

JANUARY 2024 | VOL. 29 NO. 1

ESTABLISHED IN 1996

DESERT

EXPOSURE

Experience Southern New Mexico

Side Street
comes
to life in
Alamogordo

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Desert #91 Dumbfounder

by Dave Thomas

"Desert Dumbfounder" by Dave Thomas is a simple substitution cipher; one letter stands for another. Solution is by trial and error. Solution will appear in next month's *Desert Exposure*. Send full solution, or *just the Secret Words*, to nmsrdave@swcp.com, and be recognized!
TIPS: www.nmsr.org/secretword.htm and www.nmsr.org/cypher-how2.jpg

"WSKD GDXFKL, HNF HOFSGJKL JKL HNDKHP-ZFSU NBCC TD J
OBGHFUBX LJP BK ADYBXF NBHO HOD JCAFGEH-XDUHJBK DCDXHBFK
FZ HOD XFSKHUP'G ZBUGH NFAJK EUDGBLDKH." - AFUVJK GABHO

Use the answer key below to track your clues, and reveal Secret Words!

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Previous Solution: "WHEN I HAD KIDS, I WOULD DECORATE MY HOUSE LIKE CRAZY, AND PEOPLE WOULD TELL ME, 'LAURA, YOU SHOULD CHARGE TO COME IN HERE.'" - LAURA ROMERO, "TIS THE SEASON DE MESILLA" Shorty Vaiza*, Will Adams*, David Pino*, OWNER *Secret Words: "HOLIDAY CRUMPETS" Skip Howard*, Sue Merrick*, Claudette Gallegos* & Connie Tull*!

FEBRUARY DEADLINES

All stories and notices for the editorial
section due Friday, Jan. 19
Space Reservation and ad copy
due Friday, Jan. 19.

EDITOR'S NOTE | ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Hello 2024

I know better than to resolve anything

Changes are inevitable and sometimes impossible to predict.

Like I could say I am going to do yoga to improve my balance three times a week in 2024, but then I could go and crack my kneecap and not even be able to drive. But there is, what she (Julie Andrews) said, "When one door closes, another window opens."

In this issue of Desert Exposure there certainly are a lot of doors, and windows too.

In Alamogordo, behind the

downtown area on New York Avenue, new color has been added as a cultural Arts Alley has brought a number of new murals, shade structures and community garden boxes to assemble a lovely walking and meeting space.

In Deming, teacher Magali Gomez was awarded a check of \$25,000 for her innovative ways in the classroom and out. She and her daughter will be looking out of plenty of open windows as they travel to explore a bit of the world with that cash.

Four amazing women in Deming and Polomas have made it their business to make transitions smoother for those caught in the limbo of immigration issues where many doors have been closed to them.

And talk about change, Western New Mexico alumnus James Meredith didn't predict he would take a bullet in a 1962 March Against Fear, but it was that fateful shot that brought Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. into the mix. Now in Silver City one woman has pulled together a

Elva K. Österreich is editor of Desert Exposure and would love to meet Desert Exposure readers of southern New Mexico. Please contact her at editor@desertexposure.com or by cell phone at 575-443-4408.



tribute of memories to remind folks about what the equal rights battles were for with an event honoring King's birthday.

We hear from Algernon D'Amassa, bringing his column Desert Sage to Desert Exposure, about opening windows for his children as he subjects them to the fresh scents of the Gila National Forest. "Lectures are often best left to the forest," he says.

Change comes along for everyone eventually. Storydancer Terry Alvarez left a legacy of joy and in-

spiration in many of our communities. She is the subject of a touching tribute here as her door closes with death and perhaps a window opens somewhere for her next steps.

So let's sit on the recliner (with my broken patella), or in the forest (with Algernon's children), and put our feet up and enjoy a little chocolate on the way. There is, after all, the Chocolate Fantasia coming up in Silver City in early February.

Welcome 2024, your changes, your blessings, whatever they may be.

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Public Land Boundary! End of the road with fabulous views! 10 acres with 30X30 Garage/Shop as well as small Hay Barn/Tack Barn and fenced for animals. Just 30 minutes from Silver City, NM. Enjoy the covered deck with endless views of the Gila National Forest. Add your own touches and create a wonderful, peaceful home. **MLS#40042. \$265,000.**



Adorable Hurley house features 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, laundry room, formal dining, spacious kitchen, detached 2 car garage as well as a shed/workshop. Property is completely fenced and private with large shade trees. Plenty of off-street parking in the back. Plus, solar panels from Solar Works Energy on the garage insure that your electric bill virtually goes away. Garage door openers are in the process of being replaced. **MLS# 39946. \$172,000**



Overlooking the town of Silver City, this 5 bedroom, 3 bath home is impeccably designed & thoughtfully updated. Mountain Views, Built-in Bookcases, Custom Stone Fireplaces, Formal Dining Room and a sleek, Modernized Kitchen with Granite Countertops and Stainless Appliances. Primary suite boasts oversized bathroom with jetted tub, double vanity and a walk-in shower. Large patio offers a perfect space for entertaining. Seamless Metal Roof, Tankless Water Heater, A/C plus evaporative cooling, enclosed garages for 4 vehicles, workshop with restroom, gas fireplace inserts, hot tub. **MLS39787. \$648,500.**



This 2358 sq/ft 3/2 home is magnificently designed with native stone foundations, porch column piers and steps and fireplaces with heavy timber beams/columns. You will be greeted by the two Anasazi Bear figures inlaid in the stone entryway below the 2 1/4" thick knotty Alder entry door. Peeled bark trees enhance the interior, complimented by peeled Shaggy Bark Juniper railings, Indian Box-Joint Pine walls, terracotta tile floors with towering 20+ foot ceilings. The 840 sq/ft +/- porch seems to levitate above the canyon, providing indescribable views, privacy and security of remote living in the incredible southwest, a land of rich western history. The photos and description are far from capturing the real allure of Two Bears. **MLS#40032. \$1,098,000**



This park is easy to operate and shows a history of steady income. There are 35 units all owned and existing mobiles convey with the park. The potential gross income can be \$300,000/annually with some very minor rent adjustments. Great opportunity for an owner operator and handy person. In the park center is a two bedroom doublewide manufactured home for an owner or operator to have full view of the park. **Call today. MLS#39438. \$1,150,000**



Located in the heart of the Mimbres Valley! 2 bedrooms 1 1/2 bath 1512 sf. Large living room and dining room with built in oak cabinets & shelves. Bonus area near kitchen for an office. Bedroom with loft area and private entrance. Main BR features 1/2 bath and private entrance. Level 1 acre with highway frontage and lots of parking. **MLS 39841. \$255,000**



Secluded property overlooking the Mimbres Valley in historic San Lorenzo. Unrestricted 8.16 acres located in Stitzel Canyon. Nice pasture area approximately 2.5 acres in size with 2+ acre-foot of surface water rights. Perfect for a hobby farm, orchard or livestock. Bring in your tiny home or RV. Bench area on east side of road could be used for a home site. Abundant wildlife. Short drive to the Gila National Forest, Bear Canyon Reservoir and Lake Roberts. **MLS#40034. \$59,000**



Sunset Vista's care starts from the heart, and is dedicated to serve each resident as a family member. This means kind, loving and professional senior care in a warm and comfortable home-like setting. The 10,642 square foot building features a courtyard in the middle and can accommodate up to 15 residents. The unique build offers a lounge/living area, dining area, great room and activity areas and amazing kitchen. An abundance of large windows provides a bright atmosphere and great views of our famous sunsets. This business and building are offered as a turn-key operation. **MLS#39921. \$1,600,000**

LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Focusing on the Social Emotional Benefits

Deming teacher awarded for work in classroom, community

By Elva K. Österreich

Magali Gomez, Ruben S. Torres Elementary School 5th grade teacher was “bamboozled” when her name was called during a Dec. 12 assembly at the Deming school.

She was expecting to cheer on her students as they received accolades for improved attendance rates. Instead, she was the one being celebrated as Dr. Jane Foley, Milken Educator Awards senior vice president, New Mexico Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales and Dr. Arsenio Romero, New Mexico secretary of public education, surprised Gomez with the 2023 Milken Educator Award.

The Award comes with a \$25,000 cash prize that recipients can use however they choose, as well as lifelong membership to the Milken Educator Network to collaborate with fellow recipients and broaden their impact on K-12 education.

“Our school principal notified us that the secretary of education was coming to the school, and we were having an assembly to boost student morale,” she said. “It was very exciting as the assembly continued, people were being introduced, and Dr. Foley was talking about the Milken Award. ‘This is so cool,’ I was thinking. And they announced my name. When I heard my name, it was on overwhelming honor, and

I couldn’t help but reflect

on the fellow teachers who are part of the whole team.”

Gomez said they explained the award is not given by a nomination process rather they do research in the com-

munity, see what’s happening and target educators. And it is not a lifetime achievement honor. Recipients are sought out while early to mid-career for what they have achieved

– and for the promise of what they will accomplish given the resources and opportunities afforded by the award.

“It was a complete surprise for the entire school,” she said.

Recognizing educators has a noble effect in an educational community, Gomez said. It has widespread social emotional benefits. With a social

work background, she was a youth therapist in Silver City, before she turned to teaching.

“I think it’s a very powerful combination,” she said. “I wish more social work-related development was developed for teachers developing a safe inclusive social emotional space.”

Known as an innovative

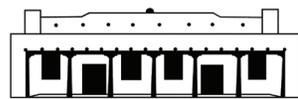
educator who drives student-led learning, Gomez embraces methodologies such as empowering students to use data-trackers to chart their own growth; incorporating color-coded strategies for teaching math; teaching com-

BENEFITS

continued on page 6



Fifth grade teacher Magali Gomez is surprised to learn the entire assembly was set up to honor her. (Photo courtesy Milken Family Foundation)



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BENEFITS*continued from page 5*

munications skills through a hands-on journalism project that encourages students to use data-driven journalism techniques to inform their writing; and weaving project-based learning throughout her curriculum to foster student cooperation and spark creativity.

“Our society works on tangible results, so my goal was to help them understand the data,” she said. “When students see their own data, they can tailor their learning style and this really has a positive

impact on students.”

Fifth grade students have valuable skills, she said. They give you perspective as to how the mind works understanding human identity and honoring their culture. Gomez teaches by encouraging advocacy and self-advocacy, in particular advocating for diverse experiences.

“Students feel empowered to be part of the learning process,” she said. “I learn more from my students than I do teaching. When they give me my feedback I am learning so much more. I teach because I learn.”

An example of the type of innovative projects Gomez

takes the lead on is the current one to help connect the students connect with their own agricultural roots. Incorporating reading a novel, “Esperanza Rising” by Pam Munoz, the students are encouraged to ask questions.

“The novel is separated in produce (titled) chapters,” she said. “The students answer questions like ‘how is this important?’ making connections. And to add to the rich experience, we are organizing field trips.”

The students went to a farm Columbus, Carzalia Valley Produce, and were able to see cotton growing, pistachios, they weighed onions, and saw

professionals, engineers and scientists, at work there too.

“It’s a very beautiful collaborative environment here (at the school),” she said. “We make decisions together and we all add to the ideas.”

Gomez has worked at the school for five years now. She said her own daughter’s success is a huge motivator. She thinks about how she would like her daughter to experience 5th grade.

“My ideas or the way I make decisions about the learning experiences is a combination of experience and the things that were most memorable for me,” she said. “It’s a beautiful combination of



Magali Gomez makes her way to the front of the Ruben S. Torres Elementary gymnasium to accept the Award. (Photo courtesy Milken Family Foundation)

different cultures. All of those things help us come up with ideas, culturally competent experiences for the students.”

One thing taken into consideration for the Milken Award is community beyond the school setting. Gomez’s leadership extends beyond her classroom, into the school and greater community.

She serves as a court-appointed advocate for foster children; an honorary board member of Playsharitty, a hands-on children’s museum; and an adjunct professor in social work at Western New Mexico University. She can be regularly found helping non-native English speakers with taxes or benefit applications, caring for the homeless and helping migrant families adjust to their new lives in Deming.

“Where do I find the time?” she said. “I like to think I operate with a proactive

mentality. I don’t focus on the challenge; I focus on the solutions. It makes it more enjoyable. I spend little time redesigning the wheel.”

On considering the ways she will be using the award money; she knows part of it will be in making unforgettable memories with her daughter. Maybe they will take a trip, “an experiential treat.”

She said her daughter not only is inspirational motivation but also the best helper and is glad to help with teacher duties like lamination; arts and crafts creation; and offering new perspectives.

Gomez said she would tell teachers who feel discouraged or unnoticed, its okay to feel overwhelmed.

“Celebrate the little victories and to take a moment to recognize your incredible strength and the positive influence you have in your community.”



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Real Evidence on the Floridas, Please

The proposal to designate the Florida Mountains as a national monument calls for hard evidence, not hand-waving promises.

What we haven't seen yet is evidence of the costs and benefits from a national monument designation. Specifically, what vetted evidence is there of the likely economic contribution from such a designation to the Luna County economy? Is the evidence credible? Who did the analysis? Is it even-handed or biased? Does the "evidence" vaguely rely on comparisons to Las Cruces and the Organ Mountains? Is that comparison valid? Why? What about the costs? What will a national monument cost Luna County in the loss of other revenue and the loss of local families who are now using the land? On balance, do the benefits (which are uncertain) far outweigh the costs (which are more certain)?

As far as costs are concerned, actual, past experience shows several things we know and can count on now or down the road:

Luna County will forever lose any measure of control or influence over these resources. You will lose all influence to faceless bureaucrats in far-away places who have no connection to the land. Those bureaucrats have no accountability to local people.

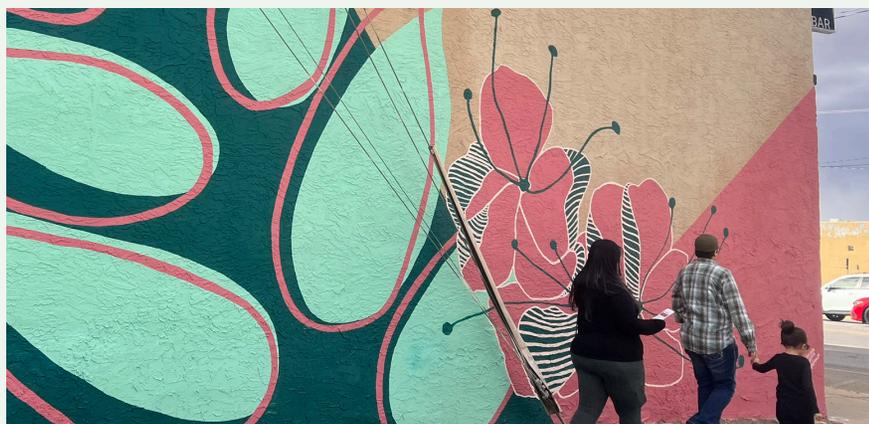
Despite promises or even express terms in the enabling language for a national monument designation, traditional uses will be shut down now or in the future. Grazing in the Gila

Wilderness, for example, is expressly authorized but is now administratively prohibited. The mobility-impaired and hunters may well find that they are banned from using motorized vehicles in a designated area, thereby limiting their access.

We know that the federal government does a poor job following its own rules. Illegal immigration is one example. Another is also close by: The USFS has specific rules for how to remove unauthorized cattle from grazing in the Gila Wilderness. Instead of following its express rules, it has shot cattle from helicopters.

On behalf of our members in Luna County, the New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association urges you to contact your elected leaders (Luna County Commissioners Ray Trejo, Colette Chandler and John Sweetser, Representative Jenifer Jones and Senator Crystal Diamond Brantley) and urge them to resist political pressure from outside Luna County. They should be very cautious about relying on unsubstantiated, pie-in-the-sky promises. Giving away all control to a federal government that doesn't trust you to make wise decisions will forever limit local influence over your natural resources. You and your neighbors who depend on those resources will suffer the consequences.

**Bronson Corn, President
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association**



ABOUT THE COVER

Artist Melinese Boner adds her name to the mural she and Taylor Ojeda worked on as part of a MainStreet program, the Side Street Art Project, in Alamogordo. Ojeda directed the mural creation. See Pages 8 and 9 for more on the project. (Photo by Elva K. Österreich)



WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

Cultural Affairs

JANUARY/FEBRUARY EVENTS



Charles & Edwina Milner
Women in the Arts

Allison Hudson

Lecture and Exhibit

Thursday, January 18
6pm Lecture: Light Hall Theater
7pm Reception: McCray Gallery
Exhibit open until February 15

Free and open to the public

Multi-media artist Allison Hudson's artwork is tactile yet fragile. The media is a combination of unfired clay, wool, fabric, resin, dry pigment and wax. This current work focuses on the exploration of metamorphosis.



Alash Tuvan throat singing

Saturday, January 20 • 7p Light Hall Theater • \$15

Master throat singers, ALASH, from the Republic of Tuva, perform the remarkable technique of singing multiple pitches at the same time. What distinguishes this trio from earlier generations of Tuvan throat singers is the subtle infusion of modern influences into their traditional music.



Sunny War & Chris Pierce

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Visionaries

Thursday, February 1 • 7p Light Hall Theater • \$15

Sunny War and Chris Pierce offer raw, honest lyrics and soulful performances that reflect their resilience and passion for creating positive change through music. Their unique blend combines genres from R&B, Soul, Punk and Folk music.



MASTERS OF SOUL

Thursday, February 16
7p Fine Arts Center Theatre • \$15

In the early 1960s, some of the most iconic names in the history of popular music were discovered in the Motor City of Detroit, MI. Masters of Soul is a celebration of these artists, their music, and their style. This show features stylishly-costumed and fully-choreographed Motown tributes with a live band.



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ARTS + COMMUNITY

Side Street Project Colors Alamogordo

MainStreet program dedicates murals, more

Story by Chris Edwards
Photos by Elva K. Österreich

A crowd turned out Saturday, Nov. 25 for the Ribbon Cutting of the New York Avenue Side Street alleyway improvement project.

The project is a collaboration of community of artisans, small business owners of

New York Avenue, the Holoman Spouses Organization, leadership from Alamogordo MainStreet, government leaders such a Commissioner Sharon McDonald, students from Mountain View Middle School, Alamogordo High School, New Mexico State University Alamogordo, nonprofits such as Otero Arts, With Many Friends - Al-

amogordo, Courtney McCary and friends, and local businesses.

“I love to see our community come together to create something truly unique and beautiful. So many people came together, worked hard, and pulled resources to create a magical space for our entire community to enjoy,” said Amanda Jewell, Board Mem-

ber and community volunteer of Alamogordo MainStreet.

What began as a vision of the business owners of New York Avenue, working through Alamogordo MainStreet for the last several years to reimagine the Downtown District; as a center of commerce, history, art and culture; some visible signs of that effort is finally coming to

life.

Recently the downtown merchants received a “safety grant” for lighting and cameras for the alley ways. Next was a grant from the AARP Livable Communities and the work began.

AARP Livable Communities grants are issued to community organizations with a focus on diversity, equity and

inclusion while improving the already built and social environment of a community to create vibrant public places that improve open spaces, parks and access to other amenities.

Alamogordo MainStreet was granted \$10,000 to kick off the effort. Then individuals and other businesses added to funding and volun-

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Lila, DLH, Siamese female, 3yrs

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Muffin, DSH, female 4 mos.

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Noel, DSH, female 1yr old

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Plum, DSH, female 1yr. old

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Spooky, DLH, neutered male, 2 years old

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Buster, Hound/Catahoula male, 7 mos.

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Cindy Lou Who, border collie/Heeler female, 6 yrs.

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Fowler, Hound X male, 1yr.

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Holly, Heeler mix, female, 3 mos.

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Spock, Heeler mix, neutered male, 2 yrs.

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Above and to the right, just a few of the murals and spaces created as part of the MainStreet, Side Street program in Alamogordo. One grant, 29 sponsors, more than \$15,000 raised, six partner organizations, nine downtown business/property owners and hundreds of volunteer hours contributed to make the project possible.

teering and a collaborative approach is working toward a better future for New York Avenue.

For the event community members came out to the ribbon cutting and since then many more have strolled the alleyway to see the improve-

ments. Walking tours are planned to explain the murals and those behind them in the future. As an example, Otero Arts competed a mural as a partner in the project.

The mural painted by Otero Arts as part of the MainStreet Side Street project

is just the beginning of the partnership between the organizations. Otero Arts is partnered with Alamogordo MainStreet through a state program called Jump Start which is designed to lead Alamogordo to receive a designation as an Arts and Cultural



District. Thus, this is the first of many components of that effort: The mural by Otero Arts was painted by the members Janet Amtmann, Pennie Espiritu, Paige Young and Ann Beacht.

The MainStreet Side Street Project continues and will evolve to include the alley on the opposite side of the street in the near future.

Chris Edwards is the editor of 2nd Life Media Alamogordo Town News.



Above, the Side Street project ribbon is cut as non-profit groups, artists and area businesses gather to celebrate the space. Right, some of the children at the event having a moment of fun.



WINTER CLEARANCE

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CONSERVATION + PHOTOGRAPHY

White Sands Photos Find New Home

NMSU library permanently houses award-winning images

By Tatiana Favela,
NMSU Writer

It's a vast, dreamy landscape many in the Southwest feel lucky to have in their own backyard. Whether you are sledding down the soft waves of sand, spending time with family and friends, or simply admiring its beauty, White Sands National Park is a sight to see – and you can experience a glimpse of it at New Mexico State University's Library.

New Mexico State University Archives and Special Collections recently acquired the photographic exhibition

called "Into the Great White Sands: Photographs by Craig Varjabedian." An award-winning photographer, Varjabedian said this project is the result of his decade-long effort to capture the breathtaking beauty and natural elements of White Sands.

"White Sands first became this place that I went to rest and restore when work would become too intense," Varjabedian said. "For me, the process of deciding on a body of work is really organic. As I look back at it now, when I first went to the Sands in the 1980s, I had yet to fall truly in love with the place. Of



The entire exhibition of framed photographs from "Into the Great White Sands" has made its way to NMSU Library's Archives and Special Collections, a safehouse that will preserve Varjabedian's work and continue to expose it to the community and beyond. (NMSU photo by Josh Bachman).

course, I thought it was in-

credibly beautiful, but I didn't feel particularly compelled to photograph it at first. I came to find out much later that it really is like no other place on earth."

"While nearly everyone who has visited White Sands has taken photographs, Craig's eye, enormous talent, and dedication to his long-term goal have produced a collection of images that is truly exceptional," said Dennis Daily, department head of NMSU Library's Archives and Special Collections. "We are glad that Craig felt strongly about making sure these images remain in the state of New Mexico and the area

where they were produced, where they will be preserved and enjoyed for generations."

Varjabedian made the trek to White Sands in the early 2010s and was just finishing his third book, "Landscape Dreams: A New Mexico Portrait," with the University of New Mexico Press. With the encouragement of the press, he decided that White Sands would be the subject of his next book and so began the journey of revealing the beauty of this incredible landscape through his lens.

"What you see in the book and in the exhibition is a curated selection of images," he said. "I want to share the beauty of White Sands through my photographs. I photographed it in all kinds of weather, different times of the year, different times of the day, different seasons – all of it."

During his quest to photograph this New Mexico treasure, Varjabedian received assistance from the staff of National Park Service at the Park. Their help made many of the pictures in the collection possible.

"White Sands is about 275 square miles, so in the beginning I did a lot of hiking," he said. "There are, however, distant areas in the park that I wasn't comfortable hiking out alone, particularly during the heat of summer. Fortunately, the National Park Service stepped in and allowed me to accompany them on their ATVs when their work took them out to distant areas with-



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1-3 pm

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Saturdays 10 am to 1 pm

This project made possible by the New Mexico Arts, a Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts.

BORDERLAND TALES

Women on the Border

Doing great things in Palomas and Deming

Photos and story
By Morgan Smith

Claudia Sheinbaum or Xóchitl Gálvez? Which of these two women will be the first woman in Mexico's history to be elected President in the national elections next June? Whoever wins will hopefully bring much needed additional focus on women's issues. Having said that, I want to briefly profile four women who have already changed the lives of many in the Palomas, Mexico-Deming, New Mexico area.

Ivonne Romero and her husband, Sergio founded the Pink Store in Palomas almost 30 years ago. Just a block from the United States border, it is a wonderful combination of an excellent restaurant and a superb collection of folk art, ceramics, silver and jewelry from all over Mexico but especially Jalisco, Guanajuato, Michoacán and Queretaro. Not only does she provide much needed employment for at least 25 residents of Palomas but the sales of the folk art are vital to artisans all over Mexico.

On any given day, the restaurant is full of tourists who has crossed the border for dental appointments or to purchase eyeglasses or prescription drugs. This wasn't the case a few years ago when the high level of violence kept the tourists away. Nonetheless, Ivonne kept the store open then out of loyalty to her employees, even though there were no customers.

On June 25, 2021, Sandra Magallanes became a United States citizen, a struggle that took her many years.

"I am an immigrant like many are, but the United States is truly my home," she said. "I still love my country of birth (Mexico) and

I visit it regularly but I cannot deny there are opportunities that the United States provides that were just not available where I grew up."

Sandra has been a constant force – maybe savior is a better word – for migrants in both Palomas and Deming. I've seen her at the Motel Six in Deming providing meals for migrants from as far away as Turkey and Cuba, at the Deming Armory, which was initially the entry point for migrants, and in Palomas at the fire station where migrants are housed through the Mexican government's Punto Beto program.

"Sandra is amazing," said Barbara Gabioud, who is the leader in her church's role (the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Silver City) in supporting migrant programs in Palomas. "I refer to her as the fairy godmother of the Palomas shelter; She goes day or night for any emergency. She carries all the asylees she has met in her heart and never forgets about them even after they make it to their sponsors."

An example of this involved a man named Pedro from Guatemala who broke bones in his feet falling off the border wall in 2021. The Border Patrol picked him up and shipped him back to Mexico where he ended up in the Tierra de Oro shelter in Palomas, awaiting transportation back to his home country. My interview with him on March 24, 2021, was one of the saddest I can remember. Not long afterwards, however, Sandra arranged for him to return to the U.S. where he was able to get decent medical care. Now he is living and working in Ft. Meyer's, Florida and Sandra remains in contact with him.

Ariana Saldares is a force of nature, never stopping in her commitment to bettering the lives of both



Top left, clockwise: Ivonne Romero at the Pink Store, Palomas; Sandra with deportees in Palomas; Ariana with a trainee at a restaurant in Deming; Joseline, left, with a volunteer in Deming.

those who live in Deming and the hundreds of migrants who are processed through the shelter she has established. In 2019, she founded Colores United, a non-profit dedicated to her community.

One of her early projects was Charlie Cat's, a restaurant that not only offered food for migrants who were housed in the nearby motel but important job training for local youth. She now has a combination coffee shop/work center located at 110 Gold Street in downtown Deming. With funding via a grant from the University of New Mexico, she can offer counseling for local citizens who are struggling to deal with the complexities of applying for state assistance programs. The coffee shop in front also functions as a training ground for young people, many of whom are migrants.

Originally, Saldares was a leader in establishing a migrant shelter in the former National Guard Armory in Deming; now she has renovated another property for that function and has a relationship with the Border Patrol whereby they send up to 100 migrants a week to the center. She and her staff, including several volunteers, assist these migrants with medical care and also arrange transportation for them so that they can go to their family members or sponsors in other parts of the United States. She receives minimal support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Joseline Ramirez came to Deming from Juárez with her mother and sisters in 2017 and quickly realized she was way behind in terms of her education. Schooling in Juárez had been totally inadequate. Now 24

years old, she is struggling to catch up. She works for Saldares, manages Saldares's migrant shelter several days a week and works the other days as the manager of Saldares's coffee shop in downtown Deming. She is also a student at New Mexico State University, goes to Las Cruces for classes several days a week and is focused on earning a degree in business administration. It is a demanding schedule, but this young woman is going to be a success.

These four women are leaders in regard to border issues and examples of what women can accomplish for those in need.

Morgan Smith writes frequently about border issues and can be reached at Morgan-smith@comcast.net.

ARTS + OPPORTUNITIES

Arts Scene

Upcoming area art happenings

By Elva K. Österreich

SILVER CITY

• From Jan. 18 through Feb. 15 **Francis McCray Gallery** and the Edwina and Charles Milner Women in the Arts Series presents the exhibition “**Allison Hudson—Safe Passage,**” an exploration of metamorphosis. On Jan. 18 the artist’s lecture begins at 6 p.m. at Light Hall and the opening reception will be at 7 p.m. at Francis McCray Gallery. Debuting her first solo exhibition at Francis McCray Gallery, Allison Hudson combines unfired clay, twine, fabric, resin, dye and wax into something new and unrecognizable. Francis McCray Gallery of Contemporary Art Western New Mexico University is at 1000 W. College Avenue Silver City. Info: 575-538-6517.

• **Made In Silver City Gallery** is featuring a special exhibition with sculptor **John Rogers**. Rogers manipulates found objects of metal, wood and various other materials into thought-provoking and often kinetic, sculptural assemblages. The exhibit runs through Jan. 5. Info: info@madeinsilvercity.com.

• **Light Art Space**, 209 W. Broadway in Silver City, presents **LAS TEN**, featuring recent artwork by the 10 local artists represented by Light Art Space. A variety of media are on display including painting, drawing, photography, jewelry, fiber, assemblage, sculpture, and wood furniture. Work is by **Joel**

Armstrong, Kathleen Koopman, Joe Huebner, Karen Hymer, Rhonda Munzinger, Art Peterson, Susan H. Porter, Eric Renner, Nancy Spencer and Juan Velasco. The show will be up through Feb. 24. The gallery is open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and Saturday and by appointment. Info: lightartspace.com.

• As we begin the centennial year of the Gila’s formal designation as a wilderness, the **Grant County Art Guild** is especially pleased to announce that painter **Hilary Klein**’s work has been added to the GCAG Gallery mix. The Gila Wilderness, and our vast southwestern skies, provide Klein with subject matter, and a pallet that shines through the hyperrealism of her work. Klein paints not only the color she sees, but also the color she feels in her surroundings. Klein will offer original paintings, archival quality reproductions (often hand-embellished), plus cards at the gallery. The Grant County Art Guild Gallery is located at 316 N Bullard, Silver City. The hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m., seven days a week, with additional hours for special events. Info: gcag.org.

• **The Silver City Public Library** hosts works by mixed media and textile artist **Suzanne Ens** Dec. 1 through Jan. 31. Ens makes her creations with cast-off clothing and other foraged items, often implementing monotype print designs into both her mediums. See more about the artist



GCAG painting by Hilary Klein. (Courtesy photo)

and her current body of work at fringe-artists.com and at 515 W. College Ave in Silver City. Library hours are 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday to Friday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays.

ALAMOGORDO

• Otero Arts features “**Enjoying the Journey,**” an exhibit by **Anne Aleshire** at the **Artspace** located at 1118 Indiana Avenue in Alamogordo. The Michigan native, who now divides her time between Fairbanks, Alaska, and Bent says she developed a passion for nature and travel early in life. “Exploring the outdoors evokes a sense of serenity, peace and quiet, which I try to reflect in my landscape paintings,” she said. Artspace is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The Artpace Gallery opens 5-7 p.m. Jan. 5 with a reception for oil painter Aleshire. The ex-



Agave Gallery George Holland’s horse hair horse.

hibit is open 1-4 p.m., Thursday through Sunday. Info: oteroarts.org.

DEMING

• “**Assemblage Creations,**” is the title of the January exhibit at the **Deming Art Center**. Visit the imaginative pieces the artists have

created out of “found” items. The exhibit features **Wanda Fuselier** from Las Cruces and **Sharon Blazier, Diana Le Marbe, Lisa Riley, Marci** and **Michael Colson**, all from Deming. The exhibit runs from January 3-30 and there will be a time to meet the artists 1-3 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 7. The Deming Art Center is at 100 S. Gold St., Deming. The gallery hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturday. Info: 575-546-3663 and at www.demingarts.org.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

• **Rio Bravo Fine Art**, 110 North Broadway in Truth or Consequences, presents **Rebecca Speakes** who is one of New Mexico’s most talented and creative fiber artists. Speakes represents 30 years of experience as a graphic designer combined with tangential interests in math and architectural concepts are the foundation for her work. Speakes will present an **Art Talks** lecture on Jan. 21 titled “**My Pathway as an Artist.**” Rio Bravo Fine Arts Gallery is at 110 N. Broadway in Truth or Consequences. Info: riobravofa@gmail.com.

MAGDALENA

• Houston artist **Jack Massing**, known worldwide as one of **The Art Guys**, will be featured this January at **kind of a small array**, 106 N. Main in Magdalena. This will be his first solo project in New Mexico. The show opens 6-8

p.m. on Jan. 27 and continues through Feb. 24. Massing employs found materials, humor, linguistic puns and a tendency to follow through on fugitive ideas that occur to him serendipitously while making his way through his days. “**Compression**” will feature video, assemblage, artist books, and a capillary beverage cup patented in 2016 to aid astronauts drinking liquids in zero gravity environments. Two recently published books, Massing’s “**Thanks A Million**” and a collaboration with William Wegman, “**Two Clever by Half,**” will be available for purchase and signing by the artist at the opening. Info: kindofasmallarray.com.

• “**Portraits of Magdalena’s Art Tradition: Native Daughters and Sons**” is on display at the **CWB Gallery**, 104 Main St., Magdalena. This exhibit features painters, santera and retablo artists and Alamo Reservation Navajo weavers who were prominent in the development of the artistic tradition in Magdalena. The artists represented include painters **David Hixon Money Penny** and **Eddie Tsosie**; santera and retablo painters **Maryrose Pino** and **Grace Maria Garcia Dobson**; and Navajo Alamo weavers **Isabella Pino-Thomas, Sarah Secate-ro, Annie Apachito Vicente, Louise Abeyta, Shirley Baca** and **Violet Lucero**. The show will be up through the first week of January. Info: 910-297-9904 or laposadademari-amagdalena.com/art-gallery.

LAS CRUCES

• The **Tombaugh Gallery** hosts an invitational exhibit focusing on the songs of the folk singer **Phil Ochs** in January. The exhibit opens with a reception 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 7 at the gallery, 2000 S. Solano Drive. A second reception will be held 6-8 p.m., Friday, Jan. 19 at the gallery, and is expected to include live music. **A Still Small Voice** nonprofit is sponsoring the art show, as it has done in the past, it is offering a \$100 award for the artist whose work is the best interpretation of the Ochs song **"I'm Gonna Say It Now."** The gallery, located in the Unitarian Universalist Church in Las Cruces, is open 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Sunday.

• The **Las Cruces Museums** opens two new exhibitions that investigate how artists relate to the natural environment. **"Connection : : Conjunto"** opens at the **Branigan Cultural Center** and features artwork from The Border Artists in which they consider the connection between artists, the natural environment, and the community in which they live. At the **Museum of Art**, **"The Desert Was Red and Red the Dust Was Raised"** uses

abstraction to consider the relationship between the desert landscape and how it influences an artist's imagery. The exhibitions open on Jan. 5 and run through March 23. The Branigan Cultural Center is located at 501 N. Main St. and the Museum of Art is located at 491 N. Main St. They are open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday. There is no admission charge. For additional information, visit the website at www.lascruces.gov/museums or call 575-541-2154.

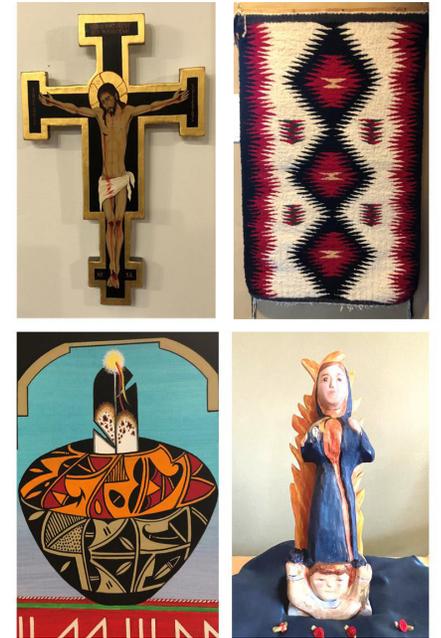
• Art lovers in the region have an opportunity to experience 40 years of boundary-breaking artwork by conceptual multimedia artist **Celia Álvarez Muñoz**. More than 35 of her works are on display at the **University Art Museum at New Mexico State University**. **"Celia Álvarez Muñoz: Breaking the Binding"** The show, which includes large-scale immersive installations, photographic series and book projects, runs through March 2. Info: uam.nmsu.edu.

• **Agave Artists Gallery** newest member is potter **George Holland**, the January Artist of the Month. Holland works in Celadon (Chinese) and Raku (Japanese) pottery styles. He will discuss how

these techniques differ from other types of pottery making. His demonstration at 1 p.m. Jan. 6 will include applying gold leaf, decorative wire, and acrylic paint and how to make a two-piece mold for sculptural lids. The gallery is open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday to Monday and until 8 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month at 2250 Calle de San Albino. Info: 575-339-9870.

• The **Mesilla Valley Fine Arts Gallery**, 2470-A Calle de Guadalupe, across from the historic Fountain Theatre features two local artists for the month of January: **Sue Ann Glenn** and **Yvonne Postelle**. Glenn, a watercolorist, brings to life ordinary objects and scenes. Postelle works primarily in oils as a landscape painter. The love of art has been a constant passion as long as she can remember. **First American Bank in Mesilla** is well represented by gallery members who rotate the galleries artists' work monthly. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Info: 575-522-2933, www.mesilla-valleyfinearts.com.

• At **Branigan Cultural Center** **"The Amadors: Family, Culture, and Identity in Early Las Cruces"** exhibit, follows the Amadors' experience of Mexican families living along the U.S. side of the international boundary following the Mexican American War, as they adjusted to new social, economic, educational, and political systems of the U.S. while holding on to their Mexican identities and cultural values. The museum is open from 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday and 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday. Info: www.lascruces.gov/Museums or 575-541-2154.



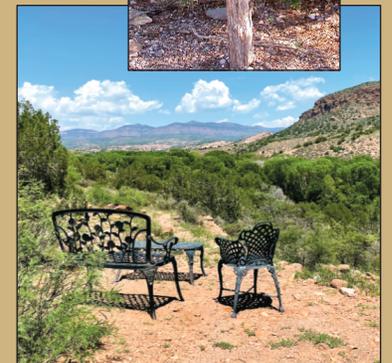
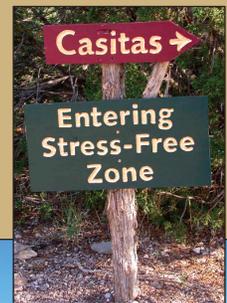
Left: Las Cruces Museums, "At the Crossroads" by Jean Wilkey; right: Magdalena show.



Deming Art Gallery, Assemblage by Sharon Blazier.

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REMEMBER

King Legacy to be Celebrated

Civil rights history marches into the future

By Elva K. Österreich
Rosmary Dupray of Silver City looked around, listened to what is happening in the country and was confused by

what she saw. She heard that some places are discussing censoring books and information received by students regarding civil rights and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Some states are discussing censor-

ship because, Dupray said, children might feel bad about themselves.

But, Dupray said, it is important history is known. The civil rights movement is essential to change in the country.

“It’s critical so that people can understand the context of where racism comes from,” she said. “I think it’s really important for young people growing up now just to know our history and to have an un-

derstanding of racial awareness and cultural awareness expanding to native American and Hispanic awareness.”

She came to the realization everyone on the planet under the age of 55 were not even

alive when King was alive and most of the people were not even around when he died.

LEGACY

continued on page 19

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH

By Georgianna Duarte during a drive from Las Cruces to Silver City.

If you have a favorite recent photo capturing the nature of life and living in southern New Mexico please share it with us and we will consider it for publication. Submit photos to editor@desertexposure.com.



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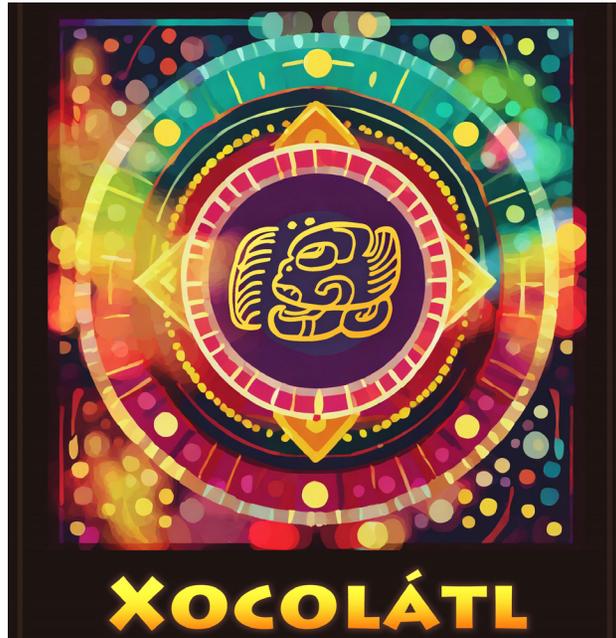
The Mimbres Region Arts Council presents Chocolate Fantasia, XOCOLATL: Mayan Chocolate, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Febr. 10.

Xocolatl is the Mayan word for chocolate. This word was chosen as the theme to bring back the history of chocolate to North America. The Mayans, along with many pre-contact cultures in North America, revered this decadent ingredient, Chocolate, as a gift from the gods. It was used in ceremony to honor the gods, oneself, and the community. Other ingredients, such as Chili and Vanilla, are

all native to North, Central and South America.

Silver City has gathered many chocolatiers this year and asked them to keep the origin of and rich history of Xocolatl in mind when creating their treats. There will be live music throughout the town.

Saturday tickets for \$25 are on sale and this year a Friday night event has been added at the Little Toad Brewery and Distillery: \$55 gets you a flight of New Mexico drinks, hors d'oeuvres and dessert, with a band playing and Full access to the event on Saturday.



“Silver City has its own unique charm. Add in gourmet, handmade chocolate confections, and you’ll see why February is a sweet time to come visit,” said Simon Sotelo, event coordinator. “This event is one of our most anticipated annual events. We encourage those interested in attending to purchase tickets early as the event sells out each year.”

Ticket holders can cast their People’s Choice votes for best chocolates, best music, and best business decorations on the back of their tasting tickets and turn in their tickets by 3 p.m. at Javalina Coffee

House, 117 W. Market Street in Silver City. Awards will be given out at the closing ceremonies at Little Toad Creek Brewery and Distillery, 200 N Bullard Street in Silver City at 4:30 p.m.

Proceeds from Chocolate Fantasia are used to fund the Mimbres Region Arts Council programs and events which provide access and opportunity to anyone wanting to participate in meaningful arts experiences. Tickets are available online at www.chocolatefantasia.org/2024-event-tickets or by emailing chocolatefantasia@mimbresarts.org.



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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Integration Hero Marches

WNMU alum James Meredith paved the way for change

By Jennifer Olson
Story and Photos provided
courtesy of Western New
Mexico University

James Meredith chal-
lenged Mississippi's
racial order and paved
the way for integration na-
tionwide. His path down the

road of affecting change on
a national scale all began in
the clerical/typist program at
Western New Mexico Univer-
sity.

On Sept. 30, 1962, in an
evening address to the nation,
President John F. Kennedy
announced, "Mr. James Mer-
edith is now in residence on

the campus of the University
of Mississippi," a culmina-
tion following days of rioting,
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ing actions that led to the
desegregation of Ole Miss,
Meredith set out to march 220
miles for voting rights and
prove a black man could walk
peacefully from Memphis,
Tennessee, to Jackson, Mis-
sissippi. On the second day

of his March Against Fear,
Meredith was struck down by
the bullet of a would-be assas-
sin. While he recovered, his
demonstration was resumed
by civil rights leaders, includ-
ing Dr. Martin Luther King
Jr., and the Student Non-Vi-
olent Coordinating Commit-
tee's Stokely Carmichael, the

latter introducing the idea of
Black Power to a broad audi-
ence during the walk. In Jack-
son, Meredith rejoined the
estimated 15,000 who took up
the march in his stead, lead-
ing to a concluding rally at the

HERO

continued on page 18



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HERO*continued from page 17*

state capitol.

Having earned a law degree from Columbia University, Meredith ran for political office and became a political advisor. He has penned more than two dozen books, including his memoir "Three Years in Mississippi." Most recently, he was the subject of a BBC documentary that aired on the Smithsonian Channel.

Learning With Meaning

For Meredith, his path down the road of affecting change on a national scale all began in the clerical/typist program at what is today Western New Mexico University while enlisted in the United States Air Force.

"One of my most powerful memories has always been New Mexico Western College because I've always known

what it did for me," he said.

While most see Meredith's admission to the all-white University of Mississippi as a pivotal moment in civil rights history and what is now considered a landmark U.S. Supreme Court case, Meredith sees his attendance at New Mexico Western College as a pivotal moment in his own personal history.

"Most military people didn't go to college to learn whatever they were going to do in the military, so I was lucky enough to end up at a college," he said. Maybe it wasn't luck. But it shaped me, influenced the rest of my life."

After basic training, the Air Force sent Meredith to Silver City in the fall of 1951 to train as a clerk/typist.

"The basic training was only six weeks. But from August to January, I was in New Mexico Western College, which was a long time com-

paratively," he said.

While the program was called clerk/typist, Meredith said "it was a little more than that in the military." What the instructors were really teaching was language arts.

"As a result of that training, I became proficient in the English language. In addition to reading a lot of material, I was able to write a lot of material," he said.

From Mississippi, Meredith had never known a high school teacher who'd earned a college degree.

"The people with that type of education were never considered experts in their language. But New Mexico Western College made me an expert," he said.

That expertise made him more proficient in reading and writing than his superiors in the military, too.

"It wasn't just the 18-year-olds who didn't know much



James Meredith (right) consults with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who continued the March Against Fear when Meredith was incapacitated by a bullet. (Getty Images)

about the English language," he said. Most of the commanders and sergeants didn't know much about the English language either, so I had to straighten out most of what

they wrote. And I could do that because in the military all your bosses are military people, and at New Mexico Western College, they were all civilians."

Meredith doesn't remember being trained in administrative work, as only the English classes stand out in his mind.

"I have written 28 books since then, and I'm almost certain it was because I went to that school," he said.

Continuing To Dream

After leaving Silver City, Meredith was assigned to a base in Kansas.

"The first thing that I did within a week of being at Topeka Air Force Base was to go to their one-room library and start reading books," he said. That's what I did for most of the nine years I was in the military. It might not have been exactly because of my attendance at New Mexico

Western College, but I'm sure there was a connection."

In 2020, Meredith reconnected with WNMU.

"I have not been back but it did seem like Silver City was high up in the hills of the mountains," he said in one of the initial conversations. And after receiving a photograph of campus in the present day from the WNMU Alumni Association, Meredith exclaimed, "I was right!"

Acknowledging that nearly six decades have passed since he acquired essential skills and knowledge that carried him through an impactful career, Meredith emphasized the part this institution played in his overall course.

"A whole lotta water's crossed under the bridge, but there's no question in my mind the role New Mexico Western College played in my good fortune through my life," he said.

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LEGACY*continued from page 14*

Because it is important to understand the past, Dupray has built a way of celebrating his life in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 15.

“I want his life to be celebrated and not just have nobody know who this man is,” she said. “He’s been a hero of mine all of my life. I want him to be remembered because he was a great being and he was a man of peace and he was a man of love. I feel like he is deserving of a celebration of his life.”

So, she has pulled together an array of events for the weekend of Jan. 12-14 to do just that. The weekend culminates with A Celebration of All of Life from 2:30-10 p.m. held at the Silver City Chamber Conference Center which includes talks with several people including the Rev. Earseye Ross, pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Silver City. Ross was a civil rights activist and associate of King, Rosa Parks, John Lewis, Jesse Jackson and other civil rights leaders of the 1960s.

Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s peace legacy

Friday, Jan. 12 – Dance of Universal Peace: 5:30-7:30 p.m. – Donations Accepted, at 607 Arizona Street in Silver City

Saturday, Jan. 13 - documentary: “The Freedom Riders:” noon -3 p.m. –admission free, at the Silver City Library, 515 W. College Ave Silver City. The Freedom Riders were civil rights activists during the 1960s who rode interstate buses in southern US to challenge the segregated bus systems. A talk will be given by the Rev. Earseye Ross.

Saturday, Jan. 13 – Healing Sound Bath by Slum: 7- 8:30 p.m.: \$10 at the Lotus Center, 211 W. Broadway Ave., Silver City - A unique instrumental experience utilizing Tibetan singing bowls; gongs and cymbals; and chanting from various indigenous influences around the world.

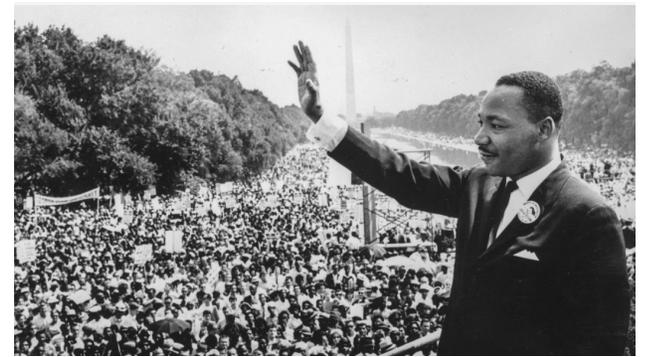
Sunday, Jan. 14 – In Memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., A Celebration of All of Life: 2:30-10 p.m. –\$10. At the Chamber of Commerce Conference Center, 3031 US 180 (near Ace Highway) Silver City. All profits benefit the Commons Center for Food Security. Speakers include the Rev. Earseye Ross; Toohayaysay; and a League of United Latin American Citizens presentation.

Musical vocalists include gospel singer Rachel Ross; Mariachi singer Angelica Padilla; and Mariachi singer Keana Huerta. And there will be a drumming circle with drummers with the Chiricahua Apache Nation. Finally closing with an open mic welcoming vocalists, musicians, poets and storytellers to share their hearts and talents in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy.

Other speakers include Chiricahua Apache and visiting lecturer of Native American Studies at Western New Mexico University, Toohayaysay as well as a representative of the League of United Latin American Citizens. There will also be music and an open mic for poets, music and stories at the end.

“History is important,” Dupray reiterates. “In order for racial healing to happen, there needs to be acknowledgement that this country has a legacy of brutality and a legacy of racism. That needs to be seen, acknowledged and educated.”

She said King cannot just fade away into history. Everybody needs to know who he was and what he stood for and what he died for.



Martin Luther King Jr. addresses crowds during his civil rights activism. (Courtesy Photo)

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RAISINGDAD

Two For The Show

The thing of it is ...

By Jim and Henry
Duchene

...one...

The thing about getting older is that you find yourself going to the doctor more often,

Blood tests, mammograms if you're female, colonoscopies.

Since we live in the future, wasn't all this medical nonsense supposed to be taken care of by now with the taking of a pill? And where are our flying cars?

One thing that annoys me are referrals. Whatever little complaint I might mention, my doctor is quick to refer me to ANOTHER doctor.

Heck, even I can do that. In fact, when I was deciding on a career, I should have just legally changed my first name to "Doctor" and made a living referring sick people to REAL doctors. You know, the ones who had the bad judgement to get in debt

going to medical school.

Well, the good news is my health is fine, but my bad cholesterol levels are not, so in addition to losing weight I have to change my diet. More fish, less fried foods, cut out sugar and bread. You know, the things that make life worth living. I'm a man who has spent his life avoiding bad habits, so I consider this God's cruel joke.

Speaking of jokes:

A man goes to the doctor.

"Doc," he says, "I don't drink or smoke or do drugs or gamble or chase women. Will I live to be a hundred?"

"Sure," the doctor says, "but why would you want to?"

Anyway...

"What did the doctor say?" my father asked me when I walked back into the waiting area where he was.

It's funny, but we spent

my growing up years avoiding each other. My father was of the Children-Should-Be-Seen-Not-Heard generation. Me? I saw enough police procedurals on TV to know not to incriminate myself.

Having said all that, the funny part I'm referring to (See? I AM good at referrals.) is that we now spend a lot of our time together. I take him to HIS doctor appointments, and he comes with me to mine. I take him to lunch when we're done, or at least I try to take him to lunch. After my father vetoes every one of my suggestions, sometimes the only suggestion left is to go home.

"I have to go on a diet," I told him. "My cholesterol's too high."

My father snorted in disgust, enthusiastically rubbing his nose in contempt. He's familiar with the tyranny of the medical profession. Fortunately, my wife is an excellent cook and can accommodate our

culinary requirements. Not only is she beautiful, but she can make it taste delicious as well.

"I guess we can be diet buddies," I told him. "You can be my sponsor, like in AA. Whenever I'm in the mood for some fried chicken, I'll give you a call."

"You bet," he agreed, "and we'll sneak off to KFC."

...two...

I told you last month how my wife and I ran into a buddy of mine at Costco. It was sad news.

Even sadder than usual. He was recently diagnosed pre-Alzheimer's. He's retired and spends a lot of his time searching the internet for a cure. It gives him hope, I guess.

As inappropriate as it is, that reminds me of another joke:

A man goes to the doctor to get his test results.

"I'm sorry," the doctor

says, "but it's bad news. You've got cancer."

"Oh, no," the man says. "That's terrible news."

"It's worse than that," the doctor continues. "You also have Alzheimer's."

"I have Alzheimer's? That's awful," the man exclaims. "Well," he says after a while, "at least I don't have cancer."

Anyway, his wife started explaining the sad situation to us.

"But I've got a great doctor," my friend cut in. There was never a conversation he didn't want to dominate.

"You do?" my wife asked, being polite. "What's his name?"

"Aw, jeez," my friend said, "his name. You know, with this Alzheimer's, sometimes I forget things."

My wife and I nodded our heads in sympathy, and here I exaggerate our conversation, but not by much.

"His name... his name..."

he said, trying to remember. And then, out of the blue, he asked me, "What's that TV show I like?"

"Which TV show?" I asked back.

"The one about nothing."

"Seinfeld?"

"Yeah, Seinfeld. Didn't he make a movie? A cartoon?"

"Yeah," I said, wondering where he was going with all this.

"What was it called?"

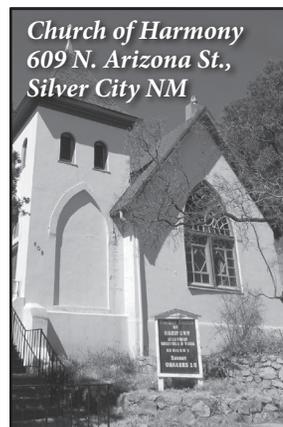
"The Bee Movie," I answered.

"That's right, The Bee Movie. What's that thing that bees make that's sweet?"

"Honey?" I guessed.

"That's right," my friend said, and then turned to his wife. "Honey, what's my doctor's name?"

May your troubles last as long as your New Year resolutions.
theduchenebrothers@gmail.com; @JimDuchene



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DESERT SAGE | ALGERNON D'AMMASSA

On Taking My Knuckleheads to the Forest

Sometimes one must escape the reach of cell phone service

The Gila National Forest has so many storied virtues that require little rehearsal in these pages: Three million-plus acres of forest, mountain ranges and open land, and the nation's first designated wilderness area, the Gila Wilderness, whose centenary arrives on June 3.

One asset unmentioned in Forest Service literature is how many of those acres are beyond the reach of mobile phone signals. The Gila provides refuge for so many species; in its relative remoteness from bondage to digital devices, it is a refuge to our own as well. The phone serves only as a camera, which is most fitting.

There was a weekend day my older sons, teenager and adolescent, were lost to the physical world, immersed in video games or the endless rotation of distractions on YouTube, with small audio devices lodged in their ears requiring us to shout for their attention, emerging from sensory deprivation only to bicker with one another and absentmindedly

insert food into their mouths.

Parenthood in this century, especially the last decade, involves a persistent current of anxiety over letting the children become media zombies that may be somewhat overblown. Some of that, no doubt, is anxiety over observing a childhood so different than my own, when home video games had to be manually wired to a television set and activated by a switch box; phones were appliances that lived on a tabletop or hung on a wall; and my parents chided me for bringing books, rather than an iPhone, to the table.

Still, on days like this one, it was clearly time to wrest my media-besotted lads away from, well, media other than their senses. My command to put the devices away was met with barely verbal protests and rolling of eyes. They stared in cold astonishment when I followed this with instructions to put on shoes and coats, visit the loo and prepare bottles of water.

"Where are we going?" they asked. I an-

swered, truthfully, that I wasn't sure. I could not predict our destination within three million acres.

They looked at each other confirming their alliance in the custody of a dangerous madman and followed orders.

From Deming, I drove them – no devices allowed – up into Grant County and kept going until the windows looked out on tall pines, moisture in the air and snow on the ground. Somewhere suitable, I parked and we emerged into rich smells, chilly air and the feel of a wet forest floor under our feet.

We walked in silence. Lectures are often best left to the forest: Not just for the children, but for myself as well. The value of keeping silence was expressed this way in the temple rules of the zen centers where I lived long before I became a parent: "Your evil tongue will lead you to ruin. You must keep the stopper in the bottle. Only open it when necessary."

When the winds make needles sing and the breezes go through you, the forest makes for

some of the most edifying and forgiving company a person needs.

And then something struck me in the back: A snowball.

My sons were playing like children, giving chase, laughing, loving each other, pelting one another (but mostly me) with frosty missiles amid the drips from canopies high overhead. My beloved knuckleheads were back. So was I.

Where this fits into a federal management plan, I cannot say; but if we see more cell phone towers go up in these places, it merits a revolt.

Algernon D'Amassa married into Deming and has been raising a family in Luna County since 2008.



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First Day Hike,
Elephant Butte
Jan. 1



J2B2
Jan. 11

EVENTS

What's Happening

Events you won't want to miss in January

SUNDAY, DEC. 31

Grant County
Songwriters Anthology
noon-3 p.m. at
Tranquilbuxx Coffee
House, 300 N. Arizona St.,
Silver City
tranquilbuxx.com

New Year's Eve
Celebration
It's Midnight Somewhere
7-11 p.m. at Whiskey Creek
Zócalo, 11786 U.S. Highway
180 E. Arenas Valley

whiskeycreekzocalo.com

Lincoln County
New Year's Eve
Celebration
6 p.m. to midnight at the
Inn of the Mountain Gods,
287 Carrizo Canyon Road,
Mescalero
575-464-7777

New Years Eve Electric
Masquerade
9 p.m.-1 a.m. at Ruidoso
Downs Race Track, 26255

US Highway 70, Ruidoso
Down
575-378-4431

Doña Ana County
New Year's Eve Chile Drop.
Count in the New Year at
Plaza de Las Cruces
8 p.m. games begin, 9 p.m.-
midnight, live music at 100 N.
Main St. Las Cruces

MONDAY, JAN. 1
Grant County
Square Dancing

3-5:30 p.m. at United
Methodist Church, 314 W.
College St. Silver City, Use
the side entrance
575-956-7186

Otero County
First Day Hike
Oliver Lee State Park,
entry fees waived
10-11:30 a.m. 409 Dog
Canyon Road, Alamogordo
575-437-8284

Luna County
First Day Hike

Pancho villa State Park
9-10 a.m. 400 NM-9,
Columbus
575-531-2711

Sierra County
First Day Hike
Elephant Butte Lake State
Park
10 a.m.-1 p.m. 101 Highway
195, Elephant Butte
575-744-5923

TUESDAY, JAN. 2
Grant County

Future Engineers
LEGO play for ages 6-12
4 p.m. Silver City Public
Library, 515 W. College Ave.,
Silver City
575-538-3672

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 3
Grant County
Wednesday Farmers
Market
9 a.m.-noon at Old Valley
Market, 412 Highway 211 at
the corner of Clark Road, in
Gila

silvercityfarmersmarket.
info

**Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces**

8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com

**“Climate Ready Trees:
Planting Smarter for a
Warmer Future” with Dr.
Marisa Thompson**
7 p.m. at the New Mexico
State University
Herbarium/Biology Annex,
Las Cruces and by Zoom
lc@npsnm.org

THURSDAY, JAN. 4

**Grant County
Live Music: Minda Lacy/
Dan Bern**

Folk/Americana
7:30 p.m. at Whiskey Creek
Zócalo, 11786 U.S. Highway
180 E. Arenas Valley
whiskeycreekzocalo.com

**Sierra County
Square Dancing**

1-3:30 p.m. at the New
Mexico Old Time Fiddlers
Playhouse, 710 Elm St.
T or C
575-313-9971 or
505-804-3842

FRIDAY, JAN. 5

Luna County



**Silver City
Big Ditch Crickets
Jan. 6**

**State Park Astronomy
Program**

Sunset, 5:30 p.m. at
Rockhound State Park
575-546-6182

**Otero County
Launch Pad Lecture
Ranger & Mariner: All
Aboard!**

9-10 a.m. at the New Mexico
Museum of Space History,
3198 State Route 2001,
Alamogordo
nmspacemuseum.org

**Doña Ana County
Film: “Aristotle and Dante
Discover the Secrets of
the Universe”**

7:30 p.m. at the Fountain
Theatre, 2469 Calle de

Guadalupe in Mesilla
www.mesillavalleyfilm.org

SATURDAY, JAN. 6

**Grant County
State Park Astronomy
Program**

Sunset, 5:30 p.m. at City of
Rocks State Park
575-546-6182

**12th Night/Breaking Up
Christmas Community
Dance
With the Big Ditch
Crickets**

6:30-9 a.m. at the Murray
Ballroom, 200 W Broadway,
Silver City
575-534-0298

**Live Music: James Ramos
Country and Originals**

7:30 p.m. at Whiskey Creek
Zócalo, 11786 U.S. Highway
180 E. Arenas Valley
whiskeycreekzocalo.com

**Sierra County
Old Time Fiddlers
Saturday Dance**

7 p.m. at the Old Time
Fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm
St., T or C
575-744-9137

**Luna County
Saturday morning
breakfast**

8-10 a.m. at the Deming
American Legion Bataan
Post 4, 619 W. Spruce St.,
Deming

575-546-8385

**Otero County
Alamogordo Otero
County Farmers Market**

8-10 a.m. in Alameda Park,
1987 White Sands Blvd. in
Alamogordo
farmersmarketsnm.org

**Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces**

8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
fandcraftsmarketoflas
cruces.com

Las Cruces Gun Show

9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Las
Cruces Convention Center,
680 E. University Ave.
575-526-0100

**Frankenstein Movie
Marathon**

**11 a.m.-5 p.m. at the
Thomas Branigan
Memorial Library, 200 E.
Picacho Ave.
575-528-4005**

**Film: “Aristotle and Dante
Discover the Secrets of
the Universe”**

2 and 7:30 p.m. at the
Fountain Theatre, 2469
Calle de Guadalupe in
Mesilla
www.mesillavalleyfilm.org

Wild West Shootout

3:30 Vado Speedway Park,
15900 Stern Drive, Vado
vadospeedwaypark.com

SUNDAY, JAN. 7

**Sierra County
Black Cat Poetry Reading**
1-2:15 p.m. at Ingo's Art Cafe,
422 Broadway, Truth or
Consequences
blackcatpoetsnm@gmail.
com

**Doña Ana County
Las Cruces Gun Show**

10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Las
Cruces Convention Center,
680 E. University Ave.
575-526-0100

**Doña Ana County
Film: “Aristotle and Dante
Discover the Secrets of
the Universe”**

2 p.m. at the Fountain
Theatre, 2469 Calle de
Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

Wild West Shootout
3:30 Vado Speedway Park,
15900 Stern Drive, Vado
vadospeedwaypark.com

Film: “Strange Way of Life”
7:30 p.m. at the Fountain
Theatre, 2469 Calle de
Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

EVENTS

continued on page 24

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EVENTS

continued from page 23

MONDAY, JAN. 8

Grant County Square Dancing
3-5:30 p.m. at United Methodist Church, 314 W. College St. Silver City, Use the side entrance
575-956-7186

Doña Ana County

Author Talk: Mary Armstrong
“The Fountain Murders - Understanding the Characters and Conflicts”
1:30-3 p.m. at the Branigan Memorial Library

Roadrunner Room, Las Cruces
maryarmstrongauthor.com

Film: “Strange Way of Life”

7:30 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

TUESDAY, JAN. 9

Grant County Game Day
4 p.m. Silver City Public Library, 515 W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-3672

Film: “Strange Way of Life”

7:30 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla

mesillavalleyfilm.org

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 10

Grant County Wednesday Farmers Market
9 a.m.-noon at Old Valley Market, 412 Highway 211 at the corner of Clark Road, Gila
silvercityfarmersmarket.info

Sierra County Square Dancing

1-3 p.m. at the New Mexico Old Time Fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T or C. Square dancing and refreshments
575-313-9971 or 505-804-3842

Support Groups

MONDAY
Silver City/Grant County New Hope Al-Anon Family Group — noon at First United Methodist Church, 314 W. College Ave. Silver City. Zoom ID: 389 907 739, Password 658776. Info: nmal-anon.com.

TUESDAY
Silver City/Grant County Co-Dependents Anonymous (beginning Jan. 9) — 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 615 N. Texas St. Silver City. Info: CoDAsilvercity@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY
Silver City/Grant County Arenas Valley Al-Anon Family Group — 6-7 p.m. at the Arenas Valley Church of Christ, 5 Racetrack Road, Arenas. Zoom ID: 781 471 031; password: 954941; info: nmal-anon.com

Las Cruces/Mesilla Overeaters Anonymous, hybrid on Zoom at noon each Wednesday at St. James Episcopal Church, 102 St.

James St., Info: 610-762-3779.
Meditation and Healing Service 6 p.m. each Wednesday at Unity of Las Cruces, 575 N. Main St. Through meditation, experience the presence of God. A new service with Rev. Jennifer Kleitz. Info: 575-523-4847.

THURSDAY
Silver City/Grant County Adult Children of Alcoholic and Dysfunctional Families meeting — 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 615 N. Texas St. Info: 575-567-9410.

Las Cruces/Mesilla Grief Share Program, 2 p.m. Thursdays at Sierra Vista Community Church, 514 N. Telshor Blvd. Info: Robin Rice, 575-536-9535.

FRIDAY
Silver City/Grant County Women Embracing Recovery Al-Anon Family Group — 5:30-6:30 p.m. First United Methodist Church, 314 College Ave. Silver City. Zoom ID: 411 858 127; password:

954941; info: nmal-anon.com

SATURDAY
Las Cruces/Mesilla Overeaters Anonymous, hybrid on Zoom at 9:30 a.m. each Saturday at Peace Lutheran Church, 1701 Missouri Ave., Info: 575-405-9128.

Epilepsy Support & Education Services, Inc. meetings, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. second Saturday of every month at Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho Info: 575-636-4500 or EpilepsySupportNM.org.

Breast Cancer Support Group, 9:15 a.m. on the fourth Saturday of the month, at Memorial Medical Center Annex meeting room (entrance on the west side of the hospital). Info: Maricela at 505-453-1789.

SUNDAY
Las Cruces/Mesilla Grief Share Progra, 3 p.m. Sundays at Morning Star Church, 2941 Morning Star. Program lasts for 13 weeks. Contact: Cris Fernandez, crisfern@me.com.




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**Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
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8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
[farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com](http://farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com)

Storybook Station

11-11:45 a.m. at the Las
Cruces Railroad Museum,
351 N. Mesilla St. Las Cruces
575-528-3444

**Doña Ana County
Film: "Aristotle and Dante
Discover the Secrets of
the Universe"**

2 p.m. at the Fountain
Theatre, 2469 Calle de
Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

Wild West Shootout

3:30 Vado Speedway Park,
15900 Stern Drive, Vado
vadospeedwaypark.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 11

Grant County

Robot building

4 p.m. Silver City Public
Library, 515 W. College Ave.,
Silver City
575-538-3672

Sierra County

Square Dancing

1-3:30 p.m. at the New
Mexico Old Time Fiddlers
Playhouse, 710 Elm St. in T
or C
575-313-9971 or
505-804-3842

Otero County

Astronomy League

6 p.m. at the New Mexico
Museum of Space History,
3198 State Route 2001,
Alamogordo
nm spacemuseum.org

Live Music: J2B2

John Jorgenson



bluegrass band

7 p.m. at the Flickinger
Center of Performing Arts,
1110 N. New York Ave.,
Alamogordo
livebff.com

Doña Ana County

**Overdose Prevention
Education & Naloxone
Training**

10-11:30 a.m. virtually in Las
Cruces
575-525-5870

Doña Ana County

**Film: "Aristotle and Dante
Discover the Secrets of
the Universe"**

7:30 p.m. at the Fountain
Theatre, 2469 Calle de
Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

FRIDAY, JAN. 12

Grant County

Poetry Reading from

Upward Spiral

Shelly Barnett, Leonore

Hildebrandt, Pamela

Warren Williams, Lynn

Zotalis

3-5 p.m., at the Bayard
Library, 800 Central Ave.
Bayard
575-537-3327

Doña Ana County

Wild West Shootout

3:30 Vado Speedway Park,
15900 Stern Drive, Vado
vadospeedwaypark.com

Film: "Saltburn"

Runs through Jan. 18

7:30 p.m. at the Fountain
Theatre, 2469 Calle de
Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

SATURDAY, JAN. 13

Grant County

Silver City Farmers Market

9 a.m.-noon. 901 N. Pope St.
in Silver City
[silvercityfarmersmarket.
info](http://silvercityfarmersmarket.
info)

Sierra County

**Sierra County Farmers
Market**

8:30-noon a.m., Ralph
Edwards Park, 300 N.
Riverside Drive, T or C
[sierracountyfarmers
market5@gmail.com](mailto:sierracountyfarmers
market5@gmail.com)

Second Saturday Art Hop

**6 p.m. Downtown Truth or
Consequences**

[director@torcmainstreet.
org](mailto:director@torcmainstreet.
org)

Old Time Fiddlers

Saturday Dance

7 p.m. at the Old Time
Fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm
St., T or C
575-744-9137

Luna County

Saturday morning

breakfast

8-10 a.m. at the Deming
American Legion Bataan
Post 4, 619 W. Spruce St.,
Deming
575-546-8385

Otero County

**Alamogordo Otero
County Farmers Market**

8-10 a.m. in Alameda Park,
1987 White Sands Blvd. in
Alamogordo
farmersmarketsnm.org

Doña Ana County

**Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces**

8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
[farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com](http://farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com)

WWE Live SuperShow

7:30 p.m. at the Pan
American Center, Las
Cruces
panam.nmsu.edu

SUNDAY, JAN. 14

Sierra County

T or C Story Lab

1 p.m. El Cortez Theater, 415
Main St, T or C
917-204-7566

Doña Ana County

**Negative Painting with
Laurel Weathersbee**

2-4 p.m. in the Creative Arts
Room, Good Samaritan
Society, 3011 Buena Vida
Circle, Las Cruces
nmwatercolorssociety.org

MONDAY, JAN. 15

Grant County

Square Dancing

3-5:30 p.m. at United
Methodist Church, 314 W.
College St. Silver City, Use
the side entrance
575-956-7186

TUESDAY, JAN. 16

Grant County

January Craft

Silver City Public Library, 515
W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-3672

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 17

**Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces**

8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
[farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com](http://farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com)

Otero County

"Catapult"

Shadow-illusion

performance

7 p.m. at the Flickinger
Center for Performing
Arts, 1110 N. New York Ave.,
Alamogordo
livebff.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 18

Grant County

Minecraft Club

4 p.m. Silver City Public
Library, 515 W. College Ave.,

EVENTS

continued on page 26

Wine Pairing Dinner
Friday, Jan 26

artwork by Chris McDaniel

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EVENTS

continued from page 25

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Allison Hudson:
Multi-media artist
Opening reception and lecture
6 p.m. at Light Hall Theater and McCray Gallery at WNMU
scanedoperez@wnmu.edu

FRIDAY, JAN. 19
Grant County
Live Music: Frisson Wind Ensemble
7 p.m. in the Fine Arts Theater at Western New Mexico University, Silver City
gcccaconcerts.org

Doña Ana County
Musical: "Once"
Blank Conversations Theatre
7 p.m. at the Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St., Las Cruces
blankconversations.org

Film: "The Boy and the Heron"
Runs through Jan. 25
7:30 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

SATURDAY, JAN. 20
Grant County
Live music: Alash, Tuvan throat singers
7 p.m. at Light Hall Theatre, 1000 W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-6469

Sierra County
Old Time Fiddlers Saturday Dance
7 p.m. at the Old Time Fiddlers Playhouse, 710 Elm St., T or C
575-744-9137

Luna County
Saturday morning breakfast

8-10 a.m. at the Deming American Legion Bataan Post 4, 619 W. Spruce St., Deming
575-546-8385

Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market of Las Cruces
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de Las Cruces Downtown, Las Cruces
farmersandcraftsmarketoflascruces.com

History Detectives
11-11:45 a.m. at the Las Cruces Railroad Museum, 351 N. Mesilla St. Las Cruces
575-528-3444



Photography Boot Camp
9 a.m.-noon at the St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 518 Alameda Blvd., Las Cruces
daphotoclub.org

Maya Textile Sale Weaving for Justice
10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Atrium of First Christian Church, 1809 El Paseo Road in Las Cruces
weaving-for-justice.org

Musical: "Once"
Blank Conversations Theatre
7 p.m. at the Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St., Las Cruces
blankconversations.org

SUNDAY, JAN. 21
Doña Ana County
Musical: "Once"
Blank Conversations Theatre
2 p.m. at the Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St., Las Cruces
blankconversations.org

Film: "Blood Simple"
7:30 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

MONDAY, JAN. 22
Grant County
Square Dancing
3-5:30 p.m. at United Methodist Church, 314 W.

College St. Silver City, Use the side entrance
575-956-7186

Family Movie: "Ratatouille"
4-6 p.m. Silver City Public Library, 515 W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-3672

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24
Grant County
***Live Music: Just Clark Singer Songwriter/ Americana**
7:30 p.m. at Whiskey Creek Zócalo, 11786 U.S. Highway 180 E. Arenas Valley
whiskeycreekzocalo.com

Sierra County
History of the Elephant Butte Dam
Where Was the Hospital
2-4 p.m. at the Dam Site Lodge Meeting Room, Elephant Butte
575-894-2073

Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market of Las Cruces
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de Las Cruces Downtown, Las Cruces

farmersandcraftsmarketoflascruces.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 25
Grant County
Play with connective dough
4 p.m. Silver City Public Library, 515 W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-3672

FRIDAY, JAN. 26
Grant County
Squishy Circuits
4 p.m. Silver City Public Library, 515 W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-3672

Otero County
Live Music: Gunhild Carling
Swedish musical sensation
7 p.m. at the Flickinger Center of Performing Arts, 1110 N. New York Ave., Alamogordo
livebff.com

Doña Ana County
Musical: "Once"
Blank Conversations Theatre
7 p.m. at the Rio Grande Theatre, 211 N. Main St., Las Cruces
blankconversations.org

Film: "Victims of Sin"
Runs through Feb. 1
7:30 p.m. at the Fountain Theatre, 2469 Calle de Guadalupe in Mesilla
mesillavalleyfilm.org

SATURDAY, JAN. 27
Grant County
Poetry Reading from Upward Spiral
Shelly Barnett, Leonore Hildebrandt, Pamela Warren Williams, Lynn Zotalis
3-5 p.m., at SWAG Books and More, 409 N. Bullard St.

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Future Engineers
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4 p.m. Silver City Public
Library, 515 W. College Ave.,
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575-538-3672

Sierra County
Live Music: Rockin Gecko
Duo
7-10 p.m. at T or C Brewing
Company, 410 N. Broadway
St. T or C
575-297-0289

Luna County
Saturday morning
breakfast
8-10 a.m. at the Deming
American Legion Bataan
Post 4, 619 W. Spruce St.,
Deming
575-546-8385

Lincoln County



Live Music: Luis Angel
"El Flaco"
6 p.m. to midnight at the
Inn of the Mountain Gods,

287 Carrizo Canyon Road,
Mescalero
575-464-7777

Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de

Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com

Musical: "Once"
Blank Conversations
Theatre
7 p.m. at the Rio Grande
Theatre, 211 N. Main St., Las
Cruces
blankconversations.org

SUNDAY, JAN. 28
Doña Ana County
Musical: "Once"
Blank Conversations
Theatre
2 p.m. at the Rio Grande
Theatre, 211 N. Main St., Las
Cruces
blankconversations.org

MONDAY, JAN. 29
Grant County
Square Dancing
3-5:30 p.m. at United
Methodist Church, 314 W.
College St. Silver City, Use

the side entrance
575-956-7186

TUESDAY, JAN. 30
Grant County
Manga Day
Silver City Public Library, 515
W. College Ave., Silver City
575-538-3672

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31
Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com

SATURDAY, FEB. 3
Doña Ana County
Farmers & Crafts Market
of Las Cruces
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Plaza de
Las Cruces Downtown, Las
Cruces
farmersandcraftsmarket
oflascruces.com

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Sunday, February 11 • 6:30PM
The Martian (2015)

Guest Lecturer: Dr. William Stein, PhD astronomy,
Indiana University

Sunday, January 14 • 6:30PM
CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap (2015)
Guest Lecturer: Melody Hagaman, Senior Professional
Development Facilitator, BootUp PD

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Sunday, January 21 • 7:30 PM
Blood Simple (1984)

Sunday, February 18 • 7:30 PM
Lone Star (1996)

Sunday, March 17 • 7:30 PM
Hell or High Water (2016)

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CONSERVATION BEAT

Feral Cattle in Gila Likely Spared – For Now

Court hearings pushed back in federal management lawsuit

By Danielle Prokop,
Source NM

The U.S. Forest Service determined it will not be using helicopters and guns to cull cattle loose in the Gila National Forest next year.

Federal officials said aerial operations were unnecessary, because of a smaller herd size, according to a Dec. 5 federal court filing for the District of New Mexico.

“Forest Service estimates that the number of remaining Gila Cattle is roughly in the neighborhood of 10-20 animals, with some degree of



Undated photo of feral cows on the Gila River. (Photo courtesy Todd Schulke of the Center for Biological Diversity)

uncertainty outside that range due to the large area at issue and the evasive nature of the animals,” the filing stated.

“As a result of this estimate, the Gila Cattle in February Federal Respondents do not intend to proceed with aerial lethal removal operations of 2024.” Federal officials said any removals in 2024 would be

ground-based roundups.

The context

Feral cows in the Gila have been a long-standing issue.

The U.S. Forest Service said it stemmed from action taken in the mid-1970s, after a rancher with a federal grazing permit declared bankruptcy and abandoned his cattle in the national forest.

Local and national non-profit conservation organizations applauded efforts to remove the cattle, noting that their defecation and erosion in riparian environments, and potential for habitat destruction threaten federally-listed species living in the Gila Wilderness.

Over the years, 756 cattle were removed (dead or alive) from the Gila Wilderness, the Forest Service said in a 2022 press release. Of those cattle, only one cow captured in 1998 was branded. The rest did not have an ear tag, brand or other marker of ownership.

Federal officials said nearly half the feral cattle rounded up on the ground do not survive capture and removal, “due to stress and self-inflicted injury.”

In 2022, the National Forest Service said it killed 65 cattle during a two-day aerial operation, but the practice ignited further criticism in 2023. The issue touched on emotionally-charged issues such as endangered species protections, animal cruelty and federal lands management. The fracas between the

federal government, cattle organizations and conservation groups sparked national stories from a variety of outlets.

In February, a special team of federal officials sniped 19 cattle from a helicopter on public lands, after vocal objections from state cattle organizations.

Days before the scheduled operation, the New Mexico Cattle Grower’s Association, ranchers and the Humane Farming Association sued federal officials. In court filings, they called the practice “unlawful, cruel and environmentally harmful.”

The groups said federal officials failed to provide 75-days of notice, and raised concerns that wildfires destroyed fences that allowed branded cattle to mingle with the unowned, unbranded cattle.

Their lawyers disputed whether the cattle in the Gila were feral – a domesticated animal returned to a wild state.

Forest officials argued the federal district court was the wrong venue for the action.

A federal judge overruled the cattlemen’s injunction to stop the action, saying there was proper notification, and ruled the cows were feral animals.

Killing the unbranded cattle was necessary to protect hikers, waterways and habitats for threatened and endangered species, said Camille Howes, the supervisor at the Gila National Forest.



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“The feral cattle in the Gila Wilderness have been aggressive towards wilderness visitors, graze year-round, and trample stream banks and springs, causing erosion and sedimentation,” Howes said in a February statement.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham weighed in after the U.S. Forest Service shot the 19 cattle, saying she was disappointed in the “lack of meaningful, long-term engagement with New Mexico stakeholders on controversial matters like this one,” and likened it to processes such as prescribed burns.

The New Mexico Cattle Growers Association joined with others and sued to seek a permanent stop of the Forest Service shooting cattle from the air in the Gila Wil-

derness. The federal judge allowed the conservation nonprofit The Center for Biological Diversity to intervene in the lawsuit, which is still ongoing.

Parties involved in the lawsuit asked a federal judge to postpone a hearing scheduled for December until February.

Danielle Prokop covers the environment and local government in Southern New Mexico for Source NM. Her coverage has delved into climate crisis on the Rio Grande, water litigation and health impacts from pollution. She is based in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

ON STAGE

Learn to Think Like a Director

Stagecraft workshop lasts 7 weeks

“Learn to Think Like a Director” is a workshop presented by Silver City Community Theatre on script analysis and production. Award winning professional actor, director and educator Scott Plate is leading the workshop which continues every Wednesday, 6-8 p.m. from Jan. 10 to Feb. 28 at the Grant County Community Foundation Building, 1106 N. Pope St., in Silver City.

Plate has a 35-year career

in the performing arts. He chaired and nurtured two nationally-ranked performing arts training programs, and created an innovative performing arts residency in Zambia.

This workshop is for theatre enthusiasts from performers to audiences.

Visit www.silvercitycommunitytheater.com to sign up.

The workshop is simplified from a master’s-level class and is intended to give participants the basic knowledge



Scott Plate

and skills to begin using the language of a play to stage

productions in two parts.

The aim of the first part is to teach proficiency in the analysis of play scripts and to develop practical skills. The second part consists of working with scenes from the plays analyzed and staging them with actors, using the understanding we’ve acquired in our analytical work.

The cost for both parts of the workshop is \$150, which works out to less than \$20 per session and \$100 for students and seniors over 65.

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CONSERVATION BEAT

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Planting seedlings can be a fulfilling community project. (Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons)

sale is now open to the public. Twenty-three varieties of seedlings are available to order online, including long-time favorites, such as

ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, pinon pine, Rocky Mountain juniper, Scots pine, and a large variety of shrubs like chokecherry and wax currant. All proceeds from the winter seedling sale are reinvested back into the state's Conservation Seedling Program.

To qualify for the program, purchasers must own at least one acre of land in New Mexico. Seedlings must be used for conservation purposes, such as erosion control, reforestation, wildlife habitat, and windbreaks.

"Winter is a great time to take advantage of this seedling sale," said Carol Bada, Conservation Seedling Program Manager. "It's important to place your orders as soon as you can. Demand for seedlings has already surpassed our expectations, based on last year's sales during the first week of availability."

One-year-old, small container seedlings (10 cu inch container) of the same species and multi-species bundles are available in minimum lots of 49 seedlings for \$90. Two-season, large container seedlings (40 cu inch container) are available in lots of 20 seedlings for \$57.

Bareroot seedlings are 50 for \$64. There is a \$5 handling fee per order and an additional \$20 fee per lot for all UPS orders – all sales are final.

Visit www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/seedlings to order seedlings.

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TABLE TALK

Roasted Rooster Elevates the Waffle

New Las Cruces eatery has big plans for the future

Story and photos
by Algernon D'Ammassa

The old joke that waffles are simply pancakes with abs does an injustice to both: A good waffle is slightly crisp on the outside, fluffy on the inside and far more than a frilly pancake.

Daniel Gonzales, general manager of the recently-opened Roasted Rooster Coffee and Waffles at 2702 W. Amador Av. in Las Cruces, is demonstrating as much with a menu incorporating waffles suitable for breakfast, lunch, dinner or dessert.

Besides the country waffle, there are green chile cheese waffles, pesto waffles, cornbread waffles and a gluten-free variation. For larger meals, they are incorporated into sandwiches with baked chicken, smoked brisket, shredded red chile pork and more. For dessert, perhaps the Turtle Road bubble waffle with praline pecan ice cream, chocolate and caramel sauce will do.

Nothing here is fried, setting aside arguments over whether waffles are “fried,” “baked” or “cast.” The kitchen is oven-based, bustling with workers preparing fresh ingredients, locally sourced as much as possible; and of course, the waffle irons are in constant use.

The beverage menu is replete with coffee- and espresso-based drinks, tea and frescas, the coffee blends a proprietary blend unique to Roasted Rooster, Gonzales said, by way of Picacho Coffee



A baked chicken parm sandwich with pesto waffles is among the sliders served at Roasted Rooster Coffee and Waffles. An inviting counter greets visitors to the bustling kitchen.



Roasted Rooster.

The location is prime for attracting travelers, located at Amador Avenue and Motel Boulevard, near the interstate and two travel centers. Roasted Rooster even offers an array of Tesla charging stations in its parking lot. However, Gonzales said two weeks after opening, most of the clientele

are local and there are already quite a few regulars getting something to go or dining in.

A native Las Cruces who has worked in the food and beverage industries for 20 years, Gonzales said, “I wanted something that was both creative and comfortable, familiar and innovative. ... I love all the local restaurants here in

town, I frequent them, but I wanted to find something that was unique ... where we could provide higher-quality coffee, in my opinion, than your national chains.”

Roasted Rooster is busy from morning into the night, welcoming visitors with aromas of fresh waffles and coffee, colorful menus overhead and friendly greetings.

“What I keep hearing all the time is how homey it feels,” Gonzales said. “That was the vibe that we wanted ... like grandma’s home or grandma’s farm.”

That is, assuming grandma likes locally roasted coffee or cucumber limeade with a dash of red chile salt.

Roasted Rooster Coffee and Waffles is open 6 a.m. to 10

p.m. weekdays, and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends. It is located at 2702 W. Amador Avenue in Las Cruces. Online orders are available via RoastedRoosterNM.com.

RoastedRoosterNM.com.

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by Dave Thomas

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CELEBRATE

Storydancer Terry Alvarez

Tribute to a joyful, giving life

By Douglas Jackson

Several years ago a radio interviewer asked Terry Alvarez, the one-of-a-kind, force-of-nature “Storydancer” who passed away on Dec. 8 after a long illness, about a life changing decision she had made as a middle school teacher two decades prior.

“I got my principal’s license and was ready to look for principal’s jobs. Then I decided, Nah!” Alvarez had said.

She would take early retirement and travel the state as a singing and dancing Romani storyteller with a guitar, drums, and a costume that would take an hour and a half to put on... “two layers of flouncy skirts with a lot of ruffles, a blouse with puffed sleeves, harem pants and boots” and shiny bangles everywhere.

At the time, some may



Terry Alvarez performing in full joyful regalia. (Courtesy Photo)

have worried she had chosen a life of uncertainty, entailing endless hours of preparation, driving and waiting for the phone to ring. But her audiences knew that, in fact, she had chosen her higher calling.

Many performers in theaters or at festivals or in classrooms “own the stage.” With her drums, guitar, bangles and persona, Terry could create her stage wherever she

was. She was a direct descendant of those troubadours, bards and dervishes who have captivated spellbound onlookers in town squares or around roaring fires throughout the millennia.

She brought audiences to their feet and under her spell with her warmup, a kind of musical, hyperkinetic game of ‘Simon Says’ that would have them joyfully “raising the roof” with their outstretched hands and strutting like pharaohs. She would follow this with tales old and new, from far and wide, that brought hope and joy to her listeners in auditoriums, classrooms and shelters. That was Terry. She nurtured everyone...audiences, students, fellow dancers, musicians and tellers, and most of all, the members of her beloved

and supportive family.

Terry was never one to let moss grow beneath her feet. She always sought new challenges. Believing that tales can inspire people of all ages, Terry and fellow Story Tellers of Las Cruces (STLC) member, Judith Ames, launched a series of Stories for Grown Ups programs. Knowing stories can help us come to terms with our past, she created performance pieces about historic events. Her rendition of the tragic Triangle Shirt Factory Fire of 1911 transported viewers back in time and into the footsteps of the victims, as if it were a one-woman Ken Burns documentary. She also channeled her narrative gifts and childhood memories into a novel, “Down Riverside Road: Growing Up in the Borderland.”

The Doña Ana Arts Council awarded her the Arts in Education Award in recognition of her many community contributions and accomplishments. Terry’s fellow STLC members mourn her

loss and celebrate her life.

“She was an inspiration and influenced all the educators she worked with, as well as entertaining and enriching the lives of children,” Jean Gilbert said.

“She drew others out and inspired them to express their own unique creativity,” Gloria Hacker added.

To Judith Ames, “Terry was a breath of fresh air, a joy to be with, a great late-night telephone companion.”

“Terry inspired others to sing, dance, be joyful, and always be grateful,” Captain Jeff Porter said.

“Terry always saved the best story for last, and at the end of her performance, she would ask listeners to open their hands,” Sarah Addison said. “She would pick some representative kids. She would then place a gold coin in their hands and give them all a blessing.”

And so now as our sister Terry begins this new journey, let us put a coin in her hand and bless her.

“As the African saying goes, as long as you speak their names, they will not be forgotten,” Addison said. “Please join me in saying her name, Terry Alvarez. She has joined her ancestors, but her memory lives on.”

Note: STLC is an affiliate to Storytellers of New Mexico and serves Southern New Mexico.

Extraordinary

“She was as extraordinary as a mom and as a family member as she was in the community as a community treasure,” said Traci Maynez, Terry Alvarez’s daughter.

Even toward the very end of her life, without knowing, she was distributing important advice.

“I asked her if she ever had her heart broken and she said ‘oh, of course’ and paused for a long time. Then she said, ‘Do something worthy,’ so I went home and put it on my white board,” Traci said.

Terry played her guitar, sang and taught a Sunday school class for intellectually disabled adults for 40 years at St. Paul’s Methodist Church in Las Cruces.

“It was one of her gifts to her community,” Traci said. “It was very beautiful that she did that.”

There will be a celebration of life for Terry Alvarez at 10 a.m. on Jan. 20 held at St. Paul’s Methodist Church, 225 W Griggs Ave. Community members are welcome.

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