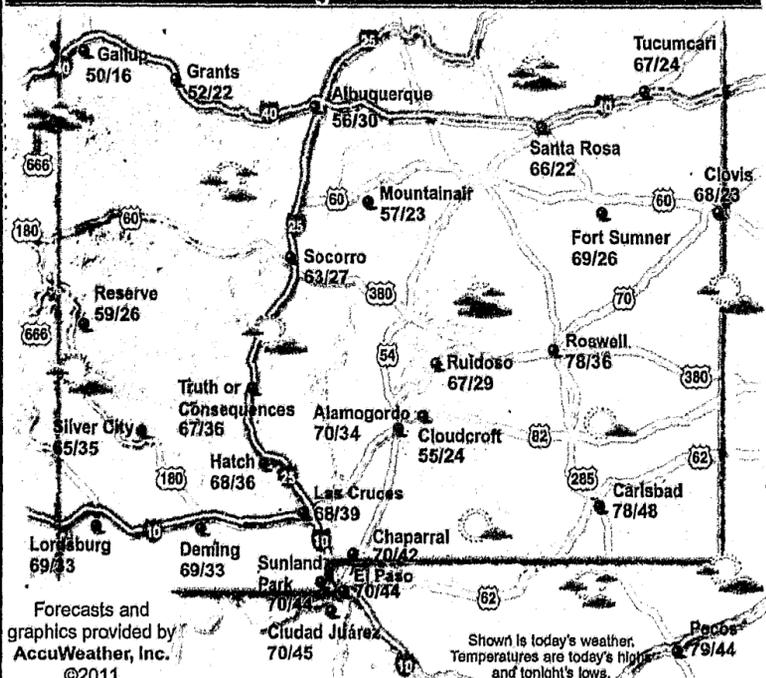
Chris Woodut Supports the Ruidoso Schools GO Bond! Paid for by Blue Ribbon Comm.

Sandi Aguilar Supports the Ruidoso Schools GO Bond! Paid for by Blue Ribbon Comm.

AccuWeather 7-day forecast for Ruidoso

Table with 7 columns: TODAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY, TUESDAY. Includes RealFeel, Humidity, and Wind information.

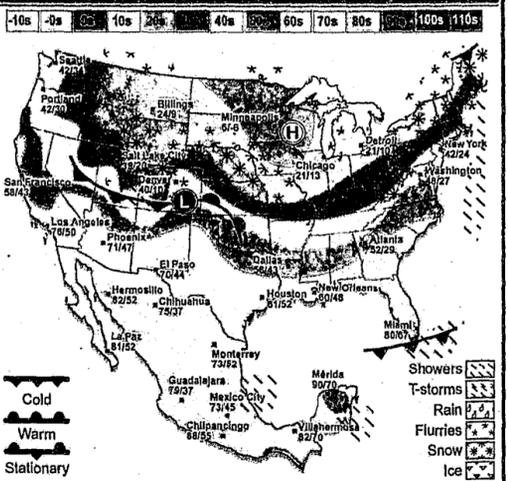
Regional Cities



Almanac

Almanac statistics for Ruidoso and Alamogordo, including temperature, precipitation, and pollen counts.

National Forecast for Jan. 19, 2011



Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day. Forecast high/low temperatures are for selected cities.

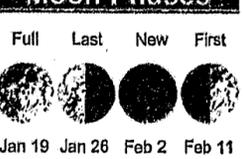
Tables for National Cities and Regional Cities with columns for Today and Thursday forecasts.

Table for Mexican Cities with columns for Today and Thursday forecasts.

Sun and Moon

Wednesday: Sunrise/Sunset 7:05 a.m./5:23 p.m. Wednesday: Moonrise/Moonset 5:33 p.m./6:46 a.m.

Moon Phases



Extremes

Monday's National High/Low: High: 90° in Chatsworth, CA Low: -29° in Saranac Lake, NY

Shopkeepers urged to clear sidewalks

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

Ruidoso village officials are launching an evaluation of village services, looking for ways to efficiently deliver services within a tight budget, says Village Manager Debi Lee.

The subject prompted Councilor Gloria Sayers to ask about what agency is responsible for clearing sidewalks after a snow or salting when rain freezes overnight.

"An acquaintance of mine broke her arm in three places when she fell on the ice," the councilor said during the council meeting Tuesday. "I talked

(Street Director J. R. Baumann) and asked who's responsible."

Lee said shopkeepers are supposed to clear the sidewalks in front of their businesses. "It's a common practice that they keep the front clean," Lee said. "It has never been a village responsibility to shovel snow or ice, or sweep."

"So it's not the state or the village?" Sayers tried to clarify.

"They'd like us to do it," Lee replied. "But it's a manpower issue."

Sudderth Drive, which runs through the historic Midtown tourist shopping core of the village, is a state highway and right-of-way.

Lee said that, with the problem raised, now may be a good time to ask the Midtown merchants to become involved with the village on tackling some common issues.

Village Parks and Recreation Director Debbie Jo Almager said her crew takes care of places such as the steps to the public parking lot and in front of the public restrooms, "but we don't do sidewalks."

Sayers said, "Sometimes there are several inches of ice and it might be June before it's all gone. It's a danger to tourists. I want them to go away knowing we take care of our visitors."

"An acquaintance of mine broke her arm in three places when she fell on the ice. I talked to Street Director J. R. Baumann and asked who's responsible."

Councilor Jim Stoddard said that, trying to shovel all the sidewalks would be costly. Mayor Ray Alborn added that it would be labor intensive.

Sayers said she wasn't saying the village should handle it. "I'm suggesting

whoever is responsible be pushed to do it," she said.

Under the consent agenda for the meeting, councilors:

- adopted a resolution authorizing submission of a \$3,750 grant agreement amendment for Airport Aid to the Federal Aviation Administration, obligating a required match, for surface painted signs at Sierra Blanca Regional Airport.

- approved a memorandum of understanding between the village, the Police Department and the Lincoln County Narcotics Enforcement Unit for the assignment of a 2000 Ford Excursion to the police department for use by the Special Response Tactical Team.

- approved a memorandum of understanding between the village, the

police department and the U.S. Marshal's Service to participate in the Violent Offenders Task Force for the purpose of locating and apprehending fugitives.

- approved an agreement with TALX Corporation for the performance of Comprehensive Unemployment Cost Control Services for \$696 a year.

- approved a six-month agreement for janitorial services between the village and Special Janitorial Services of Capitan, the only bidder, for the Ruidoso Police complex in the amount of \$6,104.76, including gross receipts taxes.

- approved a \$14,927 award plus GRT to NSide Furniture of Ruidoso, the only respondent, for the Ruidoso Convention Center.



FILE PHOTO

A Midtown merchant shovels the sidewalk in front of his business in the aftermath of a 2007 snowstorm. Merchants are expected to clear the sidewalks in winter to make them safer for pedestrians. The village, meanwhile, says it is not responsible for clearing sidewalks on Sudderth, which is also state highway 48.

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104 Park Avenue, P.O. Box 128 Ruidoso, N.M. 88355
Telephone (575) 257-4001 • Fax (575) 257-7053
RENA WALSH GENERAL MANAGER, EXT. 4118
rwalsh@ruidosonews.com
MARTY RACINE EDITOR, EXT. 4107
mracine@ruidosonews.com
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e-mail: editor@ruidosonews.com • online: www.ruidosonews.com
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NEWSROOM
Dianne Stallings General Assignment reporter, Ext. 4108
dstallings@ruidosonews.com
Jim Kalvelage Reporter, Ext. 4109
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com
Mike Curran Sports editor, Ext. 4111
mcurran@ruidosonews.com
Julie Carter County reporter, Ext. 4110
jcarter@ruidosonews.com
Jessie Hanson Entertainment, Vamonos editor, Ext. 4112
jhanson@ruidosonews.com
Harold Oakes Reporter, Ext. 4130
hoakes@ruidosonews.com
Member New Mexico Press Association, NAA, Inland Press Association
Chris Gonzales, Circulation Coordinator Ext. 4106
cgonzales@ruidosonews.com
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OPINION

RUIDOSO NEWS

Rena Walsh, general manager
Marty Racine, editor

A MediaNews Group Newspaper. Published every Wednesday and Friday

OUR OPINION

County means well, but forget deer-feeding law

Ordinance is just not enforceable

The county is in a quandary over its inclination to impose a deer-feeding ban.

First, as several commissioners pointed out last week, such an ordinance is hardly enforceable.

Second, the ban could only apply to unincorporated areas of the county when the real problem regarding predator control is found in the populated neighborhoods around Ruidoso and Alto.

We agree with the county that deer-feeding is a serious problem, not only because deer attract predators such as cougars, which follow the food

supply, but also because fawns do not digest corn easily and can therefore die of starvation.

Feeding, development and other factors such as drought have attracted ever more deer into human interaction (including automobiles), followed by unusually high cougar sightings. Regardless of what the commission eventually does – or can do – we urge the public to refrain from loving deer to death by feeding them.

Let nature take its course to cull out the deer population to healthy levels. Those deer will be able to dine as they've always done, thank you.

Martinez makes her first 'political' appointment

After announcing a string of appointees with solid professional credentials, the new governor made her first purely political pick. Harrison "Jack" Smith has little in his resume to support the decisions he would need to make as Secretary of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department.

He is, however, a luminary among conservatives for publicly denouncing the many who believe global warming is human-caused. Some might agree with him, but we need to ask how his convictions will serve New Mexicans.



SHERRY ROBINSON

ALL SHE WROTE

al warming scare' is being used as a political tool to increase government control over American lives, incomes and decision-making. It has no place in the Society's activities."

Schmitt drew more attention in 2009 when he spoke at the right-leaning Heartland

Institute's International Conference on Climate Change, an event for doubters. (The institute describes Schmitt as a "global warming expert,"

even though he's not a climate scientist and has never published a peer-reviewed paper.) He described himself as a true denier of human-caused global

warming. "The conclusion seems inescapable that nature produces the primary influences on climate," he said.

Schmitt criticized the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), saying, "There is no historical or scientific basis" to believe CO2

increases were responsible for climate change.

Back in the limelight for the first time since his moon-walk days, "Schmitt seemed to revel in his status as a doubter of manmade climate change," observed a conservative publication in Denver.

If confirmed, Schmitt the denier can hold forth as a cabinet secretary, and Democrats have already opened fire. My purpose isn't to re-argue climate change, but we need to ask if an ideologue can effectively steer sensitive negotiations and set state policy.

The infamous pit rule, for example, grew out of legitimate concern for ground water. It was a heavy-handed solution and needs to be rewritten, but that will require diplomacy. Energy producers can argue that it's their turn, that they've suffered at the hands of ideologues, but is it progress to shift from industry lawsuits to environmental lawsuits?

The public wants to see meaningful compromise, not more litigation, but compromise doesn't appear to be Schmitt's strong suit.

Everyone knows Schmitt was an astronaut and the last man to walk on the moon. Educated as a geologist (Cal Tech and Harvard), he was the only scientist astronaut. Some may remember that he served one unremarkable term from 1977 to 1982 as U.S. senator from New Mexico and was voted out of office after showing scant interest in New Mexico issues.

Schmitt then faded from the public eye – consulting, writing and speaking, teaching engineering physics at the University of Wisconsin. From 1994 to 1998, he became chairman and president of the Annapolis Center for Science-Based Public Policy, which has questioned the impacts of fossil fuels on climate, air pollution and crop pesticide residues on health.

In 2008, Schmitt resigned abruptly as chairman of the NASA Advisory Council. A month later he left the Planetary Society over differences in goals for the space program and views of global warming.

"I am sorry, but I can no longer support the society in its goals as they seem to have gone back to being more political than rational," he wrote in a widely circulated email.

He questioned the consensus that "humans are causing global warming when human experience, geologic data and history, and current cooling can argue otherwise. 'Consensus,' as many have said, merely represents the absence of definitive science. You know as well as I, the 'glob-

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Doug McLeod 11
Ruidoso News

YOUR OPINION

The deer were here, first

To the editor:

I AM WRITING today in regards to the *Ruidoso News* article Friday, Jan. 14, concerning feeding deer.

I am angry that our county commissioners are even discussing a ban on feeding deer. We did not elect you to ponder and rule over our freedoms. Do you not realize that many of our coveted tourists absolutely love seeing the abundant wildlife in and around Ruidoso?

Being close to nature and able to watch all wildlife is one of the best things about Ruidoso.

Maybe the Ruidoso Village Council and the county commissioners should study Ecotourism. The way this winter snow-pack and future long-range forecast looks, skiing may not be much of a tourist draw in the future.

I think you would be hard-pressed to find people actually filling up troughs and feeding the deer. I can see how that would be detrimental to the deer herd and health, not to mention expensive with today's prices on feed.

However, when several starving deer come around in the coldest winter months and are given maybe three cups of feed, it could hardly be considered "a feeding."

I have watched deer eat a small ration of feed off the ground, and the larger deer usu-

ally run off the smaller.

Over the years I have lived here, many have asked me where the best place to see a bear would be. I always tell them to go look around the dumpsters in upper canyon at night. The deer, bear, mountain lion and other countless wildlife lived here first.

Our homes, fences, roads and water wells have depleted much of wildlife's natural habitat, including places they used to naturally feed and water. Just because a few people whine about having to slow down for a deer by the road hardly means local government has to abuse its power, infringing on rights and making bad laws.

People who do not like deer, bear, mountain lion or various wildlife have absolutely no business living in the mountains. If one moves here, they need to adapt to life as it is here instead of expecting everything and everyone to adapt to them. My suggestion for when one sees a deer on the side or in the road is to slow down, patiently enjoy the view and be thankful for nature.

If there is any truth to the 2012 doomsday prophecies, things all over the world are going to start getting crazy. If the shelves in the local stores end up empty, it will be quite a blessing to have some healthy, life-sustaining meat close by. Are there

not more pressing issues for our elected officials to consider, such as how to give R.D. Hubbard more money?

Terry McMaster
Alto

To the editor:

I WOULD HATE to see a law passed in Lincoln County that stops people from feeding deer.

We have built homes on every mountaintop and have taken away the habitat of many animals. I think it is our responsibility to help hungry animals.

I can understand not feeding a dangerous animal like a bear or mountain lion, but to not feed the deer is ridiculous.

What comes after a law not to feed the deer? Will the next law be we can not feed hummingbirds, because they leave small droppings on our patio handrail?

There was a comment in *Ruidoso News* that feeding corn can kill fawns. I have a good solution to that: Ban the corn, and have people feed pellets.

We need to remember that deer were in Lincoln County long before any of us were born. They have not taken over our domain; we have taken over theirs.

If I were a county commissioner, I would not touch this deer issue with a 10-foot pole.

Jack Hemby
Ruidoso Downs

Vote 'Yes' for excellence

To the editor:

I WRITE TO urge your readers to vote in favor of the general obligation bonds to be presented by the Ruidoso Municipal School District on the Feb. 1 ballot.

Voting "Yes For Excellence" will not increase taxes and will allow the district to use the proceeds to complete several badly needed projects including repaying the emergency loan given to repair flood damage at the Ruidoso High School and to address permanent flood control there. In addition, the roof at Sierra Vista will be replaced, a

new playing field will be build at the new Middle School and a secondary access road completed there which is necessary especially in the event of an emergency. The science wing at the High School will receive an overdue remodel; the planning of the relocation of the Early Childhood Center will be funded and the Horton Complex will be reconfigured to a degree with some of the complex reroofed.

Additionally, the retaining wall at the Horton Stadium will finally have the damage caused by the big flood repaired. Use of

the provided funds will also allow for an upgrade to district technology bringing it into the 21st century.

As a senior citizen and a member of the Blue Ribbon Committee which has worked on prioritizing critical needs at the school district after reviewing all the needed projects, I urge our community to join me in continuing to support our fine schools – faculty, administration and especially our children by voting "Yes" on Feb. 1.

Sally Burkstaller
Ruidoso

HEAL appreciates community support

To the editor:

AS WE ENTER into a new year at Help End Abuse for Life and the Nest Domestic Violence Shelter, we are reminded how blessed we are to receive such generous community support for the women and children who live at the shelter.

Our executive staff just finished HEAL's annual federal reporting. One of the most striking accomplishment was not done by HEAL itself, but rather by the citizens of Lincoln County!

In the last 12 months, 374 volunteers worked with HEAL for a grand total of 1,522 hours of com-

munity service!

These hours included everything from maintenance repairs done in the shelter (our honey-do list), massive furniture moving during the tiling of the offices, building of bookshelves for the children's playroom, men posing for poster pictures for our Men Against Violence campaign, selling purple lights during Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Sweet Charity Resale Boutique store assistants, haircuts for the ladies/kids, body massages for our residents, Christmas decorating at the shelter and at Spencer Theater for the HEAL

Charity Tree, fellowship and preparation of weekly dinners for our clients, help with our many outreach/education and fundraising events, making of pottery for the ENMU Empty Bowls event and individual businesses hosting fundraisers.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, please accept our heartfelt thank you to all of you who have partnered with us throughout the last year. We deeply appreciate your contribution!

Joe Gomez
Board President
Help End Abuse for Life

EAGLE EYE



COURTESY DAVID TREMBLAY

A Bald Eagle rests regally on a tree branch on a sunny January day outside of Ruidoso.

Planners: Grease disposal critical

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

Even if Ruidoso officials manage to cut down the amount of commercial grease, fats and oil that travel through sewer lines to the new wastewater treatment plant, how can they head off damaging contributions from domestic sources, a Ruidoso planning and zoning commissioner asked recently.

Deputy Village Manager Bill Morris was briefing commissioners about Ruidoso's stepped-up enforcement and inspection program for grease traps at restaurants and other entities with commercial-sized kitchens during a meeting last week.

Education needed

Commissioner Art Hinz said officials better try some public education, advising homeowners and renters not to pour or rinse grease down their household sink drains. The accumulation from 8,000 houses during heavy tourist times could have a serious impact on the sensitive and expensive new filters at the \$36 million plant, he said.

The better option for a family is to dispose of grease in household garbage bags or collect and freeze it for suet used in winter bird feeding.

But Morris said the biggest problem is commercial kitchens, "and we need to take care of them first." The highest priority is businesses that handle food but have no grease traps, then those that fail to maintain their traps or use undersize traps for the amount of material generated, he said.

Those businesses must be retrofitted with with the right size.

"The businesses that morph uses are a big problem," Morris said. "They start out with one type of food product and then grow into more and generate a huge amount of oil and grease, which is very damaging to filters."

Costly filters

All of the particulates hit the filters, and grease can plug up the technology, he said. The filters could run \$1 million to replace.

To help local businesses comply, village staff researched and located a "relatively 'inexpensive' grease trap made out of PVC, polyvinyl chloride, a thermoplastic polymer. The cost of the smallest model is about \$1,000, said Building Official Shawn Fort. Morris said the cost depends on the flow and usage for the grease trap. Pumping costs go way up, if a trap is too small and has to be pumped every day or week. It's better to buy a larger trap from the outset, correctly sized, and pump less, he contended.

Morris said he's run into a lot of misinformation about how to treat grease. He told commissioners of one business owner who was proud of the cleanliness of his grease trap.

"But we learned he was taking the trap out each night and washing it in the dishwasher, which just releases the trapped grease," he said. "It won't take long to degrade the performance of the (plant filters) if we allow that."

An inspector based in the village utility department visits businesses every day to determine trap status and maintenance, Morris said.

"It's an expense, we know that," he said. "But the citizens of Ruidoso will be paying a huge maintenance cost if we don't take care of this from the start. If one burst of grease comes through, it will collect around the widgets."

Compliance spotty

Commissioner John Cornelius asked about the ability to enforce the rules and Morris said compliance to date has "been lackluster," but the village council is ready to pass an ordinance with much heavier penalties, including the ability to cut off water service.

Fort said that, under the village's new emphasis, letters were sent to 30 businesses that did not have traps or operated with improperly-sized traps about the need to comply with rules in the plumbing code. Local schools are required to have traps in their kitchens, he said.

First in the *Ruidoso News*

Cell phones as contraband: County commissioners to consider it

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

The proliferation of cell phones in detention centers and prisons is becoming a problem nationwide, and Lincoln County commissioners next month will consider adding them to other items considered to be contraband.

"The warden would like to add cell phones and handmade weapons as contraband," County Manager Tom Stewart told commissioners at their meeting last week. "I'd like to add that to the other public hearing scheduled."

The ordinance now specifically bans tobacco products or any other weed or plant material or devices used to smoke.

Stewart gave commissioners a copy of an article published in *The New York Times* about a counterfeiter at a Georgia state prison who used a smartphone he

claimed he bought off a guard to talk to friends, play online games and to organize a short strike among inmates at several Georgia prisons.

A smartphone is a mobile phone that offers more advanced computing ability and connectivity than a contemporary basic feature phone. It is considered handheld computer integrated with a mobile telephone.

The article stated that gang violence and drug trafficking are being orchestrated online, allowing inmates to continue their criminal behavior while serving their sentences.

In another issue, commissioners approved renewal of the County Attorney Alan Morel's contract with a \$250 a month increase in his fee.

"In December 2007, Mr. Morel was the only respondent to a request for pro-

posals awarded and his first based year contract under that RFP commenced Feb. 1, 2008," the manager said. The RFP is good for the base year plus three years with negotiations of terms each year. The commission would have to rebid in December 2011 for services to begin Feb. 1, 2012, Stewart said.

Morel's 2010-2011 contract is for \$13,475, plus gross receipts tax per month, which includes all fees and costs, but not litigation of individual cases of ordinance violations in magistrate and district courts.

Morel proposed an increase of \$250 per month to \$13,725 plus tax and supplied an analysis of his expenses.

"My analysis of the budget is that the proposed cost for the firm is affordable without any adjustment in the attorney contract budget line and justifi-

fied under the circumstances," Stewart wrote.

Commission Chairman Eileen Sedillo pointed out that the commission was paying an additional charge of \$130 an hour tied to several legal actions involving the sheriff's office. Morel said the separate charge for litigation would continue, but that the county is down to one enforcement case now.

"My first 10 years, there was practically no enforcement (cases) and then eight cases occurred within a span of one or two months, but we're back down to one," Morel said.

"Does that go away with the increase?" she asked.

"No," Morel replied. "I have been here 17 years and I can pretty much dictate what it takes to do county's work, but I can't control (expenses), if we go into court. I can't control those costs."

Commissioner Kathryn

Minter said, "I agree that Alan is worth his weight in gold," but without being specific she said she would like to see one long standing case resolved this year. She then offered the motion to approve the renewal with the higher fee, which passed unanimously.

Surprised by the rapid approval, Morel told commissioners, "I had a bunch of high points I was going to use to sell myself."

Commissioner Mark Doth asked about the gross receipts tax Morel charges for state collection. The attorney said it must be charged based on where his office is located and that's in Ruidoso, which has the highest rate in the county and the second highest in the state.

"The difference is substantial," the attorney said.

Commissioners said staff should look into finding an office for Morel in Carrizozo as a way of

reducing that expense, but Morel said he's paying for an office in Ruidoso.

In appointments to county advisory boards, commissioners again tabled nominations to the Land and Natural Resources Advisory Committee, the Lincoln Historic Preservation Board and the Senior Citizens Olympic Committee. They appointed Commissioner Jackie Powell as the county representative on the Joint Use Board of the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant that serves the municipalities of Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs. Commissioners originally selected Doth, but the Ruidoso Downs City Council rejected that nomination, because he lives in the village and they feared would tilt the balance of power.

Powell lives in Hondo Valley in an unincorporated area east of Ruidoso Downs.

EDUCATION

RHS works to lower dropout numbers

■ Freshman academy a possibility

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

To keep students from becoming dropouts, Ruidoso school officials have implemented changes at the high school and are considering other modifications to keep students in school.

One of the possibilities for all incoming ninth graders is a freshman academy at Ruidoso High School, beginning with the 2011-12 school year.

Principal Pauline Staski said staff is working up the concept that would be modeled on a middle school to reduce the "shock" of moving into high school.

"What happens to our kids, pretty much in all districts, is in K-8 they've kind of gotten used to being promoted with their peers. And ninth grade is the first time they've been hit with the idea of having to earn a credit and pass a course to move on to the next one. And we haven't done a real good job about supporting them in this."

Staski said the academy would help students understand the difference between high school and their elementary years.

About 20 percent of ninth grade students end up taking their freshman year over.

Staski said of the repeat freshmen, 50 percent are likely to later drop out of high school.

"We're very concerned about repeat ninth

graders," Staski said. "Not only do they require the equivalency of a teacher to re-teach what should have been learned the previous year, but we also know the children's future is not as bright as it should be."

The academy would be for all incoming freshmen students.

"We're seeing it as sort of an extension of the middle school at the high school," Staski said. "Give them a little more familiarity before we dump them into the hard, cold world."

Like at the middle school, students at the freshman academy would have instructors teaching English, math, science and social studies. The group of teachers would be responsible for 80 students. Two teams of instructors would each have approximately 80 pupils.

"They team together. They plan together. They work out the problems. They intervene for those 80 kids."

Staski said staff is just beginning to look at where the freshman academy might be physically located.

The high school is also looking at students who will be sophomores, juniors and seniors next year and the verge of dropping out.

"We have a pilot program going with five students in our library. They are pretty much self-contained. The teachers come to the students instead of the students going to class. The all came to either Mr. Edmister (assistant princi-

pal Jason Edmister) or me and requested information on a GED. We talked them into this."

Staski said she checked in on the initiative after about a week-and-a-half and the students who had been "totally disengaged" were "on task, earning credit, and feeling optimistic."

A lack of distractions in the self-contained group was seen as a positive.

"These are students who are in the situation they are in because of what they call drama. Some are easily distracted. So they appreciate that sheltered situation. They really have said that they feel that they're making much better progress."

She said if the pilot project works, it could be expanded next year.

Night school has also gotten underway at Ruidoso High School.

"We have identified the senior who absolutely must be in this credit recovery program on top of a full day of school to be able to graduate on time."

"We are in the process of identifying the juniors. If we can catch them at this point they'll be able to attend a regular day in the senior year and graduate on time."

Eventually sophomores and freshman will be assessed for night school.

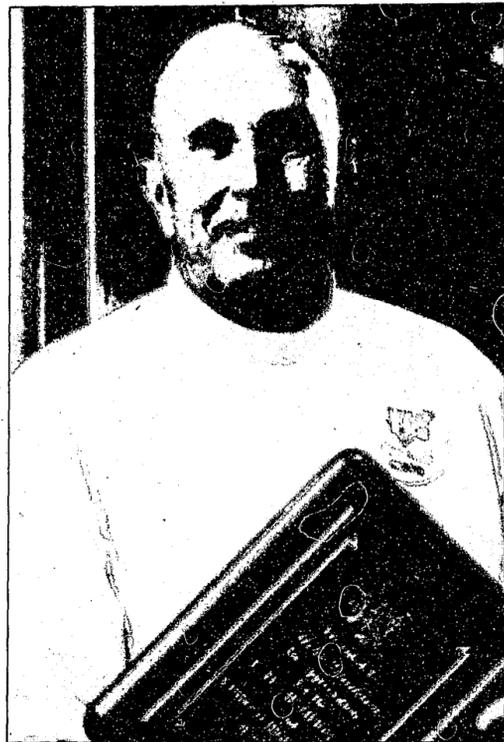
The night school runs Monday through Thursday, 3:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Students are required to log into a software program for a minimum of three hours per week.

GLADDEN HONORED

Former Ruidoso Municipal School District Superintendent Mike Gladden is recognized for his high school assistance since retiring in the early 2000s. "I don't know if you've seen them in the main gym, there's these big, long wooden state championship carved, engraved signs for every year we have a state championship," said activities director Kief Johnson, before presenting Gladden with a token of appreciation. "He's been doing that for a number of years. He did three of them for us this past year. Then he also donated his time and all of his energy in replacing that front sign at Ruidoso High School." Gladden also redid the sign at the White Mountain Elementary Schools several years ago. After serving as the schools' superintendent for 13 years, following other administrative positions in the district, Gladden retired and opened a sign making business.

COURTESY



Patterson named assistant principal

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

Ruidoso Middle School now has an assistant principal.

Cody Patterson, a teacher in the district, was appointed to the newly created position last week. Tuesday was his first day at the new position.

"They had talked about adding some administrative staff up here at the middle school to help deal with some of the issues that were going on," Patterson said.

Patterson, who has worked in the Ruidoso school district for more than 12 years, has a master's degree as an education diagnostician and an administrator's license. Before that he taught for

six years in the Tularosa school system.

"I did my administrative internship here about six years ago and have done some positions that allowed me to get a taste of administrative duties without really being an administrator. I have shown in the administrative positions."

Patterson said he realizes he'll be working during part of the summer, beyond just the school year.

"Typically administrators work the month of June. They come back early in August."

Patterson began teaching in the Ruidoso school district at the middle school and had a stint in the high school in both general education and special education.

"After I got my adminis-

tration license I went to White Mountain Intermediate School where I worked with behavior support. Then I taught fifth grade for a couple of years and one of those years was in an alternative classroom. Most recently Patterson was the head teacher at the district's alternative school, formerly called the Gavilan Canyon School.

"We are having a great year at the alternative school called Choices. It's been awesome. The student there have been neat and it was a little difficult for me to leave because you get attachments there. But I'm looking forward to here."

Patterson said he wants to bring a positive attitude to Ruidoso Middle School so students can make good choices.

School water tank sprang a leak

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

A water storage tank at Ruidoso Middle School, used to assure adequate water pressure for fire fighting, sprang a leak late last month.

"We thought we got through the holidays with no incidents even though it was very, very cold," said Harris. "We did have something happen and it had

nothing to do with the cold. Because of ground settling and perhaps a faulty installation, a pipe broke that leads from the water tank under the road. Somebody driving down Warrior (Drive) felt that's a lot of water and called Kerry (Gladden Eastep, a school board member)."

The water was turned off and the subcontractor who installed the 65,000 gallon tank was called in.

"They said 'We'll take care of it,'" Harris said. "They poured a yard-and-a-half of concrete and made a place for the joint to fit in so it can't break again."

The tank was refilled with water on Jan 11, and the fire suppression system was back in full operation.

Formore than a week, while kids were in school without the backup water supply, at the recommendation of the of the fire department, two people were hired to be on "fire watch."

Harris said it was unknown how much water was lost.

TEEN SPOTLITE

Teen Spotlight features area teens that have made a difference in their community. Christian Guillen is the next teen in the Spotlight.

Christian is currently a junior at Hondo Valley High School. He is the son of Jorge and Maria Guillen.

Christian enjoys being involved at school. Athletics are a focus for him. He participates in football, basketball and track. He is also a dancer in the Hondo Fiestas. He is proud of the fact he was part of the

State Champion Football Team. He played as a wide-receiver and remains a starter for the Hondo Football Team. In addition to Hondo School activities, Guillen is involved in his church activities. He also plays in the Ruidoso Soccer league.

Hondo School Superintendent Ms. Nieto speaks highly of him saying, "Christian is an exceptional young man. He is a hard worker, very respectful, and always willing to help out however he can. He is an asset to our school both academically and athletically."

When asked about positive influences in Christian's life, he lists his mom.



He credits her for pushing him to his best in everything he attempts.

Guillen is already planning for his future and says he would like to attend college and earn a petroleum engineering degree.

This young man has a bright future ahead of him.

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Ruidoso Village Council changes meeting time

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

Ruidoso village councilors will meet at 3 p.m., instead of 4:30 p.m. for their regular sessions during 2011.

The meeting time was one of three changes approved by the council at a regular meeting last week. Although workshops will remain limited to two hours, they now can be scheduled as needed any day of the week.

Items to be included under the consent agenda, which is approved by one vote without discussion, must be under \$50,000, an increase from the previous \$25,000 limit, but in line with the state of New Mexico's policy.

Village Manager Debi Lee explained that the resolutions setting the policies must be adopted annually. By moving up the time of regular meetings, consultants who drive down from Santa Fe and Albuquerque might be able to drive back, instead of spending the night in Ruidoso, making the visit less costly to the village.

Councilor Gloria Sayers, the only councilor to vote against the change, said she can attend whatever time is picked, but to encourage the most public participation, 4:30 p.m. was preferred in a random poll she conducted with seven local business owners. That also gives her a little more time for research on information in the agenda packets, which are not available until the Friday before the Tuesday meetings.

Mayor Ray Alborn said, "People tell me if they need to be here, they will be here." Personally, he prefers 7 a.m., and Councilor Rafael Salas agreed with that preference.

Councilor Denise Dean asked if the village would realize any benefit with earlier meetings in reference to overtime for employees.

"Sure," Lee said, for both employees and consultants such as the village's water team. Salas said his biggest concern was the consultants, but he was told they do not receive double time for evening meetings. He looked at when other entities schedule their meetings, and many begin at 9 a.m. and are finished by noon, Salas said.

"I'm an advocate of starting early. I've been here before until midnight," he said. "My main concern is the public. Most of those I talk to say, if they have an issue, they will be here or they can talk to me at any time between meetings."

"The meetings usually don't have overflow crowds anyway," Dean said. "I would hope if someone has an issue that interests them, they would try to come."

Councilor Angel Shaw, who works for Zia Natural Gas, said she could accommodate 3 p.m., but anything earlier would be difficult for her. "While I appreciate the enthusiasm, I was elected too, but I also have a day job," she told her peers.

Councilor Don Williams suggested going with 3

p.m., and if the time proved to be a problem, the council could pass a new resolution changing it.

Alborn joked that if the meetings last to midnight, he'll need a permission slip to get into his home.

Williams also suggested that if the council expects a large group to attend on some issue, that the mayor be allowed to move items around on the agenda to accommodate the visitors.

Councilor Jim Stoddard suggested to Lee that, when the agenda is put together, suspected items of controversy or generating public interest could be scheduled closer to 4:30 p.m., when most people could get off work.

Lee said she will do the same with the consultants, to allow them to leave as early as possible.

Salas added that with closed executive sessions at the end of meetings, action seldom occurs when the council reconvenes publicly, but if an item and subsequent action is of significant public interest, it should be scheduled to ensure some visitors still are in attendance when the council comes back and takes a vote.

Williams proposed leaving that flexibility to the mayor's discretion. Alborn said he wants to avoid



Alborn: "People tell me if they need to be here, they will be here."

telling people they have to leave for a closed session during the middle of a meeting.

Councilors also discussed changing the dates of some of the regular meetings in August and November, but Village Clerk Irma Devine preferred the schedule be left as is and the mayor, with 24 hours notice, could call special meetings as needed.

Councilors also specifically added radio stations to the list of entities to be notified of meetings.

As for the change in dollars for items that can be included under the consent agenda, Lee said years ago the exception began at

\$5,000, but the state continued to increase the amount.

"How does the manager feel about no input from the council?" Stoddard asked Lee.

A councilor can always ask for a particular item to be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion, she pointed out. Everything still must appear in the annual budget, but as long as department purchases are within their budgets,

she advocated synchronizing with the state purchasing policy.

Shaw said the council previously decided to leave the limit at \$25,000, "because we had issues with spending. Those have been corrected, so I'm a little more comfortable."

"If the staff puts an item on the agenda, they better be ready to defend it, whether it's on the consent or the regular agenda," Williams said.

Sayers said she preferred to leave the limit at \$25,000. Double that amount "is a lot of money," she said.

Lee said the staff "is fine either way."

Salas said as a former village department director, he had no problem with \$50,000. If he sees an item on the consent agenda that concerns him, he or any councilor can call Lee in advance to find out the particulars, he said.

Sayers also asked if agendas could be available earlier than 5 p.m. the Friday before a Tuesday meeting. With the holidays, she ran into problems

securing the agenda for a special Monday meeting in time to review it over the weekend. Lee said holiday situations like that rarely occur. Sayers said the agenda was posted on the village website at 5:04 p.m. that day.

"Having seen the process, it's difficult for me to complain," Alborn said.

"I'm just saying I don't think it should be at closing time. The packet should be ready earlier," Sayers said.

Williams said he's driven to village hall to pick up his packet and the administrative offices were closed for lunch, so he drove back later. "It's part of the job," he said.

"Let's change it to 4 p.m.," Lee said.

Dean suggested 4:45 p.m.

Devine told councilors, "It's already extremely challenging to get ready by 5 p.m.," because she often literally is waiting on information until the last minute.

Councilors voted 5-1 not to change the policy, with Sayers voting against the motion.

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Grant to fund 9-1-1 upgrades at RPD

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

A new \$978,696 four-year grant was accepted by the Ruidoso Village Council last week for improvements to the Enhanced 9-1-1 system at the Ruidoso Police Department.

Dick Swenor, the police department's 911 coordinator, told village councilors that officials with the Local Government Division of the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration asked the council to execute the new grant agreement to allow them to continue to pay approved E911 expenditures on

behalf of the village. The current grant expires Jan. 31.

The village receives cash reimbursements and also acts as fiscal agent for the Mescalero Apache Tribe in E911 issues, Swenor said. The money is used to operate the E911 center.

"I deal with six phone companies and seven to eight cellular companies," he said. "We send in invoices. We do not hold the money."

The grant included an increase in training money, he said, adding that 9-1-1 "is one of the fastest technological growth areas in

the United States."

Another \$22,300 grant was received to update the village's Geographical Information System.

"We can barely keep up," Swenor said. "Without GIS, I don't know how our emergency system would function. If you call 9-1-1, in 98 percent of the cases, we can find you."

Texting to be available

By next month, speech impaired persons will be able to text an emergency 9-1-1 message, he said. That ability also will come in handy if another accident occurs where optical cable lines are cut, which

happened recently. Within two years when someone calls 9-1-1, the screen not only will show a address, the satellite technology will add a view of the house.

"The advances are (incredible) for someone who grew up with a crank telephone," Swenor told councilors.

The money for the E911 program comes from a surcharge paid by everyone with a land line. State legislators are considering action to allow the state to collect from people who use cell phones too, because they currently pay no fee for the emergency service, he said.

"Land lines are slipping away from us rapidly," Swenor said. "Sixty percent of the calls to us are cellular, and nationwide, the percentage is even greater."

"This grant also provides DFA updates and replaces equipment as advances occur so we stay in step with the rest of the country," said Village Attorney Dan Bryant.

Swenor said next year, the village and state are scheduled to review the consoles used at the police department. "They've been in place since 2004," he said. "One or two need upgrades. There's no cost to

the village except the personnel costs to man it."

If the E911 goes down on the Mescalero Reservation, the calls are picked up by Otero County. If the Ruidoso E911 fails, the calls are answered by the Lincoln County Sheriff's Dispatch in Carrizozo, he said.

In other action, councilors approved a driveway easement for a parking lot at the old Alto Post Office off Lakeshore Drive. James and Carol Brophy are trying to open a coffee shop there and the easement documents will hold harmless the village if a liability issue arises.

AUDIT

FROM PAGE 1A

"I thought we had it," but then the land value question was raised.

"Governments were not required to keep track of this until about five years ago," Roberts said. "Infrastructure came even later. It's not like it's been missing 100 years."

Powell asked for updates on the inventory progress every six to eight months until the issue is resolved. "I want this fixed before the employee moves on to other things," she

insisted.

Stewart said he's confident that "we're where we should be."

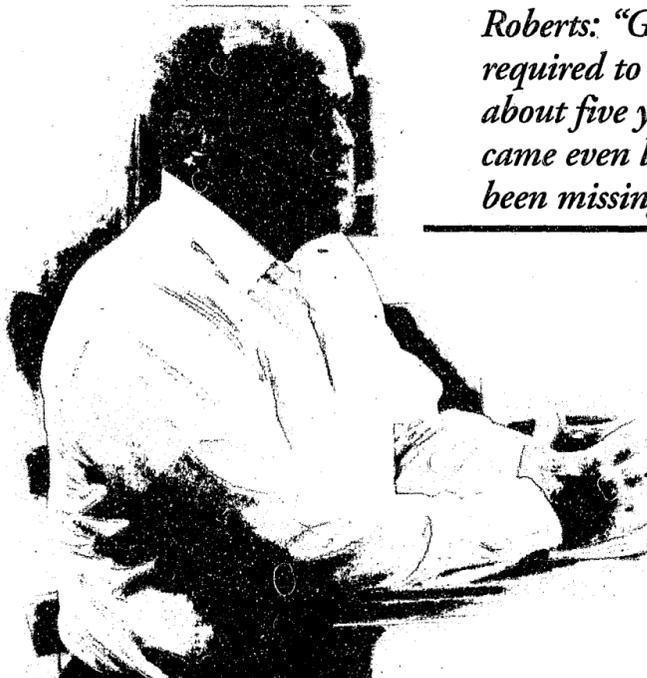
Roberts said he'd meet with the manager and inventory clerk and come back to the commission, if requested.

Commissioner Kathryn Minter noted that to prepare financial statements required of counties and municipalities, the staff needs training.

"In theory, you're supposed to be able to prepare them," Roberts said. "The majority can't, because of limited staff and time, so they let us do it. But if you don't do it, we have to note a finding."

Training can be provided and it's good for staff to understand the process, but he contended it's not necessary for staff to prepare the financial state-

Roberts: "Governments were not required to keep track of this until about five years ago. Infrastructure came even later. It's not like it's been missing 100 years."



Donna Parker Supports The Ruidoso Schools Bond!
Paid for by Blue Ribbon Comm.

ments. Stewart said five years ago when GASB first brought in all the new rules, county managers across the state agreed to protest.

"There was no way without our own internal audit department to watch all of this," he said. "Ray is preparing us for the worst case, teaching us how to rip off the government, so that we can spot fraud."

"We have a small staff and it would take hiring an audit department. If you want, I will do it. High standards are good and we need to attempt to achieve

them, but if you hear the frustration in my voice, it's true because we are so thin on staff. We're doing the best we can."

Commissioner Tom Battin, a former banker, said the GASB rules have created real frustration. Auditors usually prepare financial statements.

"I don't like qualified opinions, but we need to focus on this county being safe and sound financially, because of the management of the manager and staff," he said.

Roberts again reminded commissioners that the qualified opinion related

only to the inventory. He said while more education is good, no one new needs to be hired.

"It's my belief this will and had been going away," he said.

Powell said she was pushing not for a full auditing staff, just for more coordination between those responsible and Robert's office.

Stewart explained that under new rules and the dwindling number of qualified auditors willing to put up with all of the new government-related requirements, and as long as the annual cost is under \$50,000, the county does not have to move to another auditor after four years, as in the past. The county can stay with the same auditor for 10 years with annual review of the fee and contract terms.

COLD

FROM PAGE 1A

Thursday.

"This is very much in keeping with a La Nina pattern," lead forecaster Tim Shy said Tuesday afternoon.

"We've been watching this one very closely in the Pacific Northwest. We noticed that it really started to amplify inland as opposed to off of over the extreme northeastern Pacific Ocean.

"As a result, this thing is going to be really deficient in moisture as it comes into New Mexico."

Breezy to windy conditions will develop east of the Sacramento Mountains during the afternoon.

"Although the snow is not going to be great in snowfall amounts, you're going to blow that stuff around," Shy said. Ruidoso could see one inch accumu-

lation.

"Snowfall amounts are not going to be great by anybody's standards. But the key issue is that what does fall is going to blow around. That's going to impact visibility. If you are going to do any traveling Wednesday night into Thursday, you need to account for the fact that wintry driving conditions are certainly going to be in force, with blowing snow probably the chief problem. Anybody that does have the misfortune of getting stranded or in some sort of trouble out there will also have to deal with some windy conditions as well as very, very cold temperatures."

After low temperatures in the 30s and 40s in recent days, the mercury was predicted to drop into the 20s overnight.

And with daytime highs since the weekend in the 50s, Thursday was expected to be around the freezing

point at Ruidoso.

"What a difference a day makes," Shy said. "It's certainly going to feel like winter."

Thursday's high temperature at Ruidoso is forecast to be 14 degrees below normal after six degrees or so above average today.

The average high for the middle of January in Ruidoso is 50 degrees and the low 20. Friday and Saturday temperatures around the Sacramento and Capitan mountains were forecast to recover to near normal.

But for later in the weekend another disturbance was on the horizon, said Shy.

"We'll be watching very closely where it starts. The models are currently suggesting in the northeast Pacific, but that's what they said last time.

"We'll be watching to see if that one brings the moisture back in with it Saturday and Sunday."

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Jan 7, 2011	Fri	7:30pm	Opening Celebration "Cosmic C Major"	Western Hills United Methodist Church
Jan 8, 2011	Sat	7:30pm	Russian Romantic Tradition	Las Cruces - Rio Grande Theatre
Jan 9, 2011	Sun	2:00pm	Fifths Falling, Fifths Rising	Scottish Rite Temple
Jan 12, 2011	Wed	7:00pm	\$5 Music Film Series - <i>Boyz n the City</i>	Plaza Philanthropy Theatre
Jan 14, 2011	Fri	7:30pm	The Australian Didgeridu	Western Hills United Methodist Church
Jan 15, 2011	Sat	7:30pm	Rubens String Quartet	Western Hills United Methodist Church
Jan 15, 2011	Sat	9:30pm	World Music @ 2900	2900 Kitchen/Lounge
Jan 16, 2011	Sun	2:00pm	The Australian Didgeridu	Las Cruces - Rio Grande Theatre
Jan 18, 2011	Wed	7:30pm	\$5 Music Film Series - <i>Duplicat</i>	Plaza Philanthropy Theatre
Jan 21, 2011	Fri	7:30pm	An evening with violinist Joseph Silverstein	Las Cruces - NMSU Atkinson Recital Hall
Jan 22, 2011	Sat	7:30pm	An evening with violinist Joseph Silverstein	Western Hills United Methodist Church
Jan 23, 2011	Sun	2:00pm	Harlem String Quartet	Scottish Rite Temple
Jan 25, 2011	Wed	7:00pm	\$5 Music Film Series - <i>From Man to Man</i>	Plaza Philanthropy Theatre
Jan 28, 2011	Fri	7:30pm	EPFO/EPPM Brahms Double Concerto	Plaza Theater (Tickets only through EPFO)
Jan 29, 2011	Sat	7:30pm	EPFO/EPPM Brahms Double Concerto	Plaza Theater (Tickets only through EPFO)
Jan 30, 2011	Sun	2:00pm	International Competition Winners	UTEP Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall

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County rejects indigent health care appeal

DIANNE STALLINGS
dstallings@ruidosonews.com

Powell: "You've been a good citizen and need help, but an exception would open the flood gates."



Although they sympathized with the family's plight, Lincoln County commissioners last week rejected an appeal for an exception to the county's Indigent Health Care Fund income eligibility criteria.

County Manager Tom Stewart said recent income tax returns for the family showed an income of \$31,758, which exceeded the \$31,250 county limit, and he denied the claim. Program Administrator Scott Annala already had looked at the family income in several different approaches, but even only considering pensions and the child's Social Security check, the family exceeded the chart used by the county based on standards set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, he said.

The husband of the woman under treatment appealed Nov. 19, and in a Dec. 10 letter, amplified their situation, but Stewart again denied the claim. The husband requested a hearing Dec. 21.

At the podium, the husband reviewed for commissioners the details of the family's finances and some of the continuing medical financial requirements tied to chemotherapy. Commissioner Tom Battin recused himself from participating, because he said he is a friend of the family. He said they are people of integrity.

The husband, a part-time teacher, said he respected the county's guidelines and thought Annala did his work well, but hoped for a waiver, as the Veterans Administration did for his medical expenses.

Director Scott Annala said he worked the numbers several ways, but couldn't get them within program limits.

Commissioner Kathryn Minter said she also knows the family and, "They are wonderful people."

"I feel terrible the government put you in this position that you have to come before us and lay out your whole life," she said. "I think this goes back many years when the government started to pay for health care and now more than half (is federally paid) and when the government

gets involved, costs go up.

"You probably have paid your taxes your whole life, but we have a guideline. You've been paying in for those who meet the guidelines and now you can't get (any money) out. This is a step toward socialism and that only works when it's within a family, not in a community.

"I would love to get back where everything is not going through government, where friends, family and faith-base charities provided health care when needed. I don't think Obama Care (will work). I think it will be worse. I understand what you are going through. You've been a good citizen and need help, but an exception would open the flood gates."

The system wipes out any incentive to keep costs down, because someone else is paying, Minter said. When she underwent a medical procedure, she insisted on knowing the cost upfront, but constantly was told not to worry about it, because she had insurance, she said.

"We need to incrementally get away from government paying for everything," she said. Her father didn't have insurance and he used a payment plan with the hospital where he lived, she said.

Commissioner Mark Doth told the family representative, "In all due respect to your situation, we seem to have a process here and Mr. Annala has gone over the details numerous times and we would be setting a dangerous precedent, if we approved your situation. If we opened this up, we would have a standing line out the door and around the courthouse of people in similar situations to yours. I'm not going to sit here like God and say approved or denied. We have a process and we should follow it. If something changes drastically in your situation, you can reapply."

"Who sets the income level?" Commission Chairman Eileen Sedillo asked.

Stewart said the standard is established by HUD, but the commission can adopt whatever levels it prefers.

"You need to gauge how to maintain the vitality of the program and to help as many citizens as we can," Stewart said.

"We all have hard times, Commissioner Jackie Powell said. "Even though I have insurance, it never seems to cover what I need it for or it would kick in the next week, or my child was a year too old. I never fall within the guidelines, never quite there. But we have to follow our guidelines."

Fidgeting in her seat, Minter injected, "This is what I don't like about all this government involvement. The incentive is not to work. If (the husband) did not go out and get a job, the family might meet our guidelines. We're taxing some citizens to give to other citizens. The ones working hard resent it and the one receiving says why should I work. I personally will help contribute, if you have a fund raiser. This comment is on the government process. If there is no incentive on either end to work, we'll end up with no money."

Battin asked if the commission revises the income levels annually and Stewart said it depends on the financial health of the program. Either income levels can be adjusted or the percentage of reimbursement.

"When a provider accepts payment, we expect them to dismiss any other

charges," he said. "They know that, when (a provider) makes application."

A motion by Powell to deny the appeal passed 4-0, with Battin abstaining. County Attorney Alan Morel said the family could appeal the commission's decision to district court.

In a related issue, commissioners approved 49 out of 50 claims reviewed for payment under the Sole Community Provider Program that reimburses the county hospital for care of the medically indigent. The claims totaled \$88,782.91, bringing the year-to-date figure to \$669,892.47.

Commissioners also approved 65 of 77 claims submitted under the county Indigent Health Care Fund that reimburses (non-hospital related) independent health care providers for care of the medically indigent. The \$22,560.26 in claims brings the total to date this fiscal year to \$224,674.12.

Stewart said last year, the average monthly payment was \$26,235 for a total of \$314,818. The average this year is \$32,096, and if that average continues, \$385,157 would be needed from the \$517,088 budgeted.

To be eligible for the county program, besides meeting the income guidelines, a patient must file annually each July, the beginning of the fiscal year.

Minter, as a new commissioner, asked why providers are reimbursed at different percentages. Annala explained that a 100 percent reimbursement usually is for substance abuse based on a contract with the providers, because there is no diag-

nostic code. The procedures with codes are paid the Medicaid rate versus the full charge.

"So if we have a contract and there is no code, they get 100 percent?" Minter asked.

"Until they meet the cap," Annala replied.

Doth asked if bills could be considered retroactively.

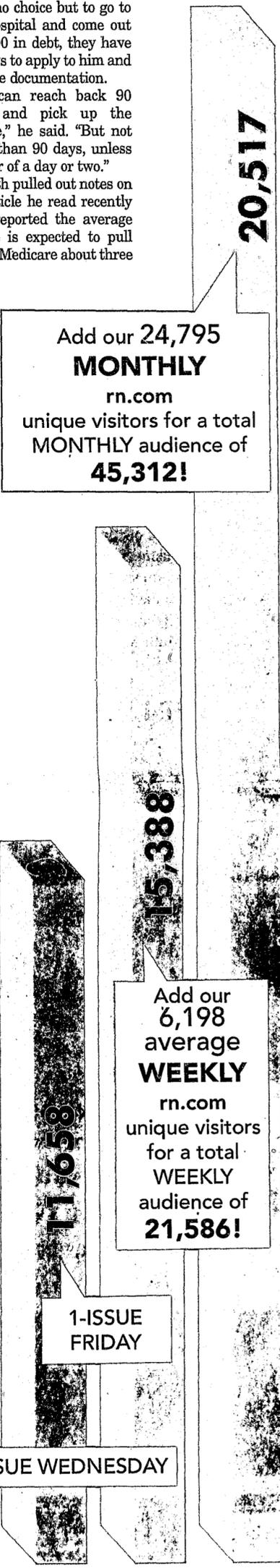
Annala said he tells clients that if their gall bladder goes out and they have no choice but to go to the hospital and come out \$10,000 in debt, they have 90 days to apply to him and provide documentation.

"I can reach back 90 days and pick up the charge," he said. "But not more than 90 days, unless matter of a day or two."

Doth pulled out notes on an article he read recently that reported the average couple is expected to pull out of Medicare about three

times the amount of money they paid into over their working lifetime.

"I just think it's important for us to keep that in perspective every time we review something with the hospital and health care here and across the nation," he said. "People come in here sometimes thinking it is a right."



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

New snow past 48 hrs.: 0 inches
Season total: 26 inches

Snowmaking: Yes

Mid-mountain snow: 26 inches

Snow surface: Packed powder

Weather for Wednesday: Windy with a few clouds from time to time. High around 60F. Winds W at 20 to 30 mph. Wednesday evening, a mostly clear sky. Low 29F. Winds WNW at 10 to 20 mph.

Weather for Thursday: Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 30s and lows in the upper 20s.

Groomed runs: Bunny, Easy Street, Ramp, Lower Deep Freeze, Capitan Lite, Lower Moonshine, Lower Spruce, Lower SBT, Smokey Bear, Snow Park, Chino and Moonshine Gulch

Lifts open: No. 2, No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5. Gondola open, weather permitting

Results

Boys Basketball

Saturday, Jan. 15
Ruidoso 61, Hot Springs 56
Ruidoso JV 75, Hot Springs JV 37
Clovis 56, Hondo 53
Thursday, Jan. 13
Goddard 97, Ruidoso 50
Eilda 63, Hondo 61
Carrizozo 49, Mesalero 39

Girls Basketball

Friday, Jan. 14
Tularosa 55, Ruidoso 53 (OT)
Carrizozo 53, Mountainair 30
Thursday, Jan. 13
Carrizozo 53, Mesalero 40

Sports On Tap

Basketball

Girls
Thursday, Jan. 20
Carrizozo at Corona, 5 p.m.
Mesalero at Tularosa, 6:30 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 21
RHS at Chaparral, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 22
Magdalena at Carrizozo, 5 p.m.
Artesia at RHS, 2:30 p.m.
Quemado at Hondo, 3 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 25
West Las Vegas at Ruidoso, 5:30 p.m.
Mesalero at Cloudcroft, 5:30 p.m.
Boys
Thursday, Jan. 20
Carrizozo at Corona, 7 p.m.
Foothill at Mesalero, 4 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 21
RHS at West Las Vegas, 3 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 22
Magdalena at Carrizozo, 7 p.m.
Capitan at NMMI, 3 p.m.
RHS at Roswell, two games starting at 5:30 p.m.
Quemado at Hondo, 5 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 25
Hondo at Valley Christian, 6:30 p.m.

On Deck

Little League Baseball

Ruidoso Little League Baseball needs board members for the upcoming season. For information contact Brian Mosher at 937-8749.

K of C Free Throw

The Knights of Columbus, Council #6597, will hold its annual "Free Throw Championship" on Saturday, Jan. 22. Boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 14 are invited to join the fun. Please meet at 11 a.m. in the Horton lower gym for registration. All participants must bring a birth certificate or proof of age. The competition will begin at 12 p.m. The district championship will be held in Ruidoso this year (TBA). For info contact Dave Tetreault at 257-9556 or 937-2919.

Party on for good health

Zumba Fitness at the RAC promotes exercise, fun and wellness in a different way

MIKE CURRAN
mcurran@ruidosonews.com

Conditioning, vigor and good health may be achieved in a variety of ways. For some, the solitude of cycling, running or weightlifting could accomplish the desired results.

For others, team activities such as football, volleyball or soccer could be the answer.

Suppose you wanted to combine dancing, hot music and good times with an individual mode-of-dress-statement in a party-on atmosphere. What then?

America, noted as a country with something for everyone, has just the ticket for you ... at an athletic facility near you. It's called Zumba Fitness® and it's appearing at the Ruidoso Athletic Center (RAC) eight times a week, Monday through Saturday.

Four, spirited, enthusiastic instructors are on hand to guide the participants through the 60-minute get-togethers.

Carol Ast-Milchen, Cheryl Gnatkowski, Cathi

"This is a great way to get people into shape and have fun at the same time. This is how we get our dance fix."

Cheryl Gnatkowski
Zumba instructor

McIntosh and Natasha Nichols have nearly eight years of experience as Zumba® instructors and all are certified by that organization.

Ast-Milchen, Gnatkowski and McIntosh are grandmothers but without being told you wouldn't readily guess that fact to look at them.

Nichols recently had a baby (in September, her second child) but to look at her you wouldn't believe it. She promised it's true and also confided she taught courses until she was almost eight months pregnant. Maybe there is something to Zumba after all.

"A few years ago there were very few places to dance, except bars,"

See ZUMBA, page 2B



Zumba instructors, l-r, Cheryl Gnatkowski, Cathi McIntosh, Carol Ast-Milchen and Natasha Nichols. COURTESY

Ruidoso Warriors outlast Hot Springs

MIKE CURRAN
mcurran@ruidosonews.com

Thursday, the RHS hardwood crew traveled to Roswell and were repaid for their efforts with a 97-50 loss by the Goddard Rockets.

Saturday, the Warriors were out for some blood when they entertained the Hot Springs Tigers.

Their redemption was harder to come by than expected but they still managed to put a 61-56 win in the hopper.

Earlier in the season (Dec. 11), the Tigers had shaded the Warriors, 69-68, at the Sandia Prep Tournament in Albuquerque.

Saturday's game started slowly. The Warriors seemed somewhat tentative, committing some unnecessary turnovers, but

managed to take a 13-9 lead after the first eight minutes of play.

Ruidoso's offense slowed down in the second quarter only scoring six points to Hot Springs 10 and both teams went to the locker rooms knotted at 19 apiece.

In the third period of play, the Tigers tied the score again at 31 with three minutes left and jumped ahead 36-33 with only two minutes left in the third eight minutes of action.

It looked as though Hot Springs was laying claim to the momentum of the game until their "big gun," No. 24, Tannen Rentelen, left the contest with a damaged left knee.

To that point, Rentelen had scored 24 points.

The Warriors found themselves behind, early in

See RHS, page 2B



Daniel Salazar beats four Hot Springs players on a rebound. MIKE CURRAN/RUIDOSO NEWS

NMSU hoops depth finally showing itself

JASON GROVES
Las Cruces Sun-News

LAS CRUCES — Depth was one of the reasons the New Mexico State men's basketball team was picked second in the Western Athletic Conference.

After surviving a string of injuries, the Aggies' were as healthy as they have been all season in a 78-53 Western Athletic Conference victory over San Jose State on Saturday.

NMSU scored 42 bench points on Saturday to improve to 10-9 and 4-1 in conference play.

"It's the type of depth that you need to win and that's what we have been waiting for," Aggies coach Marvin Menzies said. "Now we just have to take it a game at a time."

Bench players were 15-for-25 (60 percent) from the field.

Senior guard Gordo Castillo was 6-for-12 from the floor and 5-for-11 from

3-point range for 17 points.

"I have always come off the bench so I just think everyone knows what they have to do now," Castillo said. "Everyone knows their roles and what to do and everyone wants to win. We are at that point where it's conference time and every game is a hard game."

Aggies freshman guard Christian Kabongo was 5-for-7 from the floor and 3-for-3 from long range for 14 points, showing signs of

emerging from a shooting slump after entering the game shooting 14 percent from 3-point range.

"We tweaked his shot a little bit but he has a much more balanced looking shot now from the perimeter when he gets his feet set," Menzies said. "He was forcing them a little bit earlier but now he is understanding good shots from bad shots."

Kabongo has started 13 games this season, Castillo started four games, and

freshman center Tshildzi Nephawe came off the bench to score eight and pull down a team-high 10 rebounds.

Nephawe had started the previous eight games as junior center Hamidu Rahman works back from a calf injury. Rahman started on Saturday and scored five points with seven rebounds in 17 minutes.

"With so many injuries, people who are on the

See NMSU, page 2B

ZUMBA

FROM PAGE 1B

Gnatkowski said. "This is a great way to get people into shape and have fun at the same time. This is how we get our dance fix."

Judging from the people who partake in the classes there are no age limits.

"We have people in our classes who are in their 70s, as well as teenagers," Ast-Milchen said.

Zumba was a fortuitous accident. A few years ago, aerobics instructor, Beto Perez, was scheduled to teach a class in his native Columbia when he realized he had forgotten his fitness music.

Thinking quickly, he ran out to his car and grabbed a tape of Latin songs he had

been listening to. The class responded to the impromptu music with spontaneous delight. Beto realized the highly successful occurrence for what it was and began to develop and refine Zumba into what it is today.

Now, multiple rhythms such as merengue, salsa, raggae, tango, pop and hip-hop - to name a few - are heard in various Zumba classes across the country. There are currently more than 40,000 instructors around the world.

If you don't believe the enthusiasm of the class members stand inside the RAC and watch the session party-goers as they enter the "Zumba" room. The look on their faces is animated, anxious and optimistic. Their broad smiles and distinctive attire contribute to the entire class. Once the

music begins, side-steps, two-steps, low hip-pulsating crouches, quick knee-snapping footsteps and rhythmic arm and hand gyrations permeate the room.

On the face of it, if you can do a rapid two- or three-step, together with some hip turns and maybe an accelerated waltz you should be well-able to do Zumba.

After all, with a practiced step, almost anyone can begin to show rhythm ... especially with the appropriate music.

The one-hour warm-up, dancing workout and cool down will be over before you know it. And with it, you should have burned off 400 to 800 calories.

Zumba classes are held at the RAC at 8:45 a.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, as well as 5



MIKE CURRAN/RUIDOSO NEWS

RAC Zumba instructors are ready. Are you?

p.m. classes Mondays and Wednesdays. There are 10 a.m. sessions Tuesdays and

Thursdays and an 11 a.m. class on Saturday. For more information

call 257-4900 or visit www.ruidosoathleticclub.com or www.zumba.com.

RHS

FROM PAGE 1B

the last period of play, 43-35, but battled back and managed to take a 48-47 lead on a layup by Terrence Shields.

With four minutes left, the score was tied at 49. At the 2:20 mark, Hot Springs nudged ahead 52-51 but RHS regained the lead, 56-54, with 1:24 left on the clock.

With 50 seconds left it was 56-all but the Warriors soon trudged ahead, 58-56, on a jumper by Shields.

The Tigers had a chance to tie the game at the free throw line but missed both shots.

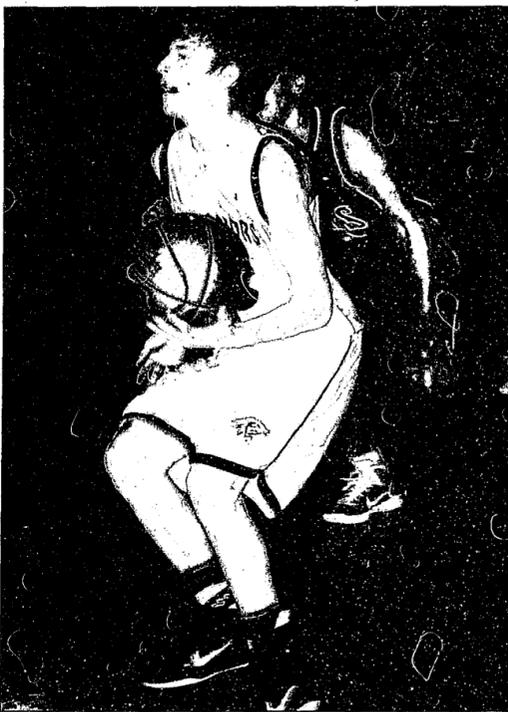
Ruidoso began to smell blood when Daniel Salazar made one-of-two from the line to give the hometown boys a three-point advantage.

As time ran out Shields was fouled hard by the Tigers, went to the line and made both shots to give the Warriors a five-point win.

"The kids kept plugging away and got better as the game went along," Ruidoso head coach Dennis Davis said. "In the end they pulled it out by working just a bit harder on defense than the Tigers.

"Having said that, though, Hot Springs held us to only 19 points in the first half. I thought the biggest change occurred when we went to a full-court press. It spread the game out and helped to give us the win."

With a 7-8 overall record the Warriors will have traveled to Dexter Tuesday who they beat here on Jan. 7, 61-54. Friday, Ruidoso will set their sights on West Las Vegas in another away game.



MIKE CURRAN/RUIDOSO NEWS

Terrence Shields looks for help under Ruidoso's basket.



MIKE CURRAN/RUIDOSO NEWS

Ismail Cook drives up for two against Hot Springs.

NMSU

FROM PAGE 1B

bench were starting and when they come into the game they have that same starter's confidence," Kabongo said. "It doesn't

even feel like we are coming off the bench because anybody could start."

Should the Aggies remain healthy for the rest of the season, Menzies now has the ability to play with the lineup as he may have envisioned entering the season.

"It's hard (for opponents) to study a bunch of guys like that," Castillo said. "I think it's tough for other teams."

The Aggies return to WAC play with the vaunted Nevada/Utah State road swing this weekend.

"We are going to have to be together more than any-

thing on the road because we don't have the crowd there to pick us up," Kabongo said.

NMSU plays at 2-3 Nevada on Thursday. The Wolf Pack picked up a 69-67 road victory at 4-2 Boise State on Saturday.

"That team is going to be

very hungry for a win," Menzies said. "They have a lot of talent but they have had some issues early on as did we. I think it's just a matter of time before they kick it into gear. They are not a team I want to face at their place in the tournament."

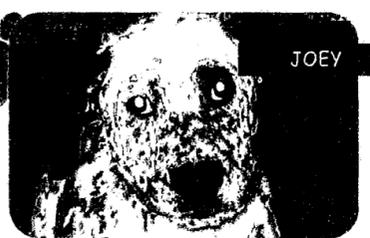
The Aggies then travel to Logan, Utah on Saturday to take on 5-0 Utah State, where NMSU has not won since 2006.

"It's probably going to be kind of like the Pit," Castillo said. "We have to worry about Nevada first. We do it one game at a time."

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Adoption Special

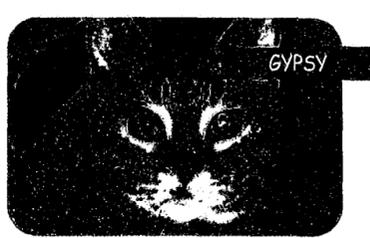
Adoption Fees Cats & Kittens - 2 for \$40 or 1 for \$25 Dogs \$50



JOEY

Joey is a rambunctious Palomation mix puppy, about 5 months old. He is outgoing, vivacious and full of life. Joey loves playing with other puppies, as long as they can keep up with him! He is already neutered, current on his vaccinations and weighs about 35 pounds.

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GYPSY

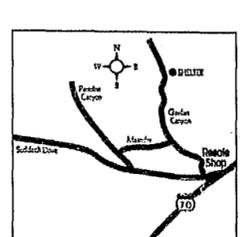
Gypsy is a beautiful short haired brown tabby with a wonderful personality. She is very curious and playful as well as affectionate. Gypsy is about 7 months old, spayed, current on her vaccinations and also declawed on her front paws.

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HIGGINS

Higgins is a handsome doberman mix with a sweet disposition. He is laid back and easy to get along with. Higgins weighs just over 50 pounds, but could stand to gain some weight. He is about 1-2 years old. He does excellent with other dogs and is very well behaved.

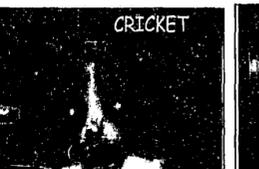
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KYLE

Kyle is a handsome heeler mix, about 7 months old. He plays very well with other dogs and loves people. Kyle weighs about 25 pounds.

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CRICKET

Cricket is a pretty red heeler/ausie mix. She is very attentive and eager to please. Cricket weighs 35 pounds and is about 2 years old

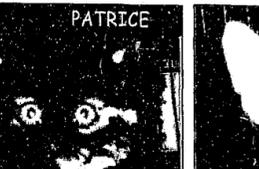
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ALFALFA

Alfalfa is an adorable kitten, about 9 weeks old. He is very friendly and sweet. Alfalfa will definitely make a wonderful family pet.

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PATRICE

Patrice is about 9 weeks old and ready to find her permanent home. She has medium length fur and is a tortoiseshell in color

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FLASH

Flash is about 10-12 weeks old, short haired and is a buff/orange tabby. He is very playful and outgoing.

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LINCOLN COUNTY

Capitan School Board extends contract

JULIE CARTER
jcarter@ruidosonews.com

The Capitan Board of Education, in its Jan. 13 meeting, voted to extend the contract for Superintendent Shirley Crawford for another two years.

Crawford began her job with Capitan Municipal Schools in the 2007-08 school year. This new contract runs from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013.

The Board recognized the winners of the 4th Grade Essay Contest. First place winner Avonlea Ward, gave her speech, "In this Era of School Budget Cuts, Should Athletics be Eliminated," to the board members.

Awards from the New Mexico School Boards Association were also presented to Board members. Receiving were: Ed Vinson, Exemplary; Robin Parks, Exemplary; and Nate Dunn, Outstanding.

Reports from schools were provided by teachers. Topics covered included the Elementary Reading Program and the instructors approval that the program incorporates some science and social studies, improved safety for elementary students at afternoon dismissal and increased



focus on Keyboarding skills.

Teachers also expressed a willingness to be an active part of budget development for the next school year.

In other business:

- The Board received a report on some legislation already being discussed for this legislative session and of most concern was SB 80 dealing with consolidation of schools.

- discussed the concerns about a possible change in funding for small schools.

- A report was given about the joint meetings being held with Hondo, Carrizozo and Corona Schools to discuss sharing of resources in order to stretch operational dollars further for the 2011-12 school year.



Capitan Schools Superintendent Shirley Crawford, top left, had her contract extended for two more years. Top right, the Capitan School Board recognized winners of the Fourth Grade Essay Contest. Front row: l-r, Avonlea Ward (1st), Shane Barnwell (2nd), Josh Young (3rd) and fourth grade teacher Lisa Wenner. Back row: Board members Ed Vinson, Robin Parks, Nate Dunn, James Fields, Steve Dirks and Fourth Grade teacher Lisa Wenner. At right, Ed Vinson, Robin Parks and Nate Dunn receive awards from the New Mexico School Board Association.

COURTESY PHOTO



WINTER FORMAL



COURTESY PHOTOS

The Capitan High School Student Senate thanks Zia Natural Gas Company and Angel Shaw for donating the Snowflake Fantasy decorations for the Capitan 2010 Winter Formal held Dec. 18 in the Capitan Hospitality room. Capitan High School Student Senate is Student Senate Sponsor Shirley Wood; President Maritza Nava, Vice President Kersti Davis, Secretary Emily Swanner, and Reporter Tara Herrera. Other members include Alexis Trost and Samantha Hasenbuhler.

Cleckler places second in National 4-H Speech Contest

JULIE CARTER
jcarter@ruidosonews.com

A Capitan 4-Her and New Mexico State University freshman competed in public speaking at the National Western Roundup in Denver earlier this month.

On Jan. 8, Jenna Cleckler won second place in the National 4-H Public Speaking Contest with a prepared speech.

"I received this amazing opportunity to compete at Nationals after winning the New Mexico State 4-H competition this past July," Cleckler said.

"My speech dealt with leadership and talked about how tomorrow is never guaranteed and that each second is an opportunity to make a difference."

Cleckler said that in the past few years she had received a wake up call that life is entirely too short to not embrace every moment.



"When I'm speaking to my audience, I know that I have been given the opportunity to maybe change someone's perspective on life," she said.

Winning the honor of the title, "Reserve National Champion" with a speech that had deep personal meaning to her was not just an honor for Cleckler, but one of her greatest accomplishments as far as she is concerned.

"Even though I did so well, it was never about winning for me, I know that I was, in a small way, leaving an impact every time I spoke," she said. "That inspired me to give it my best every time I began communicating my message."

At the awards assembly, Cleckler received a plaque and ribbon for her accomplishments in the speaking contest.

COUNTY BRIEFS

Extension club

The Carrizozo Road-runners Chapter of the Lincoln County Extension Association meets at 1

p.m., Thursday, Jan. 20, at the Otero County Electric Coop community room on 12th Street in Carrizozo.

Member Barbara Culler will present the program

on animal abuse and its connection to domestic violence. Extension Association meetings are open to anyone interested.

For more information contact President Barbara VanGorder at 648-9805, or Doris Cherry at 354-2673.

Q&A forum

The Carrizozo Chamber of Commerce will host a Question & Answer Forum for the candidates of the Feb. 1 School Board Election on Thursday, Jan. 27

at 6 p.m., in the Commission Chambers of the Lincoln County Courthouse.

Welda Grider will moderate the forum and present written questions from the audience to each candidate.

Come ask your questions and hear the responses of the school board candidates. Refreshments will be served.

Capitan forum

Capitan PTA and CACT

will be hosting a Meet the Candidates Forum on Monday, Jan. 24, at 6 p.m., in the Capitan Municipal Schools multipurpose room (cafeteria).

Candidates for the upcoming school board elections will be answering questions posed to them from the community members.

Bird Club outing

The Lincoln County Bird Club will have their first 2011 field trip on

Saturday, Jan. 22.

This will be an all-day trip to the Bosque Del Apache (near San Antonio, N.M.) where there will be many species of birds and ducks to observe.

For those interested, meet at 7:30 a.m. at Eagle Creek Shell Station off Ski Run Road to carpool.

There will be a lunch stop in either San Antonio or Socorro. Bring water and snacks. This field trip is open to everyone. Call 257-5352 for additional information.



Lujan remains house speaker

Johnny Cope yanked from transportation commission

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

The speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives the past 10 year was reelected to the top leadership position at Tuesday's opening of the 2011 legislative session.

Ben Lujan (D-Santa Fe) was selected by his fellow representatives on a 36-33 vote. There are 37

Democrats and 33 Republicans in the house, following the November general election that boosted the GOP's ranks by eight members.

Tom Taylor (R-Farmingington) received votes from his fellow 32 Republicans, including Zach Cook of Ruidoso, and Nora Espinoza and Dennis Kingtigh, both from Roswell.

What had been seen as a

possible challenge to Lujan's reign as the speaker, a key position in the legislature, failed to materialize without a nomination of Joseph Cervantes (D-Las Cruces). In November, some of Cervantes' backers from southern New Mexico had indicated they might create a coalition with house Republicans to elect Cervantes to the powerful speaker's post.

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

The chair of the New Mexico Transportation Commission, Johnny Cope, was yanked from the panel by Governor Susana Martinez last Friday. Cope, from Hobbs, was the commissioner from transportation District 2, which covers southeastern New Mexico, including Lincoln

County.

Martinez said it was time to restore accountability to the transportation commission.

"As a body that has exceptional control over the use of taxpayer money, the potential for abuse is equally great," Martinez said. "If we hope to restore the public's trusts in government, we must guarantee that public servants are held to

the highest standard as responsible stewards of taxpayer money."

Cope's term on the transportation panel had been scheduled to expire on Dec. 31, 2012.

Martinez also notified members of the Labor and Industrial Commission and the New Mexico Spaceport Authority Board of Directors that they were also dismissed.

NMG&F gets AG opinion on special hunt drawing quota

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish may continue to use a special hunting license drawing quota that differentiates between residents and nonresidents, according to a Jan. 4 opinion from the New Mexico Attorney General's office.

Game and Fish Director Tod Stevenson had questioned if federal legislation, approved in 2005, had any effect on the application of resident and nonresident special drawing quotas for hunting licenses.

Stevenson asked if the Reaffirmation of State

Regulation of Resident and Nonresident Hunting Act allowed the department to use special drawing quotas for bighorn sheep, ibex or oryx.

A state statute authorizes the department to issue 78 percent of hunting licenses to New Mexico residents and 22 percent to nonresidents. The department applies the special drawing quota to hunting licenses for elk, deer, pronghorn antelope and javelina, but not to bighorn sheep, ibex and oryx.

Stevenson said the department excludes the three species because of a 1977 court ruling after a Texas resident sued over

the allocation of licenses in favor of state residents.

Assistant Attorney General Elaine Lujan responded to Stevenson that the Reaffirmation of Resident and Nonresident Hunting Act of 2005 retained the right of states to continue to regulate hunting.

That included the regulations that differentiate between residents and nonresidents on the availability of licenses and hunting fees.

Lujan added that special drawing quotas can be applied to all categories of hunting licenses, and the department may consider reevaluating its policy of excluding bighorn sheep,

Martinez fills two southern seats

JIM KALVELAGE
jkalvelage@ruidosonews.com

Two southern New Mexico legislative seats were filled Friday by Governor Susana Martinez.

Bill Burt, of Alamogordo, was appointed to serve Senate District 40.

Bob Wooley, of Roswell, will serve as the state representative from House District 66.

Burt is the owner of Burt Broadcasting, which operates four radio stations in Alamogordo.

"I'm looking forward to working with Governor

Martinez to bring the principals of running a small business to state government," Burt said.

"I'm confident that we can put New Mexico back on track through our shared values of smaller government and responsible stewardship of taxpayers' money."

Bob Wooley retired in 2005 after a career with Allstate. He currently is a pipeline inspector and safety specialist for MBS Services.

"I'm confident that by passing Governor Martinez's agenda of cutting government waste, reducing

spending, and eliminating bureaucracy, we can jumpstart New Mexico's economy," Wooley said.

"I'm eager to get to work on behalf of the people of my district and the state of New Mexico as we tackle the many challenges in front of us."

Senate District 40 was vacated by Dianna Duran of Tularosa when she resigned after being elected to serve as New Mexico's Secretary of State.

House District 66 opened when Keith Gardner, of Roswell, re-signed to take the job of Martinez's chief of staff.

Eppers honored by New Mexico Federal Lands Council

Alice Eppers, Roswell, received the 2010 Bud's Contract Award from the New Mexico Federal Lands Council (NMFLC) during the recent Joint Stockmen's Convention held in Albuquerque.

"Alice worked right alongside Bud on federal lands issues, whether it was keeping things going on the ranch while he was away representing federal lands' ranchers in New Mexico, writing letters, or helping build and maintain our organization," said Don L. "Bebo" Lee, NMFLC president, Alamogordo.

"It's only fitting that we honor her for her hard work, and we're glad to have this opportunity to say thank you."

The NMFLC gives the

Bud's Contract award annually to an individual who has given of their time and effort to the NMFLC.

Past recipients include land management agency personnel, NMSU staff, and others who have shown dedication to the grazing industry in New Mexico.

The award, a bronze handshake, is given in memory of long-time NMFLC President Bud Eppers, the late husband of this year's recipient.

"Bud and Alice were a great team," Lee said.

"She was a big part of the reason he was able to do so much on behalf of federal lands ranchers in New Mexico, and since his death, has helped his legacy live on."

Eppers remains involv-

ed in the NMFLC and other organizations working on land and agricultural issues in the state including the New Mexico

Wool Growers, Inc., the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association and the Paragon Foundation.

She served two terms on

the Chaves County Commission, and remains active in the Chaves County Republican Party.

She was a long-time

staff member for Congressman Joe Skeen, who represented southern New Mexico for many years.

Barbara Lee DiPaolo

Barbara Lee DiPaolo passed away Monday January 17, 2011 at Shands Hospital in Gainesville, FL. She was born to Betty Lee & Albert E. Taylor in St. Louis, Missouri August 6, 1939.

Barbara is survived by loving companion of 11 years Joel Sowers, The Villages, Florida and her daughters Pamela (Mike) Cherpelis of Boulder, Colorado and Tamara (Scott) Orth of Albuquerque, New Mexico who admired her never ending strength and her love. Her five grandchildren; Heather, Bryce, Ryan, Ashton, Caylon, and 4 great grandchildren; Kyndall, Makenna, Alexander, Branson who lovingly called her Nanny and were the apples of her eye. She was "big sister" to Patricia Whalen, Judith Townes, and Sharon Riddle. Barbara was preceded in death by daughter Cherylyn DiPaolo Judnick and her husband Jack DiPaolo, former Mayor of Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico.

Barbara raised her 3 daughters in Ruidoso, New Mexico and was a very active member in the community performing volunteer work, serving on several community boards and was a business owner of DiPaolo Real Estate and partner in construction custom home building. When she moved to Ruidoso, she continued to live and sell real estate in southern California, Colorado and Florida where she made The Villages, Florida her final residence upon retiring from an astonishing career where she received numerous awards in all 4 states.

She had many wonderful and dear friends from coast-to-coast and she kept in touch with them all throughout the years via e-mail. Barbara was a beautiful person, she gave and received endless love from everyone who knew her and taught us how to live and die with dignity. Love, Faith and Hope were her favorite beliefs and she lived her life accordingly. She will be dearly missed by her family and all who's lives were touched by her heart and soul.

Services will be held at St. Eleaguers Catholic Church in Ruidoso, New Mexico Saturday January 22, 2011 at 2:00pm. Memorial contributions can be made by passing on kindness to a stranger, a neighbor, friends, and loved ones.



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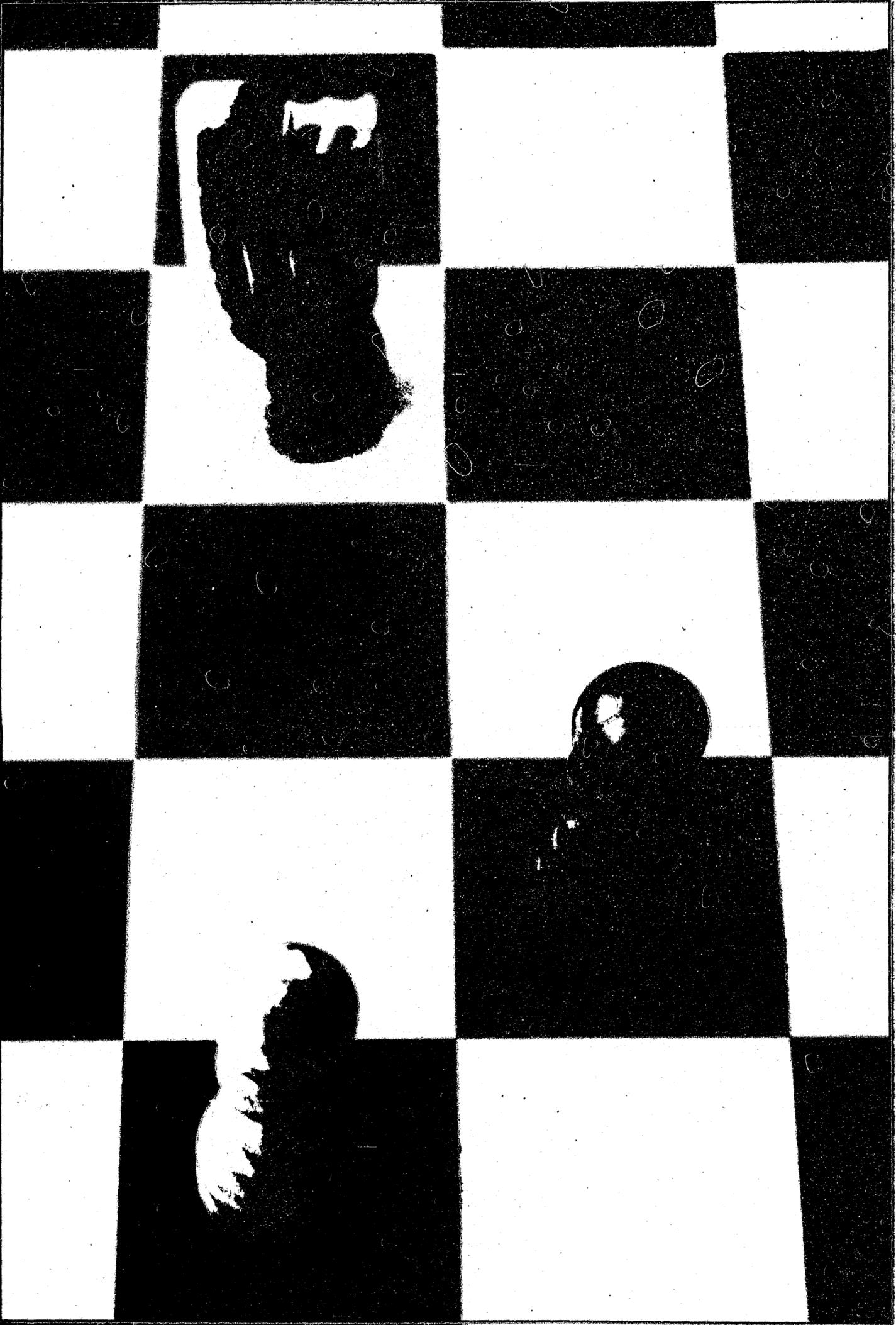
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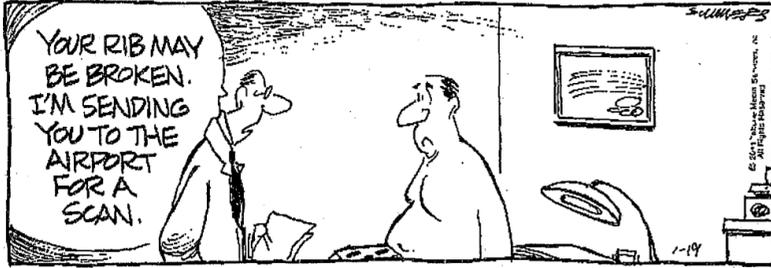
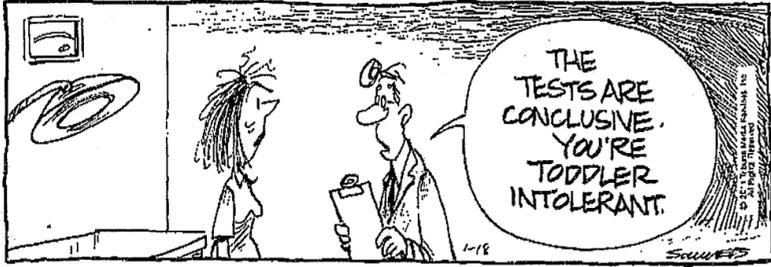
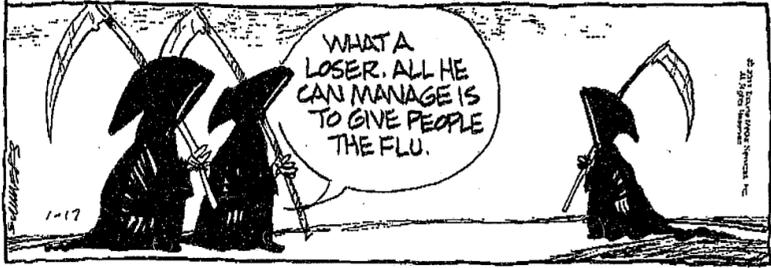


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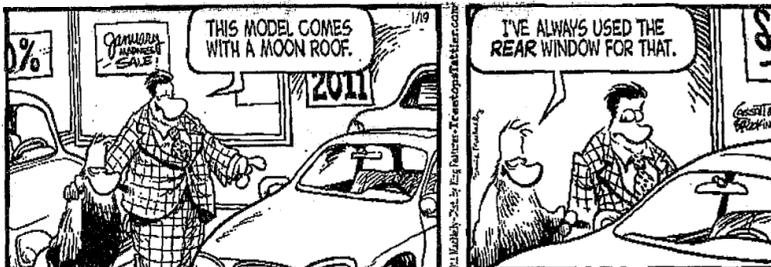
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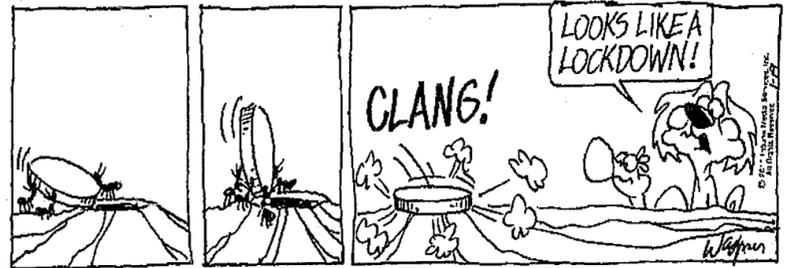
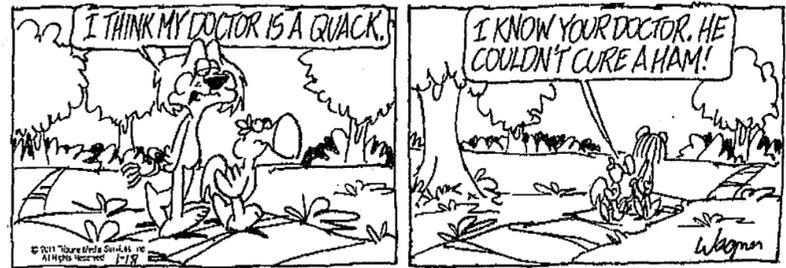
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E	I	O	N	S	R	V	1st Letter Double
A	E	U	L	B	H	S	RACK 4

PAR SCORE 145-155
BEST SCORE 243
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. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 4th Edition.

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JUMBLE

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

AM DAM
THE IG
YIN JET
DIM YAD

Answer here: "O O O O O O O O"

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Mike Argirion and Jeff Knurek

I feel like I'm inside a washing machine. Hold on!

HOW SHE FELT WHEN THE PLANE BOUNCED AROUND IN THE STORM.

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RACK 4 =	11
RACK 3 =	64
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THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mephram Group

Level: 1 2 3 4

		3						
	5				8	4	1	9
2		4						7
			8	6	2			
8				1				6
			9	5	7			
6						8		2
5	2	9	4				3	
						9		

SOLUTION TO TODAY'S PUZZLE 1/19/11

9	1	3	7	4	5	6	2	8
7	5	6	2	3	8	4	1	9
2	8	4	6	9	1	3	5	7
1	4	7	8	6	2	5	9	3
8	9	5	3	1	4	2	7	6
3	6	2	9	5	7	1	8	4
6	3	1	5	7	9	8	4	2
5	2	9	4	8	6	7	3	1
4	7	8	1	2	3	9	6	5

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

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In the storm — "AGITATED"
Answer: MADM EIGHT JITNEY MIDDAY
Jumbles: MADM EIGHT JITNEY MIDDAY

Health Care 232

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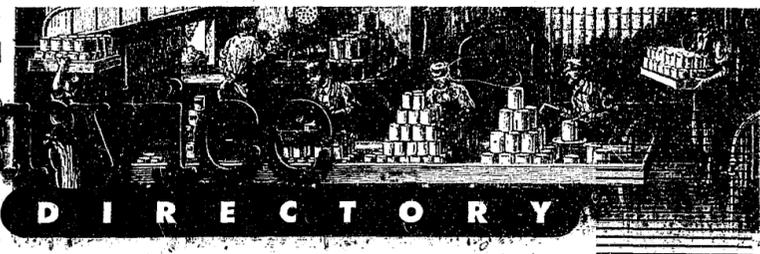
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