

DESERT exposure



New Mexican "pickers," page 20



Gambling then and now, page 26



Las Cruces museums on the move, page 30

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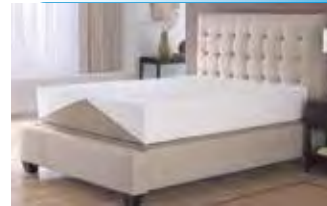
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Bring your family and enjoy the holiday exhibits



Beyond Politics

The campaign is over. Let's get things done—before it starts again.

The end of the seemingly endless 2012 campaign means more than just relief from those annoying political commercials. It offers a brief window of opportunity—before the 2014 and 2016 races get in gear, likely in a few months—for our elected officials to do what they were, after all, elected to do: govern.

We shouldn't assume, however, that even the nation's most powerful elected officials will put America's well-being ahead of their political interests between campaigns. In 2010, Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader, unashamedly announced, "The single most important thing we want to achieve is for President Obama to be a one-term president." Not reduce the deficit, reform our tax code or fix the immigration system—but to block any sort of action that America needs, as long as the president can be denied re-election.

Now that McConnell's ambition has been thwarted, Americans of all political parties can only hope that he and his colleagues will finally put country above partisanship and get something done. It's no coincidence that the last Congress was among the least productive in US history, even as the nation remained mired in the lingering effects of financial collapse. We can't wait another two years or four to address America's problems. Indeed, the looming "fiscal cliff" means we can't wait beyond the end of this month.

It's not just in Washington where governing has been put on hold. Now that the Affordable Care Act is not only the settled law of the land, but in no danger of repeal, New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez has moved forward with establishing the state insurance exchanges called for in the law. That's much to her credit—and a contrast to other GOP governors. Now Martinez should also promptly accept the expansion of Medicaid made possible under "Obamacare": New Mexico can receive an estimated \$6 billion between 2014 and 2020 to improve health coverage for those who need it most. A new report by the University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research estimates expanding Medicaid would add \$8.6 billion in economic activity and generate 8,461 jobs by 2020. The state would net \$523.4 million in revenue, even after kicking in \$281 million as its share of the Medicaid expansion. It's a win-win proposition, and only politics has kept the governor from reaping these benefits for New Mexico.

Unfortunately, politics may also make it more difficult for Martinez to accomplish some of her important goals—such as reforming the driver's license system and reducing the business-cramping effects of the gross-receipts tax. The Reform New Mexico Now PAC associated with Martinez went ballistic on two top Democrats, Senate President Pro Tem Tim Jennings and Senate Majority Leader Michael Sanchez, running ads accusing them of being soft on child killers. The ad blitz succeeded in knocking off Jennings, but Sanchez survived—and it's hard to imagine him being receptive to Martinez' ideas. Worse for Martinez' chances of getting anything through the legislature, Jennings was among the more centrist Democrats in Santa Fe; she may simply have strengthened the hand of progressive Democrats who've chafed at being sidelined.

New Mexico politics blogger Joe Monahan says of Sanchez now, "He's got the whole world in his hands.... He looked the beast in the eye and beat it.... If you're going to kill the king, kill him. Now the fate of this governorship is largely in Sanchez' hands."

It would be only human if Sanchez feels as Jennings does now. Departing the Roundhouse after 34 years, Jennings commented, "I think Susana has created a monster, exposing hate and destruction around here just like we're seeing in politics in other states and on the national level that I think is a disservice."

That "hate and destruction"—coupled with blind allegiance to partisanship and ideology—must give way to cooperation and real-world solutions, at least until the next campaign begins. Nationally, *New York Times* columnist Thomas L. Friedman writes, "America today desperately needs a center-right GOP that is offering merit-based, market-based approaches... and a willingness to meet the other side halfway. The country is starved for practical, bipartisan cooperation, and it will reward politicians who deliver it and punish those who don't."

Indeed, the party that lost the Electoral College in a near-landslide for the second straight election needs to meet the president *more* than halfway. (GOP House members who argue that they, too, won a mandate need to remember that Democrats actually got more votes nationally in House races; the GOP held onto a majority only because of redistricting gerrymandering.) The presidential election set out two clearly contrasting worldviews and ways forward for America. Now the people have spoken and Obama needs to be given a chance to do what he was elected to do. If he fails, the GOP can stand ready with a clear alternative course. For the good of the nation, though, patriotic Republicans must stop not only hoping for failure but blocking every measure the president proposes, regardless of the merits. (The rantings of "birthers" and "Kenyan socialist" conspiracy-mongers likewise need to be tossed in the trash bin of history where they've always belonged.)

Elections have consequences, as Obama reminded the nation when he was first elected. Deciding the difficult questions that divide America is, after all, why we go through these grueling campaigns. After a much closer, more controversial result in 2000, Democrats—not all of them, but those who truly love their country—swallowed hard and gave President George W. Bush a chance. After 9/11, even the most partisan rallied around the president.

In his re-election victory speech, President Obama concluded with a hope we should all share: "I believe we can seize this future together because we are not as divided as our politics suggests. We're not as cynical as the pundits believe. We are greater than the sum of our individual ambitions, and we remain more than a collection of red states and blue states. We are and forever will be the United States of America."

The test of the next four years will be whether, as another president said some 150 years ago on the battlefield at Gettysburg, that nation can long endure. ❁

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LETTERS

Our Readers Write

Slackers, riparian areas and Martian landscapes.

Unicorn Economics?

I read your editorial in the October issue of *Desert Exposure* ("The 'Hunger Games' Election"). It seems you take full advantage of your position to promote your leftist views. That's okay, we are still a democracy that values freedom of speech. Perhaps you should give equal opportunity to another perspective with a more informed view of macro economics. After all, that IS what this election is about. It is not about the DNC's class-warfare talking points you faithfully recite. Surely you know a conservative who can write and also understands the reality of a \$16 trillion deficit. Heck, every objective observer recognizes the magnitude of our current president's failure.

I am offended personally by the left's attempt to characterize all conservatives as mean and uncaring. Caring and compassion are not the privately held province of liberals. Because we ALL care, we are most concerned with what is painfully obvious: that a bankrupt America will most hurt the very people you champion. All conservatives I know agree it would be just ducky if health care, college education, food and housing were free to all. We also agree that such dreams require more money than the Republic has to spend. To spend what you do not have is indeed a chump's play. Don't you agree?

Though you eloquently make your points based on critics' opinions of a 50-plus-year-old novel, the piece lacks the real business perspective needed to save this country from circling the drain. Perhaps in your next piece you could reference *Das Kapital* and advocate getting rid of this nasty free enterprise stuff altogether.

What is true in Silver City and one might conclude all over the country is this: Along with the deserving there are many who have convinced the system that their unwillingness to work constitutes a disability. If "mooch" is a disagreeable colloquialism, perhaps "slacker" will suffice?

Like unicorns, Santa Claus and successful socialism, the ideological underpinning of your editorial is the stuff of a starry-eyed dreamer's fantasy. Of course, that is just my opinion. Nevertheless, my opinion is indeed, no less valid than yours.

Finally, free tax advice. Take a risk. Buy stock in a US tax-paying corporation. The profit of corporations is taxed as per section 11 of the tax code. As high as 34%. Currently the dividends arising from that profit are again taxed at 15% when you receive them. Risk takers like Buffet and Romney (and Obama, too) get this portion of their income at this double-taxed "reduced rate." Note: don't invest in whatever cockamamie schemes Obama in-

vests the taxpayers' money in; it's hard to get your money out of a bankrupt solar panel misadventure.
Kas Nelson
Silver City

Editor's note: As regular readers know, we do provide well-written conservative opinions in our pages in the monthly columns by Henry Lightcap and Larry Lightner, and of course we welcome articulate letters like the one above. The economic perspective and "starry-eyed" ideological underpinning in the October editorial were derived from reading Paul Krugman and Joseph Stiglitz, both of whom have won the Nobel Prize for economics.

Running Dry

Many thanks to Jay Sharp for his careful examination of "Our Vanishing Riparian Landscapes" (October). Human overpopulation along with mismanagement of scant water resources have led to this disastrous situation. The once-mighty Rio Grande may now be better described as the Acequia Grande.

Kara Naber
Williamsburg, NM

Martian Chronicles

Just finished your article on New Mexico's similarity to the Martian landscape (Continental Divide, October). I am surprised you didn't make mention of *Capricorn One*, a

1977 movie starring James Brolin, Elliot Gould, Sam Waterston and the infamous O.J. Simpson, where NASA is forced to fake a Mars mission and try to keep the fake secret. No, it was not filmed in New Mexico, rather the Imperial Valley of California. A pretty good movie if anyone wants to Netflix it.

I also finally got to read Tara Straubinger's great article, "It Came from the Agave!" (October). I hope that by the time the third agave bloomed, they realized that they make great Southwest Christmas trees! Mine is currently suspended in my garage, waiting for its fifth Christmas.

Bert de Pedro
Red Rock

I enjoyed your Continental Divide story, "Life on Mars," this week. I am a transplanted New Englander, and my family remains in that lush, heavily treed part of the country. The first time they came out to visit, I had them fly into Tucson and met them there. Their expectations for Arizona were pretty low, so no one minded too much that the scenery was fairly desolate most of the way. Once we hit New Mexico, however, and got to "Fraggle Rock," the car got REALLY quiet. By

Lordsburg, there was dead silence.

I kept chatting away happily, knowing what was coming, and by the time we hit the Gila National Forest sign, about Mile Marker 12 on Highway 90, everyone heaved a collective sigh, and conversation resumed. When we turned onto C Bar Ranch Road, the mood got quite festive. We still have fun with people's reactions when they arrive at our place after I-10 and Lordsburg.

Erin Evans
via email ✉

Let us hear from you! Write *Desert Exposure* Letters, PO Box 191, Silver City, NM 88062, fax 534-4134 or email letters@desertexposure.com. Letters are subject to editing for style and length (maximum 500 words, please), and must be in response to content that has appeared in our pages. Deadline for the next issue is the 18th of the month.



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DESERT DIARY

Sin, Farming and Talking Dogs

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Getting yer Irish up... Don't mess with priests, **GeraldH** warns, especially not Irish ones:

"An Irish priest was transferred to Texas. Father O'Malley rose from his bed one morning. It was a fine spring day in his new west Texas mission parish. He walked to the window of his bedroom to get a deep breath of the beautiful day outside. He then noticed there was a jackass lying dead in the middle of his front lawn. He promptly called the local police station. The conversation went like this: 'Good morning. This is Sergeant Jones. How might I help you?'"

"And the best of the day te yerself. This is Father O'Malley at St. Ann's Catholic Church. There's a jackass lying dead in me front lawn and would ye be so kind as to send a couple o' yer lads to take care of the matter?"

"Sergeant Jones, considering himself to be quite a wit and recognizing the foreign accent, thought he would have a little fun with the good father and replied, 'Well now, Father, it was always my impression that you people took care of the last rites!'"

"There was dead silence on the line for a long

moment. Father O'Malley then replied: 'Aye, 'tis certainly true—but we are also obliged to notify the next of kin first, which is the reason for me call.'"

Life on the farm... Herewith, a two-part salute to American agriculture, kicking off with this yarn from **Ned Ludd**. The easily offended might want to avert your eyes:

"Three hookers were talking. The first one said, 'I had a fireman last night.' The second one asked how she knew he was a fireman, and the first one replied, 'I saw his badge.'"

"The second hooker said, 'Well, I had a policeman.' The first one asked how she knew he was a policeman. The second hooker replied, 'I saw his gun.'"

"The third hooker then joined in and said, 'Well, I had an Iowa farmer last night.' The other two replied, 'How do you know he was an Iowa farmer?'"

"The third hooker answered, 'First he said it cost too much, then he said that it was too dry, then he said it was too wet, and when we were through he asked if I had any free hats!'"

Taking a surprisingly similar theme, as you'll see, is this tale sent our way by **CharlesC**:

"John went to the local bank to borrow money for a new bull. The loan was made and Banker Bill, who loaned the money, came by a week later to see how the bull was doing. John complained that the bull just ate grass and wouldn't even look at a cow. The banker suggested that he have a veterinarian take a look at the bull.

"Next week, the banker returned to see if the vet had helped. John really looked very pleased. 'The bull has serviced all of my cows! He broke through the fence, and bred all my neighbor's cows! He's been breeding just about everything in sight. He's like a machine!'"

"Wow," said the banker. "What did the vet do to that bull?"

"Just gave him some pills," replied John.

"What kind of pills?" asked the banker.

"I don't know, but they've got a peppermint taste."

Annals of inebriation... Not that we are in any way condoning drinking in excess, but next in our deadly sins tour is this from **Aletteration**:

"Alcohol is not the answer. It just lets you forget the question.

"I tried cooking with wine but that didn't work so well; after five glasses I even forgot I was in the kitchen.

"Don't forget to buy Mom a bottle of wine for Mother's Day; remember, you're the reason she drinks.

"Makes no difference if the glass is half full or half empty; there is clearly room for more wine.

"I drink because my psychiatrist said I shouldn't keep things bottled up.

"I tried to drown my sorrows, but the bastards had learned how to swim.

"Do not let the bottle of any vintage serve as an inspiration to call your Ex in a pathetic attempt to get back together. Show some respect: some very fine grapes have died in then making this fine wine.

"The secret of enjoying fine wine: 1. Open the bottle to allow the wine to breathe. 2. Realize the wine may need mouth-to-mouth resuscitation."

Send your own tales of sin and/or agriculture, or just your favorite jokes, to *Desert Diary* at diary@desertexposure.com.

Losing the battle of the sexes... This cautionary dispatch from the gender wars comes courtesy of **Old Grumps**:

"Vern works hard at the phone company but spends two nights each week bowling, and plays golf every Saturday. His wife thinks he's pushing himself too hard, so for his birthday she takes him to a local strip club. The doorman at the club greets them and says, 'Hey, Vern! How ya doin'?"

"His wife is puzzled and asks if he's been to this club before. 'Oh no,' says Vern. 'He's in my bowling league.'"

"When they are seated, a waitress asks Vern if he'd like his usual and brings over a Budweiser. His wife is becoming increasingly uncomfortable and says, 'How did she know that you drink Budweiser?'"

"I recognize her; she's the waitress from the golf club," Vern explains. "I always have a Bud at the end of the first nine, honey."

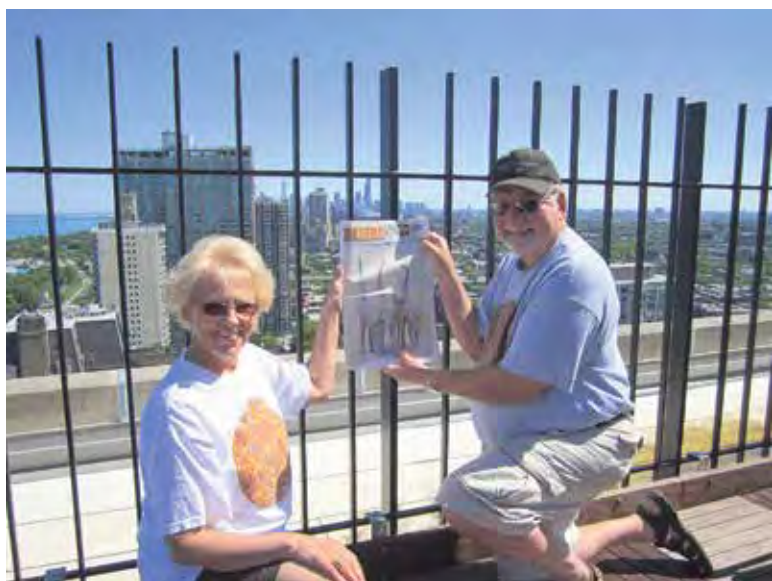
"A stripper then comes over to their table, throws her arms around Vern, starts to rub herself all over him and says, 'Hi, Vern. Want your usual table dance, big boy?'"

"Vern's wife, now furious, grabs her purse and storms out of the club. Vern follows and spots her getting into a cab. Before she can slam the door, he jumps in beside her. Vern tries desperately to explain how the stripper must have mistaken him for someone else, but his wife is having none of it. She is screaming at him at the top of her lungs, calling him every four-letter word in the book.

"The cabby turns around and says, 'Geez, Vern, you picked up a real bitch this time.'"

"Vern's funeral will be held on Friday."

You're only as old as you feel... The **Silver City Greek** emails us: "I thought you would want to know about this e-mail virus. Even the most advanced programs from Norton or McAfee cannot take care of this one. It appears to affect those who were born prior to 1965..."



Postcards from the edge... Readers continue to respond to our invitation to submit photos of themselves on vacation holding "the biggest little paper in the Southwest." As you'll see, we're running a little behind—but don't let that stop you from sending in your own photos! We promise, they'll all see print.

First up are proud parents **Greg and Kathie Lennes** from Las Cruces, who write, "We went to Chicago for our daughter's graduation at DePaul University where Bonnie received her Master of Arts degree in Communications. Of course we brought our *Desert Exposure* with us. We read the excellent June issue while relaxing on the sundeck of our daughter's apartment building at 3550 North Lake Drive. Note the beautiful Chicago skyline in the background."



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Postcards from the edge... Taking "the biggest little paper in the Southwest" even farther afield, here are **Nancy Bailey and Bruce Williams**, who write: "Thought you would be interested in putting this photo in showing your paper in the Galapagos Islands. We had a wonderful time. The wildlife was amazing."

Whether you're heading for Gallup or the Galapagos, snap a picture of yourself holding *Desert Exposure* and send it to PO Box 191, Silver City, NM 88062, or diary@desertexposure.com.

"Symptoms:

1. Causes you to send the same e-mail twice. Done that!
 2. Causes you to send a blank e-mail! That, too!
 3. Causes you to send e-mail to the wrong person. Yep!
 4. Causes you to send it back to the person who sent it to you. Aha!
 5. Causes you to forget to attach the attachment. Well, darn!
 6. Causes you to hit 'SEND' before you've finished. Oh, no, not again!
 7. Causes you to hit 'DELETE' instead of 'SEND.' And I just hate that!
 8. Causes you to hit 'SEND' when you should 'DELETE.' Oh, no!
- "It is called the 'c-nile virus.'
 "Hmm... Have I already sent this to you, or did you send it to me?"

More on aging gracefully with technology, from **Shanty Shaker**:

- "Teens have their texting codes (LOL, OMG, TTYL, etc.). Not to be outdone by these little SNK (snotty-nosed kids), now, finally we long-suffering seniors have our own texting codes! Texting for seniors as follows:
- "ATD—At the Doctor's
 - "BFF—Best Friend's Funeral
 - "BTW—Bring the Wheelchair
 - "BYOT—Bring Your Own teeth
 - "CUATSC—See You at the Senior Center
 - "DWI—Driving While Incontinent
 - "FWBB—Friend with Beta Blockers
 - "FWIW—Forgot Where I Was
 - "FYI—Found Your Insulin
 - "GGPBL—Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low
 - "GHA—Got Heartburn Again
 - "IMHAO—Is My Hearing Aid On?
 - "LMDO—Laughing My Dentures Out
 - "LOL—Living on Lipitor
 - "OMMR—On My Massage Recliner
 - "ROTFL... CGU—Rolling on the Floor Laughing... Can't Get Up!
 - "TOT—Texting on Toilet
 - "TTYL—Talk to You Louder
 - "WATP—Where are the Prunes?
 - "WWNO—Walker Wheels Need Oil
 - "Hope these help! GGLKI—Gotta Go, Laxative Kicking In."

Kids say the darnedest things... This report from a truthful youngster was passed along by **The Santa Claran**:

"Our teacher asked what my favorite animal was, and I said, 'Fried chicken.' She said I wasn't funny, but she couldn't have been right, because everyone else laughed. My parents told me to always tell the truth. I did. Fried chicken is my favorite animal.

"I told my dad what happened, and he said my teacher was probably a member of PETA. He said they love animals very much. I do, too. Especially chicken, pork and beef. Anyway, my teacher sent me to the principal's office. I told him what hap-

pened, and he laughed, too. Then he told me not to do it again.

"The next day in class my teacher asked me what my favorite live animal was. I told her it was chicken. She asked me why, so I told her it was because you could make them into fried chicken. She sent me back to the principal's office. He laughed, and told me not to do it again.

"I don't understand. My parents taught me to be honest, but my teacher doesn't like it when I am.

"Today, my teacher asked me to tell her what famous person I admired most.

"I told her, 'Colonel Sanders.' Guess where I am now...."

Pondering the imponderables... These deep thoughts were passed along for our pondering by **GeeRichard**:

"I have kleptomania, but when it gets bad, I take something for it.

"Sometimes too much to drink isn't enough.

"My short-term memory is not as sharp as it used to be. Also, my short-term memory's not as sharp as it used to be.

"Illogic? I am a Nobody. Nobody is Perfect. Therefore, I am Perfect.

"I want to die while asleep like my grandfather. Not screaming in terror like the passengers in his car.

"I don't suffer from insanity; I enjoy every minute of it.

"The original point-and-click interface was a Smith & Wesson.

"Procrastinate now!"

Our pets, ourselves... Thanks to **Pop Hayes** for this lesson about higher education:

"A young cowboy from Montana goes off to college. Halfway through the semester, having foolishly squandered all his money, he calls home. 'Dad,' he says, 'you won't believe what modern education is developing! They actually have a program here in Missoula that will teach our dog, Ol' Blue, how to talk!'"

"That's amazing,' his dad says. 'How do I get Ol' Blue in that program?'"

"Just send him down here with \$1,000,' the young cowboy says, 'and I'll get him in the course.' So, his father sends the dog and \$1,000.

"About two-thirds of the way through the semester, the money again runs out. The boy calls home.

"So how's Ol' Blue doing, son?' his father asks.

"Awesome, Dad, he's talking up a storm,' he says, 'but you just won't believe this—they've had such good results they have started to teach the animals how to read!'"

"Read!?" says his father. 'No kidding! How do we get Blue in that program?'"

"Just send \$2,500. I'll get him in the class.'

"The money promptly arrives. But our hero has a problem. At the end of the year, his father will find out the dog can neither talk nor read. So he shoots the dog.

"When the student arrives home at the end of the year, his father is all excited. 'Where's Ol' Blue? I just can't wait to see him read something and talk!'"

"Dad,' the boy says, 'I have some grim news. Yesterday morning, just before we left to drive home, Ol' Blue was in the living room, kicked back in the recliner, reading the *Wall Street Journal*, like he usually does. Then Ol' Blue turned to me and asked, "So, is your daddy still messing around with that little redhead who lives down the street?'"

"The father went white and exclaimed, 'I hope you shot that son of a bitch before he talks to your mother!'"

"I sure did, Dad!'"

"That's my boy!'"

"No surprise, the kid went on to law school, and now serves in Washington, DC, as a congressman." ❄

Send your favorite anecdotes, jokes, puns and tall tales to Desert Diary, PO Box 191, Silver City, NM 88062, fax (575) 534-4134 or email diary@desertexposure.com. The best submission each month gets a brand-new Desert Exposure mouse pad, scientifically proven to take the strain out of emailing jokes to Desert Diary.



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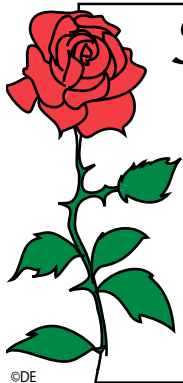
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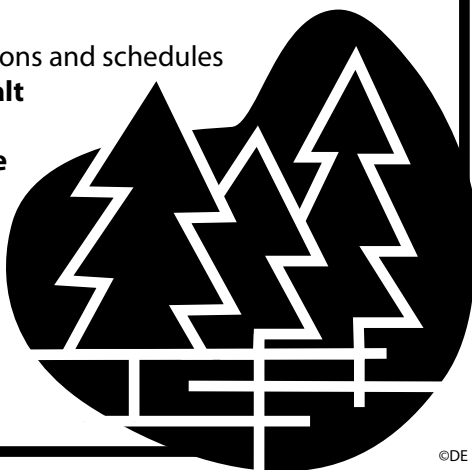
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Trading Post

Silver Dust Trading & Gallery offers a chance to buy a piece of the past.

Al Grieve stands in the middle of his Silver City shop, surrounded by nearly uncountable Hopi and Navajo treasures. In describing how he and his Navajo wife, Margaret, came to own all of the colorful items, he becomes passionate, describing the couple's 45 years owning and operating five different trading posts, and the lives of the Native Americans with whom he did business.

He picks up a colorful woven basket, a "mud head" figure in the center of it.

"Someone would come in with a basket, wanting to trade for goods," he says. "Groceries, gasoline, the necessities of life. I've got a hundred baskets in the vault. What do I need with another?" he asks, then pauses. "*You buy!* I could have rugs this high," he says, indicating with his hand a pile of rugs up to his shoulder. "Someone comes in with another rug?" Again he pauses, then says with intensity, "*You buy!*"

Grieve is full of colorful stories, of locals needing gas in the middle of the night, knocking on the couple's window, stories of others needing groceries, needing medicine for their babies. Each story ends the same way, with the Grieves making a late-night trade, taking in hand-carved Kachina dolls, blankets and baskets, dispensing the needed goods to members of the community in which they lived for so many happy years.

He tells how the couple's business functioned as a community center, with locals leaving and picking up messages to and from their kids away in college. The trading post, he says, was nothing less than a lifeline.

In November of this year, having sold their store in Shonto, Ariz., off Indian Route 221 in Navajo County, the couple traveled back to Silver City, a place they had visited many times. The plan was "to kick back for the winter," he says. "Then I saw this space for rent," he adds, gesturing around his store in Piñon Plaza. "I thought it would be a good place to show our collection, so we decided to give it a try."

Silver Dust Trading & Gallery is decked from floor to ceiling with authentic Hopi and Navajo collectible items, high-quality silver and turquoise jewelry, hand-carved Kachinas, hand-woven baskets and blankets.

"We are the only ones around selling authentic Pendleton blankets," he says.

Asked if his goods were procured at Native American festivals or expos, Grieve shakes his head emphatically. "These all have been bought di-



Al and Margaret Grieve, owners of Silver Dust Trading and Gallery. (Photos by Donna Clayton Walter)

rectly from the makers," he replies. "And we don't deal in imports or anything that's not authentic."

He describes his prospective customers as "people who appreciate quality. They want to decorate in this style, and they want to have the real thing."

As for his credentials in dealing in authentic Native American arts, he pulls out an old black-and-white photo of him with three other lifelong traders—"all four of us married to Navajo women," he says with apparent pride and a kind glance at his wife. The photo's caption reads, "200 years of Indian trading; \$10 million in rugs," a synopsis of the four traders' successful trading-post businesses.

He pulls out more photos, showing his wife as a young woman and award-winning blanket weaver.

"This stuff is going to be the last of the line," he says. "No one knows these crafts—basket weaving, blanket making. This is a chance for people to own the real thing, to cherish it and preserve it, live with it."

Grieve says being in Silver City should bring the couple the right audience for their wares. "We're not far from Indian country. This used to be Apache land," he says. And customers, he adds, will be pleased to find these goods at far less than they would have to pay in, say, Santa Fe. "We're keeping prices in line with the market here," he says, showing an original black-and-white photo by famed photographer Edward S. Curtis being offered for sale at the same price paid for it 25 years ago. The store also carries original works by Adee B. Dodge.

Asks what items are his favorites, Grieve shakes his head. His wife, he allows, probably loves the jewelry the best, and Margaret Grieve nods and shows the numerous silver and turquoise bracelets and rings she is wearing.

As for himself, though, he says, "How can I choose between blankets and baskets? The art? The pottery? It's all so different, and precious in its own right."

Then he goes to a small curio cabinet at the back of the store and points out two carved figures, an Indian and a cowboy.

"Maybe these are the most special and personal to me," he says. "I saw these at a Harvey train sta-

The Tumbleweeds Top 10

Who and what's been making news from New Mexico this past month, as measured by mentions in Google News (news.google.com). Trends noted are vs. last month's total hits; * indicates new to the list. Number in parenthesis indicates last month's Top 10 rank. Election headlines begin to fade, along with Felix the skydiver.

1. (2) **New Mexico Senate race**—16,600 hits (▼)
2. (3) **Ex-Gov. Gary Johnson + president**—9,830 hits (▼)
3. (9) **New Mexico wolves**—8,930 hits (▲)
4. (5) **New Mexico drought**—5,280 hits (▲)
5. (4) **Gov. Susana Martinez**—4,040 hits (▼)
6. (8) **Ex-Gov. Bill Richardson**—2,230 hits (▲)
7. (7) **Sen.-elect Martin Heinrich**—1,970 hits (▼)
8. (10) **New Mexico + "battleground state"**—1,730 hits (▲)
9. (1) **Skydiver Felix Baumgartner + Roswell**—1,570 hits (▼)
10. (6) **Heather Wilson**—1,450 hits (▼)



An Indian wedding basket.



Margaret Grieve, by the Silver Dust Trading and Gallery jewelry case.

tion when I was about 10 years old. I went back and bought them 20 years later. I guess they are special to me because they represent the start of my being a collector.”

Now, with a colorful store showcasing his decades of participating in Indian life, trading baby medicine and gasoline for fine blankets and works of art, Grieve hopes others will begin their own collections. He hopes they will adorn their homes with genuine Hopi and Navajo works of art and the finest crafts, crafts that are dying out as the handful of old Indians who can create such works are leaving the earth.

“It’s a piece of history,” he says. “The beautiful history of a beautiful culture and people.”

Silver Dust Trading & Gallery, Al and Margaret Grieve, proprietors, 1607 Piñon Plaza, Adobe Springs Shopping Plaza, Silver City. Open Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., adding Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and expanded hours weekdays closer to Christmas. 388-1159.

Donna Clayton Walter is a Silver City freelance writer.

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EYE ON THE ECONOMY • MICHAEL GRAZIANO

Dollars and Sense

With the election and a surprisingly good 2012 behind us,
a cautiously optimistic outlook for New Mexico's economy.

What a year 2012 has been, for the US and New Mexico. A surprisingly good year for the stock and bond markets to date caught a lot of market participants off guard. This came mostly as a result of better than expected news on the economic front, a manageable resolution to the debt problems in Europe (at least to the point of avoiding financial catastrophe) and a Chinese economy re-accelerating off an slowdown to resume powering an integral part of the global economy. The results of this positive news were an unexpectedly strong stock and bond market so far this year, marred only slightly by a sharp drop after the election.

Among the biggest market movers of the last few years have been the debt crisis in Europe and the economic slowdown in China. While the problems in Europe certainly can't be understated, it should be understood that politicians abroad are coming to decent resolutions of their sovereign debt issues.

It should also be understood how overblown the issue has appeared in the media. The PIIGS (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain) have all had their fair share of headlines stemming from the debt crisis, with Greece stealing the show. Although Greece is suffering through a depression and certainly faces dire problems and difficult decisions, it is more of an attention-grabbing headline than a true global economic problem. The fact is that although Greece's problems are severe for Greece, their economy is roughly the size of Dallas. Imagine Dallas going bankrupt. Would it cause a global economic collapse? I hardly think so. I think the bigger impact of Greece was that it acted as a litmus test for the other European countries facing debt problems,

to get a more accurate idea of how austerity measures and increased taxes to dig themselves out of their deep debt hole might pan out. Europe is in for a recession next year and no doubt headlines both good and bad will move the markets every now and again, but for now disaster has been averted.

China, on the other hand, was barely whispered in the mainstream media except on the political front, where both candidates used China as an economic scapegoat. Heated rhetoric aside, China has done a fairly good job of turning an economic slowdown from a crash to a soft landing, thus allowing for an easier re-acceleration in growth. This to me is a more important economic headline than the European problems. Consider this: China's economy creates the equivalent of Greece's economy in three months, the equivalent of Spain's economy in 15 months, and the equivalent of Italy's in 24. When the world's second-largest economy sneezes, the global economy gets a cold. Fortunately, China is looking healthy.

In a year where the S&P 500 (an index of the top 500 publicly traded companies in the US, considered a good barometer for the American stock market and economy) was expected to end the year with high single-digit to low double-digit returns, the S&P actually hit a high-water mark of up almost 20% back in September. Following the old stock market adage of "sell in May and go away," a reference to the poor seasonal performance of the summer months, would have resulted in missing out on the above-average performance between the beginning of June to the most recent high made back in the second week of September.

The domestic bond market also enjoyed a good year thanks to the Federal Reserve's accommodative monetary policy of continuing quantitative easing—a fancy term for "pumping cash into the economy," designed to act as a stimulus to encourage growth. Bond buyers were rewarded with price gains thanks to decreasing interest rates. Mortgage-backed debt has done well in 2012 as housing has begun to turn around and with the

announcement of QE3 (the Fed's third round of quantitative easing), which is focused on purchasing mortgages. The Fed has helped the stock and bond market perform well this year, but more than artificially pumping in growth, it should be noted the economy is healing and growing on its own.

Believe it or not, the unemployment and housing components of our economy that have been made vile buzzwords since the Great Recession have begun to turn around. The home-builder sub-sector in the stock market is one of the top-performing industry groups in 2012. It's a bit-tersweet pill to swallow as the good news of new homes being built is offset by the idea that there is still an enormous amount of surplus housing, especially in areas hardest hit by the bursting of the housing bubble such as Las Vegas, Phoenix and parts of Florida and California. While the stings of lower home prices and high unemployment are still no doubt felt across New Mexico and the entire United States, the good news is that they have likely found a bottom and are improving.

Economists are projecting housing to have a positive impact on the economy this year and next, versus being the detractor it was when the housing bubble burst. Owning a home is not just an important part of the American Dream; it is a good

Although New Mexico home prices have been relatively steady the last year, home price increases can be something to look forward to.

portion of where Americans' net worth comes from. As home prices find a bottom and slowly improve, home equity will begin to increase, giving homeowners the benefits of more wealth and home equity to spend to fuel consumption if they so desire. This contributes to the "wealth effect," the increase in spending stemming from a positive psychological perception of increased wealth.

As our economy is roughly two-thirds driven by consumption, this would help the economy twofold through the improvement in the housing sector and home prices, plus through increased potential spending.

Although New Mexico home prices have been relatively steady the last year, these trends are expected to be transitory and home price increases can be something to look forward to in the relatively near future. Granted, home price increases will be aided by surplus housing reduction and increased demand for housing from population growth, which is naturally a slower process. It can be expected as populations grow and shift around the state that some areas will fare better than others. In general, when a market bubble bursts as did the housing bubble in 2007, it takes approximately seven years to absorb the damage and recover from the resulting collapse. It would be sophomoric to suggest 2014 will be a definitive turning point for the New Mexico and national housing markets, but given that some parts of the country have already begun to see home price appreciation, it suggests this market adage could hold true.

Unemployment is improving as well, but similarly to housing, it's a sluggish recovery process. Good news for New Mexicans and the entire US economy rests just over the horizon. The employment situation has improved in 2012; in fact, the national unemployment rate has been falling since it peaked at 10% back in October 2009. Although New Mexico's unemployment rate peaked after the national rate a year later in October 2010, it peaked at a lower 8% and resides at a lower 6.4% compared to the country's higher 7.9% today.

The real boon to employment is coming over the next four years. The 12 million jobs number thrown about by both parties is actually a fairly reasonable estimate of the jobs that can be created over the next four years; however, neither party told you these jobs will likely come regardless of who is in the Oval Office. The reason is the economy is improving, albeit slowly, and these jobs will

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be created by a growing economy and as the result of clarity around the political landscape post-election, thereby incentivizing business leaders to grow and hire.

Politics has been especially burdensome to the economy over the last two years. There are times when gridlock in Washington can be positive for the markets and economy, as business leaders view politicians' inaction as a signal the legal landscape and business environment will not change. Over the last two years, however, the incredible divisiveness of American politics and the inability for Congress to do, well, anything has instilled a sense of uncertainty and fear in America's business leaders. This manifests in apprehension to expand their business and an unwillingness to invest in new employees.

As that landscape becomes clear with the re-election of President Obama, the uncertainty over who will help mold the economy over the next four years will be resolved. Even though who is president is certainly important, he cannot control Congress, geopolitical events, or even exogenous shocks or unexpectedly positive news.

With President Obama staying in the White House, New Mexico can expect an upbeat next four years. While private business comprises a larger portion of the New Mexico economy than federal spending, the latter component is essential to the health of the Land of Enchantment's economic well-being. Given the rhetoric of both candidates' platforms, it would suggest President Obama's policies on the whole will be economically positive for New Mexico.


A critical part of the New Mexico economy rests in its natural resources production. As oil and natural gas production account for over 80% of New Mexico's natural resource production, Obama's energy policy will be a mix of good and bad for New Mexico. Regardless of political agendas, the next few years could also be beneficial for the oil and gas companies in New Mexico, as the end of the typical business cycle tends to be positive for commodities and the natural resource companies that extract and sell them.

As a final caveat to the political scene, the impending "fiscal cliff" merits mentioning. The way the legislation is currently written, the US would enact a series of tax increases and spending cuts that would detract enough from our economy to pull us from slow growth into recession. Although many believe Congress' ineptitude could allow for this dire situation to unfold in the worst-case scenario, I believe the self-preservationist mentality of many politicians and the desire not to be held accountable for such a disaster will prevent them from allowing us to go over the "cliff." That being said, I believe Congress will enact bits of both revenue-increasing measures and spending cuts to prevent catastrophe, but not address the need for to reduce and eventually eliminate the deficit. They will most likely do what Congress has done so well for so long: pass what they can today and kick the can down the road for the rest.

On the whole, New Mexico has a bright future with declining and lower than the national unemployment, a stable housing market, and enough private and federal business to keep the Land of Enchantment growing. I'm optimistic about New Mexico and indeed the entire country's future. This sense of optimism stems not only from a sense of patriotism and love for what this country is, but a love of what this country can do. No matter the politics of any given time, America and the American people have proven to be great innovators, and our future economic prosperity will elevate New Mexico and the United States to a better place both next year and in years to come. 🌵


Michael Graziano is Vice President of Investments at Graziano Budny Wealth Management Group and holds the Chartered Market Technician (CMT) designation.

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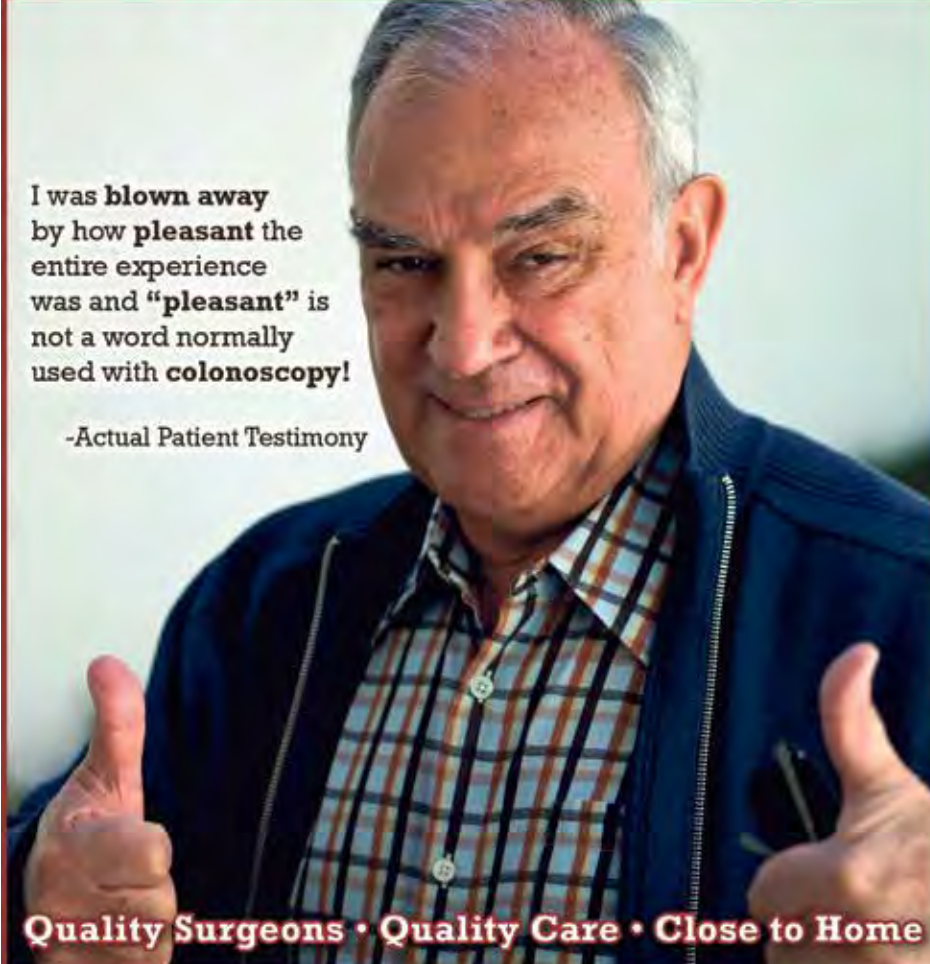
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Comic Anthropologist

Paul Hoylen's artwork is all over Deming,
a place he came to because of an ad in a comic book.

Deming artist and local art icon Paul Hoylen took a roundabout route to the desert Southwest. He was born in Vienna, Austria, and lived his early years with his parents and brother in several other countries—England, Sweden, Venezuela—and in the Washington, DC, area. “That’s where I got my exposure to art,” he says.

His father worked in US consulates and embassies all over the world. His mother’s father, from Colombia, worked in the Colombian consulate in Paris, and she got a degree in art from the Sorbonne.

So it wasn’t an obvious choice that led Hoylen to become a cartoonist. He paints mostly people in a simplified, naive style, often in crowd scenes or group scenes.

The models for his artistic style are mostly from folk art in Haiti, Colombia or Michoacan, Mexico, with their typical subjects being “families having parties, having weddings,” he says.

“But I’m more interested in contemporary culture—I call it ‘comic anthropology,’” he adds. “I like doing bars, street life, a humorous take on anthropology. You can call it ‘visual anthropology’ or ‘cartoon anthropology.’”

Hoylen’s paintings are liked and shown all over Deming and the area. The first ones he showed publicly may have been at the Pink Store in Palomas; that’s where he started specializing in crowd scenes. The store has since sold his paintings, but there are still a couple of T-shirts there with a painting of his in kids’ sizes. One of his paintings adorns a wall of the Hispanic Room of the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum.

There are three of Hoylen’s works at the Adobe Deli, two at the Deming Brewery, one in the Luna County Court House, a couple at Campos Restau-



Artist Paul Hoylen. (Photo by Marjorie Lilly)

rant, and several displayed at the Gold Street Gallery. He’s been part of a show at the Hal Marcus Gallery in El Paso, and he’s illustrated a bilingual book called *Chula the Chihuahua* (by Garilee Ogden and Tya Taylor) that “did well locally, regionally,” says Hoylen. “The schools bought it.” There were book signings at Gold Street Gallery and at the Hal Marcus Gallery.

Years ago he painted a mural at Memorial Elementary School that included Maurice Sendak figures and Curious George. “I spent all summer doing it,” he recalls. “It was beautiful. Everyone liked it.” But it was eventually knocked down, he says.

Two summers ago Hoylen painted a large mural of angels on a wall at St. Augustine’s Anglican Church in Deming, with the help of two women at the church—Elsie Torres and the late Toy Ogden.

Hoylen also has the proud distinction of winning the \$100 first prize for painting a trash barrel. It depicts Spiderman reaching out for a can, and it says “Be a Hero, Keep Luna County Beautiful.”

With his very recognizable style, his art is definitely iconic in the area.

Hoylen’s upbringing was by no means run-of-the-mill. He met John F. Kennedy when he was in elementary school at the American School of London. His mother brought him to Richard Nixon’s inauguration in Washington, DC. “My mother wanted me to see history,” he says. He was also tear-gassed and briefly arrested during Vietnam War protests there.

Interestingly, it was a stray American comic book in Sweden that helped shape the fate of the young Hoylen and his par-



Artwork at the Deming Brewery.

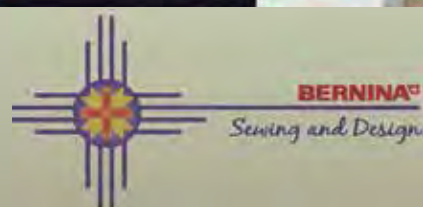
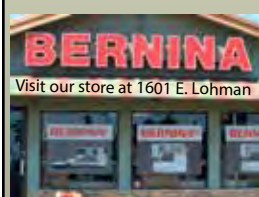
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ents. When he was age 10 or 11 and his father was working in Sweden, Paul saw an ad for the Deming Ranchettes in its pages. He persuaded his parents to buy a half-acre lot in New Mexico that cost \$90.

"I thought there were still cowboys and Indians," he says. "I was infatuated with the West."

In 1966 the family visited Deming to go to the Spanish Stirrup dude ranch. "I got to be a cowboy," he says. They then moved to Deming after high school, when his parents were retiring. "It was a big shock for me—from DC to Deming." He adds, a bit woefully, "It was my fault."

Hoylen got a degree in anthropology at NMSU, and worked a while in anthropology after college. But he has mostly spent his life in Deming. He's done dishwashing, worked as a substitute teacher, and later as an educational assistant in the public schools.

For the last four years he's had a job as an art teacher in the elementary schools. He likes to teach the kids to draw cartoons. "I'm taking them step-by-step," he says.



Portrait of Ed Nesselbaum.

As he relates it, Hoylen started his artistic career when he was five or six, when he did a drawing of Wild Bill Hickok, which he still

has stashed away somewhere. He copied "Bugs Bunny, super heroes, all of the old stuff."

He adds, "I was very heavily influenced by TV." He liked Tom Terrific, Reddi Kilowatt, Popeye, Clarabelle the Cow, all those characters. He had a fascination with a penguin in Kent cigarette ads. "That had a heavy influence on me," he says without irony.

Hoylen's low-key sense of humor infuses almost all of his paintings. He draws for the most part expressionless figures sitting, driving, rushing around or fighting, with the same unmov-

HOYLEN continued on next page



Artwork at the Adobe Deli.

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Art Opening
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HOYLEN continued

ing bodies and the same blank look on their faces.

His paintings at the Adobe Deli include recognizable figures like the owner, Van Jacobsen, and his wife Vicki, a former priest called Father Richard, Clint Eastwood, Pancho Villa, the waitress Jill, and Ninjas from the movie *Kill Bill*.

The art books he owns range from Van Gogh to Picasso, Muench, Pollock and, not surprisingly, Disney.



Hoylen's "Don Gato."

Hoylen doesn't take photos of his paintings, and has only a vague idea of where all his old paintings are. He has sold or giv-

en away most of them, and he says quite a few are in private collections.

With his career as an art teacher, he doesn't have much time now to do his own art. The only recent project he's undertaken was painting a friend's face for a Halloween party.

But it seems pretty clear that the same little engine in him that has produced all his previous works for so long will be producing more images for quite a while.

Marjorie Lilly also writes the Borderlines column.

ARTS EXPOSURE

Arts Scene

The latest area art happenings.

Silver City/Grant County

Seedboat Gallery's annual Holiday Jewelry Show will open Saturday, Dec. 1, with a reception from 2-5 p.m. 214 W. Yankee, 534-1136, seedboatgallery.com.

The inaugural **Wind Canyon Studio Open House** will be Dec. 1 and 2 at 11 Quail Run, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days, featuring works by Louise Sackett.

The 32nd annual **Mimbres Hot Springs Ranch Studio Sale** is Dec. 1-2, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Works include flame-worked and fused glass, pottery, jewelry, cut-paper art, fiber art, watercolors and oils. Take Hwy. 152 to the Mimbres, follow Hwy. 61 south to Royal John Mine Road and follow signs.

A **Christmas Boutique** featuring crafts and gifts will be held at the Grant County Business & Conference Center on Hwy. 180, Dec. 1 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Dec. 2 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. 534-3991, 313-5858, campocats@msn.com.

Victoria Chick's **Cow Trail Art Studio** in Arenas Valley has a new exhibit of original 19th and 20th century prints. December hours are Monday 1-3 p.m. or by appointment. 119 Cow Trail, www.victoriachick.com.

New work by watercolor/mixed media artist Brent Flenniken will be featured in an exhibit opening at **Gallery 400** on Friday, Dec. 7, with a reception starting at 5:30 p.m. with classical guitar music by Freddy Rodriguez. The exhibit will consist of over 30 new paintings

by Flenniken, a highly spontaneous painter who paints colorful Southwest and Mexican landscapes, mission churches, carnival scenes, watercolor portraits, florals and abstract compositions. His paintings are known for magical, dreamlike images and for the use of mythical, subliminal figures and images. His work has been exhibited widely in US and Mexican galleries, and is included in collections in the US, Canada and Mexico.

Flenniken grew up in the Southwest and received art degrees from Texas Tech University and Western New Mexico University. In addition to painting, Flenniken is also known for his efforts in teaching art in Texas and at the prestigious Instituto de Allende in San

Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

In addition to Flenniken's work, Gallery 400 will also show selected pieces of hand-carved walnut furniture and crosses created by another well-known Silver City artist, Dink Tatsch. 400 N. Arizona, 313-7015.

The **Silver City Museum Society** will host a trunk show for local artist Karen Muench on Saturday, Dec. 15, 2012, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Museum. Prints, cards and postcards will be for sale on this day only, with a percentage of the sales going to the society. The Museum Store regularly sells Muench's cards, but does not have the space to display her wonderful prints.

Says Muench, "I like to create brightly colored whimsical southwestern scenes. Imaginative tortugas appear in my art as well because of a recent close encounter with sea turtles while snorkeling in the Galapagos Islands. A favorite quote by Albert Einstein, 'imagination is more important than knowledge,' continues to inspire my work. I like to bring joy to viewers by developing interesting, unusual juxtapositions." 312 W. Broadway, 538-5921, www.silvercity-museum.org.

A studio sale of Nizhoni Pottery by **Romaine Begay** will be held Dec. 15, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at 3235 Little Walnut Road. 590-0698.

Lois Duffy Art Gallery will become **Lois Duffy Art Studio**



Bert Gammill is one of this month's featured artists at the Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery.

as of Jan. 1, 2013. The Studio will be open to the public every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., showing paintings, prints and cards by Duffy. 211C N. Texas, 534-0822.

Las Cruces & Mesilla

The **Potters' Guild of Las Cruces** continues its Annual Holiday Sale on Saturday, Dec. 1, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Las Cruces Association of Realtors, 150 E. Idaho Ave. 524-1146, 639-6786.

The **NMSU University Art Gallery** continues to show "rematerialized," which focuses on the use of objects, performances and spaces that are re-contextualized from our everyday world. Williams Hall, University Ave. east of Solano, 646-2545.

The colorful works of award-winning conceptual artist Marilyn Sahs will be on display in the **El Paso Electric Gallery**, south of the Rio Grande



The colorful works of award-winning conceptual artist Marilyn Sahs will be on display in the El Paso Electric Gallery, south of the Rio Grande Theatre lobby.



"Madonna of the Ghetto" by Nancy Frost Begin, featured at the Main Street Gallery in Las Cruces.

Theatre lobby, for the month of December, with an artist reception on Dec. 7, 5-7 p.m., as part of the Downtown Art Ramble. A professional working mixed media artist, Sahs spent her formative years in Cuxhaven, Germany, and now resides in Santa Fe. Her work can best be described as "eclectic, sometimes playful, sometimes erotic and often complex." Her work has been displayed in various locales across the Southwest and she recently served as artist-in-residence at the historic Santa Fe Foundation's James L. Johnson House in Santa Fe. 211 N. Main, 523-6403.

The **Main Street Gallery** continues its show of two National Water Color Society Signature Artists who also happen to be sisters—Nancy Frost Begin and Susan Frost Hanssen. Begin won Best-of-Show at the New Mexico Watercolor Society Fall "Open" Watercolor Exhibit 2012. Hanssen is featured in the hardcover book, *Splash 13*. 311 N. Main St., 647-0508.

ARTS SCENE continued on next page

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Gila Regional Medical Center PLANETREE

ARTS SCENE continued

The **Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery** this month features two local artists, Bert Gammill and Naida Zucker. Gammill is a multimedia artist primarily working in watercolor and oil. Zucker combines gelatin monoprinting (hectography) with digital photography. 2470-A Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla, 522-2933, www.mesillavalleyfinearts.com

Linda Marlena Carr is opening a new art gallery and gift shop, **Creative Harmony**, at 220 N. Campo St. in downtown Las Cruces. Hours of operation will be Wednesday through Sunday, from 12-5 p.m. Creative Harmony will offer fine art, presenting the works of selected local artists including Ed Breeding, Dennis Lujan and Phil Yost, as well as crafts and gifts. 312-3040.

Aralia Gallery will feature the photographic art of Ron Saltzman, with an opening during the Ramble on Dec. 7, 4-9 p.m. Titled "The ME (My Environment) Show," it is Saltzman's first one-man show of his photographs, including photos of area landscapes, a recent photo safari to the Ladder and Armendaris ranches, and art-oriented automobile photographs. Saltzman, who owns the Frame and Art Center, says, "I have had a passion for photography all of my life. I took courses in photography at the University of Texas at El Paso while getting my BBA. Living in the Las Cruces area has afforded me many great opportunities to experience the magnificent diversities of landscapes, skies and unbelievable colors. I do not use any photo manipulation programs when printing my photos. I try hard to present the image and the color the way I saw it as it was happening. Trying to get the unconventional shot can be very challenging, but well worth the effort." 224 N. Campo, 650-7543.

Mesquite Art Gallery is hosting a special holiday exhibit with new items by Wanda Fuselier, Greta Berger and Luke Tumblin with a Christmas or holiday theme. There will also be an art demo during Camino del Arte, Dec. 8, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Horse wagons will shuttle patrons between galleries and other merchants. 340 N. Mesquite St., 540-3502, www.mesquiteartgallery.com.

Unsettled Gallery continues the Border Artists and Friends "Go Ornamental" show, through Dec. 15. 905 N. Mesquite St., 635-2285, www.unsettledgallery.com.

The fall semester's graduating NMSU Graphic Design students will hold a senior art show, "Up All Night," at the **Corbett Student Union Art Gallery**, with a reception Dec. 14, 5-7 p.m. The show will exhibit the photographic, drawing, craft, digital design skill sets and unique work of eight individual designers. Contact Casey Webb, 442-1974, or Liz Brown, (505) 908-0511

Also opening Dec. 14, 6-9 p.m., are "First Im-



Work featured in the Chiricahua Gallery Holiday Show in Rodeo.

pressions" and "What Has Been," thesis exhibitions that showcase the work of NMSU Bachelor of Fine Arts graduating seniors, Ammie Ward and Stephanie Wagner, at the **West End Art Depot Gallery**. 649-1455, 405-2620, or 312-9892.

The **Tombaugh Gallery** presents Micah Pearson's "Digital Dreams," a show that moves through space and time, melding the realistic and the fantastical, using mixed-media including photography, hand drawing and digital modeling and manipulation. The exhibit will run from Dec. 2-Jan. 30, with an artist's reception Friday, Dec. 14, at 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 2000 S. Solano, 522-7281.

Hidalgo County

The **Chiricahua Gallery** Holiday Show in Rodeo continues through Jan. 5. The show features original work by local and regional artists and artisans. Located in an historic building that has evolved from frontier saloon to church to its present incarnation, the gallery has been serving area residents as well as visitors to nearby Portal, Ariz., since 1986. Income from artist sales goes to further the cultural and educational experiences through scholarships, art for kids, exhibits and workshops. Open every day except Wednesdays and holidays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pine Street and Hwy. 80, 557-2225, www.chiricahuagallery.org.

Sierra County

The **Monte Cristo Gift Shop and Gallery** in Chloride will again be hosting "Yuletide in Chloride." The 7th annual event featuring local artists will be Dec. 1-9, daily from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 35 miles west of Truth or Consequences via Hwy. 52, 743-0493, montecristogallery@windstream.net.

All phone numbers are area code 575 except as noted. Send arts news to events@desertexposure.com.

ARTS EXPOSURE

Gallery Guide

SILVER CITY
ANN SIMONSEN STUDIO-GALLERY, 104 W. Yankee St., 654-5727.
ART + CONVERSATION, 614 N. Bullard, 388-3350. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sundays 12 a.m.-6 p.m. Gallery and gathering space. www.artandconversation.com.
ARTESANOS, 211-B N. Texas St., 519-0804. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 12-6 p.m.
[A]SP."A"@E, 110 W. 7th St., 538-3333, aspace.studiogallery@gmail.com.
AZURITE GALLERY, 110 W. Broadway, 538-9048, Wed.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. www.azuritegallery.com.
BLUE DOME GALLERY, 60 Bear Mountain Ranch Road (Bear Mountain Lodge, 2251 Cottage San Road), 534-8671. Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. www.bluedomegallery.com.
CLAYFUL HANDS, 622 N. California, 534-0180. By appointment. Phoebe Lawrence.
CLAYMOON STUDIO, 13 Jade Dr., 313-6959. Marcia Smith. By appointment.
COMMON THREAD, 107 W. Broadway, 538-5733. Mon., Thurs, Fri. and Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Retail and gallery space for fiber arts. www.fiberartscollective.org.
COPPER QUAIL GALLERY, 211-A

Texas St., corner of Yankee and Texas, 388-2646. Open 7 days a week. Fine arts and crafts.
COW TRAIL ART STUDIO, 119 Cow Trail in Arenas Valley. Mon., Thurs.-Sat., 12-3 p.m. www.victoriachick.com.
CREATIONS & ADORNMENTS, 108 N. Bullard, 534-4269. Mon.-Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Work by Diane Reid.
FRANCIS MCCRAY GALLERY, 1000 College Ave., WNMU, 538-6517.
GALLERY 400, Gila House, 400 N. Arizona, 313-7015. Tues.-Sat., 1-6 p.m. www.gilahouse.com.
LEYBA & INGALLS ARTS, 315 N. Bullard St., 388-5725. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Contemporary art ranging from realism to abstraction in a variety of media featuring artists Crystal Foreman Brown, Romaine Begay, Christina Brown, Susan Brinkley, Gordee Headlee, Diana Ingalls Leyba, Dayna Griego, Constance Knuppel, Mary Alice Murphy, Phillip Parotti, Betsey Resnick, Teri Matelson, Joe Theiman, Zoe Wolfe, Melanie Zipin. www.LeybalngallsARTS.com, LeybalngallsART@zianet.com.
LOIS DUFFY, 211C N. Texas, 534-0822. Fri.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The studio and gallery of Lois Duffy presents a unique and thought-provoking view of the world through the eyes of an artist. Imaginative portraits,

surreal places and realistic scenes of life. Original paintings, cards and prints. www.loisduffy.com, loisduffy@signalpeak.net.
MIMBRES REGION ARTS COUNCIL GALLERY, Wells Fargo Bank Bldg., 1201 N. Pope St. www.mimbresarts.org.
MOLLY RAMOLLA GALLERY & FRAMING, 307 N. Texas, 538-5538. www.ramollaart.com.
OFF BEAD GALLERY, 701 N. Bullard, 388-8973. Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
OL' WEST GALLERY & MERCANTILE, 104 W. Broadway, 388-1811/313-2595. Daily 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
RED EARTH GALLERY, 108 W. Yankee St., (505) 850-3182, www.pudfranzblau.com.
SEEDBOAT CENTER FOR THE ARTS, 214 W. Yankee St., 534-1136. Mon., Thurs.-Sat. 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Sun. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tues.-Wed. by appointment. info@seedboatgallery.com.
SILVER SPIRIT GALLERY, 215 W. Broadway, 388-2079.
STONEWALKER STUDIO, 105 Country Road, 534-0530. By appointment. Barbara Jorgen Nance.
THE STUDIOSPACE, 109 N. Bullard St., 534-9291. www.jessgorell.com.
STUDIO UPSTAIRS, 109 N. Bullard St., 574-2493. By appointment.
SUSAN SZAJER STUDIO, Sanctuary

Road, 313-7197 By appointment.
TATIANA MARIA GALLERY, 305 & 307 N. Bullard St., 388-4426.
TOP HAT ART, 115 N. Bayard.
TUNDAR GALLERY & STUDIO, 110 Yankie, 597-0011.
TWO SPIRIT GALLERY, 313 N. Bullard, Suite B, 534-4563. Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
WILD WEST WEAVING, 211-D N. Texas, 313-1032, www.hosanaeiert.com. Mon.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Fri.-Sat. 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
YANKIE ST. ARTIST STUDIOS, 103 W. Yankie St., 313-1032. By appointment.
ZOE'S GALLERY, 305 N. Cooper St., 654-4910.

PINOS ALTOS
HEARST CHURCH GALLERY, Gold St., 574-2831. Open late-April to early-October. Fri., Sat., Sun. and holidays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

MIMBRES
CHAMOMILE CONNECTION, 3918 Highway 35N, 536-9845. Lynnae McConaha. By appointment.

COTTAGE STAINED GLASS & MORE, Cedar Lane off Hwy. 35, 536-3234. Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat.-Sun. 2-5 p.m.

KATE BROWN POTTERY AND TILE, HC 15 Box 1335, San Lorenzo, 536-9935, katebrown@gilanet.com, www.katebrownpottery.com. By appointment.

NARRIE TOOLE, Estudio de La Montura, 313-2565, www.narrietool.com. Contemporary western oils, giclées and art prints. By appointment.

REESE-BENTON ARTS, 3811 Hwy. 35, 536-9487. By appointment.

BAYARD
KATHRYN ALLEN CLAY STUDIO, 601 Erie St., 537-3332. By appointment.
T. ALI STUDIO, 421 E. Elm St., 537-3470. By appointment.

HANOVER
FIERRO CANYON GALLERY, 4 Hermosa St., 537-3262, www.fierrocanyongallery.com. Thurs.-Mon. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
LA GARITA, 13 Humboldt, 537-6624. By appointment.

HURLEY
JW ART GALLERY, Old Hurley Store, 99 Cortez Ave., 537-0300. Weds.-Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., www.jwartgallery.com.

NORTHERN GRANT COUNTY & CATRON COUNTY
CASITAS DE GILA, 50 Casita Flats Road, Gila, 535-4455. Sat.-Sun. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. or by appointment. gallery@casitasdegila.com, www.galleryatthecasitas.com.
WILLOW GALLERY, Hwy. 15, Gila Hot Springs, 536-3021. By appointment.

MESILLA
ADOBE PATIO GALLERY, 1765 Avenida de Mercado (in the Mesilla Mercado), 532-9310. Tues.-Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
GALERI AZUL, Old Mesilla Plaza, 523-8783. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
GALERIA ON THE PLAZA, 2310 Calle de Principal, 526-9771. Daily 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

GALERIA TEPIN, 2220 Calle de Parian, 523-3988. Thurs.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

MESILLA VALLEY FINE ARTS GALLERY, 2470 Calle de Guadalupe, 522-2933. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Sun. 12-5:30 p.m.

THE POTTERIES, 2260 Calle de Santiago, 524-0538.

ROKOKO, 1785 Avenida de Mercado, 405-8877.

LAS CRUCES
ALEGRE GALLERY, 920 N Alameda Blvd., 523-0685.

BLUE GATE GALLERY, 311 Old Downtown Mall, 523-2950. Tue.-Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-noon.

CHARLES INC., 1885 W Boutz Rd, 523-1888, Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

COTTONWOOD GALLERY, 275 N. Downtown Mall (Southwest Environmental Center), 522-5552. Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

CREATIVE HARMONY, 220 N. Campo St., 312-3040. Weds.-Sun. 12-5 p.m.

CRUZ NOPAL, 1175 W. Picacho, 635-7899. Thurs.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. or by appointment. ouida@ouidatouchon.com, www.ouidatouchon.com.

CUTTER GALLERY, 2640 El Paseo, 541-0658. Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

GALERIE ACCENTS, 344 S. San Pedro #3, 522-3567. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

GRIGGS & REYMOND, 504 W. Griggs Ave., 524-8450, Tue.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

JUSTUS WRIGHT GALERIA, 266 W. Court Ave., 526-6101, jud@delvalleprinting.com.

LAS CRUCES MUSEUM OF ART, 491 N. Main St., 541-2137. Tues.-Fri. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

LUNDEEN INN OF THE ARTS, 618 S. Alameda Blvd., 526-3326. Daily 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

MAIN STREET GALLERY, 311 N. Downtown Mall, 647-0508. Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

MESQUITE ART GALLERY, 340 N. Mesquite St., 640-3502. Thur.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 2-5 p.m.

MOUNTAIN GALLERY AND STUDIOS, 138 W. Mountain St. Thurs.-Sun., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

M. PHILLIP'S FINE ART GALLERY, 221 N. Main St., 525-1367.

MVS STUDIOS, 535 N. Main, Stull Bldg., 635-5015, www.mvsstudios.com.

NEW DIMENSION ART WORKS, 615 E. Piñon, 373-0043.

NEW MEXICO ART, 121 Wyatt Dr., Suite 1, 525-8292/649-4876. Weds. 1-6 p.m., Thurs.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

NMSU ART GALLERY, Williams Hall, University Ave. east of Solano, 646-2545. Tues.-Sun.

NOPALITO'S GALERIA, 326 S. Mesquite. Fri.-Sun., 8 a.m.-8:30 p.m.

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MESILLA JOURNAL • KAREN RAY

New Mexican Pickers

For Eric Mack and Gary Warren, proprietors of Mesilla's 5967 Traders, the antiques they acquire on trips through the area are proof that one man's junk is another's treasure.



Eric Mack in the workshop describing his plans for this vintage lamp. (Photos by Karen Ray)

"Back up and turn around!" "Wait!" "Stop!" is how the script reads on one of Eric Mack and Gary Warren's "picking" trips to resupply their shop, 5967 Traders, just off the Mesilla Plaza. The two friends share a love of classic cars and a common passion for preserving old, and sometimes odd, bits of Americana. Not just preserving it but repurposing it into decorative, functional items for home and yard, each with at least one story to tell.

The long-time friends opened their business in November 2010. When asked how they came up with the name "5967 Traders," Eric laughs and says, "Well, that actually came about by taking Gary's birth year and my birth year and putting them together."

Not unlike the History Channel duo depicted on TV's "American Pickers," they have always liked to pick, roaming back roads, small towns and antiques warehouses for supplies and inspiration. They met at a classic car show in Ruidoso years ago and discovered they both had an interest in antiques as well. Soon after that they began exploring the possibilities of selling at weekend fairs and markets. At a monthly fair in Fredericksburg, Texas, they were encouraged by the positive response from fairgoers and other vendors.

Eric says they cut their teeth working with consignments, taking baby steps in the direction of a storefront. "We were doing road shows, hauling our products to different small town venues," Gary adds, "and it was kind of a crap shoot whether we could pay expenses or not."

One of the driving forces behind the 5967 storefront was a growing frustration with consignment options. This was a great motivator to open a store and carry their own merchandise. As the rigors of traveling started to get to them, they began thinking about setting up in one spot with a brick-and-mortar shop.

They finally found a small house just off the Mesilla Plaza. Thinking they would be unable to afford the rent, they contacted the owners, Paul and Bertha Gallegos, anyway. The Gallegos have strong generational ties to Mesilla and this was just the kind of business they were looking for to build the com-

munity. Paul grew up in the house when it had dirt floors and still comes in occasionally to talk with Gary and Eric. He also makes a guest appearance on the 5967 Traders website with a few of the metal sculptured farm animals that are sold in the shop.

Business has been quite good, with more than half the business coming from locals and the rest from regional visitors and tourists. They have a steady repeat clientele. Gary adds, "We're not afraid of competition; we have our own niche. We sell service with a smile."

Gary and Eric both participate in the day-to-day efforts of running 5967 Traders and try to stay flexible. Although they tend to handle different aspects of running the retail storefront, the business partners are able and willing to jump in and do whatever job is needed. Eric says they've been "pretty successful operating on the freewheeling model of business." Both men say the hardest part of the job is the down time. Eric is full of energy and happiest when working with his hands, visualizing and creating functional art. The friends still take custom orders and enjoy the challenge of creating a unique piece for a specific customer.

Granville Smith, their 93-year-old neighbor and close friend, often goes along on picking trips or keeps them company in the store. Gary says, "He's like a history book because his mind is still sharp. If we don't know what something is we ask him and he usually does." Granville's remarkable life experiences range from traveling through the Mesilla Valley by covered wagon as a kid to being held as a POW in Japan.

One of their favorite picking trips is actually an ongoing one. Eric's eyes light up as he describes a wonderful rambling warehouse they routinely canvas for inspiration and supplies. They make a trip to this pickers' Mecca every couple of months to resupply. He says that often as he walks he will see something that will be just right for completing a project in progress back home.

Although the two friends have favorite locations they visit for antiques and raw materials for their creations, their picking trips usually involve a large dose

of serendipity. They enjoy driving back roads, keeping their eyes open for likely places. One or the other may see something that catches their attention or looks promising. Eric says sometimes it might be the line of an old car that prompts him to stop and knock on a door, asking to take a look. Other times it might be a vintage tractor or just the way yard detritus and possessions have collected that tips them off to a possible treasure hunt.

Respect and taking the time to listen to the stories people tell about their possessions are essential. Eric talks a lot about reading people. He says you have to know what is important to people. Why have they saved these items? Usually there is a story behind the piece, sometimes great emotional attachment or even just the desire to own something intriguing that other people will ask about.

There have been a few times when folks wouldn't answer their door or would yell through the door, "It's not for sale!"—sometimes before Eric could even ask. But he says most of the time people are happy that you're interested in the



Gary Warren on a recent picking trip.

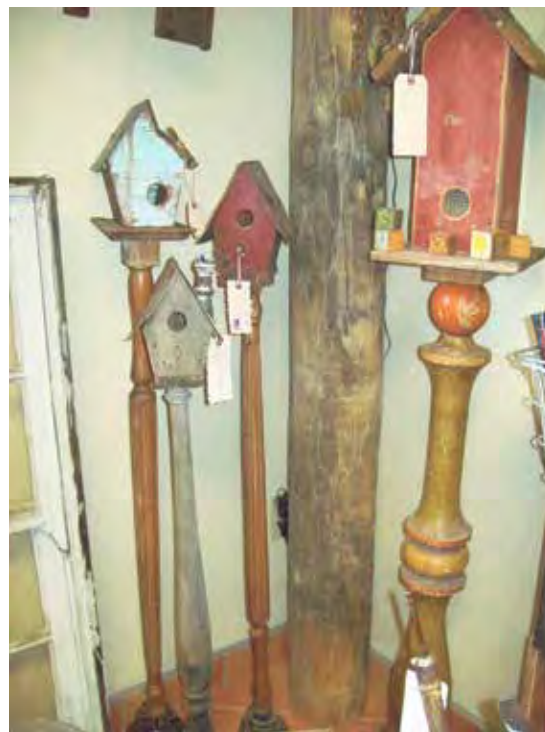
things they have saved, an inquiry often leading to, "Oh, if you're interested in this maybe you'd like to see...."

Eric describes himself as "a picture person and exceptionally good at visualizing." In brainstorming ideas for the art he creates, he says, "I usually start with one piece and build everything else around it. Every part is the key to the next one.... It is like working a puzzle as I look at all of the things I want to combine into one larger piece." He is a self-taught designer; creativity comes naturally to him. He credits his favorite uncle, Larry, with "steering all of that energy into focus," by buying him a table saw and mentoring him in its use.

Eric retired in May 2009 after serving 22 years in the Air Force. While stationed in Clovis a lady asked him to build her a birdhouse and he says it just took off from there. A friend of hers saw the artistic avian abode and

also wanted one. Soon he was getting regular orders and checks as word spread. He has since branched out, designing and crafting many different types of creative projects, but he still regularly makes one-of-a-kind birdhouses that are truly works of art.

The combination of vintage Americana and old barn wood is Eric's niche. He declares that he "is blessed to make stuff" and marvels at the craft work that has gone into the creation of old things. "It is a testament to the spirit and the drive of people to make not only functional but beautiful



Eric Mack's popular birdhouses.

things." His admiration for sturdy and beautiful functionality, he confesses, leads him to "overbuild everything."

Prior to opening 5967 Traders, Gary and Eric conducted a long-haul picking/trading venture, stopping in small towns and visiting other shops all the way up to Yellowstone National Park and back. Both men agree this quick five-day turnaround trip was one of their most memorable picking adventures. Gary had bid online for 68 vintage cast-iron lavatories (about 10,000 pounds' worth), many with original faucets. These are not just any old sinks; they date from the early 1900s and once graced the rooms of the Mammoth Hotel in Yellowstone. The old hotel was torn down in 1936 to make way for new buildings.

That trek was conceived on a whim and born on the strength of a "whatever." So, without looking at a roadmap, they took off with a heavy-duty 20-foot utility trailer and a sense of adventure, researching places to stop along the way. In one Idaho town

Antique ephemera at 5967 Traders.



they saw an old shuttered building with a for-sale sign on it. "Peeking in the window we could see some very old screen doors with the brass hardware that come out of a store and big tall glass doors. There was a bank vault gate in there, a real old one," Gary reminisces. Eric persistently called the number on the sign as they continued up north, finally tracking down the owner. They bought the doors and the old vault gate, muscling its hefty 500 pounds onto the trailer.

When they arrived in Yellowstone to pick up their classic sinks, Gary says, "We got to see so much stuff that came out of that park, from day one of the park, that they were preserving that came out of old houses—the old furniture, the old beds and the old lamps. That stuff wasn't for sale but they were courteous enough to show us and tell us the history." The old pieces were going to be used to furnish cabins and museums in Yellowstone.

On the return trip they stopped at a small-town antique shop and bought a few things. The owner gave them directions to her farm, whereupon her husband bought six of the sinks and the bank vault door as well as some other vintage doors. Gary still regrets that he did not purchase an old gas pump the man had for sale.

Often Eric says they will get a lead or a reference from one person to go visit another who has some interesting items. This generally opens a lot of doors. He says, "I've knocked on probably a thousand doors."

Gary adds, "You get a lot of invitations when you stop off at small coffee shops and people see what you have on your trailer." The friends also enjoy being around old-timers. "They all have stories...but you can't rush them," says Gary.

Sometimes the friends come across something whose original purpose is unknown. They always try to find out what it is, usually by asking older people. If it's something broken, Eric will scavenge it for parts to use in different projects. They are quick to give thanks and credit to Las Cruces store owner Bob Gaines of Sweet Old Bob's Antiques for



Fanciful creations outside the store.

his knowledgeable help.

Asked if he's ever been in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation while picking, Gary confides, "Yes, I'm afraid of spiders and snakes.... Eric's as bad or worse. That's always a concern; we try to always work safe. We don't want an old building to fall down on us." He cautions that it's important to stay current on the tetanus shot.

Driving through early fall color on a recent picking expedition here in southern New Mexico, the traders reminisce about past trips and great finds, including an old train engine Gary almost bought. Deer lounge under the junipers, watching as the truck and trailer rig winds its way up through the foothills.

Each trip requires an investment of time and money that there is no guarantee of recouping. It is a bit of a gamble, but they've developed a good sense of what is marketable and interesting. They always carry cash on picking trips and they always take time to listen to the back story of the items for sale.

Arriving at their day's destination, they chat with the owners, greeting the family dogs and stretching after the long drive. Then the fun begins as garage doors are opened and the brilliant fall

sunshine streams in over a buggy and harness, saddles, tools and lovingly cared-for furniture, some of it over 100 years old. The process of examining pieces, hearing the stories behind them and negotiating prices is a pleasant routine that takes most of the afternoon.

Contact numbers are exchanged in case the owners reconsider some items and put them up for sale. With the trailer loaded and warm handshakes all around, the traders take their leave and head back home, tired but satisfied.

On a tour of the traders' workshop, Gary describes his father's wealth of information as he walks through neat stacks of weathered lumber and other unique salvaged supplies, much of which had been collected by his dad. In a cast-iron bathtub, glittering in the morning sun, rests an assortment of antique glass insulators that he and his dad had spent a whole day salvaging from an old phone line near Deming after a teen-aged Gary had spent too much time carousing the night before. "That was a long day," Gary says with a smile.

His father's experience with the poverty of the Depression and his resourcefulness as a contractor after retiring from the Army affected him. "Being raised up as a carpenter's son, I always liked to build things." He still has many of his dad's old hand tools and says inspiration often comes through mood. He once made a "rustic and functional" unique coat rack for a customer out of old pulleys and gears.

Gary inherited his father's resourceful ways and says even in his teen years he'd find something and take it home: "I was always a hustler, trying to make money mowing yards or selling crystal rocks." Local farmers would often peruse his selection of old farm equip-



Chiles made from old wooden spindles and finials.

PICKERS continued on next page

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PICKERS continued

ment for parts. Later in life he gave up a high-stress job as a commercial truck salesman to expand his weekend picking trips into a full-time endeavor. Gary says, "Nothing is more fun than taking off a couple days and going picking."

The traders tend to focus on working with different elements; Eric likes to work with wood and Gary enjoys metallic raw materials, often welding hat racks and dinner chimes. They frequently brainstorm ideas back and forth. Their art, inspiration and skills are not limited to one medium or another; each is quite versatile. This way they are able to create a variety of pieces for the shop and custom orders.

Gary's talents also include a bit of computer work. He created the website for 5967 Traders, which reads like a fascinating discussion with good friends. Posted online are numerous photos of the items they have for sale, many of which are one-of-a-kind functional art they have created. Customers are invited to send in a picture of themselves with their new/old treasures. In fact, their landlord, Paul, stars in a couple of photos with the whimsical metal farm animals he has bought for his own home.

Eric explains the history behind many items in the shop during a walk-through tour. A handsome blue table has an intriguing pedigree, with a top of Georgia planks, metal accents from Silver City, and beautiful wood hailing from El Paso. Each item in the store has a handwritten tag explaining some of the history behind the piece.

Mirrored door frames are one of their specialties and a best seller. The oldest piece in Traders 5967 is a door mirror, which Eric explains is a "metaphor": The door came from California, the side posts and finials decorating the top from Texas. There is also an angel on top of the door next to a lucky-seven pool ball. The piece is sure to inspire conversation in its new home someday.

There are several stunning block lamps with stained glass panels for sale in the shop. The classic design is reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright. Eric crafts all the stained glass work on these and other items in the shop. Look carefully and on many pieces you will see unexpected, whimsical elements like the coat hook that incorporates printer's blocks in a generation "X" theme.

Gary says the most unusual thing he's ever found was a prayer kneeler. It was a prized possession crafted from beautiful mesquite wood. They estimate it is a couple of hundred years old and, while they purchased it here in the Mesilla Valley, they believe it came out of southern Mexico. They sold it to a lady friend who uses it every day.

The flying pigs and other whimsical metal art decorating the front yard of the shop were introduced after the hard freeze in 2010. They wanted to bring a bit of color to the shop that couldn't be killed by rough weather. Gary says, "It was a lot of



Americana inside 5967 Traders.

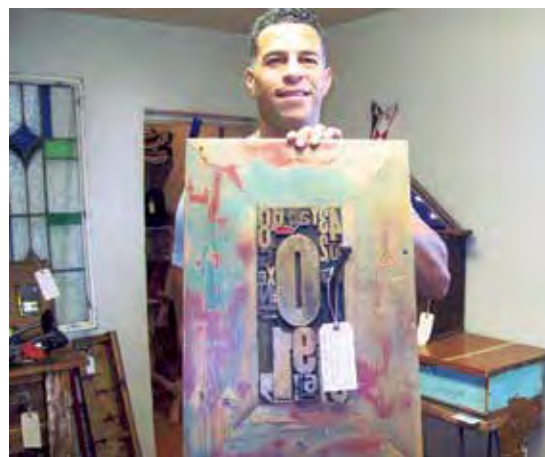
fun. Whether people bought anything or not, they always left with a laugh."

Gary says, "This business isn't a business you get rich in unless it's an accident." The items for sale in the store are reasonably priced; a shopper can take home some unique Americana along with a great story to tell. There are a variety of beautiful antiques, some traditional like the tall glass front cherry secretary, all affordably priced. He believes TV shows like "American Pickers" and "Pawn Stars" have inspired people and reinvigorated their interest in antiques.

"The one thing that's real important to Eric and me is to provide a product or service to people that they feel very comfortable receiving at a very fair price," Gary goes on. "It's real important for us to not have this stereotypical high-priced antique store."

The pickers of 5967 Traders are always looking for interesting raw supplies or antique items for the shop. Sometimes they find some really nice old lumber listed online or people will stop in and ask if they'd be interested in buying their items. Craigslist and occasionally garage sales have also

been good sources for creative materials or vintage goods. If you have architectural items or intriguing old salvaged things to sell, you should contact Gary and Eric. They are always looking to pick, always going places. ✨



Eric Mack with his Generation "X" functional art.

5967 Traders is located at 2310 Avenida de Mesilla in historic Mesilla. Contact them at (575) 526-5967 or visit the website at www.5967traders.com.

Karen Ray is a nearly lifelong resident of Las Cruces, who grew up here, attended NMSU, then returned 17 years ago to finish raising her family. She earned a degree in journalism from the University of Wisconsin.

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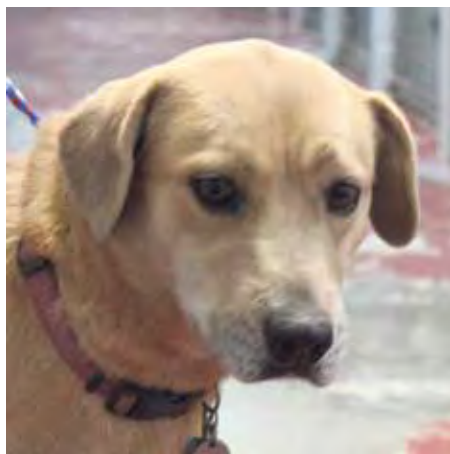
Meemo

4 mos., Female, Ragdoll



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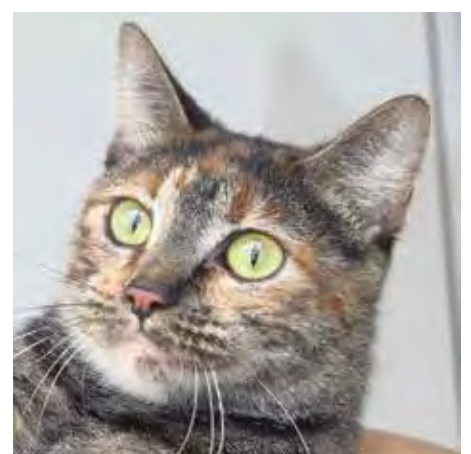
Nikki

1-2 yrs., Female, Labrador-X



Candi

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Wicca

1 yr., Female, Torti DSH



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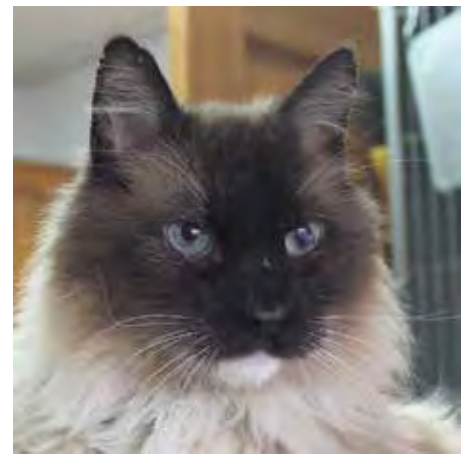
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FICTION • PHILLIP PAROTTI

Up the Camino Real

The anaconda was bad enough. Then Angelita started digging near the old presidio...

Editor's note: Our holiday gift to readers is a new short story by local favorite Phillip "Pep" Parotti, a multiple winner of our annual writing contest and frequent contributor of memories about growing up hereabouts.

You might think that being mayor of a village the size of San Elizando—we number, according to Father Bernard, no more than 400 souls—would be an easy job, and in some ways, I suppose, it is. Here, in the quiet farm land between Vado and Anthony, for example, the Rio Grande never floods; we are not threatened by terrorists, and *La Migra*, finding us so small and insignificant, invariably passes us by. On a daily basis, things in



San Elizando are normally quiet. A few of us run small businesses; the remainder are engaged in agricultural pursuits, while three or four, graduates of NMSU or UTEP, drive up to Las Cruces or down to El Paso in order to work in offices. But for the majority of us, life is organized according to the seasons and ac-

ording to the supplies of irrigation water that are stored behind Elephant Butte Dam, so the cycle of plowing, planting and harvesting goes forward at a steady pace as we contribute our share of onions, alfalfa and green chile to the nation's bread basket. Occasionally, however, something goes awry, and then, unfortunately, my telephone begins to ring.

Most of the time, the "disturbances" that trouble my telephone and then trouble me turn out to be relatively insignificant. Three years ago, for example, Eddie Bergen's septic tank stopped up and flooded part of Main Street in the middle of the night. Aside from having to coordinate clean-up efforts with regard to that unpleasant episode, I also had to spend three or four nights filling out the EPA reports to be mailed to the various agencies associated with the Rio Grande Water Authority, and, as I recall, I also had to answer some unhappy questions posed by various environmental offices in Santa Fe. Considering that some of the run-off from Eddie's system did get into the river, the folks in the capital were not pleased, but the measures we took to rectify the fault did seem to satisfy them, so the incident was quickly corrected and forgotten.

Issues having to do with Rudolfo Gallegos' anaconda were actually more troublesome.

After considering the infestation of anacondas that now plagues southern Florida, why anyone would want to harbor one of those reptiles anywhere along the banks of the Rio Grande is something that I find utterly impossible to understand. But about two years ago, Rudolfo apparently visited his cousin in Fort Myers—that's right on the edge of the Everglades—and returned here with an infant anaconda that measured about four feet in length. For a few days, he had great fun showing the creature to his friends, and then, without warning anyone, he turned it loose in his barn, intending—according to what Sally Archuletta told me—to use the thing to control mice and rats. I found out about that only several weeks after the fact, and then, I spoke to Rudolfo about it, and he assured me that the reptile could not get out of the barn. At the time, you will understand, we had no village ordinance regarding the keeping of exotic "pets," so there wasn't a thing I could do about it.

Apparently, Zippo—for that was the name Rudolfo gave his snake—proved a very effective rat catcher. Given the steady diet the barn afforded,

Zippo grew rapidly to a length of six and then eight feet, and that is when Zippo got out, probably right through one of the rat holes, and swallowed two of Bernice Sepulveda's chickens, and then, let me tell you, all hell broke loose. Bernice, if I can get away with saying so, was madder than a wet hen, particularly when she found Zippo stretched out inside her chicken coop. As is apt to happen with things like this, I was called in to mediate. Rudolfo, of course, came at once to collect Zippo, made apologies, and paid damages.

There, I hoped the matter might rest, and it probably would have had not Zippo escaped once more about three months later, made his way through Reston Teague's hog wire, and swallowed one of Reston's shoats. Having swallowed a rather large shoat, Zippo could not get back through the hog wire, and, given Zippo's weight and the added weight of the swallowed shoat, it took Rudolfo, Reston and one of Reston's farm laborers to lift Zippo out of the pen and get him into the bed of Rudolfo's pickup. Once more, Rudolfo made apologies and paid damages, and then, after several tedious council meetings and under much pressure from the local population, the council finally passed an ordinance against the keeping of exotic pets. Zippo was swiftly dispatched to the zoo in Albuquerque, where he has grown to a length of 12 feet.

Given all the ruffled feathers that I had to try to stroke back into place after that episode in San Elizando's history, I would have to think that it amounted to much more than a bump in the road during my tenure in office. But truth told, it amounted to absolutely nothing compared to what happened here last month.

Long, long ago, in 1798 to be exact—if the records can be trusted—and at about the time some of the farming here is supposed to have been started, one or another of the Spanish military expeditions that came up this way in pursuit of the Apaches apparently attempted to build a small presidio right behind what is now our central plaza. At the time, one supposes, they gave a thought to establishing a small garrison here, to protect the farmers and to give Spain a presence much to the north of the big presidio at Janos. Whatever the case, they never finished the work, so we were left with some astonishingly durable adobe in what had been intended to be the north wall of the establishment and a single turret that still has walls three feet thick and stands, even with the incursions of time, fully eight feet in height. Angelita Ortega's place backs up to the remains of that north wall, and about five weeks ago, she decided to put in a garden, right up against the remains of the wall. That's when the trouble began.

As Angelita later told me, she hadn't turned over a foot of soil back there before she struck pay dirt. When she pushed her shovel into the ground, she heard a *clink*. That made her curious, so she went immediately into the house and returned with a sieve to sift the dirt she had loosened. Before 10 minutes had passed, she had turned up a small hoard consisting of: four gold *escuderos* carrying the image of Carlos IV, each of which had been minted in Mexico; two gold *escuderos* carrying the image of Carlos III, both of them minted in Santiago; five silver *reales* carrying the image of Carlos IV that had been minted in Guatemala; and seven copper *maravedies*, all of them minted in Segovia and all also carrying the image of Carlos IV.

Angelita has a reputation for being a pretty shrewd woman, you will understand, so she said absolutely nothing to anyone about her find, spent the remainder of the day digging up every inch of

soil along her entire length of that wall, and continued until she had thoroughly satisfied herself that she had exhausted the proceeds of providence. And at the crack of dawn on the following morning, without saying so much as a word to her husband Lorenzo, she raced straight down to the most reputable rare coin dealer in El Paso—with the happy result that Angelita, Lorenzo, the three kids, their grandmother, and two of her sister's cousins made a previously unscheduled trip to Disney World in the middle of the month, with enough left over when they returned to buy Lorenzo two new calves and a hay baler. And then the word got out, and chaos followed.

Had I been in town, I have to believe, I might have been able to stop the proceedings before they went too far. But I had driven up to Las Cruces for the day on business, and because my meetings lasted several hours longer than I had intended, I spent the night with my sister and her husband and only started home around 10 o'clock on the following morning. To my surprise, as I approached the outskirts of San Elizando, I saw no one working in the fields. That should have alerted me to the fact that something out of the ordinary was underway, but it didn't; that kind of interruption of expectation simply doesn't register until after the event.

And the first event I encountered was a stalled panel truck, its front wheels stuck up to the hubs in a three-foot-wide trench that had been dug straight out from Bob Wheeler's front yard into the middle of our unpaved Main Street. As far as I knew, Village Maintenance had made no plans whatsoever to do work of any kind on Main. So, swiftly, I parked behind the panel truck, got out, and hurried around to the front of the cab where I found the furious delivery driver berating Bob, who seemed to look more than a little sheepish and who seemed to be apologizing profusely.

"What's happened here?" I asked as I made my approach.

"What the hell is it to you?" the driver snapped, even more angry to be interrupted in the middle of his tirade.

"I'm the mayor," I said.

"Well, for God's sake," the driver said, altering his tone only slightly, "what kind of a crazy asylum are you running around here where nuts like this guy are allowed to dig trenches right into the middle of the street without putting up any warning barriers? Just look around you. These idiots have gone stark raving mad!"

I looked. The *idiots*, my fellow citizens, the citizens who had elected me, did seem to have gone stark raving mad.

Thirty yards beyond where the panel truck rested on its frame, Sammy Marquez was using his backhoe to dig yet another trench into Main, while his wife, Lupe, and his neighbor, Rollo Hughes, were using shovels to clear the dirt as fast as Sammy could bring it up. Off to the right, Laverne Lindsey, a cigarette dangling from

her mouth, was digging up her rose garden in something pretty close to a frenzy. Then I heard a crack that sounded not unlike a bolt of lightning, and in the same instant, the nearest corner of Manuel and Ester Gonzales' front porch collapsed into the deep hole that they had foolishly dug too close to the supporting piers holding it up. Off around the bandstand in the plaza, standing up to their waists in holes that seemed to be at least three feet deep, Ted Mesker, Tony Vinegoni and Julia Moreno were furiously swinging picks. Then I noticed that the whole northwest quadrant of the presidio's turret had collapsed into yet another gaping trench dug much too close to its base.

I was speechless. I'd never seen anything like it. But before I could so much as open my mouth to ask another question, I spotted old Oscar Villegas come running around the corner of his house, his gray hair streaming out behind him, his dark eyes concentrated on the dials of that



second-hand metal detector he'd bought at the flea market, his daughter, Romola, and her two sons, all three of them carrying shovels, hurrying along in his wake. And then, for me at least, the lights began to go on. Once more, I turned to Bob Wheeler.

"Why don't you tell me what's happened here?" I said in tones that I kept perfectly flat.

Bob winced. "Er... ah... well, Angelita Ortega found some coins," Bob said, "in her backyard... along the wall of the presidio."

"I see," I said. "What kind of coins?"

"Spanish coins," Bob said, "old ones."

"And they were worth a lot of money?" I said.

"Ah... yeah," Bob said.

"How much?" I asked.

"Don't know exactly," Bob said.

"Take a guess," I said.

"If I had to guess," Bob said, "I'd say enough to pay for a week at Disney World as well as two calves and a hay baler."

"Ah," I said.

Bob had certainly caught the attention of the panel truck driver, so much so that for a minute or two, I thought the man might be looking around for a pick or a shovel of his own.

"You," I said to the driver, arresting his attention, "why don't you call for a wrecker? I'm sorry about this. The village will pay for the costs. And you, Bob, you start filling in this trench, and let's have no more of this nonsense."

And with that, I started off down the street in an attempt to restore some order to San Elizando. By nightfall, finally, I succeeded, Laverne Lindsey lamenting the loss of her roses, the Gonzaleses having jacked up the corner of their porch, Ted, Tony and Julia having been induced to fill in the holes they had dug around the bandstand, and countless others having been persuaded to stop looking for pennies from heaven. There the matter might have ended, save for the fact that the panel truck driver spread the word around Anthony as soon as he returned home that evening after making his deliveries.

The next day was Saturday, don't you see, so I hate to try to describe what my weekend was like because at the crack of dawn, something like the California gold rush seemed to have

gotten underway. As is always the case with something like this, the panel truck driver had conveyed his news about the coins only to a few selected friends, but those friends unfortunately owned telephones, which meant that by eight o'clock on Saturday morning, Alfredo Tellez, our deputy, and I had turned away at least five pickups, two jeeps, three vans, several cars and a purple Humvee coming in to prospect not only from Anthony but also from Las Cruces, Vado, El Paso, Fabens, Fort Hancock and Van Horn. One man even rode in on a motorcycle from as far away as Odessa. And on Sunday, after we put up the barriers to control access into town, we even had one potential gold seeker who drove all the way up from Houston and seemed mighty disappointed when we wouldn't let him dig.

By the time the sun went down on Sunday evening, Alfredo and I were utterly exhausted, both of us having stayed on our feet throughout the entire weekend in order to turn away the prospectors and make explanations about our hastily passed "No Digging Ordinance." But if we were exhausted, so were a few others, and I am happy at least to remember that there turned out to be a slight upside to the great gold rush.

At the Snappy Mart, for example, Harriet Bascomb sold nearly 200 additional gallons of gas over the weekend as well as fully double the number of sodas that she normally would sell over the same period. Comacho's General Store reported selling two picks, six shovels and ten feet of galvanized screen. And down at Bennie's Taco Parlor and Greater Enchilada Emporium, Bennie said he sold triple the number of tacos that he usually makes over a two-day period and not a few of his more expensive combination plates.

So San Elizando enjoyed just enough of an increase in gross receipts tax to correct some of the damage that had been done and commence a restoration of the presidio's turret. Blissfully, by Monday, the word seemed to have gotten out and the gold hunters stopped coming, save for that fellow who drove the 600 miles from San Diego and the old woman who brought her supposed "gold sniffing dog" all the way down here from Denver. Alfredo and I have paid close attention, of course, but for all practical purposes, we think the coin crisis

is ended and that life here has returned to normal.

Now, in answer to your question, *no*, I will not run for a fifth term as mayor. Being mayor in a small village like San Elizando has its rewards, to be sure, but to tell you the truth, I think I'm ready for a rest, and it seems only right that I should now step back and give a younger person the opportunity to make a contribution. ❀

Phillip "Pep" Parotti grew up in Silver City and has retired and come home after a long teaching career at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas.

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GAMBLING • JEFF BERG

Taking a Chance

Digging into the sometimes-dicey history of gambling in the Land of Enchantment.



Justin Laugherty of Las Cruces, the state's most recent Powerball winner, claiming a \$1 million prize.

If you are believer in the Bible, you might think that the "action" of Eve after her creation was a gamble—a bet, if you will. "What are the chances of anything happening if I take a bite of this apple?"

Oops!

Here in New Mexico, gambling has probably been omnipresent, if not exactly from the Creation, at least for the state's entire history. I'm sure there were early forms of gambling games among the Pueblo and First Nations peoples who occupied the area in the very early days. It's not much of a stretch to think that the Spanish were taking a huge gamble when they invaded the region, hedging their bets toward finding untold riches of all kinds.

Gambling became such an issue by the early part of the 1900s that both New Mexico and Arizona were forced to outlaw casinos in order to achieve statehood.

Little is to be found about gambling back then, but it is pretty well documented that it was a widespread illegal problem, at least in southern New Mexico in the late 1940s and 1950s. Ed Mechem of Las Cruces was elected governor in 1950 on a vow to clean up illegal gambling in the state (and to find the killer of Las Cruces waitress Cricket Coogler; see insidethecapitol.blogspot.com/2008/04/4-23-nms-biggest-murder-story.html).

Today, of course, we have tribal gaming and the state-sponsored lottery games such as "Scratchers," not to mention Powerball and Lotto.

The first form of post-statehood legalized gambling in New Mexico came about in 1946, with the introduction of pari-mutuel horseracing in Raton at La Mesa Park, according to gambling blogger David Oakeley on santafe.com. This track was followed by Sunland Park in Santa Teresa, Ruidoso Downs, and the long-defunct Santa Fe Downs. It is interesting to note that one of the main reasons these tracks were opened was to

attract even more Texans (and horse-loving Oklahomans, according to Oakeley) to New Mexico. Raton's proximity to both states was a draw, and Ruidoso, as we know, often has more Texas license plates than New Mexico plates running about.

Oakeley goes on to note the opening of the Farmington track and the "granddaddy of them all," as he puts it, the racing that took place during the New Mexico State Fair. It became such a cash cow (cash horse?) that the state fair was expanded to 25 days and then 15 more days were added in Santa Fe in the spring.

A number of factors intervened to deflate the racing and betting boom, including no attraction for younger gamblers, the complex pari-mutuel system of placing bets for many patrons, and the fact that Texas approved its own version of horse racing in 1987. The gloss started to wear off the races when other forms of gambling were allowed, and in 1998, the state voted to allow slot machines to be installed at race tracks, which are now called "racinos."

Gambling is an amazing industry that raises millions of dollars for many things. But for some estimated 40,000-70,000 New Mexicans, it is also a problem—those who are considered gambling addicts, according to state-funded studies.

Although the state of New Mexico has made small efforts to help folks with a gambling addiction, lots of voices say we haven't done enough. The main resource for help with problem gambling is the New Mexico Council on Problem Gambling (NMCPG). This is not a state agency.

Besides offering help and resources for those in need of same, the council keeps a detailed tracking of those who contact it for help—and hooray for those that do. Funding, about \$275,000 in 2010, was provided by casinos. There is grumbling that this is not enough and that it is a conflict of interest for the casinos to be involved and also that the director's husband has part ownership in two racetracks—er, racinos.

The NMCPG figures from 2010, the most recent stats available, show that nearly half of their calls were from Albuquerque,

at about 45%. Farmington, El Paso, Rio Rancho and Santa Fe were nearly tied in a distant second place at about 7% each. Slot machines seem to be the most addictive for folks, with 74% reporting that those are their main form of gaming. More Hispanics than others call for help, with 48% of calls coming from Hispanics and 37% from non-Hispanic whites.

Sandia Casino, just north of Albuquerque, is the favorite stop by far for those with a gambling issue, at 26%. Among troubled gamblers who seek help, 84% say they gamble alone. Problem gamblers estimated that they spend 21 hours a week at a casino, are over \$11,000 in debt on average, and that they get the money from credit cards, payday loan outfits, and family or friends. And



Scratching the Surface

Highlights of New Mexico Lottery history:

April 5, 1995: Gov. Gary Johnson signs Senate Bill 853, creating the New Mexico Lottery Authority

Nov. 20, 1995: Ralph Decker, the lottery's first CEO, reports for work.

April 8, 1996: The first Scratchers tickets—all 7.2 million—arrive at Lottery headquarters; the game is "Match 3" (pictured above).

April 27, 1996: Lottery launch day.

Oct. 20, 1996: Powerball launches; Gov. Johnson buys first ticket.

Feb. 16, 1997: Daily Millions launches.

August 1997: New Mexico Commission on Higher Education awards first Legislative Lottery Scholarships.

Feb. 6, 1998: Roadrunner Cash launches; State Senator Roman Maes buys first ticket.

Oct. 19, 1998: Mega Match 4 launches.

Nov. 3, 1998: Richard Beasley of Farmington claims the first \$500,000 Mega Match 4 top prize.

Nov. 30, 2000: 14 players from Albuquerque claim New Mexico's first Powerball jackpot of \$131 million.

January 2001: Lottery's first compulsive-gambling commercial airs.

Feb. 22, 2002: New Mexico's second Powerball jackpot winner, Isabell Delgado of Las Cruces, claims her \$32 million prize.

Oct. 3, 2008: Nine Roswell residents claim a \$206.9 million prize, New Mexico's largest Powerball jackpot ever.

Jan. 31, 2010: Mega Millions launches.

November 2011: Lottery profits for education break the \$500 million mark.

August 16, 2012: Justin Laugherty of Las Cruces becomes the state's most recent Powerball winner, claiming a \$1 million prize for a lucky ticket purchased at Shorty's, 1025 E. Spruce Ave.

the most common reason for a call to NMCPG is because they want to stop gambling. Marital issues and those seeking help for a friend or family member are not far behind.

Interestingly, more women than men call: 74% of the calls for help to NMCPG are from females, while gentlemen make up only 26%. Perhaps men are more in denial, but that may not be accurate, since the percentage of women who actually seek help is 57%, with 43% of callers men looking to stop.

The other interesting fact is that many of the problem gamblers don't really work. The highest category of "employment" noted in the 2010 report, at 18%, was for retirees. The unemployed made up 8%, and most curiously, another 7%, the third highest were disabled.

It almost seems like boredom and loneliness are reasons that people become problem gamblers.

And these folks create a duality of sorts, because it is the loyal and repeat customers who keep the casinos rolling in dough. Studies from the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia have shown that over 50% of gambling revenue comes from those with a gambling problem. Gary Loveman, the CEO of Harrah's casinos, has been quoted as saying that 90% of their financial wherewithal is thanks to 10% of patrons.

There is certainly room for improvement with help from the state and tribes.

Nationwide, 44 states have lotteries, and of course, New Mexico is no exception. Lotteries have an interesting history that dates clear back to the days of Julius Caesar. There is evidence that lottery-type games were played between 100-44 BC. A bit later, the Hun Dynasty in China picked

Below: Buffalo Thunder casino and resort (Photo: NM True, Department of Tourism) Below right: The more modest Akela property on which tribal chairman Jeff Haozous (pictured) wants to develop an Apache casino.



up on it, and in about 100 AD the Chinese used them to raise funds to finance construction of the Great Wall. The Chinese are also credited with the invention of the still-popular game of keno. Much later, a lottery was held in 1612 to fund the colony at Jamestown and Ben Franklin started lotteries during the Revolutionary War to help raise funds to buy cannons.

But by 1878 or so, gambling abolitionists got their way in all of the states except Louisiana (privately owned and very corrupt) and lotteries were banned by the federal government. It was not until 1964 that New Hampshire did a lotto based on a quarterly horse race to start lotteries up again.

It took New Mexico another 30 years to get into the swing of things, as it was 1995 when then-Governor Gary Johnson signed Senate Bill 853, which created the New Mexico State Lottery—as a business enterprise with no state funding. Its primary purpose was to raise money for education, in particular scholarships, a job that it has done well over the years. Sponsored by state Senator Michael Sanchez of Valencia County, the act has generated scholarships for more than 75,000 New Mexico students since 1996 (through 2011), many of whom may not have otherwise had the chance to attend college.

"The first ticket was sold on April 27, 1996," says Ariana Binns, the director of marketing for the state lottery. "There was a \$1 and a \$2 ticket, and they were especially popular because of the media buzz." In the first eight days, 8.3 million tickets were sold, generating \$10.6 million in revenue for the program. Since then, the lottery has seen \$2 billion in ticket sales and \$1.1 billion in prizes awarded, creating 43 New Mexico millionaires and raising \$535 million for scholarships, allowing more than 34,000 students to graduate. By state statute, the lottery is required to return at least 50% of the revenue to players and 30% for scholarships. Only about 4% of the money raised is used for administrative costs.

Binns has been on staff the entire time, and recalls the hiring of the first lottery CEO, Ralph Decker, and the temporary offices that they had. There wasn't much time between the passing of the bill and the actual issuance of those first tickets, just nine months.

"It was mass chaos, having to put the business together, starting from scratch," she says. "But it was also very exciting to set up the gaming system."



A current New Mexico Lottery holiday-themed game.

Slot machines seem to be the most addictive for folks, with 74% reporting that those are their main form of gaming.

The New Mexico Lottery Authority is a mirror of the successful Georgia lottery system and is set up as a corporation rather than a state entity. The Georgia system also uses lottery money to fund education, and once that was established, New Mexico's Commission on Higher Education had to put together criteria for awarding the scholarships.

Retailers can also cash in a bit, especially when a large winning prize is purchased at an outlet. Binns recalls that in the beginning, there were numerous retailers who wanted to join up, and that for a while, there was even a funeral home that sold lottery tickets.

"There are about 1,100 retailers now," she says. "We have representatives that will work with a potential retailer to tailor their orders to their customers and help create their own niche."

Among "Scratchers," surprisingly, the \$20 cards are the most popular. If there is not a Scratch-off with a crossword game, "worlds collide," Binns says with a laugh. "They are the most popular along with those that utilize New Mexico heritage."

She adds, "There is always another crossword in the pipeline. There is one player that I know of who will only play the crosswords, and she has won some prizes."

Another more recent addition has been the marketing of cards from licensed properties, such as Pink Panther, Betty Boop and the rock band KISS.

Linda Hamlin, New Mexico lottery communications manager, shares a story about a KISS fan who won a "second chance" drawing for a guitar signed by the band, after passing up the chance to buy an un-autographed version earlier. "He was happier than if he'd have won the grand prize," Hamlin says. "Serendipity."

As for lottery scholarships, Hamlin says, "Enrollment for students with a 2.5 GPA [or higher, one of the requirements] at UNM has doubled and CNM (Central New Mexico Community College) enrollment has tripled. A lot of times these are students that could not have gone to college otherwise, and often they are the first in their family to have that opportunity. There are 25 schools involved and the scholarships cover 100% of tuition."

GAMBLING continued on next page



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GAMBLING continued

She also notes that some of the 55 lottery-office employees went to school thanks to the scholarships, including several who design the very popular Scratchers.

She laughs when she says, "There is even a 'rocket scientist' who graduated from UNM and now works at Los Alamos." He actually received a nuclear engineering degree, she clarifies. But it's proof positive that the sky is the limit for some of the students.

Although it would seem that revenue from the lottery games would be higher than ever, due to so many economic woes in the country and folks trying to turn their fortunes around, sales have actually dipped a bit since the record high of \$43.6 million achieved in 2010.

Both Binns and Hamlin offer several good reasons for this, the most obvious being the fact that discretionary income for many has fallen off. Since playing the lottery is seen as a form of entertainment, it just isn't in the budget for as many people at this time.

"The economy has also forced a lot of store closures, as well," Binns adds. "Recently we lost 24 retailers in one day when the Redi Marts closed. We also have limited resources to use to engage with patrons. Our budget has fallen the last few years, but we maintain incredibly strict financial management."

All in all, the program seems to be working well and with few naysayers, Binns and Hamilton will get to have more of those "goose bump" moments when they receive new figures about students who graduate thanks to the program.

Tribal gaming, sometimes referred to by wags as "red man's revenge," has really taken off since its inception in 1988.

It actually began in 1979 and 1987 when two tribes—the Seminole of Florida and Cabazon Band in California, respectively—began to offer prizes in bingo games larger than those allowed under state laws. The matter ended up in federal court, which upheld the tribal arguments. In 1988, Congress then passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which requires the tribes to negotiate with state governments to create gambling rules, covering what can be played and making sure that only the tribes benefit.

It is a continuing and ongoing battle, but so far, the sovereignty of the tribal nations has endured. There are currently 473 casinos (24 in New Mexico) on Indian lands, operated by 241 of the 565

federally recognized tribes in 28 states. In 2011, an incredible \$27.2 billion in revenue was taken in by the tribal casinos.

New Mexico's first tribal casino opened in 1993, the Santa Ana Star, operated by the Santa Ana Pueblo, just north of Albuquerque.

The state and the tribes and pueblos have struggled to come to clear agreements over the required gaming compacts, an issue that at times in the early days

required casinos to close. The vote to allow the casinos by the state legislature itself was a nail-biter, since it was a tie at 34-34, until one representative changed her vote at the last minute. Called to task because of donations from tribal and gambling entities for her campaign, she remained resolute in her vote.

In recent years, tribes have made efforts to open up casinos in new areas of the state, both of these in southern New Mexico.

The Fort Sill (Oklahoma) Apache Nation continues to attempt to open a casino in southern New Mexico, near Deming on land that is owned by them, and at various times the Akela site has had slots and bingo games, poker, food and beer. (See "Akela's New Deal," February 2012.) The 700-member tribe is claiming that its 30 acres will be used for a casino and perhaps a hotel and that revenues will be used to acquire additional lands to "get our members to return" to New Mexico from Oklahoma, where the Apache were relocated. The tribal chair, Jeff Haozous, says, "The goal is to repatriate the tribe."

There has been opposition from the state, which claims that the Fort Sill band agreed not to open a casino when the land was put into trust a decade ago. Authorities cite a lack of support from other tribes or Pueblos, in particular the Mescalero Apache, who operate Inn of the Mountain Gods in Ruidoso. Sunland Park has to also come into play, as the racetrack was instrumental in the closure of a Tewa casino near El Paso a few years ago, by pulling strings with friendly Texas politicians.

Another hotly contested issue is the opening of a casino at Anthony, on the Texas-New Mexico border, by the Jemez people. The plan has been rejected several times, and has little support from other state tribes and pueblos. But the issue remains a hot button, with the Jemez publicists claiming that nearly 1,000 jobs could be created in the area and that, in spite of its proximity to Ruidoso and El Paso, the draw would be immense, creating an economic boon for the area. The

request was rejected again in the fall of 2011, but the Jemez-Anthony supporters have not given up as of yet.

No matter which end of the gambling issue that you look at, there are winners and losers. Tribal casinos have clearly helped many impoverished people get a new grip on life, but sometimes at the risk of harming others, such as people with gambling addictions. The state lottery has very little criticism and receives high marks for continuing its efforts in supporting education.

And isn't everything a gamble... from getting in your car to using that escalator that a stranger designed and another maintains? Or how about the stock market and going to a new doctor... whom do you trust?

As one of my heroes, Ambrose Bierce, said, "The gambling known as business looks with austere disfavor upon the business known as gambling." ❁

Longtime Desert Exposure Senior Writer Jeff Berg, who now lives in Santa Fe, says, "I'm back, taking a gamble that you'll want to read a few more articles that I am working on for Desert Exposure."

"This article barely touches on the complexity and history of gaming in New Mexico. There are numerous online resources available, especially an excellent eight-part series that ran in the Albuquerque Journal in 2005 (www.abqjournal.com/news/gambling; click on "Judging the Big Bet" to the right of the page)."



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CULTURAL CONNECTIONS • JAY W. SHARP

Museums on the Move

With the opening of a new Museum of Nature & Science, downtown Las Cruces is now home to four standout museums.



MoNaS' Magic Planet exhibit, with Pluto discoverer Clyde W. Tombaugh's telescope, the "Grazer Gazer," which he had mounted on a lawnmower base to make it more portable. (MoNaS photo)

With the addition of the Museum of Nature & Science (MoNaS) to the cultural complex in Las Cruces' rebounding downtown area—culminating more than a decade of planning and preparation and more than \$5 million in investment—the city will offer one of the richest and most diverse experiences in natural science, history and art in southern New Mexico or western Texas.

Museum of Nature & Science

Located proximate to the Branigan Culture Center and the Museum of Art and only a few blocks east of the Railroad Museum (situated at the original Las Cruces Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad Depot), MoNaS aims to "inspire curiosity about the sciences, facilitate life-long learning, and promote stewardship of the natural environment of the Chihuahuan Desert and southern New Mexico," according to the museum's most recent



annual report. MoNaS, under Director Michael Walczak, also serves as an interpretive center for our Chihuahuan Desert—one of the most varied but threatened landscapes in the nation.

Newly reopened and renamed after its move from Las Cruces' Mesilla Valley Mall, the former Museum of Natural History features a major new exhibit on the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument, located in the Robledo Mountains, north of Las Cruces. The monument, notes the Bureau of Land Management, contains "footprints of numerous amphibians, reptiles and insects (including previously unknown species), plants, and petrified wood dating back 280 million years, which collectively provide new opportunities to understand animal behaviors and environments

from a time predating dinosaurs. The site contains the most scientifically significant Early Permian track sites in the world." The museum will serve as an interpretive starting point for tours of the monument, which encompasses some 5,280 acres.

MoNaS also has a new, four-foot-diameter globe called the "Magic Planet." Controlled by a touch-screen display, the globe can track weather systems on earth and display detailed surface features of the sun and our solar system planets.

The MoNaS building itself serves as a significant exhibit because it now meets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, which promote environmentally sound, healthy, durable and affordable practices in structural design and construction. The building, owned by the city, enhances the museum's potential for grants.

Along with its new exhibits and innovative construction, the museum has significantly improved its animal habitat displays, and it has added a classroom and discovery laboratory for visitors.

In addition to exhibits, the museum offers numerous programs for children and adults who love nature and the sciences. These include, for a few examples, hands-on experiences with Chihuahuan Desert wildlife, plant life and geology; desert field trips with museum staff; science-book story time for three- to five-year olds and their parents; merit badge programs for Boy Scouts; night-sky discovery time with the New Mexico State University Astronomy Department; and monthly roundtable discussions with International Scientific Research Society members.



Exhibits at the new MoNaS: Left, a live 25-year-old common snapping turtle, one of more than two-dozen species in the museum's live animal exhibit. (Jay W. Sharp) Above: Part of the Trackways exhibit at the new MoNaS, with a cast of a dimetrodon skeleton. The exhibit includes tracks left by creatures of this species. (MoNaS photo)

Branigan Culture Center

Under Director Rebecca Slaughter, the Branigan Culture Center, housed in a structure listed on the national and state registries of historic buildings, maintains permanent exhibits on the prehistory and the four-and-a-half-century history of Las Cruces and the Mesilla Valley—a story that extends from Native American peoples to Spanish



Artist's concept of the new Museum of Nature & Science (MoNaS), located proximate to the Branigan Culture Center and the Museum of Art and only a few blocks east of the Railroad Museum. The city invested some \$3 million in the restoration and modernization of the building (not including the cost of moving and new and improved exhibits), once the location of the Bank of the Rio Grande.

conquistadores to Hispanic and Anglo settlers to space-age technology. It is a tale that vibrates to the ceremonial chanting of ancient shamans, the clatter of hoof beats, the screech of badly worn wagon wheels, the lowing of livestock, the rattling of armor, the tramp of Civil War soldiers, the cries of human conflict, the crack of musket and rifle fire, the thunder of mountain howitzers, the mournful call of passing trains, the hum of today's automobiles and trucks, and the occasional sound-barrier breakthroughs of modern military aircraft.

The Branigan exhibits, comprising artifacts, documents, narrative and historic photographs, recall the progression from the hardships of early travel and encampments along the Rio Grande to the dusty life in early small adobe homes in the valley to the vibrancy of our growing city and outlying communities of today.

In the course of a typical year, the museum hosts numerous exhibits featuring chapters in Western history as well as work by national, regional and local artists and craftsmen. Often in collaboration with organizations such as New Mexico State University, the Doña Ana Arts Council, the Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service and many others, Branigan offers various lecture series; Native American craft and lifestyle demonstrations; international cultural exchanges; after-school art, music and dance programs; and public concert and film presentations.

Museum of Art

The Las Cruces Museum of Art, says Director Lisa Pugh, "strives to engage and inspire its diverse audience through contemporary art exhibitions, public programming, and educational activities." It holds a growing permanent collection of contemporary art. It hosts changing contemporary art exhibits, including international, national, juried, traveling and invitational exhibits. It runs an extensive art studio class program for all ages.

The museum's permanent collection includes works by internationally and nationally recognized artists, particularly those who specialize in the Southwest and US/Mexican border regions. It includes paintings, sculptures, photographs, ceramics, mixed-media and other works.

Past traveling and special exhibitions have included, for a few examples, "Rodin in His Own Words"; "Sight Unseen: The Sculpture of Michael Naranjo"; "NASA/ART: 50 Years of Exploration"; and "T.I.M.E. (Temporary Installations made for the Environment)."

Current exhibitions include:

- "Photos of Mary Taylor" (December through February), which includes images produced by historian, author and photographer Mary Daniels Taylor, wife of well-known educator and state representative J. Paul Taylor. (Mary Taylor died in 2007 at the age of 85.)

- "Pueblo to Pueblo" (Dec. 7 through Feb. 18), which includes ceramic vessels produced by various Puebloan craftsmen during the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries, building on a tradition that began nearly 2000 years ago.

Upcoming exhibitions, says Pugh, include "Las Cruces Collects," artwork from private and corporate collections; "Elemental New Mexico," featuring artists whose works are influenced by the



Below: MoNaS's new exhibit on the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument, located in the Robledo Mountains, north of Las Cruces. (Left: MoNaS photo; right: Jay W. Sharp)



Above: The Branigan Culture Center, housed in a structure listed on the national and state registries of historic buildings. Right: Museum of Art, directly across a walkway from the Branigan Culture Center.



elements of the New Mexico landscape such as the earth, sky and water; and "The Floating World: Ukiyo-e Prints," a traveling exhibition of Edo-period Japanese prints. In addition, the museum hosts events such as the nationally recognized juried ceramics biennial From the Ground Up; the New Mexico State University Bachelor of Fine Arts exhibition; and the Las Cruces Public Schools' High School Graduating Seniors Show. All the museum's exhibitions are complemented by educational programming that includes lectures, musical performances, demonstrations, and/or guided and self-

Railroad Museum

Through exhibits and public programming, the Railroad Museum, says Education Curator Joanne Beer, promotes understanding and appreciation of the dramatic historical impact of railroading on the development of Las Cruces and the Mesilla Valley.

The museum, under the direction of Garland Courts, resides at the century-old Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Depot, which now stands as a symbol of the period when trains, drawn by steam engines, signaled the end of travel by horseback, wagons and coaches. The building, an exhibit in itself, ranks as one of the most significant historic sites in Las Cruces. It is listed in the National Registry of Historic Buildings.

In addition to displays on the life of railway workers, the museum devotes a room to model train layouts and display cases. The largest and most elaborate layout, crafted largely by volunteers over the past few years, depicts railroading in the Southwest in the middle of the 20th century. "It includes," according to the museum staff, "a switching yard, a vibrant downtown area featuring a few buildings from Las Cruces' past, and outlying farms and mountains." Some of the layouts offer children the fun of operating the model trains.

A major exterior exhibit, still under restoration, is a late 19th century wooden caboose, which crew members used for office space, rest and braking operations during their long trips across the country. The caboose, Courts says, retains its original conductor's desk, bunks, storage spaces, heater, sink, braking station and other reminders of life on the rails in the early late 19th century and early-to-mid 20th century. Once refurbished, the caboose will offer visitors an intimate glimpse of early railroading.



A 19th century wooden caboose, still under restoration, at the Railroad Museum. It served as a home-away-from-home for operators.

guided tours.

The museum adds another dimension to its promotion of the visual arts by offering educational studio programs for youngsters and adults. For instance, it hosts programs such as the After-School Art Explorers' Club, Homeschoolers' Art Adventures, Children's Ceramics and others for kids. It offers classes in painting, sculpture, ceramics and mixed media for adults. Its programs, which have drawn considerable interest, are taught by experienced instructors and artisans.

As Pugh says, the art museum serves as an anchor in the downtown cultural corridor.

At regularly scheduled times throughout the year, the museum hosts events for visitors of all ages. These include, for example, the Rail Readers Book Club

Puebloan Indian dancer sculpture, by Puebloan sculptor Michael Naranjo, whose work depicts the lives of his people. Located on the walkway between the Museum of Art and the Branigan Culture Center. (Photos this page by Jay W. Sharp)

MUSEUMS continued on next page

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MUSEUMS continued

meetings, Family Game Day, Story Time, National Model Railroad Association meetings, the Brown Bag Lecture series and the Dinosaur Trail program. The sessions offer opportunities to exchange ideas, explore history and simply have fun.

In April each year, the museum holds events to celebrate the region's railroading heritage—past, present and future. Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad bring in modern rolling stock available for display on the tracks immediately beside the museum. Harvey Girl re-enactors—recalling the famous waitresses of the pioneering Harvey House restaurant chain—will engage visitors inside the museum. Performers and vendors will man stages and booths outside the museum.

On the first Friday of each December—the seventh of the month this year—the museum celebrates the season with the highly festive and decorative Old Fashioned Holiday Display, which includes a Santa visit, kids' crafts, refreshments, music and a special holiday train display.

Lending a Hand

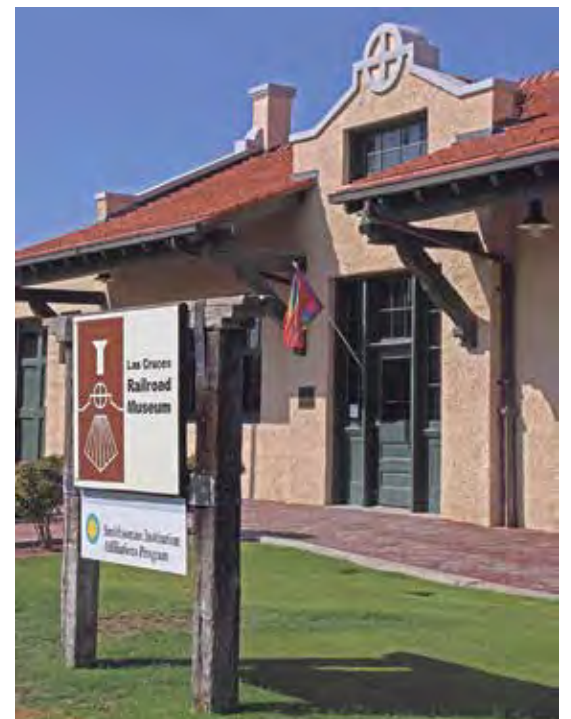
All four of the city museums benefit from the contributions from volunteers, who contributed more than 8,000 hours of service—a new record—last year. As Julie Hansen, volunteer coordinator, put it in the museums' 2011 annual report, "Volunteers have stepped in to make it possible to maintain the quality of our exhibits and programs."

The volunteers, she added, lead visitor tours, facilitate exhibit development and maintenance, help coordinate and supervise public programs, support administrative work, and even provide facility renovation and maintenance support.

Meanwhile, Hansen said, the museums all foster growing relationships with New Mexico State University, the Senior Programs Volunteer Center, the Court Youth Center and Alma d'arte Charter High School. The museums also provide regular internships for students from the university's art, history and anthropology departments as well as the Museum Studies program.

Promise for the Future

Notably, this past summer, all four of Las Cruces' museums—which, collectively, attract more than a quarter of a million visits a year—became Smithsonian Institution Affiliates. This means that all the museums, under the over-



The Railroad Museum, located in the century-old Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Depot on North Mesilla Street. (Photos by Jay W. Sharp)

all guidance and direction of Will Ticknor, now meet the Smithsonian's demanding standards for policies, exhibitions and programming. This gives direct access to the know-how and skills of Smithsonian curators and experts. The museums can now borrow from the Smithsonian's extensive collections for specially scheduled exhibit materials.

That bodes well for the future and for Las Cruces' continued downtown revitalization.

The Museum of Nature and Science, the Branigan Cultural Center and the Museum of Art are



Railroad Museum volunteers touching up the model train exhibit.

all located on North Main, at the north end of the Downtown Mall in Las Cruces. They are all open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Railroad Museum, located at 351 N. Mesilla St., next to the railroad tracks, is open Thursday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Learn more about the museums online at www.las-cruces.org/museums.

Jay W. Sharp is a Las Cruces author who is a regular contributor to *DesertUSA*, an Internet magazine, and who is the author of *Texas Unexplained*, now available as an e-book from Amazon or iTunes. To read his guides to wildlife of the Southwest, see www.desertexposure.com/wildlife.



Railroad Museum's model train exhibit, crafted largely by volunteers.

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Waiting for Rain

Drought in Chihuahua, plus helping hands in Palomas.

The state of Chihuahua, in its most extreme drought in its modern history, is still waiting for rain.

US ranchers in western states have been going through a lot of angst because of the drought there. Mexican ranchers in the same weather system, but without all the safeguards US ranchers enjoy, have had to watch their cattle die and leave their rumpled bodies throughout the landscape.

The Mexican agency that produces national statistics, INEGI, recorded that 350,000 cattle died in Chihuahua in 2012.

Betty Jurado, who helps distribute food in Palomas, told me friends of hers saw 20 cattle dead in Madera, a couple hours southwest of Casas Grandes. But the director of the stockyards in Palomas, Ignacio Montoya, says most of Chihuahua's cattle are near Chihuahua City, so you don't see dead cattle near the border. And a lot of ranches are located far from the main roads.

Chihuahua Governor Cesar Duarte has announced that according to the National Water Commission, Chihuahua is the Mexican state hardest hit by drought.

As a sign of the tensions produced by the drought in Chihuahua, Ismael Solorio Urrutia and his wife Manuela Martha Solis were gunned down on Oct. 22. They were found in a field near a Mennonite colony in Cuauhtemoc, a city about an hour west of Chihuahua City.

Ismael was a founding member of the Chihuahua chapter of the small farmers' group called Barzonistas. He and his wife lived in Buenaventura, a half-hour or so south of Casas Grandes. They had driven from their home to Cuauhtemoc that day.

Longtime leftist activist Victor Quintana wrote that Solorio had just about a week earlier been a vocal prosector of the mine that Canadian MAG Silver Corp. operates in his ejido called Benito Juarez. He was afterwards beaten by mine employees. Quintana calls Solorio and his wife "the first two victims of the war in defense of water and natural resources."

He claims that Solorio was "subject to a media and political lynching" before he was killed.

There's also speculation that their death had to do with the conflict brewing over Mennonites digging wells in Chihuahua, especially since that's where the bodies were found.

The conflict had been brewing throughout the summer. Mennonites living near Cuauhtemoc have always been known to be well off. But in recent years their farms have turned into high-tech agribusinesses that are still expanding and creating new wells, even during the drought.

The Mennonite colonies near the border are poorer and the people are less educated, with five or six years of school being the norm. But Ignacio Montoya told me that the colony of Buenavista, west of Ascension, has been booming economically.

In the past when I've asked poor Mexicans what they thought of Mennonites, they invariably answered, "They're very hardworking." They've been liked and respected, but the relationship may be wearing thin.

The Barzonistas claim the wells are illegal and have on several occasions, with the support of the state water agency CONAGUA, shut down Mennonite wells and broken their dams because other wells were going dry. The Mennonites respond that they've paid tens of thousands of dollars to get the permits but CONAGUA employees have pocketed the money.

On July 2, Pinos Altos writer Tom Barry, a *Desert Exposure* contributor, was present at one of the well shutdowns. A number of police were there and asked him to give them his camera. Several Barzonistas came forward to protect Barry, and the police shot in the air and at the farmers' feet. The situation is hot and isn't likely to cool off soon.

There are good things going on in Palomas now and all year, more than can be included in this article. For anyone in Palomas or the US who wants to come, there will be a dinner on Saturday afternoon, Dec. 8, at the Casa de Amor, run by a coalition of New Mexico churches. Afterwards there will be a gift giveaway for children.

This is what used to be called the "orphanage," until the Mexican government got on their case because that's not what it ever really was. The Casa de Amor will now be called the "Refuge for Abused and Abandoned Children." The place was shut down for a while and the kids will come back after some changes have been made.

In Palomas there are government programs of *despensas*, or food portions, that are given to some poor families, and the Columbus elementary schools sometimes send home food with Palomas kids who especially need it. All the organizations listed by *Desert Exposure* can always use donations. The need is bottomless.

There's a new organization listed called the Asilo para Ancianos. Reina Cisneros years ago started taking elderly people into her own home to care for them, and she's always in need of a whole list of things—food, adult diapers, sheets, detergent, Clorox, soap, toilet paper and so forth. Send to: Reina de Cisneros, PO Box 981, Columbus, NM 88029.

The Casa de Amor always trucks down at least 1,000 pounds of beans from Santa Fe every month. They give out a *despensa* of beans, rice, sugar and cooking oil to many families, and leave what's left over at a few churches. But I've often

heard people in Palomas say they get to the churches after they've run out of food.

Casa de Amor has a new program of scholarships for children in elementary school through high school—128 for Palomas and 36 in the three little towns a half-hour south of Palomas. Individuals donating to a child will be paying for tuition, a school uniform and shoes, and will get a photo of that child.

Some people say the food situation is the same in Palomas as it has been for a few years, and some say it's a little worse, partly because of the drought. But either way, people are very tired of not having work.

Some are lucky and catch a ride on trucks to do fieldwork in other states—Sinaloa, Guanajuato or maybe Veracruz. But most stay put.

I've asked a few people if anybody goes to work in the growing maquiladora industry in Juarez, and they wrinkle their noses and say, "*Es muy feo*" (it's very nasty).

The growth of factory work and tourism appears to be the only hope for economic growth in Palomas. Until then they'll be soaking up donations like a dry sponge. ❧

Borderlines columnist Marjorie Lilly lives in Deming.



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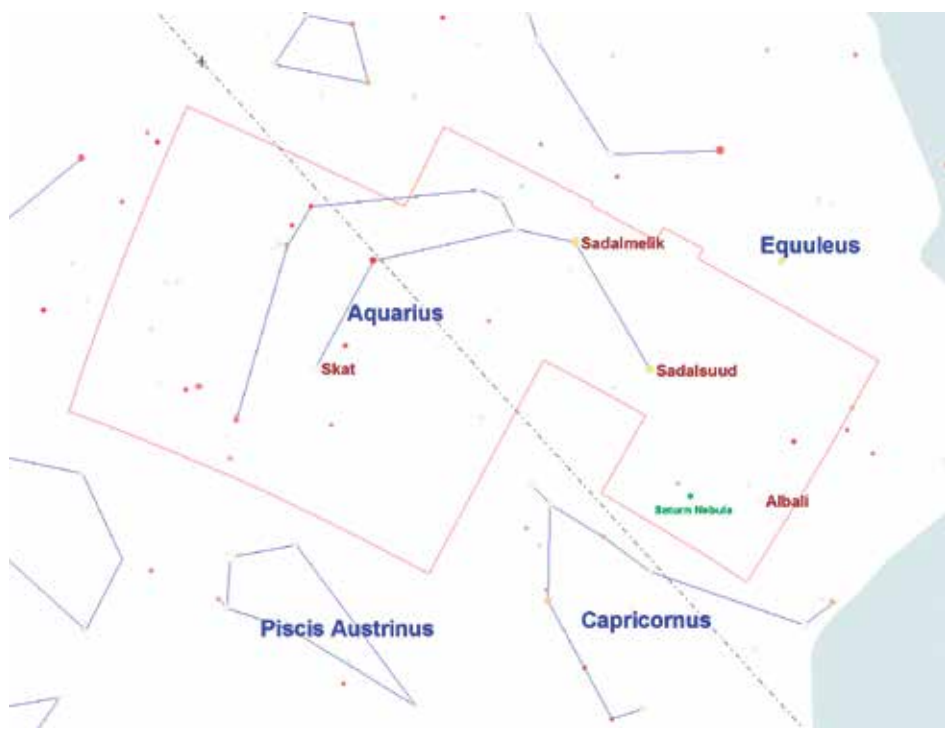
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THE STARRY DOME • BERT STEVENS

Aquarius, the Water Bearer

Plus the planets for December.



Aquarius is the 10th largest constellation in our sky. It is starting to head toward the western horizon on December evenings, so it appears here as tipped downward. This constellation portrays a water bearer and is one of the “water signs” of the zodiac. The Sun currently goes through this constellation in late February and early March, but thousands of years ago when the constellations were named, the Sun passed through here in January. That is the rainy season in the Mideast, leading to this constellation being associated with flowing water, like the annual flooding of the Nile in Egypt.

For a larger, printable version of this map, visit www.desertexposure.com

Aquarius, the Water Bearer, is in a section of the sky unofficially called the Sea. This is an area where there are many water-related constellations, including sea-goats, dolphins, fish and whales. From the Greek tradition, this constellation is called the water bearer, but the human figure holding a vase is usually omitted on sky maps, leaving only the vase to pour water onto Piscis Austrinus (the Southern Fish). This constellation is much older, yet still has a relationship to water.

For the Babylonians, this constellation is asso-

ciated with the 11th book of the “Epic of Creation,” which corresponds to Aquarius, the 11th constellation of the zodiac. The other books of the Epic correspond numerically to the other constellations of the zodiac as well. For the Babylonians, Aquarius is associated with January-February, which they called the Curse of Rain, the time of their rainy season. The Egyptians named this constellation the “Lord of Canals” some 15,000 years ago because the annual Nile floods were at their height when the Sun entered Aquarius.

The Hindu zodiac shows this constellation as the “Water Pitcher,” implying that their zodiac was derived from the Greeks. The Chinese had their own zodiac, where Aquarius was called in part the “Army of Yu-Lin” (Yu-lin-kiun)—an army of many light-footed soldiers (Yu-Lin means “feathers and forests”). Also in Aquarius is the Fou-youe, an axe-like weapon sometimes used for hostage executions.

Among the stars of Aquarius is the planetary nebula NGC 7009, more commonly known as the Saturn Nebula. Planetary nebulae are so called because in early telescopes, their filled disc made them look like planets, but they did not have the sharp edges of a planet and they did not move. Modern astronomy has discovered these are actually the outer atmosphere of an older star, sloughed off near the end of the star’s life. So even though they are not actually planets, planetary nebulae are associated with a star at or near the center of the nebula; thus they are in a sense planetary.

The Saturn Nebula was discovered by William Herschel on Sept. 7, 1782. Lord Rosse named it in the 1840s when telescopes had improved to the point where its Saturn-like shape could be seen. The Saturn Nebula has two jet-like streams shooting outward from either side, giving it a superficial resemblance to the Ringed Planet. The nebula is rather bright, with an apparent magnitude of 8.0.

The star that created this nebula is 20 times brighter than our Sun. The ultraviolet light it emits strikes the oxygen atoms in the surrounding nebula, energizing them. When the oxygen atoms release this energy, they do so in the green portion of the spectrum characteristic of oxygen emissions. This gives the Saturn Nebula the green color astronomers see in their telescopes.

Since this is an isolated star, it is hard to tell how far away this nebula is from the Earth. Astronomers usually use “standard candles”—objects with a brightness we know based on other physical measurements. For example, all Cepheid variable stars that pulsate with the same period have the same brightness. If we measure how bright a Cepheid appears from Earth, we can compute its distance. Similarly, Type Ia supernovae have roughly the same brightness at their peak, so we can use them in the same way.

The Saturn Nebula belongs to an isolated star in

Watch the Skies

(all times MST)

- Dec. 2,** 7 p.m.—Jupiter at opposition
- Dec. 4,** 4 p.m.—Mercury greatest distance west of Sun (21 degrees)
- Dec. 6,** 8:31 a.m.—Last Quarter Moon
- Dec. 13,** 1:42 a.m.—New Moon
- 5 p.m.—Geminid Meteor Shower peaks
- Dec. 19,** 10:19 p.m.—First Quarter Moon
- Dec. 21,** 4:12 a.m.—December Solstice, northern hemisphere winter begins
- Dec. 28,** 3:21 a.m.—Full Moon

space and there are no other stars that are associated with it, so we can only guess its distance—around 3,900 light-years. This would translate the 41 second-of-arc by 35 second-of-arc size of nebula we see from Earth to being roughly half a light-year across.

The Planets for December

Mars will be near the star Nunki as the month begins. Still in the evening sky, Mars is slowly losing its race to stay ahead of the Sun as both run eastward. This month, Mars travels from central Sagittarius into western Capricornus. At mid-month, the God of War sets around 7 p.m. Mars’ disc is a tiny 4.2 seconds-of-arc across, making it difficult to view features with a telescope. As it gets dark, Mars will be 16 degrees up in the west-southwest, still shining at magnitude +1.2.

The King of the Gods reaches opposition on Dec. 3, and will be visible all night. This is the best time to look at **Jupiter** with a telescope, since its apparent size is the largest it will be for another year. Jupiter is in Taurus, shining at magnitude -2.8, and its disc is 48.4 seconds-of-arc across. Jupiter will be best viewed around midnight, when it is highest in the sky.

In the morning sky, **Saturn** now rises before Venus, coming over the east-southeastern horizon around 3:15 a.m. Starting the month in far eastern Virgo, Saturn moves eastward into western Libra on Dec. 6, where it spends the rest of the month. The Rings are tilted down 18.4 degrees with the northern face showing and are 36.0 seconds-of-arc across. The planet’s disc is 15.9 seconds-of-arc across and it shines at magnitude +0.7.

Venus starts the month in western Libra, heading eastward over the panhandle of Scorpius and into south-central Ophiuchus, where it ends the month. Venus rises at 5 a.m. in the east-southeast, shining at magnitude -4.0. Its disc is 11.2 seconds-of-arc across, almost full at 91% illumination as Venus starts to swing around the far side of the Sun. Venus is 16 degrees above the southeastern horizon as it gets light.

As the month begins, **Mercury** is seven degrees below and left of Venus. The two planets will stay approximately this far apart until nearly the end of the month, when Mercury leaves Venus behind. Traveling eastward, Mercury begins the month in central Libra, crossing the panhandle of Scorpius and all of Ophiuchus and finally ending the month in western Sagittarius. Shining at magnitude -0.5, Mercury rises around 5:30 a.m. The Messenger of the Gods has a disc only 5.5 seconds-of-arc across, 84% illuminated at midmonth. Mercury is also going around the far side of the Sun. Mercury is 10 degrees above the east-southeastern horizon as it gets light on December mornings.

The astronomical season of winter begins on Dec. 21 at 4:12 a.m. when the Sun reaches its southernmost declination (latitude) of the year. Due to the eccentricity of the Earth’s orbit, the earliest sunset will occur on Dec. 3, while the latest sunrise will occur on Jan. 8. Nevertheless, the longest night will be on Dec. 20-21, the night of the Solstice. This will give you plenty of time to observe the heavens, so stay warm and “keep watching the sky”!

An amateur astronomer for more than 40 years, Bert Stevens is co-director of Desert Moon Observatory in Las Cruces.



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BODY, MIND & SPIRIT • MARGARET ANDERSEN

Taking Care

A new support group helps those in Grant County caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's and dementia.

This is my story and the story of every caregiver to those with dementia.

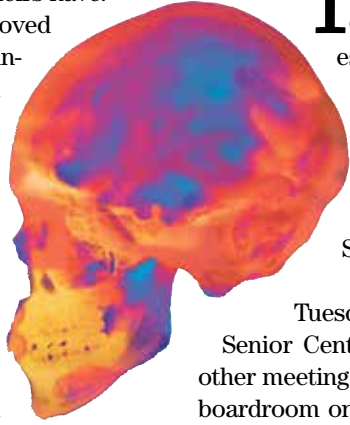
In 2006 my husband was diagnosed at the Mayo Clinic as having "cognitive impairment"—the non-definitive description of a tragic physical/medical condition. Alzheimer's disease cannot factually be diagnosed except through the autopsy of the brain.

The incidence of Alzheimer's disease is growing at an epidemic rate in America. More than 5.5 million Americans have the disease and a new person is diagnosed every 72 seconds. One in eight "baby boomers" will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's—more than 10 million in the US alone. There are more than 40,000 New Mexicans living with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

The family members affected by Alzheimer's are beyond count. These families need much in community support. They need to relate with others whose lives have changed as theirs have. They need adult day care for their loved ones. They need community volunteer workers who will give them some respite.

There are many reasons for and manifestations of cognitive impairment and dementia. I had no knowledge or experience with any of them. I did my research. I learned as much as I could. I managed as well as I could. I did my best. Caregivers learn their "best" never seems to be quite good enough.

I heard from a friend how great she felt the Alzheimer's support group was that she had attended in California. She spoke of what emotional support it truly was. She spoke of how much the caregivers learned from each other, and what a special bond was formed by the sharing of their experiences. I had never belonged to any support group, but I did know I needed support.



"The worst thing is we have lost our shared memories."
"The worst thing is she can't remember our children's names."

hand." "I wanted to die when my wife woke up and didn't recognize me." "I feel so guilty and angry at myself when I lose my patience." "The worst thing is we have lost our shared memories." "The worst thing is she can't remember our children's names." "The worst thing is she can't remember they are her children." "The worst thing is..."—there is always one more "worst thing." And every time a caregiver thinks she or he has a handle on it, everything changes, and their state of always feeling overwhelmed and exhausted expands in those increments.

The bottom line is no one can understand what living with any type of dementia is like unless you are living with it. The emotional stress caregivers suffer is not commonly recognized by others—except other caregivers.

In my attendance at Maia's six-week course and at the Southern Regional Caregivers Conference in Las Cruces on June 30, I was made even more aware of the greater need for a support group here. Some of those who attended the course formed the core of a newly founded local Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Support Group.

We started with meeting each Tuesday from 1-3 p.m. at the Silver City Senior Center's library. We recently added another meeting at the Gila Regional Medical Center boardroom on Saturday from 10 a.m.-noon to accommodate as many as possible who would want to attend.

All attending our meetings need to know that their views and feelings will be respected and what they say, what they share, is personal, private and confidential. Informational materials about many Alzheimer's/dementia related topics are available at the meetings and we will have guest speakers and educational movies on occasion.

The remarkable people with Gila Regional Medical Center's Health and Hospice—Siri Khalsa, Kathryn Schmid and Connie Hostetler—have been incredible advocates and supporters of this caregivers group. They have been totally engaged and have given and continue to give every assistance they are able to. Through their advocacy we now have a second facilitator besides myself, John Reeves, a retired hospice worker who devotes much time to various community services.

All of us are aware many might like to attend the Caregivers Support Group meetings but are unable to as they have no one to take care of those they care for. According to Arminda Martinez of the Volunteer Center of Grant County, there is a long waiting list for such volunteers. ❀

For more information regarding the Silver City & Grant County Caregivers Support Group, phone Maggie Andersen at (575) 388-4539 or John Reeves at (575) 590-0078. To contact the Volunteer Center, phone (575) 388-2988.

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT continued on next page

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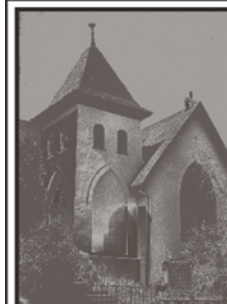
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BODY, MIND & SPIRIT • BINA BREITNER

The Lure of Co-Dependence

Why we agree to be used.

If someone drinks too much or uncontrollably, he “depends” on alcohol. His “co-dependent” girlfriend lends him money (with which he buys more liquor), hides his mess from the neighbors, calls in sick for him, and otherwise “enables” his addiction. She becomes a collaborator, supporting his addiction like a co-pilot. He doesn’t have to face the consequences of his behavior.

The co-dependent person may recognize her (or his) role. She’s probably angry at the fellow she’s enabling, and certainly angry at herself—*why is she selling herself short?* It’s obvious that he benefits from being with her, but why does *she* stick around?

The reality is that, in her own way, she depends on him and on her role with him. They are truly co-dependent. For example:

Meg’s husband, Joe, can’t hold a job. He always has a plausible reason—the economy is changing; the boss is sadistic; the work is beneath him; an injury keeps him from continuing, etc. The result is the same: Joe is unemployed again, and they’re living on her income.

Meg and Joe both believe that she is strong and he is weak. So do her friends. (“What is such a capable woman doing with him?”) Meg knows she’s not standing up for herself: She doesn’t insist he pull his financial weight. Instead, she compensates for his wobbly work pattern, and he doesn’t feel the financial consequences of not working.

Meg grinds her teeth as she takes on a second job, but she figures she loves him and Joe is Joe. He’s never been a strong earner. If she regrets his financial unreliability, well, she made her choice, they’re a family, and life with him is better than life without him. She tells herself he’s doing his best, the mortgage has to be paid, the family can’t go hungry. And he has many good qualities, and sometimes he stays employed for more than a year at a time, and some financial help is better than none.... All true.

Their marriage looks like a plausible set of compromises, a steady (if unhealthy) fit. But co-dependent relationships aren’t static; they depend for their vitality on secret negotiations. For instance, Joe and Meg have silently agreed on a game of projection: He assigns her (“projects” onto her) the role of a savior, and she accepts it. Of course she isn’t a savior; she’s just another person. But she grew up “saving” her mother from depression, compensating for her mother’s erratic emotional availability. When Joe offered her the role, she



agreed to put on her familiar costume and speak her lines.

She’s adept at it. First with her mother, and now with Joe, she makes the other person’s needs her priority, pushing her own needs aside. Meg is “just glad she has the strength to deal with whatever the family is going through.”

For his part, Joe still struggles with a bind imposed on him by his powerful and angry father. Dad needed to be the best; Joe got the message that he had to be secondary. But then Dad criticized Joe’s “lack of character and discipline.” Joe couldn’t resolve the contradiction: his father’s covert instruction to be unsuccessful, followed by the open disdain of, “Why aren’t you doing well? What’s the matter with you?” Joe still feels helpless; he’s never managed to earn his father’s approval or leave the bind. He knows he’s a loser; he needs help.

Of course, that fits right in with Meg’s training. She understands Joe’s unhappiness and agrees he was treated unfairly. She recognizes it wasn’t his fault. Maybe she can make the difference in his life. She tries to improve Joe’s self-esteem, just as she tried to lift her mother’s misery. She isn’t having much luck, but that doesn’t mean she should stop trying.

So, back to the question. Meg provides financial help, compensation for Joe’s inability to hold a job, and encouragement. Without her, he’d land in jail, or go broke, or lose his car insurance, forfeit the children’s affection, etc. But what does Meg get by propping up Joe?

Obviously, she gets a sense of *value*. He needs her, and she makes a big difference in his life.

How did she learn that her value came through providing for others? Like most enablers, she learned it in her family. Meg grew up being “parentified”—that is, functioning as the family’s emotional “parent” even though she was still a child. Her mom and dad stayed married, and they looked like the people in charge, but the mother was depressed and the father mostly absent. They had minimal emotional energy available for Meg.

Meg tried to be important to them by giving. Her mother did feel loved by Meg, less alone. Depression kept her from responding in kind, but she said things like, “You’re such a darling girl...what would I do without you?” Clearly Meg was meant to keep giving. It felt good to be appreciated.



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Her father wasn't home much. Life was better at the office, because his wife was depressed, the children were a bother, and he had work to do. Meg's attentions to his wife reduced his family duties, and he, too, thanked Meg for her generosity. Meg's conditioning (if I give, I'm loved) was reinforced. No one spoke the hidden threat: if I *don't* give, I will not be loved.

Giving to others—especially if they appreciate it or the gift makes a difference—is gratifying. But there's the question of proportion: An enabler, like Meg, usually has been trained to give too much to others and keep too little for themselves. How could Meg have known her parents were supposed to be attending to *her* needs, and not the other way around? She didn't know she was giving too much. In her little world, it was just right. This was her job, and she did it willingly and well. She still does. That's how she knows she matters.

Less obviously, enabling also gives Meg her *identity*. Meg watched out for her parents' moods, what they needed, what they might like from her, what expectations she was supposed to fulfill. Her emotional attention was on what *they* felt and needed. She believed she was making a difference (even if nothing ever changed).

This concern with other people's needs has made Meg kind of empty inside. Since the vast majority of her emotional energy is devoted to understanding the people she's helping, she knows much more about them she does about herself. For years, she's identified with how to help her parents; now she identifies with how to help Joe. This role gives her a sense of who she is.

Of course, it isn't an authentic Meg; it's a role. If you ask her how *she* feels about something, she starts talking about how the situation looks, who needs what, and what she might do to help. Meg knows herself as a link in other people's systems—which everyone is, but not to such a great extent. If

you take away from her the role of assisting others, *she doesn't know herself*.

Again, the problem is in the proportion. Caring for others, identifying with their needs, is part of empathy, of relating to people who matter to us. It's good. But not to the extent of neglecting your own feelings, needs and perceptions.

It's like the airplane instructions about putting on your own oxygen mask, then helping others. They don't tell you to put on your own mask and ignore other passengers. You really are more helpful to others if you're properly taking care of yourself. Similarly, you can love others more richly and fully when your needs and feelings are attended to. If you've been enabling, you're barely aware of your own need for the oxygen mask and very concerned for your neighbor's. But then, that's what you do. It's "who you are."

She's probably angry at the fellow she's enabling, and certainly angry at herself—why is she selling herself short?

Furthermore, Meg gets a sense of *safety*. Since helping others is both her primary value and her identity, she's scared of standing on her own. Paradoxically, being less of a person, being subsumed in another person's needs and identity, makes her feel protected and less

exposed. If she stops compensating for Joe's job instability and unreliable financial contributions—if she tells him the rules have changed and he has to come up with his share of the money and work—would he still "love" her? Wouldn't he feel betrayed, angry and alienated? Might that end the marriage? And wouldn't she feel like a bad, unsympathetic person?

In sum, Joe isn't the only one who gets something out of this co-dependent relationship. Clearly, he gets a wife who helps him, and he never has to grow up. But Meg gets something, too: a husband who keeps her busy as the helper, thereby providing her with a sense of identity and of worth, and the false security that he'll never leave because he

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT continued on next page

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VOLUNTEER CORNER

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT continued

needs her. She doesn't have to stand on her own or develop as a differentiated person. She doesn't have to grow up, either.

There's another level on which they've secretly agreed: Both are scared of emotional intimacy. As long as they stay buried within their roles, they have a "cover" for their fear of being close to another human being. Roles are not personal.

It's understandable that both would fear intimacy. With his father, Joe couldn't win for losing: Winning (taking initiative) meant he challenged his father and lost the father's "love"; losing (staying secondary) meant he was "a loser." Who would want to stay close to that bind, or risk re-creating it? Better to hide out in his role as Meg's "weak" husband, even if it makes him irritable.

Meg suspects she's a failure, because she's never been able to fix her mother's depression, and her efforts to prop up Joe aren't working, either. She, too, is angry, but her role as an enabler soothes her sense of inadequacy and emptiness. She has a job to do! Real intimacy, by contrast, would involve knowing how helpless she's been to heal the people she loves. Better to hide out in her role as Joe's "strong" wife.

You can see how enticing a co-dependent relationship is. Within it, you can avoid the pain and helplessness of important early relationships. You never could figure out how to make things better, and you found, instead, a role in which you were busy with other things—like how to stop being a loser (Joe), or how to fix the loser and his low self-esteem (Meg). It's wonderfully self-reinforcing: Both people get distance from what they don't know how to deal with, and the roles are well balanced. The only problem is that both are trapped in performances, neglecting their own lives and what they deserve.

What to do? Meg can vow to become conscious of her enabling role and train herself to stop sliding into it. That's good. It's still a defense, a clenched fist ("I will not be co-dependent!"), and she hasn't really learned anything about her own or Joe's growing up, but at least she's challenging the old behaviors.

If both people are interested and willing to take the deeper journey, they can start telling the truth. Joe can acknowledge and work through the bind his father put him in, gradually finding his own voice. He can admit how demoralized he's felt for years, not holding onto jobs, not knowing how to do better, not earning enough, being dependent on Meg, knowing how he looks to other people. He can confess how comfy it is to shirk responsibilities, how scared he is of real intimacy, and how much he secretly suspects Meg depends on him to be the "weak" one, because it makes her feel needed.

Meg can recognize out loud how little sense of self she has, other than as someone else's support. She can admit that the kind of help she's been try-



ing to provide is beyond her capacities. (No matter how good a girl she was, she could never fix her mother's depression; neither can she work through Joe's history for him.) She can rage at having done such a good job as an enabler, only to learn it was the wrong job.

She can acknowledge how much she's resented the "savior" role—all that extra work, to no avail, and what about her? Who's been thinking of what she needs? She can own up to how scared she is of real intimacy: Who would love her if she really shows up, with needs of her own and limits to how helpful she wants to be?

And she'll have to admit she's offended Joe by propping him up. She's been treating him like a child, assuming he can't cope as an adult. She's actually contributed to his distorted view of himself, believing, with him, that he can't make it without her support. You don't do that to someone you love. She didn't realize, of course; she was just trying to help...


Both of them need to recognize that all these behaviors and limitations are no one's fault. Meg's parents, Joe's parents, Meg and Joe... everyone is doing *they* best they know how. That's part of why Meg is stuck in her role. If Joe were good at holding a job but refused to do it, that would be a different story. But he really is trying. He doesn't understand his quasi-paralysis, and Meg truly does sympathize, just as she sympathized with her mother's depression.

And both can acknowledge how well the pieces fit together—it's been a very stable system. Now they can decide to review their prior negotiations, projections and agreements, this time in the service not of hiding but of developing as separate, vital people.


It's good if both of them want to do the work, but it isn't essential. A relationship is interactive, so if one person changes the rules, the other has to react. Whoever gets fed up first can begin. The outcome isn't guaranteed, except for one thing: The more you "tell it like it is" to yourself, the freer, stronger and happier you get. With any luck, the other person will want some of that, too. ✂

Bina Breitner, MA, is a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) in private practice at 808 W. 8th St. in Silver City. She can be reached at (575) 538-4380.

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BODY, MIND & SPIRIT • MEGAN HIRT

Stopping the Sniffles

19 natural ways to prevent and treat colds and flu.

We all know the signs of a cold or flu settling in, about to derail us—however temporarily—from our day-to-day lives. In the United States, we spend billions every year trying to knock out these maladies, but most of that money goes to treatments that only suppress symptoms and do little to spur healing.

With natural cold and flu remedies, you can save money, take control of your health, and trim your time spent feeling under the weather this cold and flu season. Here are some natural ways to start beating the sniffles:

Cough and sneeze into your elbow—Instead of covering your cough with your hand, turn your head and cough into your elbow, which will sequester a virus just as well. Your elbow, however, is far less likely than your hands to come in contact with people or surfaces.

Wash up often—The more frequently you wash your hands, the lower your risk of becoming sick. Remember: Colds and flu are caused by viruses—not bacteria—so banking on antibacterial soap as a safeguard against colds and flu won't be effective. Studies have shown that washing your hands with an antibacterial soap is no better at preventing infectious illnesses than scrubbing with plain soap and water.

Hands off your face—A 2008 study from the University of California-Berkeley found that the typical person makes the hand-to-face connection an average of 16 times per hour. If you refrain from touching your eyes, nose and lips, you drastically reduce the likelihood of a virus entering your body.

Avoid touching surfaces others touch—Encourage your workplace to outfit bathroom doors with foot-operated openers that allow for a hands-free exit. Block contact with faucets, door handles and other heavily trafficked surfaces in public restrooms by cloaking your grip in a paper towel.

Consider copper surfaces—A 2009 study from Selly Oak Hospital in England found that frequently touched items in a hospital setting that were made of copper harbored up to 95% fewer microorganisms compared with the same items made of standard materials such as stainless steel. Numerous follow-up studies of copper's antiviral properties indicate copper surfaces could be an effective means of reducing the spread of colds and flu if this prevention tactic were widely adopted.

Get regular exercise—While colder weather may trigger an urge to curl up in the sedentary comfort of a blanket, moving your body will actually boost its immune function. Everyday chores such as raking leaves or shoveling snow can count as moderate-intensity exercise.



Astragalus, an antiviral and immune-strengthening herb, has been a principal player in traditional Chinese medicine for millennia. (Photo: Tigerente)

contracted considerably fewer colds. In his book *The Green Pharmacy*, Dr. James A. Duke suggests a daily dose of about one teaspoon ginseng steeped in a cup of boiling water to make a tea.

Eleuthero (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*)—Also known as “Siberian ginseng,” this herb isn't related to ginseng but has similar effects, including immune-boosting antiviral action. Take daily as a tea of about one teaspoon eleuthero root steeped in one cup boiling water.

Mushrooms—Maitake mushrooms (*Gri-fola frondosa*), reishi mushrooms (*Ganoderma lucidum*) and shiitake mushrooms (*Lentinula edodes*) rev up the immune system to defend against a number of viruses. Maitake mushrooms aren't easy to find fresh, so try ordering them dried (www.oregonmushrooms.com is one mail-order source). Reishi mushrooms are rather unpleasant-tasting and aren't used as a food (take them as capsules instead), but go ahead and eat your fill of robust, scrumptious shiitakes.

Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*)—This antiviral and immune-strengthening herb has been a principal player in traditional Chinese medicine for millennia. In *Herbal Antibiotics*, author Stephen Harrod Buhner recommends a daily pot of tea containing two to three ounces astragalus root.

BODY, MIND & SPIRIT continued on next page

Scientific research supports the use of the following herbs to help stave off colds and flu.

Garlic (*Allium sativum*)—Crushing or cutting garlic cloves generates a sulfur compound known as allicin, which has antiviral, antibacterial and anti-fungal properties and is often credited as the star component that gives garlic its all-around stellar healing repertoire. Allicin is available only from raw garlic, however, so choose a preparation that calls for it raw, or add garlic at the end of cooking to tap its full medicinal power.

Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*, *P. quinquefolius*)—In a 2005 study, Canadian researchers gave 279 adults either a daily placebo or 400 milligrams a day of ginseng. Four months later, the ginseng group had

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BODY, MIND & SPIRIT continued

Should your prevention measures fall short—and they likely will at some point—try these natural means to lessen a cold or flu's impact and duration:

Chicken soup—In a laboratory study published in 2000, University of Nebraska researchers found chicken soup eased the inflammation of throat cells that can cause cold symptoms. The researchers weren't able to identify a precise ingredient responsible for the alleviation, but they theorized a combination of the soup's components working together gave it its benefit. The recipe tested featured chicken broth, onions, sweet potatoes, parsnips, turnips, carrots, celery stems, parsley, salt and pepper.

Ginseng—In addition to ginseng's value in cold prevention, research from the University of Connecticut also showed ginseng cut severity of cold symptoms in half.

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)—Ginger contains chemicals known as sesquiterpenes that specifically fight rhinoviruses, the leading cause of the common cold. Dr. Duke recommends concocting a soothing ginger tea by pouring boiling water over two tablespoons of fresh, shredded ginger root.

Juniper (*Juniperus spp*)—Juniper berries boast a powerful antiviral compound known as de-



Ginger contains chemicals known as sesquiterpenes that specifically fight rhinoviruses, the leading cause of the common cold. (Photo: Frank C. Müller)

oxy-podophyllotoxin. For upper-respiratory tract infections, Buhner advises turning to the woods-smelling essential oil of juniper. Place 8 to 10 drops of juniper essential oil in water in a one-ounce nasal spray bottle. Use four to six times per day, shaking the mixture before each use.

Hot drinks and honey—Honey coats the throat and relieves irritation while its antioxidant and antimicrobial properties go to work fighting viral infections. Try Buhner's Colds and Flu Tea: two tablespoons ginger juice, juice of one-quarter lime, pinch cayenne pepper, one tablespoon honey, and hot water.

Horhound (*Marrubium vulgare*), **licorice** (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) and **slippery elm** (*Ulmus rubra*)—Each of this trio provides remarkable relief for sore throats. Try a tea of licorice root and slippery elm bark, and put horhound leaves to work in homemade cough drops.



Ginseng may reduce the severity of colds.

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NIH News in Health: Cleaning Your Brain
 Scientists have discovered a system that drains waste products from the brain. The finding may lead to new ways to treat brain disorders such as Alzheimer's disease.
 Our bodies remove dead blood cells and other waste products through a network of vessels called the lymphatic system. The brain, however, uses a different method. Cerebrospinal fluid cleanses brain tissue. Based on previous research, scientists suspected that nutrients and waste were carried away through a slow process called diffusion.
 In a new study, scientists used a method called 2-photon laser scanning microscopy to analyze the movement of cerebrospinal fluid in living mouse brains. To their surprise, the researchers found that the fluid flowed along a series of channels surrounding blood vessels. They named this new system the "glymphatic system" because it is similar to the body's lymphatic system but managed by cells in the brain called glial cells.
 The scientists speculated that glitches in the glymphatic system might lead to the buildup of harmful waste in the brain. To test this idea, they injected a protein called amyloid beta into the brains of both healthy mice and mice with a faulty glymphatic system. The protein is known to play a role in human Alzheimer's disease. Normal mice cleared amyloid beta rapidly from brain tissue. Mice with faulty glymphatic systems had much slower protein removal.
 "This work shows that the brain is cleansing itself in a more organized way and on a much larger scale than has been realized previously," says Dr. Maiken Nedergaard of the University of Rochester Medical Center. "We're hopeful that these findings have implications for many conditions that involve the brain, such as traumatic brain injury, Alzheimer's disease, stroke and Parkinson's disease."—newsinhealth.nih.gov

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BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

Grant County Weekly Events

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SUNDAYS

ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY—First Sun. of every month, field trip. 536-3092, whudson43@yahoo.com.

BEAD SOCIETY—1 p.m. Alotta Gelato 388-1362.

BINGO—1st and 2d Sun. Doors open 12:30 p.m., games start 1:35 p.m. Benefits Salvation Army and Post 18 charities. American Legion Post 18, 409 W. College Ave. 534-0780

GENTLE YOGA—5:30-7 p.m. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas, 388-2425.

HOLISTIC PRESENTATIONS—11 a.m. PeaceMeal Coop Deli. 534-9703

PRAYER AND STUDY IN THE EASTERN ORTHODOX TRADITION—Sunset. Theotokos Retreat Center, 5202 Hwy. 152, Santa Clara. 537-4839, theotokos@zianet.com.

RESTORATIVE YOGA—4-5:30 p.m. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas, 388-2425.

MONDAYS

A COURSE IN MIRACLES—6:30 p.m., 600 N. Hudson. Information, 534-9172 or 534-1869.

AARP CHAPTER #1496—Third Monday. 12:30 p.m. Senior Center, 205 W. Victoria. Contact Marcia Fisch, 388-1298

AARP WIDOWED PERSONS—Second Mondays. 11 a.m. Glad Tidings Church. Contact Sally, 537-3643.

AL-ANON—12:05 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, 1915 Swan, Silver City. Contact Valerie, 313-2561.

ART CLASS—9-10:45 a.m. Silver City Senior Citizen Center. Beginners to advanced. Contact Jean 519-2977.

KUNDALINI YOGA—Noon. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas St.

PING PONG—5:30-7 p.m. Grant County Convention Center. Beginners 7-8 p.m.

SILVER CITY SQUARES—Dancing 7-9 p.m. Presbyterian Church, 1915 N. Swan St. Kay, 388-4227, or Linda, 534-4523.

TAI CHI FOR BETTER BALANCE—1 p.m., Senior Center. Call Lydia Moncada to register, 534-0059.

TUESDAYS

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS—Men's group, 7 a.m. Unitarian Fellowship Hall. 3845 N. Swan. Jerry, 534-4866.

ALZHEIMER'S/DEMENTIA SUPPORT—1-3 p.m. Senior Center. Margaret, 388-4539.

BAYARD HISTORIC MINE TOUR—2nd Tuesday. Meet at Bayard City Hall, 800 Central Ave., by 9:30 a.m. \$5 fee covers two-hour bus tour of historic mines plus literature and map; call 537-3327 for reservation.

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS—4th Tuesday. 6:30 p.m. Support for those who've lost a child. Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 7th and Texas St. Charlene Mitchell, 313-7362.

FIGURE/MODEL DRAWING—4-6 p.m. Contact Sam, 388-5583.

GILA WRITERS—6:30 p.m. Gila Regional Medical Center Conference Room, 1313 E. 32nd St. Trish Heck, pheck@grmc.org, 538-4072.

INTERBODY YOGA—5:30-6:30 p.m., 315 N. Bullard, 2d fl. 519-8948.

KIWANIS CLUB—Noon. Red Barn, 708 Silver Heights Blvd., 590-0540.

LOS COMADRES CANCER SUPPORT GROUP—1st Tues. 6 p.m. Business and Conference Center, 3031 Hwy. 180 E. (next to Ace). 388-1198 ext. 10.

REIKI CIRCLE—First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m. 2035 Little Walnut. Treatment for those in need of healing. Vicki, 388-8114, or Virginia, 388-4870.

RESTORATIVE YOGA—10-11:30 a.m., 5:30-7 p.m. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas, 388-2425.

SLOW FLOW YOGA—11:30 a.m. 315 N. Bullard, 2d fl. 519-8948.

SOCIAL SERVICES—Noon. Red Barn, 707 Silver Heights Blvd. 538-5666.

TEA PARTY PATRIOTS—2nd and 4th Tues. 6 p.m. Red Barn Steakhouse, 708 Silver Heights Blvd. 388-4143.

WEDNESDAYS

ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY—Third Weds. of every month. Oct.-Nov., Jan.-April 7 p.m. Silver City Women's Club. Summers 6 p.m. location TBA. 536-3092, whudson43@yahoo.com.

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN—2nd Weds. 6 p.m. Gila Regional Medical Center Conference Room. Subject to change. 536-2953.

CURBSIDE CONSULTING—Free for nonprofits. 9 a.m.-noon. Wellness Coalition, 409 N. Bullard, Lisa Jimenez, 534-0665, ext. 232, lisa@wellnesscoalition.org.

FOOD ADDICTS ANONYMOUS WOMEN'S GROUP—6:30 p.m. 1000 N Hudson St., 519-1070.

GRANT COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY—2nd Weds. Potluck at 5:30 p.m., meeting at 6:30 p.m. Sen. Howie Morales' building, 3060 E. Hwy. 180.

GROUP MEDITATION—5:30 p.m., A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas St. 388-2425.

LADIES GOLF ASSOCIATION—8 a.m. tee time. Silver City Golf Course.

PFLAG—(Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) 1st Weds. 5:30 p.m. Wellness Coalition, 509 N. Bullard. 590-8797.

PING PONG—5:30-7 p.m. Grant County Convention Center. Beginners 7-8 p.m.

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP—3rd Weds. 6:30 p.m. Gila Regional Medical Center Conference Room. 388-1198 ext. 10.

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF GRANT COUNTY—Third Weds. 6 p.m. Red Barn.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP—3:30-5 p.m. All-Purpose Room, Billy Casper Wellness Center, Hudson St. & Hwy. 180. James, 537-2429, or Danita, 534-9057.

BAYARD AL-ANON—6:30 p.m. Bayard Community Center. 575-537-3141.

THURSDAYS

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP—2nd Thurs. 6 p.m. Gila Regional Medical Center Board Room. 388-1198 ext. 10.

CARDIAC SUPPORT GROUP—3rd Thurs. 4 p.m. Grant County Business and Conference Center, 3031 Hwy 180E, 590-2578.

CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL—First Thurs. 5:30 p.m. Grant County Admin Bldg.

DE-STRESSING MEDITATIONS—12-

12:45 p.m. New Church of the SW Desert, 1302 Bennett St. 313-4087.

GRANT COUNTY ROLLING STONES GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY—2nd Thurs. 6 p.m. Senior Center, 204 W. Victoria St. Kyle, 538-5706.

HISTORIC MINING DISTRICT & TOURISM MEETING—Second Thurs. 10 a.m. Bayard Community Center, 290 Hurley Ave., Bayard. 537-3327.

KUNDALINI YOGA—5:30 p.m. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas, 388-2425.

MOUNTAIN DULCIMER JAM—6:15 p.m., Public Library.

PROGRESSIVE PILATES—5:30-6:30 p.m., 315 N. Bullard, 2d fl. 519-8948.

TOPS—5 p.m. 1st Presbyterian Church, 1915 Swan, 538-9447.

VINYASA YOGA—5:30-6:30 p.m., 315 N. Bullard, 2d fl. 519-8948.

YOGA CLASS—Free class taught by Colleen Stinar. 1-2 p.m. Episcopal Church fellowship hall, 7th and Texas.

FRIDAYS

KUNDALINI YOGA—Noon. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas St.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS—6 p.m. Gila Regional Medical Center conference room. 313-9400.

SILVER CITY WOMAN'S CLUB—2d Fri., 10 a.m. 411 Silver Heights Blvd. 538-9326.

TAIZÉ—2d Friday. Service of prayer, songs, scripture readings and quiet contemplation. 6:30 p.m. Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 538-2015.

WOODCARVING CLUB—2d and 4th Fridays except holidays. 1 p.m. Senior Center. 313-1518.

YOUTH SPACE—5:30-10 p.m. Loud music, video games, chill out. Satellite/Wellness Coalition.

SATURDAYS

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS BEGINNERS—6 p.m. Lions Club, 8th & Bullard (entrance at Big Ditch behind Domino's). Newcomers and seasoned members welcome.

ALZHEIMER'S/DEMENTIA SUPPORT—10 a.m.-noon. Gila Regional Medical Center Conference Room. Margaret, 388-4539.

BEGINNING SALSA—7-8 p.m. Javalina's. Instructor Gail Willow, 388-3332.

DOUBLE FEATURE BLOCKBUSTER MEGA HIT MOVIE NIGHT—5:30-11 pm. Satellite/Wellness Coalition.

EVENING PRAYER IN THE EASTERN ORTHODOX TRADITION—5 p.m. Theotokos Retreat Center, 5202 Hwy. 152, Santa Clara. 537-4839, theotokos@zianet.com.

KIDS BIKE RIDE—10 a.m., Bike-works, 815 E. 10th St. Dave Baker, 590-2166.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS—6 p.m. New 180 Club, 1661 Hwy. 180 E.

SADHANA MORNING PRAYER, MEDITATION, YOGA—Last Sat. 5-7 a.m. A Daily Practice, 104 N. Texas, 388-2425.

SPINNING GROUP—1st Sat., 1-3 p.m. Yada Yada Yarn, 614 N. Bullard, 388-3350.

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RAMBLIN' OUTDOORS • LARRY LIGHTNER

Observe This

Road-trip observations, from Silver City to Ruidoso and back.

As I write this, it is the end of October and I am fresh off of a trip to Roswell and a little ramblin' outdoors, but this time out, I was in my truck and not on my feet.

The purpose of this little foray was so that my Beloved could see her son and grandkids. I was along for the ride and to try to do a little "eyeballing" of the scenery as Jeri drove some of the way; it was a real eye-opener of observations.

The first thing I want to talk about is the price of gasoline along the way. Here in Silver City, it was \$3.80 per gallon (I rounded it off) when we departed. I usually fill up on any trip out of town, but a friend had told me that gasoline was 25 cents a gallon cheaper in Deming, so I decided to wait until there.

Trouble was, it wasn't—at least not at the name-brand stations that I passed. In fact, at the Chevron off of I-10, it was 10 cents higher!

So we drove to Cruces, and marveled as the price dropped dramatically; as much as 60 cents per gallon (\$3.19) at a Valero station. I use a credit card and so stopped at an Alon (Fina) that was still running at \$3.23.

Now, we've all heard the excuse that gas is higher in Silver because it is so far out of the way, but in Ruidoso, which is just as far out of the way, it was 25 cents a gallon cheaper. Alamogordo was 30 cents cheaper and when we arrived in Roswell, it was again down to \$3.28, but I figured it would be there, since the population is around 50,000.

One more gas-price observation: Silver City is the only place where all of the gas prices are virtually the same, no matter the brand! Every other town and countryside, the prices varied, even across corners, and the variation was as much as 10 to 20 cents! And I'm talking only about the "name-brand" stations, not the "generic" ones.

While I'm pickin' on Silver City, I have one more negative observation: The signs advertising our fair town all say, "A great place for birding, hiking and biking." But not one mention of the "other sports," hunting and fishing—yet we claim to be the gateway to the Gila, and what is the Gila known for? Hunting and fishing!

I know, I know, these sports are considered "politically incorrect," but a heck of a lot of folks still participate in them. I guess those "antis" are squeakin' a might louder than the rest of us and getting all of the grease.

But it's a dang shame because the Game & Fish folks spent an awful lot of coin to establish a Gila trout fishery here. And dare I mention that Gila elk are considered some of the best hunting in the West?

Yet the "powers-that-be" feel compelled to slight and even ignore these two fine and popular pastimes.

On the positive side of the ledger, as we entered home once again and came over the last hill, I remarked to Jeri that Silver is still one of prettiest mountain towns that I have yet seen and I'm proud and happy to live here. I never tire of seeing her.

Only Ruidoso rivaled Silver in beauty on this trip, and it was partially lackluster because of the recent fire.

I will admit, though, that I find other places more appealing, but none are towns or cit-

ies—they are countrysides, and one of them is the lower Hondo Valley, below Ruidoso.

Its scarce population, beauty and remoteness make it, to me, a very desirable place to reside. Who knows? Maybe when Jeri retires, or some reader leaves me a million bucks (hint, hint), we will decide to move there!

On this trip, I was especially wanting to observe wildlife, and I was extremely disappointed. The only deer I saw was as we were returning and on our own ridge above the house. The only antelope that we saw were south of Hurley, both coming and going, about 30 in all.

The area around Roswell is known for goats, but we saw nary a one. In the Hondo, I did see about two-dozen Rio Grande turkeys; one flock was on a particular piece of property that was for sale. Hmmm?

I also saw one fox squirrel that was two houses down from my son's. An interesting aside: The fox squirrel is not native to Roswell, but was introduced by sportsmen in the 1960s and is now recognized as legal game.

Along those same lines, the Rio turkeys are not native to the Hondo Valley, but were illegally introduced to the area by well-known state senator Robert P. Anderson, who owned the vast ranch there. That too, was in the 1960s. (He also brought in Barbary sheep.)

Speaking of politicians, Jeri made an interesting observation in Roswell; in fact, from Ruidoso to Roswell, there was not one Obama or Democratic political sign. All the signs were touting one Republican or another—I venture to guess because those people are strong supporters of oil and gas exploration, while the current administration is not, to any great extent (my opinion, as I said).

We also saw only two state cops and two county cops the entire trip; I thought that was unusual. And on this trip, as well as the past dozen through the Apache reservation, we have yet to see a reservation cop. I suspect that they keep a low profile and are less eager to arrest speeders going to and from the casinos. And there's one heck of a lot of folks going to such establishments!

Speaking of which, I noted that the Apache casino at Akela had but two tractor-trailers and three autos, and how many of the latter were owned by employees? Not good, not good.

I also watched the weather on this trip, or specifically the temperatures. It was a pleasant mid-70s when we left and came home to Silver, while both ways in Cruces the temp was in the low 80s. The daily highs in Roswell were in the high 80s, and midday on Apache Summit was a brisk mid-60s both ways. Fall had truly arrived there! Indeed, the leaves in the Hondo were turning a vivid red-burnt-orange that covered the highway.

The bare forest around Ruidoso from the recent fire was a shock to me; I hadn't realized how close that blaze came to destroying the town! One mobile home on a hill had the fire scar on three sides, but fire never touched the place; angels were certainly working there!

One last note on the same subject that I opened this column with and that is gasoline. As I said, I filled up with Alon (formerly Fina) in Cruces and "Truck" achieved a whopping 23 miles per gallon and that included going up and over Apache Summit. Only once ever in four years did I have a better average (23.5). The rest of the trip, Truck achieved 18 to 21 mpg on Shell and 66 gas. Not too shabby for a 4WD sport-trac Ford!

As always, keep the sun forever at your back, the wind forever in your face, and may The Forever God bless you too! ☼

When not Ramblin' Outdoors,
Larry Lightner lives in Silver
City.



TALKING HORSES • SCOTT THOMSON

'Tis the Season...

What one horseman is thankful for.

This is the time of year when we traditionally give thanks for what we have and try to do some good for our fellow man. I'd like to think this season of goodwill extends to our horses as well. The history of this great country was written from the back of a horse. From the early days of being our primary means of transportation, working our fields, fighting our wars and delivering the mail, to the recreational and pleasure riding of today, the horse has always been there for us. Even today, with no real role in our daily lives, the horse is still a powerful icon that stirs our emotions.

It would be easy to look around today and get a bit discouraged about what is happening to the horse. The tough economic times, drought, our aging population, a migration away from rural areas and careers in ranching and farming, overbreeding, and the sheer cost and time commitment of ownership have made it difficult for many people to continue their love affair with the horse. Current estimates from the US Forest Service say we are losing **6,000 acres of farmland and open space a day** to development and private restricted purpose. That is a staggering number and predicted to get worse as developers buy cheap land and sit on it, hoping for better times to start building. As budgets tighten, and public land and trails disappear, I suspect the conflicts between various user groups will intensify and that riders may lose more than they win.

Despite all this, I still like to pour myself a good single malt, sit back and think of all things to be thankful for this year, for myself and for all horse people:

- For Eohippus, a funny little rabbit-like animal about 12 inches tall that lived almost 60 million years ago, which evolved into the magnificent horses of today, without losing many of the instinctive traits that make a horse so special.

- For amazing horseman like the Dorrance brothers, Ray Hunt, Monte Roberts and too many others to name, who resurrected training techniques and philosophies, literally thousands of years old, that put the needs of the horse first, and for inspiring the next generations of horse men and women to continue their work.

- For the continuing influence of science and research on how we care for our horses. Innovations in shoeing, saddles, nutrition, training, fitness and general healthcare are giving us more options to help our horses live longer, more productive and healthier lives.

- That even in a small town like Silver City, we have two organizations that are doing everything possible to help with the growing problem of unwanted or abandoned horses. **There may be as many as 200,000 unwanted horses in the US today.** If you have any dollars left at the end of this year, show your appreciation for the tireless efforts of End of The Road Ranch Horse Rescue & Sanctuary and Serenity Acres.

- That we still have dedicated professionals willing to be large-animal vets. It can be a dangerous, frustrating and not always lucrative profession, but we'd be lost without them. I recently helped one of our vets with the sad but necessary end-of-life decision for an old horse. The kindness and compassion that went into a very physical task was extraordinary. The danger was also obvious as this old horse, before galloping off to horse heaven to run free with the herd in endless green pastures, never having to see a vet, farrier or trainer again, decided to take one last chunk out of the vet's arm as a souvenir—and maybe a reminder that all horses still have wildness in their hearts and souls.

- For groups like the Back Country Horseman and the Equine Land Conservation Resource and their efforts to keep and maintain trails and access to areas for riding. With all the open space and great riding we have here, we might think we're immune to the plight of riders in other parts of the country, but the same things can happen here. As someone who has owned, ridden and worked with horses in California, Oregon and Washington, I have seen firsthand how quickly a fence can go up or a trail can be closed. We're fortunate to have

so many good people here locally keeping these issues on the radar on behalf of all of us.

- That so many of the volunteer fire and rescue personnel here are also horse people. We've all just seen what a tragedy a natural disaster can be, and we have certainly experienced our share of fires and violent storms in recent years as well. But I sleep a little bit better knowing that the people we count on to help us in an emergency truly understand how important our horses are to us.

- For riders who take the time to do some PR when out on the trails. I know it is hard to believe, but not everyone loves horses, understands their behavior or likes to share a trail or campsite with them. It never hurts to stop and chat, give a little free education or promote our cause.

On the flip side, I'm thankful for hikers and bikers who know something about horses, by letting you know they're coming, not hiding behind trees, and by controlling their dogs.

- For Ken Jones, one of the best horsemen I've ever met, who after watching me work with an unhandled weanling at his ranch in Colorado, when I was so green I wasn't even sure which end the food went in or which the poop came out, said I had a feel and touch that couldn't be taught. Didn't have any idea what he meant or what it would lead to, but he was the first person who opened the door to horses for me.

- For Pat Parelli, who wrote a note to my wife 15 years ago that said, "Mere mortals can do this work with horses, even blondes like you!" That started us on our journey.

- For Dennis Reis, who after my first nine-day clinic at his ranch could have easily said, "Sell your horse and don't ever come back here again." Yes, it was that bad. Instead, he said, "There is a good horse deep inside of your horse, and if you can reach him, given his past and issues, you'll be a great hand and on your way to being an accomplished horseman." Two years later, he wanted to take me and my horse on the road and make me head of his business. None of what I've accomplished since would have ever happened without his encouragement and patience.

- For Liffey, a dangerous horse that had been surrendered to End of The Road Ranch, whom I thought had no future and should be put down. She opened her soul to me and let me into her life, and in the process validated everything I've been taught and learned about horses, especially the power of natural horsemanship. "They're all good for something" was a powerful line in the movie *Seabiscuit*, and my new best buddy Liffey proved that to me.

- For my wife, who when she called me from a castle in Ireland, where she was riding on beaches and in countryside too beautiful to be believed, and I gave her the news that I'd bought my first horse without consulting her, didn't hop the next plane home to check my sanity but looked forward to the journey ahead together.

- For Cody and Revere, our two wonderful horses. Through endless clinics, shows and demos, showing patience with students of all levels and helping train other horses when I needed an equine assistant, through major moves and many miles, and always being willing to let me try out new techniques and ideas, they have proven that the idea of true partnership with a horse is not just a clever marketing phrase. Now entering their senior years, they have given us just one sprained ankle and two broken ribs in 13 years of riding and playing—not bad given the nature of the sport and what we have asked of them. With no special skills or fancy breeding, they've been what we all want—just great horses.

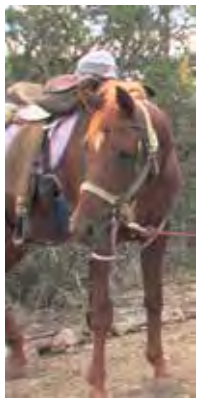
Happy holidays to all, human and horse alike! 🌿

Scott Thomson lives in Silver City and teaches natural horsemanship and foundation training. You can contact him at hsthomson@msn.com or (575) 388-1830.



Just a word of thanks to everyone who wrote, sent flowers, and called. Corona was a horse of a lifetime. She is missed. Special thanks to Dr. Linda Locklar and her staff for making a terrible situation the best it could have been. Thanks to Bob Hall for breeding such a wonderful horse for me to have known all these years. And thanks to John Rohovec, Cece Stanford, Jeb McCauley, Sally Hagel, Jeffery Brown, Tammy Baker, and Ann Bronson for being in my corner. Also, thanks to Cody Bernier and Rowan Stites for answering the phone and arranging everything. And finally to Leonard Pritikin who wrote the best sympathy card a girl could ask for.

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Southwest New Mexico's best restaurant guide.

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With each listing, we include a brief categorization of the type of cuisine plus what meals are served: B=Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner. Unless otherwise noted, restaurants are open seven days a week. Call for exact hours, which change frequently. All phone numbers are area code 575 except as specified. We also note with a star (*) restaurants where you can pick up copies of *Desert Exposure*.

If we've recently reviewed a restaurant, you'll find a brief capsule of our review and a notation of which issue it originally appeared in. Stories from all back issues of *Desert Exposure* from January 2005 on are available on our Web site.

Though every effort has been made to make these listings complete and up-to-date, errors and omissions are inevitable and restaurants may make changes after this issue goes to press. That's why we urge you to help us make Red or Green? even better. Drop a note to Red or Green? c/o *Desert Exposure*, PO Box 191, Silver City, NM 88062, fax 534-4134, or email updates@red-or-green.com.

Remember, these print listings represent only highlights. You can always find the complete, updated Red or Green? guide online at www.desertexposure.com. Bon appétit!

GRANT COUNTY

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ASIAN BUFFET, 1740 Hwy. 180E, 388-0777. Chinese, Thai, Malaysian, sushi: L D.

BILLY'S BBQ AND WOOD-FIRED PIZZA, Hwy 180E, 388-1367. Barbecue, pizza, gyros, pasta: Tues.-Fri. D. Sat.-Sun. L D. Italian nights Weds., Sat.*

BRYAN'S PIT BARBECUE, Mimbres Valley Self Storage and RV Park, (660) 247-3151 or (660) 247-3160. Barbecue: L D.

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CHINESE PALACE, 1010 Highway 180E, 538-9300. Chinese: Mon.-Fri. L D.

COURTYARD CAFÉ, Gila Regional Medical Center, 538-4094. American: B L, with special brunch Sundays.*

CURIOS KUMQUAT, 111 E. College Ave., 534-0337. "A hotspot of mod-

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DELIGHTFUL BLEND, 3030 N. Pinos Altos Road, 388-2404. Coffeeshop.

DIANE'S RESTAURANT, 510 N. Bullard St., 538-8722. Homemade American, Euro and Pacific Rim: Tues.-Sat. L D, Sun. D only, weekend brunch, catering.

DIANE'S BAKERY & DELI, The Hub, Suite A, Bullard St., 534-9229. Artisan breads, sandwiches, deli, baked goods: B L D.*

DON JUAN'S BURRITOS, 418 Silver Heights Blvd., 538-5440. Mexican: B L.

EAT YOUR HEART OUT, 800 W. Market, 313-9005. Catering.*

GIL-A BEANS, 1304 N. Bennett St. Coffeeshop.*

GOLDEN STAR, 1602 Silver Heights Blvd., 388-2323. Chinese: L D.

GRANDMA'S CAFÉ, 900 Silver Heights Blvd., 388-2627. American, Mexican: B L.*

GRINDER MILL, 403 W. College Ave., 538-3366. Mexican: B L D.*

ISAAC'S GRILL, Bullard and Broadway, 388-4090. American, burgers, sandwiches: Fri.-Sun. L D, Sun. brunch, Mon.-Wed. D only.*

JALISCO CAFÉ, 100 S. Bullard St., 388-2060. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. L D.

JAVA THE HUT, 611-A N. Bullard St., 534-4103. Espresso and coffeeshop: Mon.-Sat.*

JAVALINA COFFEE HOUSE, 201 N. Bullard St., 388-1350. Coffeehouse.*

KOUNTRY KITCHEN, 1505 N. Hudson St., 388-4512. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L early D, Sun. B only.*

LA COCINA RESTAURANT, 201 W. College Ave., 388-8687. Mexican: L D.

LA FAMILIA, 503 N. Hudson St., 388-4600. Mexican: Tues.-Sun. B L D.*

LA MEXICANA, Hwy. 180E and Memory Lane, 534-0142. Mexican and American: B L.

LION'S DEN, 208 W. Yankie, 654-0353. Coffeeshop.

MASA Y MAS TORTILLERIA, Suite C-The Hub Plaza, (505) 670-8775. Tortillas, tacos, chimichangas, burritos, enchiladas, menudo, tamales and more. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L.*

MI CASITA, 2340 Bosworth Dr., 538-5533. New Mexican cuisine: Mon.-Thurs. L, Fri. L D.

MILLIE'S BAKE HOUSE, 215 W. Yankie, 597-2253. "From pies to pizzas, the food is oven-fresh and innovative." (November 2012) Soup, salads, sandwiches, baked goods: Tues.-Sat. Deep-dish pizza: Thurs.-Mon. D.*

NANCY'S SILVER CAFÉ, 514 N. Bullard St., 388-3480. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L D.

THE PARLOR AT DIANE'S, 510 N. Bullard St., 538-8722. Beer and wine bar, sandwiches, light bites: Tues.-Sun. afternoons.

PEACE MEAL BURRITO BAR, The Hub, 6th and Bullard, 388-0106. Chipotle-style burrito bar featuring local and organic foods: Weds.-Mon. L early D.*

PRETTY SWEET EMPORIUM, 312 N. Bullard St., 388-8600. Dessert, ice cream: Mon.-Sat.*

Q'S SOUTHERN BISTRO AND BREWERY, 101 E. College Ave., 534-4401. American, steaks, barbecue, brewpub: Mon.-Sat. L D.

RED BARN, 708 Silver Heights Blvd., 538-5666. Steakhouse: L D.*

SABOR, 1700 Mountain View Road, 388-2737. Mexican, sandwiches: B L D.

SHEVEK & CO., 602 N. Bullard St., 534-9168. "Shevek & Co. will take your taste buds on a culinary tour from Spain to Greece, with delicious destinations all along the Mediterranean in-between. The sheer ambition of the offerings is astonishing." (March 2009) Mediterranean: D, brunch on selected weekends.*

SILVER BOWLING CENTER CAFÉ, 2020 Memory Lane, 538-3612. American, Mexican, hamburgers: L D.*

SUNRISE ESPRESSO, 1530 N. Hudson, 388-2027. Coffeeshop: Mon.-Sat. B L, early D.

SUNRISE ESPRESSO, 1212 E. 32nd St., 534-9565. Coffeeshop, bakery: Mon.-Fri. B L, early D, Sat. B L only.*

THREE DOGS COFFEEHOUSE, 503 N. Bullard St. Coffeeshop, lunch specialties, pizza: L.

TRE ROSAT CAFÉ, 304 N. Bullard St., 654-4919. "The dinner menu ranges from humbler (but not humdrum) fare like burgers, pizzas and pastas to daily specials that include more upscale items like grilled salmon and petite sirloin steak. Appetizers include homemade chile relleno poppers, egg rolls (with specialty fillings changing from day to day) and the ever-popular, ever deli-

cious bacon-wrapped dates." (August 2012) International eclectic: Mon.-Fri. L, D. Sat. D.*

VICKI'S EATERY, 315 N. Texas, 388-5430. "Serving hearty breakfasts, sandwiches both cold and grilled, wraps and salads that satisfy in a homey yet sophisticated way. Don't miss the German potato salad." (Dec. 2009) American: Mon.-Sat. B L. Sun. B.*

WRANGLER'S BAR & GRILL, 2005 Hwy. 180E, 538-4387. Steak, burgers, appetizers, salads: L D.*

YANKIE CREEK COFFEE HOUSE, 112 W. Yankee St. Coffeeshop, coffee, home-made pastries and ice cream, fresh fruit smoothies.*

BAYARD

FIDENCIO'S TACO SHOP, 1108 Tom Foy Blvd. Mexican: B L D.

LITTLE NISHA'S, 1101 Tom Foy Blvd., 537-3526. Mexican: Wed.-Sun. B L D.

LOS COMPAS, 1203 Tom Foy Blvd, 654-4109. Sonoran-style Mexican, hot dogs, portos, menudo: L D.

M & A BAYARD CAFÉ, 1101 N. Central Ave., 537-2251. Mexican and American: Mon.-Fri. B L D.

SPANISH CAFÉ, 106 Central Ave., 537-2640. Mexican, tamales and menudo (takeout only): B.

SUGAR SHACK, 1102 Tom Foy Blvd., 537-0500. Mexican: Sun.-Fri. B L.

CLIFF

PARKEY'S, 8414 Hwy. 180W, 535-4000. Coffeeshop: Mon.-Sat.

HURLEY

GATEWAY GRILL, 2705 Hwy. 180E, 537-5001. American and Mexican: Sun.-Thur. B L, Fri.-Sat. B L D.*

LAKE ROBERTS

LITTLE TOAD CREEK INN & TAVERN, 1122 Hwy. 35, 536-9649. "Rustic gourmet... designed to appeal to the eyes as well as the taste buds. And this is true of the items on the brunch menu, as well as those on the very different dinner menu." (June 2012). Steaks, sandwiches, American: Thurs.-Fri. D, Sat.-Sun. brunch and D. Tavern with soups, sandwiches, Scotch eggs: Daily L D.

SPIRIT CANYON LODGE & CAFÉ, 684 Hwy. 35, 536-9459. German specialties, American lunch and dinner entrées: Saturday midday D.

MIMBRES

MIMBRES VALLEY CAFÉ, 2964 Hwy. 35, 536-2857. Mexican, American, burgers: Mon.-Tues. B L, Wed.-Sun. B L

D, with Japanese tempura Wed. D.

PINOS ALTOS

BUCKHORN SALOON AND OPERA HOUSE, Main Street, 538-9911. "The Buck," as most locals affectionately call it, has a history of satisfying at the dinner plate with its long-favored menu including generous slabs of meat, hearty green chile stew with kick and 'honest pours' at the full bar." (December 2010) Steakhouse, pasta, burgers: Mon.-Sat. D.

DOÑA ANA COUNTY

LAS CRUCES & MESILLA

ABRAHAM'S BANK TOWER RESTAURANT, 500 S. Main St. #434, 523-5911. American: Mon.-Fri. B L.

AQUA REEF, 900-B S. Telshor, 522-7333. Asian, sushi: D.

A BITE OF BELGIUM, 741 N. Alameda St., 527-2483. Belgian food: Mon.-Fri. B L.

BLUE MOON, 13060 N. Valley Dr., 647-9524. Bar, burgers: Sat.-Sun. L D.

BOBA CAFÉ, 1900 S. Espina, Ste. 8, 647-5900. Sandwiches, salads, casual fare, espresso: Mon.-Sat. L D.*

BRAVO'S CAFÉ, 3205 S. Main St., 526-8604. Mexican: Tues.-Sun. B L.

CAFÉ AGOGO, 1120 Commerce Dr., Suite A, 636-4580. Asian, American, sandwich, salad, rice bowl: Mon.-Sat. L D.

CAFÉ DE MESILLA EN LA PLAZA, 2051 Calle de Santiago, 652-3019. Coffeehouse, deli, pastries, soups, sandwiches: B L early D.

CARILLO'S CAFÉ, 330 S. Church, 523-9913. Mexican, American: Mon.-Sat. L D.

CATTLEMEN'S STEAKHOUSE, 2375 Bataan Memorial Hwy., 382-9051. Steakhouse: D.

DE LA VEGA'S PECAN GRILL & BREWERY, 500 S. Telshor Blvd., 521-1099. Pecan-smoked meats, sandwiches, steaks, seafood, craft beers: L D.

DELICIA'S DEL MAR, 1401 El Paseo, 524-2396. Mexican, seafood: B L D.

DG'S UNIVERSITY DELI, 1305 E. University Ave., 522-8409. Deli: B L D.*

DOUBLE EAGLE, 2355 Calle De Guadalupe, 523-6700. Southwestern, steaks, seafood: L D, Sun. champagne brunch buffet.*

GUACAMOLE'S BAR AND GRILL, 3995 W. Picacho Ave., 525-9115. Burgers, pizza, salads, sandwiches, Hawaiian appetizers: L D.

HIEBERT'S FINE FOODS, 525 E. Madrid Ave. #7, 524-0451. Mexican,

American: B L D.

HIGH DESERT BREWING COMPANY, 1201 W. Hadley Ave., 525-6752. Brew pub: L D.*

INTERNATIONAL DELIGHTS, 1245 El Paseo Rd., 647-5956. Greek and International: B L D.

JAPANESE KITCHEN, 141 Roadrunner Parkway, 521-3555. Japanese: L D.

JIREH'S, 1445 W. Picacho. Mexican, American: B L early D.

JOSE MURPHY'S, 1201 E. Amador (inside Ten Pin Alleys), 541-4064. Mexican, American: L D.

JOSEPHINA'S OLD GATE CAFÉ, 2261 Calle de Guadalupe, 525-2620. Pastries, soups, salads, sandwiches: Mon.-Thur. L, Fri.-Sun. B L.

KATANA TEPPANYAKI GRILL, 1001 E. University Ave., 522-0526. Japanese: Mon.-Fri. L D, Sat. D.

KIM-CHI HOUSE, 1605 S. Solano, 652-4745. Korean: Tues.-Sun. L D.

KIVA PATIO CAFÉ, 600 E. Amador Ave., 527-8206. Mexican, Southwestern, American: B L D.

LA POSTA RESTAURANT DE MESILLA, 2410 Calle De San Albino, 524-3524. Mexican, steakhouse: L D, Sat.-Sun. and holidays also B.

LAS TRANCAS, 1008 S. Solano Dr., 524-1430. Mexican, steaks, burgers, fried chicken: L D, Sat.-Sun. also B.

LEMONGRASS, 2540 El Paseo Rd., 523-8778. Thai: Tues.-Fri. L D, Sat.-Mon. D.

LE RENDEZ-VOUS CAFÉ, 2701 W. Picacho Ave. #1, 527-0098. French pastry, deli, sandwiches: Mon.-Sat. B L.

LET THEM EAT CAKE, 2001 E. Lohman, Suite 136, 649-8965. Cupcakes: Tues.-Sat.

LORENZO'S PAN AM, 1753 E. University Ave., 521-3505. "Homey, classic Italian fare.... Also features ravioli dishes, in half and full portions, served with salad and a basket of warm, fresh bread. Save room for dessert." (July 2008) Italian, pizza: L D.

LOS COMPAS CAFÉ, 6335 Bataan Memorial W., 382-2025. Mexican: B L D.

LOS COMPAS CAFÉ, 603 S. Nevarez St., 523-1778. Mexican: B L D.

LOS COMPAS, 1120 Commerce Dr., 521-6228. Mexican: B L D.*

LOS MARIACHIS, 754 N. Motel

DINING GUIDE continued on page 47

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 Or
 Roast Pork Tenderloin served with spiced Texas Peaches

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 31- NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER 5-8pm
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 Or
 Pork Loin Stuffed with sausage, dried cranberries and apricots
 Or
 Smoked Salmon ravioli with a basil cream sauce

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RED OR GREEN? • PEGGY PLATONOS

Like Mamá Used to Make

Ramona's Café—Lordsburg's quiet Mexican food treasure.

A friend pointed the way to Ramona's Café in Lordsburg, and provided an enthusiastic shove in that direction with the words: "It has the best Mexican food anywhere around here!"

So I went to check it out, and took along a different friend—one whose habitual reaction to restaurant food of any kind is a lukewarm: "It's okay."

She ordered Chicken Tacos, and picked at the chicken filling. "Have you ever seen chicken filling like this? I'm used to chunks of chicken in tacos."

I loaded onto her plate bite-size samples of all the goodies in the Combo Plate #2 that I had ordered: a chile relleno, tamale, enchilada with green chile sauce. I gave her one of the two beef tacos that came with the combo plate, and she gave me one of her three chicken tacos. I had ordered a side Chimichanga with a green chile and meat filling, so I passed a chunk of that on to my friend, over her objections.

"This beef taco has a beef patty in it instead of chopped up hamburger," she announced, as she pulled the thin patty out of the taco I had given her and inspected it.

"Mmmm," I answered noncommittally around a mouthful of food. We ate for awhile in silence. I checked her progress out of the corner of my eye. She was examining each mouthful before eating it, but it was all disappearing from her plate.

Finally, she spoke, wagging one of the tacos in my direction. "This is how I like my tacos—crispy. Really crispy. Not soft and limp."

"Mmmm," I answered again.

Her plate was nearly cleared when she looked at me with wide eyes and murmured in amazement, "This is really good! All of it is really good."

No argument from me. And the green chile sauce over the enchilada... well, I sure would like to know how that was achieved.



Ramona's Café owner Marie Garcia serves up a Quesadilla plate and side taco. (Photos by Peggy Platonos)

having the restaurant. The customers are like family. I enjoy cooking for them and seeing that they like the food and watching them talk and laugh over their meal."

Her mother is definitely there in spirit, and Marie keeps a photo of her posted over the kitchen door, where she can oversee the whole operation.

Ramona's Café, appropriately, is something of a family business, with one of Marie's sisters doing all the prep work for the Mexican dishes on the menu, and a second sister taking over grill responsibility from Marie at 3 in the afternoon on Tuesdays through Fridays, the days when the restaurant is open until 8 p.m.

The café is closed on Mondays and Saturdays, and opens at 8 a.m. on the remaining days of the week. On Sundays—the one day of the week when Menudo is served—the restaurant closes at 2 p.m.

Every day, the full menu is available at all hours. If you want breakfast at 7 o'clock at night, you can have it. And you can have a Mexican Hamburger Steak topped with Chile con Queso or a Turkey Avocado Croissant sandwich at 8 in the morning, if that strikes your fancy.

In addition to a full range of Mexican dishes, the menu includes such American favorites as Club House, Grilled Cheese and BLT sandwiches, a Chef Salad, and breakfast selections that include biscuits and gravy (with or without sausage), pancakes, French toast (made with plump Texas toast-style bread) and a variety of omelets. Chicken Fried Steak appears on the menu as a full dinner meal (with salad, grilled bread and a choice of potatoes) and as two distinct breakfast options: with eggs (plus hash browns and toast) and in the Chicken Fried Steak Skillet, where the cooked steak is cut up and mixed in with hash brown potatoes and onion, then topped with two eggs and cream gravy and served with toast.

Prices are reasonable, with the cost of most meals falling between \$6.50 and \$8.50. A Shrimp Platter dinner costs \$9.99, and the most expensive item on the menu is a T-Bone Steak dinner at \$13.25.

For more information about Ramona's Café, call (575) 542-3030. The café is located at 904 E. Motel Drive in Lordsburg. Keep driving until you're sure you've missed it. You'll see it on the right-hand side of the road. 🌮

Send Mimbres freelance writer Peggy Platonos tips for restaurant reviews at platonos@gilnet.com or call (575) 536-2997.

The green chile sauce over the enchilada... well, I sure would like to know how that was achieved.

Alas, I am doomed to keep on wondering. The recipe for that sauce is a family secret, I was told later by café owner Marie Garcia, as is the recipe for the green-colored and (by my northeastern standards) very zesty salsa that is served with light and crispy tortilla chips.

The café is named for Marie's mother, Ramona, who Marie says was a "wonderful" cook. "She was the mother of 13, and was always in the kitchen. She would feed anybody. One of my brothers would bring the football team home, and she would feed them. I'd bring friends. Somehow my mother always had food for whoever showed up—any time. My older brothers would arrive home from the Navy at 10 or 11 o'clock at night, and she would make tacos for them."

Those tacos were made the same way Marie makes the beef tacos in the café—with a thin patty of meat. "I think she did it that way because it was easier. She was making so many tacos even when she was feeding just our own family."

Food in the family home provided a focal point of social unity. "Growing up, that's what I remember—sitting around the table, talking and laughing," Marie says. "And I think that's why I enjoy



Lordsburg cousins (from left) Sandra Newell and Monique Lopez enjoy bowls of Menudo as a special treat on a Sunday at Ramona's Café.



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DINING GUIDE continued

Blvd., 523-7058. Mexican: B L D.
MESILLA VALLEY KITCHEN, 2001 E. Lohman Ave. #103, 523-9311. American, Mexican: B L.*
MESON DE MESILLA, 1803 Avenida de Mesilla, 652-4953. Steaks, barbecue, seafood, sandwiches, salads, pasta: L D.
MILAGRO COFFEE Y ESPRESSO, 1733 E. University Ave., 532-1042. Coffeehouse: B L D.*
NOPALITO RESTAURANT, 310 S. Mesquite St., 524-0003. Mexican: Sun.-Tues., Thurs.-Sat. L D.*
OLD TOWN RESTAURANT, 1155 S. Valley Dr., 523-4586. Mexican, American: B L.*
PAISANO CAFÉ, 1740 Calle de Mercado, 524-0211. Mexican: B L D.*
PEPPERS CAFÉ ON THE PLAZA (IN THE DOUBLE EAGLE RESTAURANT), 2355 Calle De Guadalupe, 523-6700. Southwestern: L D.*
ROBERTO'S MEXICAN FOOD, 908 E. Amador Ave., 523-1851. Mexican: B L D.*
THE SHED, 810 S. Valley Dr., 525-2636. American, pizza, Mexican, desserts: Wed.-Sun. B L.*
SI SEÑOR, 1551 E. Amador Ave., 527-0817. Mexican: L D.*
SMOKY DICK'S BBQ, 2265 S. Main St., 541-5947. Barbecue: L D.
SPANISH KITCHEN, 2960 N. Main St., 526-4275. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L D.
SPIRIT WINDS COFFEE BAR, 2260 S. Locust St., 521-1222. Sandwiches, coffee, bakery: B L D.*
ST. CLAIR WINERY & BISTRO, 1720 Avenida de Mesilla, 524-0390. "A showcase for St. Clair wines... rooted in the same attention to detail, insistence on quality and customer-friendly attitude as the winery." (July 2012) Wine tasting, bistro: L D.
SUNSET GRILL, 1274 Golf Club Road (Sonoma Ranch Golf Course clubhouse), 521-1826. American, Southwest, steak, burgers, seafood, pasta: B L D.
TERIYAKI BOWL, 2300 N. Main St., 524-2055. Japanese: Mon.-Sat. L D.
TERIYAKI CHICKEN HOUSE, 805 El Paseo Rd., 541-1696. Japanese: Mon.-Fri. L D.
THAI DELIGHT DE MESILLA, 2184 Avenida de Mesilla, 525-1900. "For the adventurous, there are traditional

Thai curries, soups and appetizers to choose from, all of which can be ordered in the degree of heat that suits you.... The restaurant is clean, comfortable, casual in a classy sort of way, and totally unpretentious." (January 2011) Thai, salads, sandwiches, seafood, steaks, German: L D.*
TIFFANY'S PIZZA & GREEK AMERICAN CUISINE, 755 S. Telshor Blvd #G1, 532-5002. Pizza, Greek, deli: Tues.-Sat. B L D.*
UMP 88 GRILL, 1338 Picacho Hills Dr., 647-1455. Irish pub: L D.
VALLEY GRILL, 1970 N. Valley, 525-9000. American: B L D, Friday fish fry.
VINTAGE WINES, 2461 Calle de Principal, 523-WINE. Wine and cigar bar, tapas: L D.
WOK-N-WORLD, 5192 E. Boutz, 526-0010. Chinese: Mon.-Sat. L D.
ZEFFIRO PIZZERIA NAPOLETANA, 136 N. Water St., 525-6757. Pizza, pasta, also sandwiches at adjoining Popular Artisan Bakery: Mon.-Sat. L D.
ZEFFIRO NEW YORK PIZZERIA, 101 E. University Ave., 525-6770. Pizza: L D.
ANTHONY ERNESTO'S MEXICAN FOOD, 200 Anthony Dr., 882-3641. Mexican: B L.
LA COCINITA, 908 W. Main Dr., 589-1468. Mexican: L.
CHAPPARAL EL BAYO STEAK HOUSE, 417 Chaparral Dr., 824-4749. Steakhouse: Tues.-Sun. B L D.
TORTILLERIA SUSY, 661 Paloma Blanca Dr., 824-9377. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L D, Sun. B L.
DOÑA ANA BIG MIKE'S CAFÉ, Thorpe Road. Mexican, breakfasts, burgers: B L D.
ORGAN THAI DELIGHT, 16151 Hwy. 70E, 373-3000. Thai, steaks, sandwiches: L D.
RADIUM SPRINGS COUNTRY CUPBOARD, 827 Fort Selden Rd., 527-4732. American: B L D.
SANTA TERESA BILLY CREWS, 1200 Country Club Road, 589-2071. Steak, seafood: L D.
LUNA COUNTY DEMING ADOBE DELI, 3970 Lewis Flats Road

SE, 546-0361. "The lunch menu features traditional deli-style sandwiches... The dinner menu is much grander, though some sandwiches are available then, too. Dinner options include filet mignon, flat iron steak, T-bone, ribeye, New York strip, Porterhouse, barbecued pork ribs, Duck L'Orange, Alaska King Crab legs, broiled salmon steak, shrimp scampi, pork chops, osso buco, beef kabobs." (March 2010) Bar, deli, steaks: L D.*
BALBOA MOTEL & RESTAURANT, 708 W. Pine St., 546-6473. Mexican, American: Sun.-Fri. L D.
BELSHORE RESTAURANT, 1030 E. Pine St., 546-6289. Mexican, American: Tues.-Sun. B L.
BENJI'S RESTAURANT, 821 W. Pine, 546-5309. Mexican, American: Mon., Tues. Thurs, Fri. B L D, Weds. B L.
CAMPOS RESTAURANT, 105 S. Silver, 546-0095. Mexican, American, Southwestern: L D.*
CANO'S RESTAURANT, 1200 W. Pine St., 546-3181. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. L D.
CHINA RESTAURANT, 110 E. Pine St., 546-4146. Chinese: L D.
EL CAMINO REAL, 900 W. Pine St., 546-7421. Mexican, American: B L D.
ELISA'S HOUSE OF PIES AND RESTAURANT, 208 1/2 S. Silver Alley, 494-4639. "The southern-style fare is a savory prelude to 35 flavors of pie." (April 2012) American, barbecue, sandwiches, pies: Mon.-Sat. L D.*
EL MIRADOR, 510 E. Pine St., 544-7340. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L D.
GOLDEN SUN STAR, 500 E. Cedar St., 544-0689. Chinese: L D.
GRAND MOTOR INN & LOUNGE, 1721 E. Pine, 546-2632. Mexican, steak, seafood: B L D.
IRMA'S, 123 S. Silver Ave., 544-4580. Mexican, American, seafood:

B L D.
LA FONDA, 601 E. Pine St., 546-0465. "Roomy, bright and airy, La Fonda is no mere taco joint. The extensive menu features all the Mexican favorites at bargain prices, plus a wide range of Anglo fare and a breakfast that's worth the drive to Deming. Famous for its fajitas: Choose chicken, beef or both, fajitas for two, or try the unusual stuffed fajita potato or seemingly contradictory fajita burrito." (September 2009) Mexican: B L D.*
LAS CAZUELAS, 108 N. Platinum Ave. (inside El Rey meat market), 544-8432. "This gem of a restaurant turns out perfectly cooked steaks and seafood, as well as a full line of Mexican fare." (June 2011) Steaks, seafood, Mexican: Tues.-Sat. L D.*
MANGO MADDIE'S, 722 E. Florida St., 546-3345. Salads, sandwiches, juice bar, coffee drinks.
MANOLO'S CAFÉ, 120 N. Granite St., 546-0405. "The menu offers breakfast, lunch and dinner choices, and it's difficult to convey the immense range of food options available. In every section of the menu, there's a mixture of American-style 'comfort' food items and Southwest-style Mexican dishes which no doubt qualify as Hispanic 'comfort' food. There's nothing particularly fancy about the food, but it's fresh and tasty. And the prices are reasonable." (February 2012) Mexican, American: Mon.-Sat. B L D, Sun. B L.
MIMBRES VALLEY BREWING CO., 200 S. Gold, 544-BREW. Craft beer, burgers, wings, paninis: Tues.-Fri. D, Sat.-Sun. L D.
PALMA'S ITALIAN GRILL, 110 S. Silver, 544-3100. "Even if you think you don't like Italian food, you might want to try this family-run enterprise, with Harold and Palma Richmond at the helm. In addition to the name, Palma brings to the restaurant her Sicilian heritage and recipes that came to the United States with her grandmother. Harold brings training in classic Con-

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DINING GUIDE continued on next page

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 (575) 313-4028 • cbarranch575@gmail.com

Diane's

Lunch

For our gluten intolerant customers sandwiches come on romane leaves or Diane's gluten free bread for \$2 extra

Hot Sandwiches

Bullard Street Cheese Steak \$9.00
 Sirloin steak w/ peppers, onions & Swiss cheese
 Grilled Tuna Sandwich \$9.00
 4oz tuna steak grilled w/ ginger caper tartar sauce
New Mexico Cheese Burger \$8.50
 6 oz burger topped w/ green chile & cheddar Add bacon \$1.00
Big Bun \$7.25
 Two eggs any style w/ choice of bacon or ham
Tuna Melt \$7.75
 Tuna served open faced w/ melted cheddar
 Grilled Portabella \$7.75
 Grilled Portabella mushroom, roasted red bell peppers, melted Asiago cheese & pesto maya

Cold Sandwiches

B.L.T. \$8.00
 Thick Boars Head bacon
 Turkey \$7.75
 Turkey, Swiss cheese & alfalfa sprouts
Club \$8.50
 Turkey, bacon, ham, salami
Ham \$7.25
 Smoked ham & cheddar

Salads

Grilled Tuna Salad \$9.00
 4oz tuna steak, mixed greens w/ tomatoes, mushrooms, red onions, alfalfa sprouts & roasted red pepper
Chef Salad \$8.50
 Sliced turkey, ham, swiss & cheddar w/ a hard boiled egg, mushrooms, tomatoes & alfalfa sprouts, mixed greens
Mandarin Salad Large \$12.00 Small \$4.50
 Mixed greens w/ mandarin oranges, red onions, & spiced pecans, balsamic vinegar & olive oil
Caesar \$7.50
 Romaine lettuce & parmesan tossed in Caesar dressing Add chicken for \$1.00 Add gluten free croutons \$1.00
Happy Salad \$8.50
 Sliced apples, spiced pecans, mushrooms & tomatoes on top of mixed green Add chicken for \$1.00

House Specialties

Stir Fried Vegetables
 Vegetarian \$7.00 - Chicken \$8.50 - Salmon \$9.25 - Shrimp \$9.00
 Asian veggies sautéed in a ginger teriyaki sauce (gluten free teriyaki) & served w/ white rice

Gluten Free Menu

Dinner

Appetizers

Steamed Mussels or Clams \$10.00
 1 lb of clams or New Zealand blue tipped mussels w/ herbed chardonnay tomato broth
The Devils Sea Shell \$9.00
 Scallops & Shrimp baked in a spicy chili garlic sauce

Soup

Diane's Creamy Tomato Soup Bowl \$5.00 Cup \$3.00 Gluten Free Croutons \$1.00

Ala Carte

Prawn - \$2.00 Chicken Breast \$3.50 Salmon \$9.00 Pan seared to make sure gluten from grill is not transferred

Salads

Side Salad \$3.50
 Mixed greens w/ tomato wedges & Parmesan cheese
Mandarin Salad Large \$12.00 Small \$4.50
 Mixed greens w/ mandarin oranges, red onions, & spiced pecans, balsamic vinegar & olive oil
Steak Salad \$18.00
 Sliced pan seared NY steak over fresh baby organic arugula topped w/ feta cheese, white beans, grape tomatoes, red onions & topped w/ a Chilean vinaigrette
Caesar Salad Large \$12.00 Small \$7.00 Gluten Free Croutons \$1.00
 Broken romaine hearts tossed in our homemade caesar dressing w/ Parmesan cheese, anchovy fillet

Beef Rice can be substituted for Mashed Potatoes

Filet Mignon \$28.00 w/ chef's toppings \$30.00
 6 oz hand carved choice filet, pan seared to order served w/ buttermilk mashed potatoes & fresh seasonal veggies
Ribeye \$25.00
 15 oz hand carved choice ribeye w/ southwest dry rub grilled to order served w/ buttermilk mashed potatoes & seasonal veggies - Topped w/ a poblano crème fraiche & served w/ grilled veggies \$27.00
New York \$20.00
 10 oz choice grilled NY steak grilled to order served w/ buttermilk mashed potatoes & seasonal veggies -Topped w/ sautéed mushrooms & melted bleu cheese \$23.00

Seafood

Baked Scampi \$18.00
 Shrimp marinated in lemon, garlic, parsley & baked. Served w/ jasmine rice and seasonal veggies
Scampi w/ Linguine \$17.00
 4 large prawns sautéed in a garlic butter w/ a touch of white wine tossed w/ linguine
Cioppino \$18.00
 Assorted seafood in a savory herb red wine & tomato sauce over linguine, finished w/ fresh grated Parmesan cheese
Seafood Thai Coconut Curry \$18.00
 Assorted seafood w/ Asian vegetables in a spicy coconut green curry sauce. Served w/ ginger lemon carrot salad & jasmine rice
Salmon \$21.00
 6 oz sesame encrusted seared salmon filet served over jasmine rice & teriyaki stir fry
Halibut \$31.00
 6oz halibut steak parmesan crusted w/ an herbed garlic aioli sauce served over jasmine rice & fresh asparagus

Vegetarian

Portabella Mushrooms \$16.00
 Grilled portabella w/ sautéed white beans, fresh spinach, leeks & yellow crookneck squash ragout garnished w/ feta
Pineapple Stir Fry w/ Asian Veggies \$16.00
 green & red onion, carrot, celery, red bell pepper, napa cabbage, pineapple and our house teriyaki sauce served w/ jasmine rice
Red Curry \$15.00
 Asian veggies in a coconut red curry broth served w/ jasmine rice

Chicken

Chicken Italiano \$20.00
 Prosciutto ham seared chicken breast baked & w/ pesto & melted brie served w/ seasonal veggies & jasmine rice
Herb Chicken \$16.00
 7 oz herb marinated, grilled chicken breast topped w/ crumbled goat cheese. Served w/ seasonal veggies & jasmine rice
Curry Chicken \$18.00
 Tender white meat w/ red curry, Asian veggies & coconut milk served w/ jasmine rice

Gluten Free Thursdays @ Diane's Bakery

510 N Bullard 538-8722

DianesRestaurant.com



Alotta Words about ALOTTA GELATO

Ho ho ho! You folks absolutely *love* our Pumpkin Pie gelato (which is only available for a limited time)! We'll keep it around a while longer in order to (as they say) satisfy popular demand. Thank you for your enthusiasm!

Our Egg Nog flavor is back again this year, and it should be available through New Years Day and beyond. Also, our Peppermint Stick flavor has returned for the Christmas/Hanukkah/ Kwanzaa/Yule/Solstice/You-Name-it holiday season. Hurry on over and try out these fine flavors, and pick up a hand-packed pint or quart for that holiday party! (And yes, we can put several flavors into each container so everyone can have their favorite.)

If you are stumped about what to give a special someone, we suggest one of our wonderful World Music CDs from the Putumayo label; we also carry CDs from many local artists including the "Sounds of Silver City" collections.

We'd like to point out that gift certificates are available for all occasions, can be purchased in any amount, can easily fit in any stocking, and are always (ahem!) in good taste.

Don't forget: ALOTTA GELATO is open 7 nights a week until at least 9:00 PM (10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday nights), and though **we'll be closed on Christmas Day, we'll close early on New Years Eve, and we'll be closed on New Years Day**, we will be open as usual the rest of the holiday season. We have all kinds of hot drinks (such as coffee, 20-plus kinds of tea, hot cocoa, hot cider and even ramen noodles) to warm your insides when it's chilly outside, and we also carry delicious dessert items such as Key Lime Bars, Chocolate Chip Brownies, Raspberry Streusel Bars, Triple Lemon Cheesecake, slices of flourless Chocolate Raspberry Torte, Chocolate Chip cookies and big honkin' wedges of triple-layer Carrot Cake! Come join your friends and neighbors, celebrate the holiday of your choice, impress your out-of-town relatives and guests and enjoy the best gelato in the state! Thanks for reading! As a token of our esteem for you, our valued customer, **bring this ad for 25¢ off any size gelato for each member of your party.**

Visit us online at: www.alottagelato.com
Alotta Gelato - 619 N. Bullard St.,
in Downtown Silver City -575-534-4995

DINING GUIDE continued

finental cuisine, along with his family's New England food traditions." (Sept. 2010) Italian: L D. Sat. prime rib, Sun. buffet.*

PATIO CAFÉ, 1521 Columbus Road, 546-5990. "The famed burgers are ground fresh daily from 85% lean beef—a half-pound apiece before cooking—and formed for each order. You can adorn your burger in any of a dozen different combinations of cheese, bacon, chiles, pico de gallo, sautéed onions, barbecue sauce, fresh mushrooms, even ham." (February 2006) Burgers, American: Mon.-Sat. L D.*

PRIME RIB GRILL (INSIDE HOLIDAY INN), I-10 exit 85, 546-2661. Steak, seafood, Mexican: B D.

RANCHER'S GRILL, 316 E. Cedar St., 546-8883. Steakhouse, burgers: L D.*

SI SEÑOR, 200 E. Pine St., 546-3938. Mexican: Mon.-Sat. B L D, Sun. B L.

SUNRISE KITCHEN, 1409 S. Columbus Road, 544-7795. "Good-quality comfort food. There's nothing on the menu that is really exotic. But all the familiar dishes, both American and Mexican, are done well, and it's that care in preparation that lifts the food above the ordinary. This is not a freezer-to-fryer type of restaurant." (September 2012) American, Mexican, breakfasts: Mon.-Thur. B L, Fri. B L D.

TACOS MIRASOL, 323 E. Pine St., 544-0646. Mexican: Mon., Wed.-Sat. B L D, Tues. B L.

AKELA

APACHE HOMELANDS RESTAURANT, I-10. Burgers, ribs, "casino-style" food: B L D.*

COLUMBUS

PATIO CAFÉ, 23 Broadway, 531-2495. Burgers, American: B L.*

HIDALGO COUNTY

LORDSBURG

EL CHARRO RESTAURANT, 209 S. P Blvd., 542-3400. Mexican: B L D.

FIDENCIO'S, 604 E. Motel Dr., 542-8989. Mexican: B L early D.

KRANBERRY'S FAMILY RESTAURANT, 1405 Main St., 542-9400. Mexican, American: B L D.

MAMA ROSA'S PIZZA, 1312 Main St., 542-8400. Pizza, subs, calzones, salads, chicken wings, cheeseburgers, shrimp baskets: L D.

RAMONA'S CAFÉ, 904 E. Motel Dr., 542-3030. "Lordsburg's quit Mexican food treasure offers some unusual takes on traditional recipes." (December 2012) Mexican, American: Tues.-Fri. B L D, Sun. B mid-day D.

ANIMAS

PANTHER TRACKS CAFÉ, Hwy. 338, 548-2444. Burgers, Mexican, American: Mon.-Fri. B L D

RODEO

RODEO STORE AND CAFÉ, 195 Hwy. 80, 557-2295. Coffeeshop food: Mon.-Sat. B L.

RODEO TAVERN, 557-2229. Shrimp, fried chicken, steaks, burgers, seafood: Weds.-Sat. D.

CATRON COUNTY

RESERVE ADOBE

CAFÉ, Hwy. 12 & Hwy. 180, 533-6146. Deli, American, Mon. pizza, Sunday BBQ ribs: Sun.-Mon. B L D, Wed.-Fri. B L.

BLACK GOLD

98 Main St., 533-6538. Coffeeshop, pastries.

CARMEN'S

101 Main St., 533-6990. Mexican, American: B L D.

ELLA'S

CAFÉ, 533-6111. American: B L D.

UNCLE

BILL'S BAR, 230 N. Main St., 533-6369. Pizza: Mon.-Sat. L D.

GLENWOOD ALMA

GRILL, Hwy. 180, 539-2233.

Breakfast, sandwiches, burgers, Mexican: Sun.-Weds., Fri.-Sat. B L.

BLUE

FRONT BAR AND CAFÉ, Hwy. 180, 539-2561.

"Plentiful appetizer platters, perfectly done and tender ribeye, weekend special barbecue dishes smoky sweet and ample." (Nov. 2007) Mexican, American, weekend barbecue, Friday catfish fry: L D.
GOLDEN GIRLS CAFÉ, Hwy. 180, 539-2457. "Dig into an honest taste of the local scene and a down-home breakfast you'll surely wish your mama had made. The specials listed up on the whiteboard all come with biscuits and gravy, and the ample menu has all the usual suspects—omelets, pancakes, French toast and, of course, breakfast burritos—clueing you into the rib-sticking satisfaction ahead." (Nov. 2007) Breakfast: B.

MARIO'S PIZZA, Hwy. 180, 539-2316. "This unpretentious eatery serves up better pizza than you'll find in many a big city. But a recent visit to the tiny, scenic mountain town will forever be remembered as the time I had, absolutely, the best calzone of my life." (Nov. 2008) Italian: Mon.-Tues.,

Table Talk

Q's Bistro in Silver City, in the building that formerly housed the Silver City Brewing Co., is looking to get back in the brewing business—and has engaged former owner Bob Brockhausen as brewmaster. A new menu will accompany the name change to Q's Southern Bistro and Brewery, with the brewery known as the Branding Iron Brewing Co. 101 E. College Ave., 534-4401.

Curious Kumquat in Silver City has two special events this month. Dec. 7, 5-9 p.m., will be a First Friday wine and cheese party; no reservations required. On Dec. 8, 6 p.m., an Apocalypse Tasting Dinner features 12 courses celebrating the Mayan calendar; \$75 or \$100 with wine pairings. Reservations are required. 111 E. College St. 534-0337.

Diane's in Silver City is introducing a new gluten-free menu. 510 N. Bullard, 538-8722.

Pizza lovers in Las Cruces can now enjoy **Great American Pizza**, serving up pies at 3100 W. Picacho Ave. The local outpost of the pizza chain is open weekdays 11 a.m.-9 p.m. and weekends until 10 p.m. 526-4277.

If you're craving Belgian waffles, have we got an eatery for you. **A Bite of Belgium**, 741 N. Alameda St. in Las Cruces, serves waffles and other Belgian fare, ranging from burgers on homemade brioche buns to pastries. Chef-owner Michael Mal was formerly a chef at the Double Eagle, and now has come out of retirement to share his native cuisine. 527-2483. ☼

Send restaurant news to updates@red-or-green.com.

Fri.-Sat. D.

OTHER CATRON COUNTY

SNUFFY'S STEAKHOUSE AND SALOON, Quemado Lake, 773-4672. Steakhouse: D (Dec.-April: closed Mon.-Tues.)

SIERRA COUNTY

HILLSBORO

BARBER SHOP CAFÉ, Main St., 895-5283. American, Mediterranean, sandwiches: Thurs.-Sat. L.

HILLSBORO GENERAL STORE & CAFÉ, 100 Main St., 895-5306. American and Southwestern: Sun.-Wed., Fri.-Sat. B L.

NOTE—Restaurant hours and meals served vary by day of the week and change frequently; call ahead to make sure. Key to abbreviations: B=Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner.*=Find copies of *Desert Exposure* here. Send updates, additions and corrections to: updates@red-or-green.com. ☼

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40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS

What's Going on in December

Plus a look ahead into early January.

DECEMBER

SATURDAY

1 Silver City/Grant County 32ND ANNUAL MIMBRES HOT SPRINGS RANCH STUDIO SALE

Works include flame-worked and fused glass, pottery, jewelry, cut-paper art, fiber art, watercolors and oils. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mimbres Hot Springs Ranch Studio. Take Hwy. 152 to the Mimbres, follow Hwy. 61 south to Royal John Mine Road and follow signs.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE—Unique crafts and gifts, food, knife sharpening and free raffles. Have your child or dog's photo taken with Santa Paws. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Grant County Business & Conference Center, Hwy. 180.

DYING TO LIVE—Author, Earth ceremonialist and inspirational speaker Julie McIntyre presents a lively exploration into living an authentic life. Register early, space is limited. 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Agave Spirit Retreats, 519-4509, director@agavespiritretreats.com, agavespiritretreats.com/events.

GOD'S EYE CLASS—10 a.m. Silver City Museum Annex, 302 W. Broadway, 538-5921, silvercitymuseum.org.

GREG AND CHARLIE—Original folk and favorite covers on guitars and mandolin. 6:30-9 p.m. Diane's Parlor.

HOLIDAY JEWELRY SHOW—Opening reception 2-5 p.m. Seedboat Gallery, 214 W. Yankie St., seedboatgallery.com.

WNMU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY—7:30 p.m. WNMU Branchau Complex, wnmumustangs.com.

WIND CANYON STUDIO OPEN HOUSE—New Silver City resident Louise Sackett opens her studio full of oils, pastels and acrylics. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 11 Quail Run off Wild Canyon Drive.

WNMU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY—5:30 p.m. WNMU Branchau Complex, wnmumustangs.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

BIRD TOURS—Saturdays. Please bring binoculars, water, sunscreen and wear hiking shoes. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

LATCH KEY KIDS—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

LETTERS TO SANTA CLAUS—Santa will write a personal reply to each child who writes to him. Paper and envelopes will be available if you wish to write your letters at the museum. Letters will be available for pickup one

week after drop off. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Railroad Museum, 351 N. Mesilla St., 647-4480, las-cruces.org/public-services/museums.

POTTERS' GUILD HOLIDAY SALE—This is a great opportunity to purchase a unique locally made creation direct from the artist. 2-7 p.m. Free. Association of Realtors Building, 150 E. Idaho Ave., 524-1146

ROBOT & FRANK—Through Dec. 6. Set in the near future, an ex-jewel thief receives a gift from his son: a robot butler programmed to look after him. But soon the two companions try their luck as a heist team. Directed by Jake Schreier, starring Peter Sarsgaard, Frank Langella and Susan Sarandon. Nightly 7:30 p.m., Sat. 1:30 and 7:30 p.m., Sun. 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. \$7 regular, \$6 seniors and students, \$5 MVFS members, children and Weds. Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, 524-8287, mesillavalleyfilm.org.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Douglas Jackson. 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Downtown, 317 N. Water St.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Jean Gilbert 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Solano, 1101 S. Solano.

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW—Through Dec. 2. American Southwest Theatre Company at NMSU Theatre Arts. \$10-\$15. NMSU Hershel Zohn Theatre, 3014 McFie Circle, 646-4515, theatre.nmsu.edu.

DEMING

KIWANIS CHRISTMAS LIGHT PARADE—6 p.m. 546-9096.

HILLSBORO

CHRISTMAS IN THE FOOTHILLS—Highlights of the festival will include an array of vendors selling specialty hand-crafted gifts, a Vendors' Prize Raffle, the annual raffle of the original artwork depicted on collectible art prints, rides throughout town for visitors on a wagon drawn by Clydesdales, and the ever-popular \$49.99 Art Show and Sale. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Hillsboro Community Center, 895-5457.

SUNDAY

2 Silver City/Grant County ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE—See Dec. 1. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Grant County Business & Conference Center, Hwy. 180.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

LAS CRUCES HALF MARATHON—Half Marathon, 5K, Fun Run/Walk. Flat, accurate course, finish-line party with music, refreshments. Runners and walkers welcome, military and team

competition, commemorative shirts/medals. lascruceshalf.com.

POTTERS' GUILD HOLIDAY SALE—9 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Association of Realtors Building, 150 E. Idaho Ave., 524-1146.

RANGER LED NATURE HIKE—Sundays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

RON THEILMAN'S BIG BAND—A complete musical menu, with everything from Miller to present-day pop standards. 3-5 p.m. \$20. Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Downtown Mall, 523-6403, www.riograndetheatre.com.

DEMING

DPAT JAM SESSIONS—Sundays. Come out and dance, socialize and have a great time. 2-4 p.m. Free. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine.

MONDAY

3 Las Cruces / Mesilla NMSU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. UTSA—7-9 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

TUESDAY

4 Las Cruces / Mesilla ARGENTINE TANGO DE LAS CRUCES—Tuesdays. 6-9 p.m. First Christian Church, 1809 El Padeo Road, lascrucessocialdance.com/tango.html.

WEDNESDAY

5 Silver City/Grant County ANDREW DAHL-BREDINE—Singer-songwriter. Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com

CONCERT BAND OF THE SOUTHWEST—Holiday Concert. Handel's Messiah, Big Band, holiday favorites. 8 p.m. Cobre Performing Arts Center at Bayard High School.

ILLUSTRATOR DUG SITOWSKI—Also Dec. 12, 19. Walt Disney-trained advertising illustrator presents a series of arts instruction classes. 3-4 p.m. Free. Bayard Public Library, 1112 Central Ave., 537-6244.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

NMSU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. TEXAS STATE—7-9 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

THURSDAY

6 Silver City/Grant County DEAR SANTA—Christmas stories from the Old West. Brown bag. 12 p.m. Free. Silver City Museum Annex,

EVENTS continued on next page

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Buckhorn Saloon Musical Convergence

Melanie Zipin & the Sugar Leafs

Rodney Henderson & the Roadrunners

let's bring it in together!

8 PM no cover donations appreciated. mon 12/31

BUCKHORN SALOON & OPERA HOUSE

DECEMBER 2012

Open Mic Night @ 7pm Mondays

Wednesdays Saloon Spaghetti

Sat 1 TBA

Wed 5 Andrew Dahl-Bredine Singer Songwriter

Fri 7 The Oversouls Local Rock & Soul

Sat 8 The Roadrunners Rock & Blues

Wed 12 Guadalupe Day with Logan Phillips

Fri/Sat 14/15 Steve Reynolds Finger Style Guitarist Flagstaff

Wed 19 The Oversouls Local Rock & Soul

Fri 21 The Stringbeans Bluegrass

Sat 22 Bob Einweck Pop, Rock, Singer Songwriter

Wed 26 Barb & Joe Jazz Standards

Fri 28 TBA

Sat 29 Secret Circus Alternative Rock, Sweden

MON 31—NEW YEAR'S EVE Musical Convergence with Rodney Henderson & the Roadrunners Melanie Zipin & the Sugar Leafs

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The Compassionate Friends of SWNM 4th Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held at:
The Episcopal Church
 On the corner of 7th and Texas Street
 Silver City, NM
 Starting at 6:30pm



Speakers will include; Reverend Paul Moore, Dr. Gilbert Arizaga, Chris McIntosh and family members of children, siblings and grandchildren who have died, and much more. Refreshments will be available after the services.

Writing with Steve Havill
 a hands-on workshop for writers of all types and levels
Saturday, Jan. 26, 2013
9 am-4 pm
 \$75, lunch included
Bear Mountain Lodge
 silverywordfiesta@gmail.com

DECEMBER FILMS

Dec. 1 - 6 **Robot & Frank**
 Dec. 7 - 13 **Three Stars**
 Dec. 8 **Las Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo and the Search for Identity** @4:00 PM. \$3 for MVFS members, \$5 for all others

Dec. 14 - 20 **Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai**
 Dec. 21* - 27 **The Well Digger's Daughter** (*except Dec. 24, 25)
 Dec. 28* - Jan. 3 **Arbitrage** (*except for Dec. 31)

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 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, Mesilla • www.mesillavalleyfilm.org • (575) 524-8287
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Sat 1 Latch Key Kids (Silver City)
 Thu 6 Bat (Albuquerque)
 Sat 8 Lillis Urban
 Thu 13 Everett Howl
 Sat 15 The Welcome Matt, K.C. Turner & Roem Baur (San Francisco)
 Thu 20 John Hogan & Maria Moss (Austin)
 Sat 22 Daniel Park
 Mon 24 Closing early (7p.m.)
 Tue 25 Closed (Merry Christmas!)
 Thu 29 Next 2 The Tracks (El Paso)
 Mon 31 Closing early (7p.m.)
 Tue 1 Closed (Hoppy New Year!)

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THE TO DO LIST
 Holiday happenings

Holiday favorites return this month, as welcome as Christmas cookies fresh out of the oven. Start with Theatre Group New Mexico's annual holiday show, this year entitled **Just Be Christmas Inside**. It's based on the play by Winifred Bell Fletcher, adapted and directed by Winifred Bell Fletcher. Performances are **Dec. 7-9** at the WNMU Fine Arts Center Theater. **Dec. 7** is also the first of two holiday concerts and sing-alongs by the **Hi Lo Silvers** (the second is **Dec. 9**), both at First Presbyterian Church in Silver City. And **Dec. 7-23** will see performances of **Irving Berlin's White Christmas** by the Las Cruces Community Theater, based on the classic film and featuring 17 of Berlin's songs. In Truth or Consequences, **Dec. 7** brings the **5th Annual**



Old-Fashioned Christmas, with a tree lighting at Evelyn Renfro Park, carolers, wagon rides and even a live nativity scene.

The next day, **Dec. 8**, a new holiday tradition returns to downtown

Silver City with the renamed **Tamale Fiesta y Mas**. Vendors will be set up along Broadway, between Bullard and Texas Streets, where you'll also enjoy mariachi music, traditional dancing and a street party. Other events will be held at the Silver City Museum. Also at the museum, on **Dec. 13**, it's the 28th annual **Victorian Christmas Open House**.

The Mimbres Region Arts Council's annual fundraiser, the **Black Tie Benefit Ball**, will attract dancing feet to the elegantly restored Murray Hotel in downtown Silver City on **Dec. 15**. Music will be by Rhythm Mystic and Brandon Perrault.



More holiday happenings: On **Dec. 9**, the **Mesilla Valley Chorale** presents a "Holiday Potpourri" at the Rio Grande Theatre in Las Cruces.

All the fun's not done once the packages are unwrapped. Next comes **New Year's Eve**, which you can celebrate in Pinos Altos at the **Buckhorn Saloon Musical Convergence**. Music is by Melanie Zipin and the Sugar Leafs and Rodney Henderson and the Roadrunners.

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EVENTS continued

302 W. Broadway, 538-5921, silvercitymuseum.org.

LIGHT UP A LIFE—Tree memorial lighting ceremony. Bring a photo of a loved one to GRMC Hospice Services, 2814 Hwy. 180E, in advance. 5:30-6 p.m. \$5 donation to reserve a light. Gila Regional Medical Center front canopy, 574-4934, www.grmc.org.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA
BAT—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

BIG BAND DANCE CLUB—Jim Helder Septet. 7-10 p.m. \$9, \$7 members. Court Youth Center, 402 W. Court St., 526-6504.

FRIDAY
7 Silver City/Grant County
BRENT FLENNIKEN—Exhibit opening.

A highly spontaneous painter, most often paints highly creative and colorful Southwest and Mexican landscapes, mission churches, carnival scenes, watercolor portraits, florals and abstract compositions. 5:30 p.m. Gallery 400, 400 N. Arizona.

HANDPRINT HOLIDAY WREATH CRAFT CLASS—Children's craft class. 4-6 p.m. Free. Silver City Museum, 312 W. Broadway, 538-5921, silvercitymuseum.org.

HI LO SILVERS—Also Dec. 9. Holiday concert and sing-a-long. Singers are directed by Valdeen Wooton and accompanied by Virginia Robertson on piano and Bill Baldwin on bass violin. 7 p.m. Free. First Presbyterian Church, 1915 N. Swan St.

JUST BE CHRISTMAS INSIDE—Also Dec. 8, 9. Theatre Group New Mexico. 6:30 p.m. Donation for food pantry. WNMU Fine Arts Center Theater.

SWNM AUDUBON MEETING—Guest speaker Peg Abbott, founder of Nature Journeys, will present a slide show on Papua New Guinea's culture and wildlife. 7 p.m. Free. WNMU Harlan Hall.

THE OVERSOULS—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT DANCING—Fridays. Hector Carillo performs pop, light rock, country western and Spanish. 8 p.m.-12 a.m. VFW Post 3347, Hwy. 180.

WINTER UNDER WESTERN SKIES—Exhibit opening. 4-6 p.m. Silver City Museum, 312 W. Broadway, 538-5921, silvercitymuseum.org.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA
IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—Through Dec. 23. Based on the beloved, timeless film, this heartwarming musical adaptation features 17

Irving Berlin songs. 8 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

LAS CRUCES ARTS ASSOCIATION OPEN HOUSE—Featuring cards, unframed art, refreshments and raffle 1-4 p.m. Mountain Gallery and Studios, 138 W. Mountain St.

LCAA MINIATURE SHOW—4 p.m. Mountain Gallery and Studios, 138 W. Mountain St.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE—Come have fun with your family and enjoy some hot coca with Santa. Johnson Park, 541-2000.

MARILYN SAHS—Artist reception. 5-7 p.m. Free. Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Downtown Mall, 523-6403, riograndetheatre.com.

RON SALTZMAN—Opening reception for photography show. 4-9 p.m. Free. Aralia Gallery, 224 N. Campo, 660-7543.

THREE STARS—Through Dec. 13. Award-winning filmmaker Lutz Hachmeister observed the work of nine head chefs with stars in the Michelin Guide, cooking in France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, but also in the US and Japan. They are not only working in luxurious restaurants, but also in simple rural guest houses, rustic family farmhouses or profit-oriented hotel eateries. Hachmeister's main interest lies in their personalities: Who are these men (and few women) who work 14 hours a day for decades to become master chefs? Nightly 7:30 p.m., Sat. 1:30 and 7:30 p.m., Sun. 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. \$7 regular, \$6 seniors and students, \$5 MVFS members, children and Weds. Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, 524-8287, mesillavalleyfilm.org.

DEMING
WILLIAM DUNMIRE—Come join us for a slide show and speech on William Dunmire's new book "New Mexico's Living Landscapes." Copies of the book will be available for purchase. Dunmire will be available for autographs. 2 p.m. Marshall Memorial Library, 100 S. Diamond, 546-9202, youseemore.com/marshall.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
5TH ANNUAL OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS—6 p.m. tree lighting at Evelyn Renfro Park. Downtown businesses open late for holiday shopping. Carolers, live nativity scene, music, wagon rides, fire pits. www.torcmain-street.org.

SATURDAY
HANUKKAH BEGINS
Silver City/Grant County
8 FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK SALE—9 a.m.-1 p.m. 1510 Market St.

JUST BE CHRISTMAS INSIDE—Also Dec. 7, 9. Theatre Group New Mexico. 6:30 p.m. Donation for food pantry. WNMU Fine Arts Center Theater.

ASTRONOMY SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING—1 p.m. Isaac's, 200 N. Bullard St.

TAMALE FIESTA Y MAS—Vendors for this year's Tamale Fiesta will be set up along Broadway, between Bullard and Texas Streets, so you can enjoy the taste, sounds and activities right in the heart of town. On Broadway west of Bullard Street: 10-11 a.m.: Opening ceremony with Mariachi Rosas del Desierto, the acclaimed all-girl mariachi troupe from Deming. 11:15 a.m.-noon: Matachines La Rosa del Tepeyac, traditional dancers from Chihuahua, Mexico. Noon: Tamal Judging, awards for best traditional and gourmet tamales. 1-4 p.m.: Tardeada, street party with live music provided by Grant County Chicano Music Project, Friends of the Underground & The Illusion Band. At the Silver City Museum: 11-11:30 a.m., 1:30-2 p.m.: Bilingual storytelling. 12-1 p.m.: Flores Mexicanas (paper flower making) workshop. 2:30-3:30 p.m.: Culture in the Kitchen: Traditional Holiday Foods. Green Chamber of Commerce. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Downtown Silver City. 538-5555, www.TamaleFiestaYMas.org.

THE ROADRUNNERS—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA
BIRD TOURS—Saturdays. Please bring binoculars, water, sunscreen and wear hiking shoes. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 8 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

LAS ABUELAS DE PLAZA DE MAYO AND THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY—As many as 30,000 dissidents of the military dictatorship were kidnapped, tortured and killed during Argentina's Dirty War (1976-1983). Today, there is a movement underway headed by a group called Las Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo. These women are dedicated to finding their missing grandchildren, the babies who were taken from pregnant women during the Dirty War. Spanish with English subtitles. 4 p.m. \$5, \$3 MVFS members Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, 524-8287, mesillavalleyfilm.org.

LILLIS URBAN—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

MESQUITE STREET CHRISTMAS—The horse and wagon will again ride through the historic Mesquite Street area in celebration of the holidays. 11

a.m.-3 p.m. Mesquite Street.

PINCH POT WORKSHOP—Explore the properties of self-hardening clay and the basic techniques for forming your own pot. The class is limited to the first 15 adult registrants. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Free. Branigan Cultural Center, 501 N. Main St., 541-2154, las-cruces.org/museums.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Saturdays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Pat Gill. 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Downtown, 317 N. Water St.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Judith Ames. 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Solano, 1101 S. Solano.

DEMING

CAROLYN MARTIN—A unique sense of musical style, Western swing, a charismatic stage presence and a voice that exudes passion and experience. 2 p.m. \$10, \$8 DPAT members. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine, dpata.org.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS—1,000 luminarias light the visitor center, native gardens and labyrinth. 5 p.m. Rockhound State Park, Hwy. 143.

RADIUM SPRINGS

STARS-N-PARKS—Indian Sky Lore presentation features the winter sky. Observe with telescopes and binoculars, including Mars and Jupiter. 5:30-8 p.m. \$3.50. Leasburg Dam State Park, astro-npo.org.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

ART HOP—Downtown shops and galleries open late. 6-9 p.m. www.torcmainstreet.org.

ELPHANT BUTTE

18TH ANNUAL LUMINARIA BEACH-WALK—And floating lights parade. 5 p.m.

SUNDAY

9 Silver City/Grant County Hi Lo SILVERS—See Dec. 7. 3 p.m. Free. First Presbyterian Church, 1915 N. Swan St.

JUST BE CHRISTMAS INSIDE—Also Dec. 7, 8. Theatre Group New Mexico. 2 p.m. Donation for food pantry. WNMU Fine Arts Center Theatre.

WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING—Light a candle for all children who have died. Speakers, refreshments. 6:30 p.m. The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 7th and Texas St., 538-2015.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 2 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lctnm.org.

MESILLA VALLEY CHORALE—Holiday Potpourri. Classic holiday offerings, alongside upbeat spirituals and sing-alongs 3-5 p.m. \$10. Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Downtown Mall, 523-6403, riograndetheatre.com.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Sundays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

DEMING

DPAT JAM SESSIONS—Sundays. Come out and dance, socialize and have a great time. 2-4 p.m. Free. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine.

GREEN TEA—Traditional holiday event. 1:30-4 p.m. Deming Luna Mimbres Museum, 301 S. Silver.

MONDAY

10 Silver City/Grant County SILVER CITY/GRANT COUNTY WIDOWED PERSONS SERVICE—Social meeting and lunch. 11 a.m. \$10 includes lunch. Glad Tidings Church, 537-3643.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

VIRGIN DE GUADALUPE FIESTA—Piro-Manso-Tiwa Tribe of Guadalupe Pueblo of Las Cruces. St. Genevieve's Parish Hall, 524-9649.

TUESDAY

11 Silver City/Grant County SIMPLE HOLIDAY TREATS—Also Dec. 13. Favorite recipes from the Co-op Staff. 12-1 p.m. Free. Silver City Food Co-op, Community Room, 111 6th St., 388-2343, silverscityfoodcoop.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

ARGENTINE TANGO DE LAS CRUCES—Tuesdays. 6-9 p.m. First Christian Church, 1809 El Padeo Road, lascrucessocialdance.com/tango.html.

EVERY OTHER TUESDAY—Mesilla Valley Teen Singers. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Free. Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Downtown Mall, 523-6403, riograndetheatre.com.

WEDNESDAY

12 Silver City/Grant County ECONOMIC FORUM—Community

Development, Tourism, and Public Lands. Presentations by Ben Alexander, associate director of Headwaters Economics; Joe Saenz, owner/operator of WolfHorse Outfitters; and Catherine Wanek, Gila Representative of the SW NM Regional Tourism Board/owner of Black Range Lodge; followed by community discussion. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Free. Silco Theater, 311 N. Bullard St., 534-9005, silcotheater.com.

GUADALUPE DAY WITH LOGAN PHILIPS—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandopera-house.com.

ILLUSTRATOR DUG SITOWSKI—See Dec. 5. Also Dec. 19. 3-4 p.m. Free. Bayard Public Library, 1112 Central Ave., 537-6244.

STEVE REYNOLDS—Finger-style guitarist. Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandopera-house.com.

RADIUM SPRINGS

FRIENDS OF LEASBURG DAM STATE PARK—Membership Drive and Monthly Meeting. A short lecture on Native American history of the area will be provided by park ranger Alex Mares and light snack and refreshments will be provided. 6 p.m. Leasburg Dam State Park, 524-4068.

THURSDAY

13 Silver City/Grant County ROLLING STONES GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY MEETING—Annual Christmas Party and Gift Grab. A turkey and a ham will be provided for the potluck. Everyone brings their own plate (don't forget one for dessert, too), utensils, napkins, a beverage and a dish to share. Also, bring your own drinking glasses. 6 p.m. Senior Center, Victoria St., 534-1393.

SIMPLE HOLIDAY TREATS—See Dec. 11. 12-1 p.m. Free. Silver City Food Co-op, Community Room, 111 6th St., 388-2343, silverscityfoodcoop.com.

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS—Health Talk with Dr. Teresa Arizaga-Morales, Dr. Maria Elena Arizaga, Dr. Gilbert Arizaga. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Free. WNMU Global Resource Center, 538-4870, grmc.org.

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE—The halls are decked, the traditional treat recipes are out, and musicians are tuning up for the Silver City Museum's 28th Annual Victorian Christmas Open House. 5:30-8 p.m. Silver City Museum, 312 W. Broadway, 538-5921, silverscitymuseum.org.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

BIG BAND DANCE CLUB—CDs. 7-10 p.m. \$7. Court Youth Center, 402 W. Court St., 526-6504.

EVERETT HOWL—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

STORIES OF HOLIDAY'S PAST—Centennial Edition. Meet various historical characters as they celebrate New Mexico's first Christmas as a state. This festive and historically compelling program displays the different cultures of New Mexico as they come together in celebration of statehood and the holidays. Experience what was happening in the world 100 years ago at this special time-travel event. 7 p.m. \$2. Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, 4100 Dripping Springs Road, 522-4100, nmfarmandranchmuseum.org.

THE ARCHAEOLOGIST'S LABORATORY—Lillian M. Ponce will discuss radiocarbon dating, a technique often used to help determine the age of archaeological sites. 1 p.m. Branigan Cultural Center, 501 N. Main St., 541-2154, las-cruces.org/museums.

FRIDAY

14 Silver City/Grant County VFW FRIDAY NIGHT DANCING—Fridays. Hector Carillo performs pop, light rock, country western and Spanish. 8 p.m.-12 a.m. VFW Post 3347, Hwy 180.

WNMU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. CSU-PUEBLO—7:30 p.m. WNMU, wnmumustangs.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

HARA-KIRI: DEATH OF A SAMURAI—Through Dec. 20. A tale of revenge, honor and disgrace, centering on a poverty-stricken samurai who discovers the fate of his ronin son-in-law, setting in motion a tense showdown of vengeance against the house of a feudal lord. Japanese with English subtitles. Nightly 7:30 p.m., Sat. 1:30 and 7:30 p.m., Sun. 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. \$7 regular, \$6 seniors and students, \$5 MVFS members, children and Weds. Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, 524-8287, mesillavalleyfilm.org.

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 8 p.m. \$7-10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lctnm.org.

MESILLA VALLEY WEAVERS: THREADS THROUGH TIME—Opening reception.

Celebrate the rich weaving history and traditions of New Mexico in this diverse exhibition, which features 44 different woven works from the artists of the Mesilla Valley Weavers Guild. With everything from items of clothing to decorative arts, the works on display will show how weaving has evolved from a necessary task to become an important form of art. 6-8 p.m. Free. Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, 4100 Dripping Springs Road, 522-4100, nmfarmandranchmuseum.org.

MICAH PEARSON'S DIGITAL DREAMS—Exhibit through Jan. 30. Artist's reception. A show that moves through space and time, melding the realistic and the fantastical, and demonstrating the potential for artistic expression using mixed-media including photography, hand drawing and digital modeling and manipulation. 7:30 p.m. Tombaugh Gallery, Unitarian Universalist Church, 2000 S. Solano, 522-7281.

NMSU GRADUATING BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS SHOWCASE—"First Impressions" and "What Has Been." Ammie Ward and Stephanie Wagner. Thesis exhibits. 6-9 p.m. West End Art Depot, 401 N. Mesilla St.

UP ALL NIGHT—Graduating NMSU Graphic Design senior art show. Reception 5-7 p.m. NMSU Corbett Student Union.

SATURDAY

15 Silver City/Grant County ANNUAL SWEET SALE—Includes Cookie Walk—choose from thousands of cookies. Also candies, pies, quick breads and low-cost last-minute gifts. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Silver City Women's Club, 411 Silver Heights Blvd., 534-0505.

BLACK TIE BENEFIT BALL 2012—This catered affair promises to be the holiday event of the season. Dress to the nines and dance to the music of Rhythm Mystic and Brandon Perault. Benefits Mimbres Region Arts Council. 7:30 p.m. \$50. Murray Hotel Ballroom, mimbresarts.org/black-tie-holiday-benefit-ball.

CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY CRAFT HOUR—2-3 p.m. Free. Bayard Public Library, 1112 Central Ave., 537-6244.

KAREN MUENCH—Trunk Show. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Silver City Museum, 312 W. Broadway, 538-5921, silverscitymuseum.org.

NIZHONI POTTERY STUDIO SALE—Romaine Begay. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Nizhoni Pottery, 3235 Little Walnut Road, 590-0698.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT—Feeder watchers and beginning to expert birders are needed to help count the birds. Contact Karen, 388-2386.

STEVE REYNOLDS—Finger-style guitarist. Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandopera-house.com.

WNMU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. CU-COLORADO SPRINGS—5:30 p.m. WNMU, wnmumustangs.com.

WNMU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. CU-COLORADO SPRINGS—7:30 p.m. WNMU, wnmumustangs.com.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA—Members of the Grant County community will gather again to honor veterans during the holiday season. 10 a.m. \$15 per wreath. Call Robert, 313-9369, or Mary, 538-2626. Fort Bayard National Historic Landmark, 956-3294, fortbayard.org.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

BIRD TOURS—Saturdays. Please bring binoculars, water, sunscreen and wear hiking shoes. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

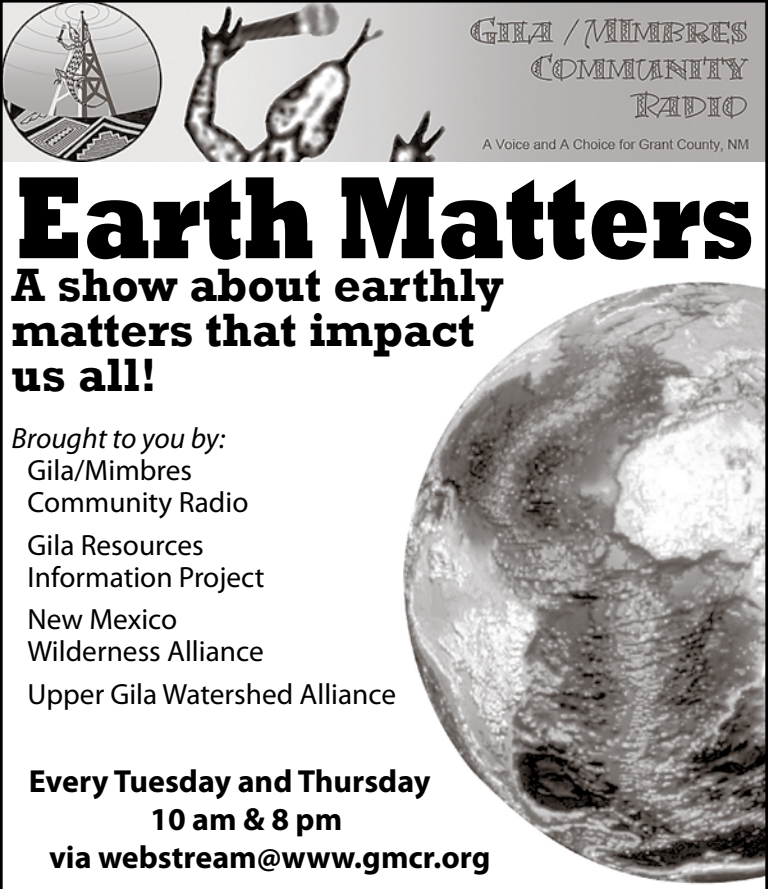
DECK THE HALLS—Christmas carols and crafts. Children will decorate a cowboy stocking, learn holiday songs, and bake stained-glass cookies. Cider and cookies. Pre-registration required. 9:30-11:30 a.m. \$5. Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, 4100 Dripping Springs Road, 522-4100, nmfarmandranchmuseum.org.

DESERT DISCOVERY TRAIL CHRISTMAS LUMINARIAS—The Desert Discovery Trail will shine bright in the heart of the Nature Park with hundreds of luminaria. 5-7 p.m. Free. Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park, 56501 N. Jornada Road, 524-3334, asombro.org.

FOOD MIXES IN A JAR—Gayla Weaver will tell how to make your own mixes in a jar and give them as holiday gifts. 11 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

HOLIDAY PLANTS INTO THE NEW YEAR—Want to keep those poinsettias and other festive plants alive after the holidays? Master Gardener Sylvia Hacker will provide tips. 10 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque

EVENTS continued on next page



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EVENTS continued

State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 8 p.m. \$7-10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

LED HOLIDAY CARD WORKSHOP—Using a special type of conductive paint and LED lights, create holiday cards that illuminate with touch. Ages 9 to 12. Pre-registration required. 9-11 a.m. Free. Branigan Cultural Center, 501 N. Main St., 541-2154, las-cruces.org/museums.

NMSU COMMENCEMENT—Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Saturdays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Sarah Addison. 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Downtown, 317 N. Water St.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Florence Hamilton 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Solano, 1101 S. Solano.

THE WELCOME MATT, K.C. TURNER & ROEM BAUR—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

DEMING

BOOK SIGNING EXTRAVAGANZA—Authors Stephen J. Bodio and M.H. "Dutch" Salmon. 12-5 p.m. Readers' Cove Used Books & Gallery, 200 S. Copper, 544-2512.

RADIUM SPRINGS

LUMINARIA TOUR—5 p.m. Fort Selden, 526-8911, nmmonuments.org.

SUNDAY

16 Silver City/Grant County
GREG AND JEAN—Original and contemporary folk music and open mic. 5-8 p.m. Diane's Parlor.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

COMPASSION & CHOICES—Discussion: Talking with Family about End-of-Life Decisions. 1:30-3 p.m. Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho Ave., 528-4000, library.las-cruces.org.

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 2 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Sundays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

DEMING DPAT JAM SESSIONS—Sundays. Come out and dance, socialize and have a great time. 2-4 p.m. Free. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine.

NEW MEXICO HOLIDAY ARTS FESTIVAL—1-3 p.m. Deming Arts Center, 100 S. Gold, 546-3663, demingarts.orbs.com.

TUESDAY

18 Las Cruces / Mesilla
ARGENTINE TANGO DE LAS CRUCES—Tuesdays. 6-9 p.m. First Christian Church, 1809 El Padeo Road, lascrucsocialdance.com/tango.html.

NMSU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. UNM—6:30 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

WEDNESDAY

19 Silver City/Grant County
ILLUSTRATOR DUG SITOWSKI—See Dec. 5. 3-4 p.m. Free. Bayard Public Library, 1112 Central Ave., 537-6244.

THE OVERSOULS—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

NMSU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. UNM—7 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

THURSDAY

20 Las Cruces / Mesilla
BIG BAND DANCE CLUB—Christmas Ball with Ron Thielman's High Society Orchestra. 7-10 p.m. \$9, \$7 members. Court Youth Center, 402 W. Court St., 526-6504.

JOHN HOGAN & MARIA MOSS—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

THE NUTCRACKER BALLET—\$19-\$21. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

FRIDAY

21 Silver City/Grant County
THE STRINGBEANS—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT DANCING—Fridays. Hector Carillo performs pop, light rock, country western and Spanish. 8 p.m.-12 a.m. VFW Post 3347, Hwy 180.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 8 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

NMSU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS.

UMKC—6:30 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

THE WELL DIGGER'S DAUGHTER—Though Dec. 27, except 24, 25. In pre-World War II France, a father is torn between his sense of honor and his deep love for his saintly daughter when she gets in trouble with the wealthy son of a shopkeeper. French with English subtitles. Nightly 7:30 p.m., Sat. 1:30 and 7:30 p.m., Sun. 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. \$7 regular, \$6 seniors and students, \$5 MVFS members, children and Weds. Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, 524-8287, mesillavalleyfilm.org.

SATURDAY

22 Silver City/Grant County
BOB EINWECK—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

BIRD TOURS—Saturdays. Please bring binoculars, water, sunscreen and wear hiking shoes. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

DANIEL PARK—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

IN SEARCH OF HISTORY—Pueblo Cliff-dwellers. Documentary. 1-2 p.m. Free. Branigan Cultural Center, 501 N. Main St., 541-2154, las-cruces.org/museums.

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. Through Dec. 23. 8 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

NMSU MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. MISSOURI ST.—7 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Saturdays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Louise O'Donnell. 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Downtown, 317 N. Water St.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Sonya Weiner 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Solano, 1101 S. Solano.

DEMING

LA CELLA BELLA—Four cellos expertly played with a repertoire as varied as the radio dial. Classical, pop, rock or even metal arrangements. 2 p.m. \$10, \$8 DPAT members. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine, dpat.org.

SUNDAY

23 Las Cruces/Mesilla
IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS—See Dec. 7. 2 p.m. \$7-\$10. Las Cruces Community Theater, 313 N. Downtown Mall, 523-1200, lcctnm.org.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Sundays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

DEMING

DPAT JAM SESSIONS—Sundays. Come out and dance, socialize and have a great time. 2-4 p.m. Free. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine.

MONDAY

CHRISTMAS EVE
24 Las Cruces / Mesilla
CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND LUMINARIAS ON THE PLAZA—The historic village of Old Mesilla is aglow with thousands of luminarias and caroling. Bring the family and enjoy hot chocolate with Santa. Free. Old Mesilla Plaza, 524-3262 ext. 116, mesilla-nm.org

TUESDAY

CHRISTMAS DAY

25 Las Cruces / Mesilla
ARGENTINE TANGO DE LAS CRUCES—Tuesdays. 6-9 p.m. First Christian Church, 1809 El Padeo Rd., lascrucsocialdance.com/tango.html.

WEDNESDAY

26 Silver City/Grant County
BARB & JOE—Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

NATURE TREK—Also Dec. 29. Holiday Stories: Children and adults are invited to learn about New Mexico culture. Stories will be told and shared along with a craft activity. 10 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

THURSDAY

27 Las Cruces / Mesilla
BIG BAND DANCE CLUB—New Year's Ball with Genie and the Starliners. 7-10 p.m. \$9, \$7 members. Court Youth Center, 402 W. Court St., 526-6504.

FRIDAY

28 Silver City/Grant County
VFW FRIDAY NIGHT DANCING—Fridays. Hector Carillo performs pop, light rock, country western and Spanish. 8 p.m.-12 a.m. VFW Post 3347, Hwy 180.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

ARBITRAGE—Through Jan. 3, except Dec. 31. A troubled hedge fund magnate desperate to complete the sale of his trading empire makes an error that forces him to turn to an unlikely person for help. Stars Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon and Brit Marling. Nightly 7:30 p.m., Sat. 1:30 and 7:30 p.m., Sun. 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. \$7 regular, \$6 seniors and students, \$5 MVFS members, children and Weds. Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe, 524-8287, mesillavalleyfilm.org.

SATURDAY

29 Silver City/Grant County
SECRET CIRCUS—Alternative rock. Sweden. Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

BIRD TOURS—Saturdays. Please bring binoculars, water, sunscreen and wear hiking shoes. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

NATURE TREK—See Dec. 26. 10 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

NEXT 2 THE TRACKS—High Desert Brewing, 1201 W. Hadley, 525-6752.

NMSU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. UT-ARLINGTON—6:30 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Saturdays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Lori Todoroki 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Downtown, 317 N. Water St.

STORYTELLERS OF LAS CRUCES—Al Infante 10:30 a.m. Coas Books Solano, 1101 S. Solano.

SUNDAY

30 Las Cruces / Mesilla
RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Sundays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle.

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

DEMING

DPAT JAM SESSIONS—Sundays. Come out and dance, socialize and have a great time. 2-4 p.m. Free. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine.

MONDAY

NEW YEAR'S EVE
31 Silver City/Grant County
BUCKHORN SALOON MUSICAL CONVERGENCE—Melanie Zipin and the Sugar Leafs. Rodney Henderson and the Roadrunners. 8 p.m. Buckhorn Saloon, Pinos Altos, 538-9911, buckhornsaloonandoperahouse.com.

LAS CRUCES/MESILLA

NMSU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. LA TECH—6:30 p.m. Pan Am Center, 646-1420, panam.nmsu.edu.

JANUARY 2013

TUESDAY

1 New Year's Day

FRIDAY

4 Silver City/Grant County
FIRST FRIDAYS DOWNTOWN—Twelfth Night. Family-friendly events at the Silco Theater and throughout downtown. Downtown Silver City, SilverCityMainStreet.com.

SATURDAY

5 Las Cruces / Mesilla
BIRD TOURS—Saturdays. Please bring binoculars, water, sunscreen and wear hiking shoes. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.
RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Saturdays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

SUNDAY

6 Las Cruces/Mesilla
RANGER-LED NATURE HIKE—Sundays. 8:15 a.m. \$5 per vehicle. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, 5000 Calle de Norte, 523-4398.

DEMING

DPAT JAM SESSIONS—Sundays. Come out and dance, socialize and have a great time. 2-4 p.m. Free. Morgan Hall, 109 E. Pine.

TUESDAY

8 Las Cruces / Mesilla
EVERY OTHER TUESDAY—Alyssa Newton. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Free. Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Downtown Mall, 523-6403, riograndetheatre.com. *

Send events info by the 20th of the month to: events@desertexposure.com, fax 534-4134, PO Box 191, Silver City, NM 88062 or **NEW**—submit your event online at www.desertexposure.com/ [submitements](http://www.submitements.com).



BEFORE YOU GO: Note that events listings are subject to change and to human error! Please confirm all dates, times and locations.

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December 7, 5:00 - 7:30 pm—**AmBank First Fridays : Holiday Cheer.** This family friendly evening features Holiday music and the Downtown Holiday Passport drawing at the Silco Theater. Free and open to the public. Additional events and promotions take place throughout Downtown. www.SilverCityMainStreet.com 575-534-1700

December 8, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm—**New Mexico Tamal Fiesta y Mas.** Vendors, live music, dancing, and a variety of tamales take center stage at the Tamal Fiesta in Historic Downtown Silver City. www.SilverCityTourism.org 575-538-1337

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Main Course, Choice Of: Prime Rib; Orange Glazed Duck, Honey & Bourbon Baked Ham; Portabella Mushroom Stuffed with Herbed Cheese & Sundried Tomato Chutney & Garlic Mashed Potatoes & Vegetables

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The Worst Holiday Songs

Here we come a-caroling—you've been warned.

Christmas traditions exist for the simple reason that nobody wants to be responsible for making the plan this year. As a nation, we collectively sigh and resign ourselves to the same routine of carefully pre-planned opportunities for yuletide observation. This lack of originality each year is staggering. Another office party where the boss thanks everyone for a great year and the employees sneak off to the bathroom to drink booze? Sure. Another simpering, narcissistic Christmas newsletter showcasing the writing skills of a crack-addled marmot with a malfunctioned QWERTY keyboard? Okay, why not? Putting the same craptastic collection of Christmas carols on a never-ending playlist shuffle that inspires visions of sugarplums dancing in a freshly severed head over a bed of fiery coals? Okay, we've got to draw the line somewhere.

Back in the days before wireless radio and the hand-crank Victrola, I'm sure Christmas carols were quite the heady treat. A pack of Dickensian characters mucking about in the snow howling seasonal greetings is a charming reminder of a gentler past, when trespassers weren't shot on sight. However, times have changed, and we are now assaulted by the same hellish line-up of hoary carols at every turn. In the grocery store, on the television, at the local pub, at the doctor's office—a constant aural reminder of the peace and joy we should be experiencing, if not for having to hear the same songs over and over again.

Some carols are more egregious than others. If I had to name the most annoying Christmas carols, I'd probably start with "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" by the duo of Elmo and Patsy Trigg Shropshire, the most notorious pair of public enemies since Bonnie and Clyde got aerated by the FBI. This light-hearted little ditty introduces family-friendly subjects like alcoholism, senile dementia, hit-and-run driving and possible inappropriate relationships between bearded old men and pointy-eared elves. Setting it to a happy redneck beat assures that the listener will experience fits of murderous rage.

You would think that a man who represents a full quarter of the Beatles' genius would have found something better to do with his time than bust out a synthesizer and ask himself, "What's the most annoying thing I can do with this keyboard?" Yet that's exactly what Paul McCartney did when he decided to record "A Wonderful Christmas Time." The hideous warbling hook of this tragic waste of notes will enter the listener's brain and convert all

functioning synapses to Cheez Whiz.

In 1952, when people still used phrases like "Gee whiz" and "Golly," a guy named Jimmy Boyd recorded "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus," and domestic violence calls during the holidays undoubtedly and immediately spiked. The concept of mixing a little hanky-panky with the holidays isn't bad, but sung from the viewpoint of an eight-year-old peeping tom with a speech impediment propels it firmly into the weapons-grade class of obnoxiousness. When the kid starts whistling his "s" sounds, I am reminded that I could effect a lot of change in this world if somebody would just buy me a flamethrower.

Which leaves me with the most horrid, reviled, crap-covered-carol-with-a-creamy-crapacular-center song of all-time, "The 12 Days of Christmas." All the elements that used to get you smacked by your parents when you were a child are here: maddening repetitiveness, nonsensical lyrics, and a never-ending verse structure that goes on longer than the lifespan of most oak trees.

With the possible exception of a generous collection of golden rings, this song represents the worst Christmas shopping list in the history of mankind, filled with things you can't find in WalMart ("Excuse me, what aisle will I find exotic fowl in? Partridges, French hens and whatnot?") or on the Internet (trust me, you do NOT want to Google "10 Lords a-leaping"). Hearing this song is akin to hearing the terrible sound of heaven ripping asunder and the leathery flapping of thousands of demon wings descending upon you at Judgment Day to snack on your face, except Judgment Day will be faster.

Before you act like everybody else in my family and label me a Scrooge, I should let you know there are some Christmas songs I love in moderation: Nat King Cole's "The Christmas Song," many versions of "Carol of the Bells," Vince Gill's "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and Joan Jett's "Little Drummer Boy."

But if I have to listen to a pack of mangy mutts barking out the tune of "Silent Night," I will be grabbing the hunting rifle and seeking out the nearest clock tower. Bah humbug indeed.

This light-hearted little ditty introduces family-friendly subjects like alcoholism, senile dementia and hit-and-run driving.

Henry Lightcap hangs his stockings with care in Las Cruces.



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CONTINENTAL DIVIDE • DAVID A. FRYXELL

The Most Real Things in the World

Yes, Virginia, there is still a Santa Claus.

We've always been pretty high on Santa Claus here in the Fryxell household. Our Santa fixation has only a little to do with the greedy, gimme-gimme side of Christmas—even in our daughter's younger, more presents-centric days—and more with the “Yes, Virginia” magic of fairies dancing on the lawn.

This Christmas still, though our daughter is a married woman in a home of her own, I will do the traditional Christmas Eve reading of “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.” Many of our Christmas Eves have also included a recitation of “The Night Before Christmas.” Having already exchanged presents in person at Thanksgiving (now “Thanksmas” for our family, as we combine the holidays so our daughter and son-in-law can spend Christmas with his clan in Denver), we'll be honoring this family tradition via Skype. But I'll no doubt get a little teary-eyed



and my voice may choke as the magic of the Internet transmits the New York *Sun's* 1897 response to eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon about the importance of childlike faith, poetry and romance “to make tolerable this existence.”

Unlike some fathers, though, at least those in holiday movies and sitcoms, I've never dressed up as Santa Claus. What would be the point, when the real “jolly old elf” is perfectly capable of making his own appearances around the globe at lightspeed?

We've had our own Santa sightings (or hearings) nonetheless. The family's fondness for Saint Nick may in fact partly trace to our first Christmas in Pittsburgh, when our daughter was only two. My parents flew out to visit and we were all gathered 'round on Christmas Eve in our rented house, when we were startled by a sound on the roof that could only have been the prancing and pawing of reindeer hoofs. (An alternate theory might hold that our next-door neighbor was responsible, knowing we had a youngster, perhaps tossing rocks up onto our roof. But the family was Jewish, so that makes no sense at all. Obviously, Occam's razor says it had to have been Santa's sleigh.)

In subsequent years, Santa's Christmas Eve visits to our house always left a trail of “magic snow” in the form of boot-prints from his magical entrance (a door, since we lacked a fireplace—just as well for Santa's safety) to the tree and back. Forensic analysis, “CSI”-style, might determine a similarity between this magical, un-melting snow and common baking soda, which just goes to show you how clever old Saint Nick is.

Several years, when we happened to leave a Polaroid camera (remember those?) out near the Christmas tree, Santa would even take time to snap an instant photo of our cat, looking up at him. We'd find the snapshot in the morning beside the emptied plate of cookies and glass of milk. If only our cat could talk, besides the occasional “meow,” what stories she could have told of meeting Santa!

And one memorable year, when we were still in Pittsburgh in a house of our own, we actually spotted the “right jolly old elf.” We had ventured out in the snowy night after opening presents on Christmas Eve (the big event still to come for our daughter the next morning) to view the holiday lights. We drove slowly through the silent night, other families mostly at church or their own living-room celebrations, pointing to this or that over-the-top decoration. Then, down a side street, we spotted the unmistakable figure of a man dressed in red and white, toting a bag over his shoulder. Who else could it possibly be but Santa himself?

It might seem odd for a committed rationalist and fact-loving skeptic like me to spend even one season of the year wallowing in the sentiment expressed by the *Sun's* editorial writer, Francis Pharcellus Church: “Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see.” (Of course, we *did* see Santa, but I digress.)

But I'm a romantic at heart, and still fondly recall my own childhood Christmas mornings. If that wasn't magic, waiting in the hall by my bedroom while my father plugged in the tree lights for the full Christmas-morning effect, knowing that presents had appeared in our living room overnight, there's no magic left in this world. Perhaps if Santa hadn't been so busy—he does have billions of households to visit and only one night to do it, after all—he might have been able to help my dad assemble the “authentic Wild West town” that was the highlight of Christmas one year. And, yes, my dad's mumbled cursing as he struggled with that cast-metal “authenticity” did take a bit of the glow off Christmas morning. But that was hardly Santa's fault, was it? Places to go, billions of children to deliver to.

When we had a child of our own, I wanted nothing more than to re-create that magic for her come Christmas each year. It wasn't just the presents, though of course every Christmas brought the obligatory parade of Barbies and Care Bears and other now-long-forgotten toys. It was the feeling that on one day—one evening and the following morning, at least—every year there was a parting of that “veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart.”

Never mind that all too soon some of the toys would be broken or discarded. Yes, mere minutes after the magical moment of first seeing the tree and presents on Christmas morning, we'd be making coffee, reading the paper, going through the motions of starting any other, ordinary day. The

discarded wrapping paper, so recently wondrous under the tree, would be crumpled up in the trash along with the explosion of boxes from opened presents. Even the “magic snow” left by Santa's boots would be vacuumed up before day's end.

We live most of 364 days a year in the mundane, grabbing what transitory joys we can out of work, home, family, the glimpse of a sunset or a hawk soaring overhead. Is it too much to ask that one day a year we make room for magic? This rationalist, fact-checking skeptic is willing to suspend disbelief and keep an eye peeled for Santa Claus.

Since moving to the desert Southwest—this will be our 10th Christmas here, hard to believe!—we haven't had much in the way of Santa sightings. But I figure he has to spend most of his time tending to households with young children. We're content to Skype his story to our grown-up child and her husband in Denver and to share our own modest holiday celebration in the tree-lit glow of our home, where it's seldom a white Christmas and that's fine by us.

One of these days—and we're in no hurry, please!—we may have grandchildren to share Santa Claus with. I'm certain that he'll spread as much magic and joy with them as he did with their mother and, long ago, with me. As the *Sun* pointed out in its reply to Virginia, Santa not only lives, but lives forever: “A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.”

I'll read those lines again this Christmas Eve to my daughter, long distance, and maybe someday I'll get to read them to my grandchildren. (Did I mention no hurry, honey?) I'll choke my way through, the romantic in me overpowering my rational, skeptical side on this one special night of the year.

Afterward, lying in bed and remembering Christmas Eves long ago as a child when I struggled between excitement and the desire to get to sleep so next morning would come more quickly, I will listen for the sound of prancing and pawing on our roof. The jingling overnight that ordinarily I'd attribute to Pippin, our youngest cat who needs a bell so we can locate him, might just have a different source this night. And if there's no

Then, down a side street, we spotted the unmistakable figure of a man dressed in red and white, toting a bag over his shoulder.

magic snow on our living-room floor in the morning, well, it's a long way to New Mexico from the North Pole, and it's probably all fallen off by the time Santa gets here.

Your little friends are wrong, Virginia, now just as they were way back in 1897. “They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which

is not comprehensible by their little minds.”

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. “He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy.”

Yes, Virginia. Oh, yes. ❄️

David A. Fryxell is editor of Desert Exposure.



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An unusual opportunity - rural, secluded property with benefits of a subdivision. 2 lots in Casas Adobes totaling 4.17 acres with access to the remaining 17.41 acres. A cleared and leveled spot for a home faces southeast. The driveway circles an old holding pond. Part of this acreage is in a secluded canyon with a small prospecting mine at the end. The views are awesome! Community water. Septic is in. Underground utilities.



MLS 29626 • \$127,500

The home has a 3 bedroom and 2 bath split floor plan. Kitchen is spacious, with a pantry and a comfortable eating area. New flooring in the main part of the house. Living room has a fireplace. Large master bedroom with bath. TDeck looks out over the Black Range and the Mimbres Valley. Native plants and some fruit trees including grapes. Fenced with large storage building. Many variety of birds come for visits.



MLS 29582 • \$128,500

Weekend getaway or full time home for the outdoor fanatic. Hike, ride, hunt, ATV, ORV, 4WD directly into the Gila National Forest from home. Located on Powderhorn Ridge in Game Management Unit 16B. Abundant wildlife; mule deer, whitetail, turkey and elk. Large decks on front and back sides. Wood stove, workshop / storage building, well house. 5+ acres spans the Mimbres River canyon. Unrestricted with horses allowed.



MLS 29602 • \$169,000

Panoramic views of the Black Range from this property in the Mimbres. The home has a 3 bedroom, 2 bath split floor plan. Landscaping includes a small pond, a waterway, garden and large mature trees. Large detached game/party room has a covered porch. Horse facilities include a barn with 3 run-ins, 2 turn out pens with metal panels and 3 acres of electric fencing. Other out buildings include a 30x20 storage shed and a pump house with additional storage.



MLS 29552 • \$58,000

PRIME VIEW LOT! Spectacular views! Rural subdivision with underground utilities and community water system. Water meter in place.



MLS 29627 • \$29,900

2bd/2ba Hurley house with bonus room/office. Wood floors, high ceilings, corner fenced lot, front covered porch, character.



MLS 29629 • \$142,900

UNIVERSITY AREA 3Bd/2Ba with hardwood floors, enclosed backyard and set above the street. Two living areas, covered outdoor seating, storage room, carport, central heat & air conditioning!



MLS 29557 • \$69,500

Attractive 1 acre in Dos Griegos subdivision. This lot has southern exposure & some nice building sites. Minutes from town, beautiful views, wooded, city water, underground utilities, paved road, protective covenants. Seller financing now available, motivated seller!



MLS 29588 • \$95,000

Downtown 2bd/1ba 1880s Victorian row house. Live in a part of Silver City history! Covered front porch, fenced front yard, rear 1 car garage. High ceilings, interior updates, double-pane windows. Centrally located, walking distance to historic district shops, restaurants, & galleries.

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Tree Memorial Lighting Ceremony

December 6, 2012
5:30 pm – 6:00 pm
 at the Gila Regional
 Front Canopy

Reserve your light today
 in memory of your loved ones
 call (575) 574-4934

A donation of \$5.00 is accepted through the GRMC Foundation 501(c)3, though is not required

Bring a photo of your loved one to GRMC Hospice Services which will be laminated and included on the tree of lights (Mon.-Fri. • 8 am-5 pm)
 2814 Highway 180 East, Silver City, NM

For more information call (575) 574-4934 or go to www.grmc.org

